First-Year Seminars

The purpose of the first-year seminar program is to introduce college-level disciplines and to contribute to students’ understanding of the ways in which a specific discipline may relate to other areas in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. A major emphasis of each seminar is placed upon the improvement of students’ skills—their ability to read texts effectively and to write prose that is carefully organized, concise, and firmly based upon evidence.

Each year a number of departments offer first-year seminars. Enrollment in each is limited to sixteen students. Sufficient seminars are offered to ensure that every first-year student has the opportunity to participate during at least one semester of the first year. Registration for the seminars takes place before registration for other courses, to facilitate scheduling. A complete listing of first-year seminars being offered in the 2008–2009 academic year follows.


Examines issues of racism in the United States, with attention to the social psychology of racism, its history, its relationship to social structure, and its ethical and moral implications. (Same as Sociology 10.)

Note: This course counts toward the major and minor in gender and women’s studies.


International as well as intranational, geographical as well as psychological, migratory movement is a powerful theme that offers explanations for modernity, memory, identity, and transnationalism. Examines selected writers engaged primarily with Caribbean migratory experience. Authors and texts may include Samuel Selvon, The Lonely Londoners; Claude McKay, Banjo; Jamaica Kincaid, Lucy; Maryse Conde, Tales from the Heart: True Stories from my Childhood; Caryl Phillips, The Final Passage; V. S. Naipaul, Mr Stone and the Knights Companion; and Edwidge Danticat, The Dew Breaker. (Same as English 14 and Latin American Studies 14.)


Introduces students to the twin themes of love and sex as they appear in literary texts written by African American women from the nineteenth century to the contemporary era. These texts explore such issues as sexism, group loyalty, racial authenticity, intra- and interracial desire, homosexuality, the intertextual unfolding of a literary tradition of black female writing, as well as how these writings relate to canonical African American male-authored texts and European American literary traditions. Students are expected to read texts closely, critically, appreciatively. (Same as English 16.)


Engages a series of novels and short stories that respond, either negatively or positively, to the prohibitions against intermarriage in the United States. Examines the ways in which fiction participates in the political discourse of marriage during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Although focused primarily on early American and African American narratives, students will also have the opportunity to see how the structure of the intermarriage plot operates in more recent works of fiction and films. Considers works by Lydia Maria Child, William Wells Brown, Charles Chesnutt, and William Dean Howells, among others. (Same as English 17.)

Beginning with W. E. B. Du Bois’s serial magazine of the 1920s, The Brownies’ Book, explores a century of African American literature for and about children. Examines the strong tradition of child-narrated fiction for teens and adults from the 1960s and 70s by such writers as Ernest Gaines, Toni Morrison, Toni Cade Bambara, Louise Meriwether, and Ann Petry. Considers the emergence of a conscious Black Arts aesthetic in children’s literature and its relationship to the flowering of multicultural children’s literature in recent decades. Explores prize-winning fiction and graphic narratives for middle readers and adolescents as well as the collaborations of writers and artists in the contemporary “golden age” of African American picture books. (Same as English 20.)

Africana Studies 25c. The Civil War in Film. Spring 2010. PATRICK RAEI.

Explores the American Civil War through an examination of popular films dedicated to the topic. Students analyze films as a representation of the past, considering not simply their historical subject matter, but also the cultural and political contexts in which they are made. Films include The Birth of a Nation, Gone with the Wind, Glory, and Cold Mountain. Weekly evening film screenings. (Same as History 25.)

[Anthropology 20b. Fantastic Archaeology.]

Anthropology 24b.d. Culture at the Top of the World. Fall 2008. JAN BRUNSON.

As the highest mountains on earth, the Himalayas have held the fascination of many people around the world. Investigates two divergent cultures that exist at the “Top of the World”: the culture of climbing expeditions on Everest, and the culture of the ethnic group commonly referred to as Sherpas. How do the extreme conditions on Everest create a shared culture among mountaineers? Who are the Sherpas, and how has their interaction with climbers altered their identity? What is the nature of the interdependence and the brokerage of power between two such parties? Explores the issues of cultural identity that accompany global tourism by examining the intersection of these two groups.

[Anthropology 25b.d. Tasting Hierarchies: Food in Latin America. (Same as Latin American Studies 25.)]

Art History 12c. Picasso and Matisse. Spring 2009. PAMELA FLETCHER.

Examines the painting of Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse, in the context of modern painting, philosophy, and history. Particular attention is paid to the creative exchanges and rivalries between the two artists, as well as their role in the popular understanding of modern art and the role of the artist in society.

Art History 15c. Art Works, Artists, and Audiences. Fall 2008. STEPHEN PERKINSON.

