

CRN# Fall 2023 Descriptions for Topics Courses

20135 ANT350-A/SOC295-A, Topics in Anthropology: Colonialism & Culture in the Middle East

Prof. T. Abowd

This class will explore colonialism, culture, and empire in the modern Middle East in many of their varied expressions. We will chart the rise of colonial and imperial domination over the peoples of the region beginning in the early 19th Century and moving forward to the present through a range of anthropological, literary, and historical texts. De-colonization and resistance movements of various kinds will also be studied as we seek to more fully acknowledge agency and the capacity of individuals and movements to transform the world. This class will examine vital themes related, among other things, to gender/sexuality, class, nationalism, urban studies, and racial politics. We shall delve into what is distinctive about colonial power and how the transformative forces that have comprised it have engendered not simply violence and sheer coercion but also a range of new cultural notions, technologies, and institutions relating to urban planning, law, agrarian regimes, and gender, racial, and class identities. Visual culture and film will be a significant component of the class. Readings will include those by Franz Fanon, Edward Said, Leila Abu Lughod, Jean-Paul Sartre, Leila Ahmed, Helene Cixous, Nawal el-Sadawi, and others.

Cross listed class. Register under ANT350-A (CRN: 20135).

20136 ANT350-B, Topics in Anthropology: Introduction to Biological Anthropology

Prof. A. Uhl

What makes us human? This class explores the nonhuman relationship humans have to extant and extinct primate ancestors and understand the unique evolutionary events that made us human, shaping our anatomy, physiology, behavior, and cultures. This course will use archaeological fossils and anatomical skeletal remains to familiarize students with human evolutionary biology, top research and theory discussions as well as modern forensic techniques for identification and interpretation of human remains. Hands on lab work as well as research readings with weekly class discussion are requirements.

20268 BIO200-A, Topics in Biology: Biotechnology Basics

Prof. M. James-Pederson

This course will use the development of biotechnology products like the COVID-19 vaccines and the Impossible Burger as models, to explore the process of scientific discovery, the application of those discoveries to the development of new products, and knowledge dissemination. This course is designed for non-biologists who want to gain a general understanding of cell biology and genetics and how their principles and research tools are applied to develop products that benefit agriculture, medicine, and the environment. We will also discuss the value of specific products, the FDA's approval process, and the ethical issues confronting the field. **Prerequisites:** none. Not intended for BIO, BCH, NEU, or HSC majors.

Fulfills Natural Scientific Inquiry.

20269 BIO200-B, Topics in Biology: Plants and People

Prof. B. Vanden Heuvel

This course introduces students to general topics in botany and the central dependency of all animals (including man) upon plants. In this course, you will learn the basics of plant anatomy and morphology – how are plants put together and how plant structures are organized. More importantly, you will gain an appreciation for the stunning diversity of the plant kingdom and the critical importance of plants to human existence.

Fulfills Natural Scientific Inquiry.

- 20270 BIO200-C, Topics in Biology: Human Sex Differences: Behavior, Biology, Ecology**
Prof. A. Uhl
Sex and gender are complicated – chromosomal, physiological, neurological, morphological, and behavioral measures are rarely binary and may not be aligned according to prevalent cultural ideologies within individuals. This course will investigate variation in modern humans adopting an evolutionary, adaptive approach to investigate sex differences and similarities in human behavior, physiology, and cognition from developmental, mechanistic, and phylogenetic perspectives. Topics include sex differences in aggression, mate choice, parenting, affiliation, and cognition. The course is primarily a seminar, allowing students to investigate literature from anthropology, biology, and gender studies and develop scientific communication skills. The course has no pre-requisites and is open to students of all majors.
- Fulfills Natural Scientific Inquiry.
- 20697 BUS420-A Topics in Accounting: Governmental and Not-for-Profit Accounting**
Prof. G. Ilacqua
Special Topics in Governmental and Not-For-Profit Accounting focuses on the development and use of financial information as it relates to governmental and not-for-profit entities. The course coverage includes identifying and applying appropriate accounting and reporting standards for governments and private not-for-profit organizations, preparing fund basis and government-wide statements for state and local governments, preparing financial statements for private not-for-profit organizations, and using nonfinancial performance measures to evaluate governmental and not-for-profit entities.
- 20029 COM323-A, Topics in Film: New Hollywood Cinema (1967-1976)**
Prof. R. Leone
The “New Hollywood” cinema of the late 60s-mid 70s marks a brief period in American and cinema history where a collection of TV veterans and film school graduates were allowed to make movies that challenged the norms and rules of “old Hollywood” and speak to a young generation of college-educated filmgoers. Despite its short lifespan, the period has given us some of the most enduring, legendary works in cinema history.
- 20030 COM333-A, Topics in Media Studies: Video Games in the 21st Century**
Prof. M. DelNero
Video gaming is now one of the biggest segments of the entertainment industry. This class examines video games from the perspectives of players, designers, journalists, and others who make their living in the world of video games. Students will have the chance to critically examine the many facets of video gaming, and special emphasis will be placed on a case study that will follow the journey of a game from idea to console.
- 20031 COM414-A, Topics in Communication: Happiness & Communication**
Prof. M. Myers
The quality of your communication directly affects the quality of your life. This course explores how happiness and communication are intertwined. We will look at what recent research reveals about factors that promote happiness. Students will be invited to apply these strategies in everyday life. This course strives to educate both the Heart and the Mind.
- 20809 CSC399-A, Topics in Computer Science: Human-Computer Interface**
Prof. TBA
Over the past decades, computers and computation have become a key part of everyday life. Far removed from their calculating machine predecessors, computers and digital interfaces now shape how we live, work, and socialize. In this course, we will approach computers from a human-centered perspective and learn how to design and develop computer programs which not only perform correct computations, but work the way users expect and feel good to use. These methods are being used behind the scenes at large technology companies to create the devices, interfaces and interaction patterns that we encounter daily.

