

**CRN#****Fall 2019 Descriptions for Topics Courses****20628 AMS 320-A/GND 300-A Topics in American Studies: Women of Color Writers****Prof. A. Opitz**

In this course we will look at the intersections of gender, race, and sexuality in the fiction and non-fiction work of women writers of color, mostly U.S. and mostly 20<sup>th</sup> century, but not exclusively. Rather than trying to establish "one tradition" of women of color writers, the course aims to introduce students to writers and artists from a range of ethnic/racial backgrounds and traditions. We'll examine a mix of "classics"—such as work by Toni Morrison, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Paula Gunn Allen, Sandra Cisneros, and Gloria Anzaldúa—as well as more recent work by novelists Julie Otsuka and Edwidge Danticat, comedian Margaret Cho, and filmmaker Dee Rees. Among the topics/questions we'll explore creating and reclaiming self/identity, family and community, racialization and the state, forgotten/remembered histories, colonialism, sexuality, queer of color critique/theory, violence, intimacy, and motherhood.

*[NOTE: This course is cross-listed and students register under GND 300-A, 20628.](#)*

**20654 COM 333-A Topics in Mediated Communication: Media Regulations****Prof. R. Leone**

This course examines the industrial, legal, and social forces that shape media regulatory policies.

**20367 EDU 333-A Topics in Education: Classroom Management in Early Childhood Education****TBA**

This course examines theoretical and empirical approaches to classroom management in early childhood educational settings. Students will explore the impacts of classroom relationships, climate, organization, routines, and structures on student engagement and achievement. Focus will be paid to understanding how age, race, gender, disability, and other factors influence classroom behaviors and management strategies. Students will then apply this knowledge to a critique of contemporary classroom management practices and to articulate their own beliefs about classroom management.

**20561 ENG 200-A Introductory Topics in Literary Studies: Reading and Pleasure****Prof. L. Scales**

The percentage of Americans who read for pleasure declines sharply after childhood (NEA 2007). This course will ask: what constitutes pleasure in literature? Ought reading be fun or make us happy? What do we think of writing that makes us work hard? Why do we divide so-called "vacation reading" from academic literature, or "highbrow" from "lowbrow"? A key question of the class will be: how and why should one develop a reading practice and an intellectual life outside of the classroom?

We will ask these questions through texts that include novels, poetry, children's literature, bestsellers, journalism, and personal narrative. We will practice forms of academic literary criticism and examine their history and purposes. Assignments will include both traditional analytical essays and creative/reflective writing. We may take a field trip to a bookstore, cinema, and/or museum. Students will also create a "syllabus" of books, films, and readings for their future selves.

**20565 ENG 242-A Topics in Creative Writing: Poetry****Prof. A. Brooks**

This creative writing course will offer an introduction to poetry writing with an emphasis on experimentation with form and process. You will have weekly writing assignments based on our readings and experiences and explorations in and outside of the classroom. In order to deepen our knowledge and abilities, we will also be reading the work of many contemporary writers and some older greats. Class will be part discussion, part writing, and part play which will all help create a community in which we learn to formulate thoughtful critique and responses to each other's work and deep insight into the reading and our writing practice.

**20567 ENG300-A Critical Theory: Empire of Signs: Introduction to Theories of Literature and Culture****Prof. J. Green**

This course will trace the rise of critical theory and cultural studies from their roots in ancient philosophy through modern literary criticism to contemporary theoretical practices. To refine our understanding of how major critical approaches: revise, refute, and rethink prior traditions, we will explore such fundamental theoretical concepts as representation, language, ideology, morality, power, sexuality, race, and gender. We will put theory into action throughout, reading James Joyce's "The Dead" through multiple critical strategies, and looking at contemporary American life through the lens of Claudia Rankine's *Citizen* films and poems. Along the way, screenings of videos, advertisements, and political propaganda will allow us to experiment with our interpretive strategies and formulate the questions that matter to us.