Explores key issues in the interpretation of artworks from a variety of cultures and time periods. Begins with mastery of a descriptive vocabulary for analysis of paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, sculpture, and architecture. Investigates ways that artists are responsible for determining the “meaning” of the works they create, as they represent the visible world, abstract ideas, thoughts, or emotions. Explores ways that art acquires meaning, following artworks as they are received, interpreted, used, and even abused by various audiences (e.g., critics, curators, collectors, the public at large). Examines ways that artists have sought to influence public opinion by creating works that address the most pressing social and political issues of their times. Includes hands-on experience with artworks from the Bowdoin College Museum of Art.

[Asian Studies 11c.d. Living in the Sixteenth Century. (Same as History 13.)]

Surveys the diverse political, social, and economic arrangements across East Asia. China, Japan, and North and South Korea are the main focus, but attention is also paid to the other countries in the region. Examines the relationship between democracy and economic change in East Asia, and asks if the relationship is different in Asia than elsewhere in the world. Other questions include: Are there common “Asian values” and if so, what are they? What is the role of Confucianism in shaping social, political, and economic life in the region? How are economic and technological developments affecting traditional social institutions such as families? How is the status of women changing? What lies ahead for Asia? (Same as Government 19.)


Examines the impact of media including the Internet, newspapers, and television, on politics and society in cross-national perspective. Asks how differences in the ownership and regulation of media affect how news is selected and presented, and looks at various forms of government censorship and commercial self-censorship. Also considers the role of the media and “pop culture” in creating national identities, perpetuating ethnic stereotypes, and providing regime legitimation; and explores the impact of satellite television and the Internet on rural societies and authoritarian governments. (Same as Government 20.)

[Classics 16c. Cultural Connections in the Ancient Mediterranean.]

Classics 17c. The Heroic Age: Ancient Supermen and Wonder Women. Fall 2008. Michael NerdaHL.

The modern concept of the superhero is an enduring vestige of the ancient concept of the “hero,” the ancient Greek word used to describe men of exceptional ability. Looks at heroes and heroines in ancient literature and culture, considering a range of sources from ancient Babylon to imperial Rome. Considers the changing definition of “hero,” the cultural values associated with heroism, the role played by gender and sexuality in the definition of the hero, and analogues to ancient heroes in modern cinema. Examines more nebulous and problematic models for the ancient “villain” and considers how contrasting definitions of hero and antihero can be used to understand ancient thought concerning human nature.


Why do you go to school? What is the central purpose of public education in the United States? Should public schools prepare students for college? The workforce? Competent citizenship? Who makes these decisions and through what policy process are they implemented? Explores the ways that public school reformers have answered such questions, from the “Common School Crusaders” of the early nineteenth century to present advocates of “No Child Left Behind.” Examining public education as both a product of social, political, and economic change and as a force in molding American society, highlights enduring tensions in the development and practice of public schooling in a democratic republic.


Analysis of the work of authors who may include Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, Wallace Stevens, and Marianne Moore.


American drama does not come into its own until after World War I but then enjoys a real flowering, particularly on Broadway. Focuses on O’Neill’s Long Day’s Journey Into Night, Miller’s Death of a Salesman, Wilder’s Our Town, and Williams’s The Glass Menagerie.
Also considers work by Odets, Inge, Albee, Wilson, Mamet, Shepherd, Vogel, Bock, and others. Students will have an opportunity to make theater as well. Course writing requirements include four five-page papers and a final ten-page paper.

**English 12c. Jane Austen.** Fall 2008. **Ann Kibbie.**

A study of Jane Austen’s major works, *Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, Emma, Mansfield Park,* and *Persuasion,* and their film adaptations. (Same as Gender and Women's Studies 13.)

**English 13c. Transfigurations of Song.** Fall 2008. **David Collings.**

A course in close reading. Explores poetry, primarily in the Romantic tradition, which dallies with the dangers of lyrical transport, whether in the form of fusion with the divine, aesthetic seduction, impossible quest, or physical transfiguration. Authors may include Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, Tennyson, Yeats, Crane, and Stevens.


International as well as intranational, geographical as well as psychological, migratory movement is a powerful theme that offers explanations for modernity, memory, identity, and transnationalism. Examines selected writers engaged primarily with Caribbean migratory experience. Authors and texts may include Samuel Selvon, *The Lonely Londoners;* Claude McKay, *Banjo;* Jamaica Kincaid, *Lucy;* Maryse Conde, *Tales from the Heart: True Stories from my Childhood;* Caryl Phillips, *The Final Passage;* V. S. Naipaul, *Mr Stone and the Knights Companion;* and Edwidge Danticat, *The Dew Breaker.* (Same as Africana Studies 14 and Latin American Studies 14.)