20529 ENG200-A, COR: Introductory Topics in Literary Studies

Prof. A. Baldys

The emission of poem/ A grooming habit/ Through which to measure, to dose or temper/ Just how and how much everything that is not the person (who writes poems)/ Never stops scavenging her. Exploring the works of contemporary poets such as Ariana Reines, Dawn Lundy Martin, Ronaldo Wilson, Fred Moten, Sueyeun Juliette Lee, Lisa Robertson, C.A. Conrad, Eileen Myles, Harmony Holiday, Hoa Nguyen, and others, we will consider how contemporary poetry shapes both poets' and readers' creations and co-creations of (representations of) selfhood. Through an interrogation of content, craft, and form, we will ask: how is the modern self built in lines? How do sociocultural markers of our identity—race, gender, sexuality, class—and their interpellations influence who we are and how we understand ourselves both on and off the page? How does contemporary poetry help us navigate who we are? How much of what “scavenges” us—as Reines puts it—is and is not ourselves?

Fulfills the Literature Cornerstone requirement.

20531 ENG242-A, Topics in Creative Writing: Poetry I : Increasing Awareness and Finding Poetry in Daily Life

Prof. A. Brooks

This creative writing course will offer an introduction to poetry writing with an emphasis on experimentation in form and process. You will have weekly writing assignments based on our readings and experiences and explorations inside 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 experimentation, which will all help create a community in which we learn to formulate thoughtful discussion and deep insight.

20532 ENG243-A, Topics in Creative Writing: Fiction I: Writing Images and Sculpting Stories

Prof. A. Brooks

This creative writing course is designed to give students the time and space to explore a wide variety of forms and styles, while also providing them with a sense of some of the major trends, currents, and controversies that are present in contemporary short fiction writing. We will read short works by many contemporary authors that will in turn inform weekly writing experiments and projects that we will share and discuss in class.

20537 ENG301-A, Topics in Medieval Literature (Writing-in-the-Disciplines)

Prof. P. White

Please see instructor for course description.

20536 ENG300-A, Critical Theory: A History of Theory

Prof. G. Piggford

A history of theory from ancient Greece to contemporary AI, this course considers language, the psyche, society, materiality, literary form, and identity.

20538 ENG306-A, Topics in British Literature, 1700-1900: Crimes & Misdemeanors in Victorian Literature (Writing-in-the-Disciplines)

Prof. S. Gracombe

Some of the most famous criminals are Victorian creations: Mr. Hyde, Dracula, Dorian Gray, Sikes, even the partly mythic Jack the Ripper. So too are some of the most famous detectives, most notably Sherlock Holmes. As these memorable characters suggest, nineteenth-century British literature was deeply concerned with questions of crime and punishment. What constitutes a “crime” and what a “misdemeanor” in an era in which rigid rules of propriety governed daily life, yet prostitution, fraud, theft, domestic violence and child abuse were common? Is criminality a matter of nature or nurture? How did Victorians think crime related to gender, sexuality, race, and nationality? Whose voices and views determined what makes someone a criminal? And can art itself be a crime? We will explore these compelling, still relevant questions through analysis of nineteenth-century literature, accompanied by “true crime” accounts in Victorian periodicals, early theories of criminology, and contemporary scholarship.

20539 ENG366-A, Topics in Twentieth Century American Literature
Prof. D. Itzkovitz

Please see instructor for course description.

20540 ENG390-A, Topics in Modernism: The Age of Information (Writing-in-the-Disciplines)
Prof. J. Green

We will explore the moral, ethical, and philosophical questions posed by the rise, spread, and domination of the information state. Our focus will be on how postmodern literature (i.e. from the 1960s on) has responded to these transformations in American culture and human social organization and consciousness more generally. Topics may include social networking, information theory, surveillance and social control, the cyborg body, and artificial intelligence. Readings will be drawn from the following authors: Jorge Luis Borges, Thomas Pynchon, Don DeLillo, Richard Powers, Tamara Shopsin, Raven Leilani, Patricia Lockwood, and Hari Kunzru. Throughout the semester we will also learn to produce, record, and edit our own humanities podcast covering the topics encountered in this course.