**20569 ENG 344-A Topics in Creative Non-Fiction****Prof. A. Brooks**

In this creative nonfiction course, we will read distinct, recent, nonfiction meditations which we will use throughout as inspirations for our own writing. Our own writing experiments will explore the uses of memory, observation, and research with close attention to structure and form in creative nonfiction writing. We work with the goal of exciting interest and developing deftness in the construction of longer-form memoirs, meditations, investigations, and personal narrative. “We live entirely, especially if we are writers, by the imposition of a narrative line upon disparate images, by the “ideas” with which we have learned to freeze the shifting phantasmagoria which is our actual experience.” -Joan Didion, *The White Album*.

**20763 ENG367-A Topics in 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature: Great American Novel****Prof. L. Scales**

It’s a truism that American writers are always striving to write “The Great American Novel.” Why not the Great American Poem or the Great American Documentary Film? Do they do this in other countries? What function is a novel supposed to play in forming our national identity? At the heart of this course will be four works that have been labeled Great American Novels: Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick*, Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*. We will also read works that are still largely unknown, or were considered “lesser” in their day, in order to interrogate how literary “greatness” gets defined. As we read together, we will ask: what national narratives do these epic novels tell? How have they shaped our ideas about race, gender, citizenship, nation, and region? How has the particular form of the novel allowed it to play so many cultural roles—as social protest, historiography, allegory, study of psychological and spiritual states—and what literary forms are so influential today?

**20572 ENG 390-A Topics in Modernism: Signals and Noise: Literature as Information (WID)****Prof. J. Green**

This course combines the emergent techniques of the digital humanities with information theory and literary and cultural analysis to explore the moral, ethical, and philosophical questions posed by texts that examine the modern information state. During the first half of the semester, we will study Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, Yevgeny Zamyatin’s *We*, the short fiction of Franz Kafka and Jorge Luis Borges, Paul Auster’s *City of Glass*, and Thomas Pynchon’s *The Crying of Lot 49*. Students in this course will also take the 1-credit course DIG 201: Digital Design Studio, in which we will learn how to use data collection, visualization, and computational tools for cultural and literary analysis, including text encoding, analysis, annotation, and mining. This broad survey of tools and digital humanities theory will set the stage for the semester’s second-half focus on W.G. Sebald’s novel *Austerlitz*. We will put our analytical and digital skills to use to collaborate on producing a deeply layered and extensive digital archive edition of the novel, incorporating documents, audio recordings, visual art, film, and 360° VR video.

**NOTE: This course is part of LC 214-A. Students must take ENG 390-A along with LC 214-A, 20752.**

**20599 HIS 385-A, Topics in U.S. Women’s History: A Long, Slow Revolution: Women and Education in American History****Prof. L. Brekke-Aloise**

This course examines the role of women as teachers, missionaries, and students fighting for educational opportunities for women and girls in North America from 1600 to the present. Beginning with the Ursulines of New France, we will explore the teaching charism of religious orders and missionaries, the role of mothers in early childhood education, girls’ acceptance into public schools and academies after the American Revolution, the entrance of women into colleges and the teaching profession in the 19th century and their continuing struggles for full educational equality today.

**NOTE: This course is part of LC 344-A. Students must take HIS 385-A along with HIS 374-A, 20598 and LC 344-A, 20600.**

**20731 IND 357-A Special Topics in Interdisciplinary Studies: Skepticism and Rationality****Prof. G. Scala**

James “The Amazing” Randi—magician, skeptic, and investigator—reminds us that “No matter how smart or how well educated you are, you can be deceived.” In an age fraught with deception and misinformation, students need tactics and strategies to separate truth from falsity. This course encourages its participants to act as skeptics—not cynics, necessarily—by requiring evidence and proof before believing or accepting claims. Students are urged to identify the most-likely-to-occur opportunities for deception in their major fields and draw from the tenets of classical rhetoric, logic, and the scientific method to develop safeguards. Frequent collaboration with classmates will allow for dynamic solutions to small and large-scale contemporary problems ranging from the personal (e.g. used car prices and avoiding fraud) to the universal (e.g. “fake news” and God).