**English 15c. Stoic Heroes and Disenchanted Knights.** Fall 2008. **Mary Agnes Edsall.**

An inquiry into the construction of heroic and chivalric masculinities in literature from Virgil to Chaucer, with a strong focus on the historical and social contexts that help make these pre-modern texts intelligible. Attention given to sex/gender systems; to the ideological power of myth, legend, and romance; and to the afterlife of ideals of heroism and chivalry. Texts may include Virgil’s *Aeneid,* *Beowulf,* *The Song of Roland,* Chrétien de Troyes’ *The Knight of the Lion,* Chaucer’s *Knight’s Tale,* and selections from the nineteenth-century “chivalric revival.”

**English 16c.d. Love and Trouble: Black Women Writers.** Fall 2008. **Guy Mark Foster.**

Introduces students to the twin themes of love and sex as they appear in literary texts written by African American women from the nineteenth century to the contemporary era. These texts explore such issues as sexism, group loyalty, racial authenticity, intra- and interracial desire, homosexuality, the intertextual unfolding of a literary tradition of black female writing, as well as how these writings relate to canonical African American male-authored texts and European American literary traditions. Students are expected to read texts closely, critically, appreciatively. (Same as Africana Studies 16.)

**English 17c.d. The Intermarriage Plot in American Fiction.** Fall 2008. **Tess Chakkalakal.**

Engages a series of novels and short stories that respond, either negatively or positively, to the prohibitions against intermarriage in the United States. Examines the ways in which fiction participates in the political discourse of marriage during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Although focused primarily on early American and African American narratives, students will also have the opportunity to see how the structure of the intermarriage plot
operates in more recent works of fiction and films. Considers works by Lydia Maria Child, William Wells Brown, Charles Chesnutt, and William Dean Howells, among others. (Same as Africana Studies 17.)

Traces the impact of emergent photographic technology and explores various intersections between photography and literature in the Victorian era. Examines the representation of photographs and photographers in novels and short fiction, analyzes early photographs as texts, and assesses photography’s impact on literary realism. Texts may include The House of the Seven Gables, A Laodicean, The Romance of a Shop, Idylls of the King, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, The Red Badge of Courage, short stories by Conan Doyle, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, and photographs by Lewis Carroll, Matthew Brady, Julia Margaret Cameron, Jacob Riis, Clementina Hawarden, Roger Fenton, Arthur Munby, and Oscar Rejlander.

Explores the representation of plagues and epidemic diseases in literature and film. Novels will include Daniel Defoe’s A Journal of the Plague Year, Albert Camus’ The Plague and José Saramago’s Blindness. Films will include Elia Kazan’s Panic in the Streets; Don Siegel’s Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956) and Philip Kaufman’s 1978 remake; and John Carpenter’s The Thing (1982).

Beginning with W. E. B. Du Bois’s serial magazine of the 1920s, The Brownies’ Book, explores a century of African American literature for and about children. Examines the strong tradition of child-narrated fiction for teens and adults from the 1960s and 70s by such writers as Ernest Gaines, Toni Morrison, Toni Cade Bambara, Louise Meriwether, and Ann Petry. Considers the emergence of a conscious Black Arts aesthetic in children’s literature and its relationship to the flowering of multicultural children’s literature in recent decades. Explores prize-winning fiction and graphic narratives for middle readers and adolescents as well as the collaborations of writers and artists in the contemporary “golden age” of African American picture books. (Same as Africana Studies 20.)

Falstaff in the suburbs, Richard III in Nazi Germany, King Lear on an Iowa farm. Explores how England’s most famous author has been translated and appropriated over the centuries. Topics include political, aesthetic, and cultural meanings in the process of adapting Shakespeare as well as the media shift a play experiences as it moves from page to stage to image (and sometimes back again). In addition to reading representative plays by Shakespeare, authors may include W. H. Auden, Isak Denisen, Tom Stoppard, and Jane Smiley. Screenings of films may include Richard Loncraine’s Richard III and Peter Greenaway’s Prospero’s Books.