20141 HSC230-A, Topics in Health Science: Foundations of Occupational Therapy
Prof. TBA

“Occupational therapists (OTs) can help you get a job right?” “OT and PT are basically the same right?” “OTs just work with the upper body right?” Wrong.

The OT profession is over 100 years old, and yet, there are still so many misconceptions about the field and its scope of practice. Established during World War I, when soldiers were returning home with physical disabilities and PTSD, OTs were tasked to assess, evaluate, and treat using every day therapeutic activities, or what are now called “occupations.” Throughout this course students will uncover the many myths of the field of occupational therapy, as well as explore the various settings and fields OTs can find themselves in-by connecting with OTs who are currently practicing. Students will also be introduced to the historical foundation, philosophical assumptions, core values, theories, models, and frameworks that have shaped the profession. Team-based and experiential learning will be emphasized in this course, to practice scenarios and emulate skills that are necessary within the profession. Pre-requisites/Restrictions: BIO 101 or BIO 102. Co-Requisite: BIO 203. Restricted to Health Science majors during registration. The course will be open to other students once add/drop opens.

20142 HSC230-B, Topics in Health Science: Biomechanics
Prof. TBA

Please see department for course description.

20046 JRN330-A, Topics in Journalism: The God Beat: Covering Catholicism in a Secular World
Prof. B. Fraga

Students will examine Catholic traditions, controversies and politics within the Church concerning traditions and how to report and write about faith in the press. Pre-requisite: JRN100.

Fulfills Catholic Intellectual Traditions.

20487 PHL266-A, Topics in Philosophy: Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus
Prof. R. Capobianco

Please see instructor for course description.

- 20218 SOC295-B, Topics in Sociology: The Opioid Epidemic**
Prof. Sandoval & Prof. Farquharson
"You poisoned our lives and had the audacity to blame us for dying." In 2021 alone, there were over 100,000 individuals that lost their lives to an opioid related overdose in the United States. There continues to be a stigma around those struggling with opioid use disorder in our society, despite the truth behind where it all began. Students will learn about the history of the opioid epidemic, how it started, and effective solutions happening on a local, state and national level to address it. Students will get the opportunity to hear from experts in the field, as well as read stories from victims and their families.
- 20367 VPD260-A, Topics in Dance: Dance Conditioning**
Prof. K. Donnelly
This course is an introduction to the principles of body conditioning using dance training as the foundation for building a strong body. Yoga, barre, Pilates, and other mind/body practices will be explored to build strength and flexibility and to promote stability, balance, and proper alignment. Dance experience is not required.
- 20368 VPD260-B, Topics in Dance: Tap II**
Prof. D. Martin
A continuation of the study and development of tap dance technique with a focus on genre and style. Students will progress to an intermediate/advanced level of tap dancing. Emphasis will be placed on alternative and world styles of tap (i.e.- Latin, Middle-Eastern, Hip-hop, etc.) as well as complex rhythm structures and moves, speed development, clarity, and improvisation.
- 20383 VPH229-A, COR: Topics in Non-Western Art: Decolonizing the Museum**
Prof. C. Smith-Corby
This course will highlight how gender, race, and identity politics have influenced artists and the evolution of contemporary art. The course will also look at how museums have sought to deal with many of the same issues.

Fulfills History cornerstone.
- 20410 VPS207-A, Special Projects: Collage**
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.
- 20791 VPS207-B, Special Projects: Making Art Material**
Prof. C. Smith-Corby
Throughout the semester, students will participate in creating historical ARTISTIC MATERIALS from start to finish, which will include harvesting plant materials from the farm to make pigments and inks. We make paper, learn about and do Japanese Shibori fabric dyeing, and make books. **We'll also work with clay to make handmade replicas of Native American and Colonial vessels! No experience is necessary but bring your curiosity and positive attitude.**
- 20407 VPS327-A, Topics in Painting: Abstract Painting**
Prof. D. Kinsey
This studio based course will explore the potential of abstraction in painting. Explore the history of abstract art and its relationship to your own voice. Acrylic painting techniques, color theory and formal theory will form the basis for your explorations of the painted surface.
- 20788 VPS327-B, Topics in Painting: Landscape Painting**
Prof. C. Walters
This course will study all properties of the landscape including light, air, space, time of day and color. During colder months we will work from master landscape painters in the studio and outside when weather allows.

20789 VPT331-A, Topics in Theatre: Movement and Voice for the Actor
Prof. A. Elson

This course focuses on the development of physical and vocal self-awareness, teaching students to recognize and control their physical and energetic presence, whether onstage or off. Students will build a tool kit of various techniques to communicate effectively in performance, presentations, and interviews. In addition, the course explores breath work, meditation, yoga, and basic anatomy.