**NOTE: This course is part of LC 203-A. Students must take IND 357-A along with PHL 210-A, 20536 and LC 203-A, 20535.**

**20782 PHL 266-A Topics in Philosophy: Philosophical Foundations of Capitalism****Prof. R. Capobianco**

A discussion of the philosophical underpinnings of the modern economic system of “capitalism.” After briefly identifying certain ancient Greek ideas that helped pave the way, the course will focus on the key modern thinkers who have provided philosophical arguments and justifications for the virtues of the free market system. The related modern political philosophy of “individual rights and liberty” will also be a central part of the discussion. Selected Texts: Aristotle, *Politics* (on the virtues of private property), John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, J.S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (selections), F. A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom and/or The Fatal Conceit* and Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*.

**20726 POL 357-A Topics in Politics: Terror, State, and Society****Prof. A. Mahajna**

Terrorist attacks from 9/11 to recent events such as the ones in France, Belgium, and Turkey have invoked a global discussion on what constitutes terrorism, its motives, and the best practices to counter this global phenomenon. This course is a survey of the evolution of the phenomenon of terrorism and an analysis of its causes (e.g. Israel/Palestine, Algeria, Iraq, Syria, Latin America, Italy, the US and others), forms, and consequences. Some of the questions it addresses are: What is terrorism? Who is a terrorist? What are the motives behind terrorism?

**20284 SOC 295-A Topics in Sociology: Sociology of American Fascism****Prof. C. Dolgon**

While many debate the definition of fascism, recent trends in American politics and society have inspired renewed interest in the subject. This course will examine the history and politics of American society and the role that fascist power and anti-fascist movements have played in its evolution. We will examine fascism from a political sociological perspective and discuss how its history has informed today’s concerns and reactions, as well as the prospect for defeating powerful interests in maintaining white supremacy, patriarchy, and corporate rule.

**20338 VPG 320-A Topics in Graphic Design: Exhibit & Wayfinding Design****Prof. C. Morgan**

In this advanced studio course, students are introduced to the environmental design specialty — the study of design as it relates to exhibit design, architectural graphics, signage, themed environments and wayfinding systems. Designed environments can help us navigate, learn something new, engage us, as well as even stop us in our tracks to admire our surroundings.

**20185 VPS 207-A Special Projects: Making Art Material****Prof. C. Smith-Corby**

By using the Farm and combining the study of sustainable food systems with an in-depth understanding of the basis, production, and use of historical studio materials, there will be a focus on homemade and sustainable ingredients reflecting local and global Slow Food movements while acknowledging the origin of our resources.

***NOTE:** This course is part of LC 336-A. Students must take VPS207 along with LC 336-A, 20041 and ENV 326-A, 20040.*

~~**20186 VPS 207-B Special Projects: Collage**~~ **CANCELLED**~~**Prof. C. Walters**~~

~~This course explores alternative and traditional methods of collage and assemblage using unique materials from detritus to personal treasures. Elements of drawing, painting, mono-printing and writing will be included to create multiple evocative, visual statements.~~

~~**20747 VPS 207-C Special Projects: Art and Technology**~~ **CANCELLED**~~**Prof. D. Kinsey**~~

~~This class will explore various technological applications for the creation of experimental artworks. Genres and techniques, such as drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and collage will be explored. Emphasis will be placed on the analog (hands on) to the digital, and back and forth. \*\*It is recommended, but not required that students have some knowledge of technological hardware such as computers, digital cameras, iPads and/or tablets, smart phones, etc.~~

**20193 VPS 327-A Topics in Painting: Watercolor****Prof. S. Savage-Rumbaugh**

This class teaches very basic use of watercolor and explores its potential. Each class will focus on specific skills: materials preparation, wet-on-wet and dry brush techniques, lifting color, basic color theory, value, glazing and composition. A visual survey of current artists working in the medium will be presented throughout the course.