Explores a popular cinematic image: the dangerous—and sometimes deadly—woman. By analyzing a range of films from classical Hollywood cinema to the present day, explores the various forms that this female figure assumes: the femme fatale, the tragic mulatto, the jealous or vindictive woman, the murderous lesbian, the revenge seeker, etc. Examines why the various permutations of the dangerous female have attained such a prevalent place on the silver screen. What is so seductive about the deadly woman? Also introduces students to film criticism. Films may include Basic Instinct, Carrie, Double Indemnity, Fatal Attraction, Gilda, Kill Bill, Mildred Pierce, Sunset Boulevard, Thelma and Louise, and Vertigo. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 22 and Gender and Women’s Studies 19.)
**Courses of Instruction**

**English 23c. Arab and Jew in Literature and Film.** Spring 2009. **Marilyn Reizbaum.**

Considers the interface between Arabs and Jews as produced on page and screen. Offers both geographical and generic range, bringing into view texts that talk to each other across ethnic, religious, historical, and theoretical boundaries. When these two figures are placed in relation to each other, they must invoke the Middle East, in particular Palestine-Israel: discusses works in translation, fiction and poetry, from the broad region, and may include authors Anton Shammas, Mahmoud Darwish, Ronit Matalon, Shimon Ballas, Haim Hazazz; writers in English such as Naomi Shihab Nye, Ammiel Alcalay, Philip Roth, Edward Said, and Ella Shohat; films by Elia Suleiman (Chronicle of a Disappearance), Khleifi (Wedding in Galilee), Gitai (Kippur), Abu-Assad (Paradise Now), Kollrin (The Band’s Visit), Kassovitz (Hate); and visual artists Mona Hatoum and Adi Nes.

**Environmental Studies 15c. Frontier Crossings: The Western Experience in American History.** Spring 2009. **Matthew Klingle.**

What accounts for the persistence of the “frontier myth” in American history, and why do Americans continue to find the idea so attractive? Explores the creation of and disputes over what became of the western United States from 1763 to the present. Topics include Euro-American relations with Native Americans; the creation of borders and national identities; the effect of nature and ideology; the role of labor and gender in the backcountry; and the enduring influence of frontier imagery in popular culture. (Same as History 15.)

[**Film Studies 10c. Cultural Difference and the Crime Film.**]

**Gay and Lesbian Studies 16c. Sex and the Church.** Fall 2008. **Elizabeth Pritchard.**

An examination of the themes, varieties, and conflicts of Christian teachings and practices regarding sex and sexuality. Source materials include the Bible, historical analyses, Church dogmatics, and contemporary legal cases. Although the focus of the course is on Catholic traditions, the course will include comparative analyses of the sexual ethics of other Christian denominations. (Same as Gender and Women’s Studies 17 and Religion 16.)

**Gay and Lesbian Studies 22c. Femmes Fatales, Lady Killers, and Other Dangerous Women.** Spring 2009. **Aviva Briefel.**

Explores a popular cinematic image: the dangerous—and sometimes deadly—woman. By analyzing a range of films from classical Hollywood cinema to the present day, explores the various forms that this female figure assumes: the femme fatale, the tragic mulatto, the jealous or vindictive woman, the murderous lesbian, the revenge seeker, etc. Examines why the various permutations of the dangerous female have attained such a prevalent place on the silver screen. What is so seductive about the deadly woman? Also introduces students to film criticism. Films may include Basic Instinct, Carrie, Double Indemnity, Fatal Attraction, Gilda, Kill Bill, Mildred Pierce, Sunset Boulevard, Thelma and Louise, and Vertigo. (Same as English 22 and Gender and Women’s Studies 19.)

**Gender and Women’s Studies 13c. Jane Austen.** Fall 2008. **Ann Kibbie.**

A study of Jane Austen’s major works, Sense and Sensibility, Pride and Prejudice, Emma, Mansfield Park, and Persuasion, and their film adaptations. (Same as English 12.)

**Gender and Women’s Studies 17c. Sex and the Church.** Fall 2008. **Elizabeth Pritchard.**

An examination of the themes, varieties, and conflicts of Christian teachings and practices regarding sex and sexuality. Source materials include the Bible, historical analyses, Church dogmatics, and contemporary legal cases. Although the focus of the course is on Catholic traditions, the course will include comparative analyses of the sexual ethics of other Christian denominations. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 16 and Religion 16.)

Explores a popular cinematic image: the dangerous—and sometimes deadly—woman. By analyzing a range of films from classical Hollywood cinema to the present day, explores the various forms that this female figure assumes: the femme fatale, the tragic mulatto, the jealous or vindictive woman, the murderous lesbian, the revenge seeker, etc. Examines why the various permutations of the dangerous female have attained such a prevalent place on the silver screen. What is so seductive about the deadly woman? Also introduces students to film criticism. Films may include Basic Instinct, Carrie, Double Indemnity, Fatal Attraction, Gilda, Kill Bill, Mildred Pierce, Sunset Boulevard, Thelma and Louise, and Vertigo. (Same as English 22 and Gay and Lesbian Studies 22.)

[Gender and Women’s Studies 20c. In Sickness and in Health: Public Health in Europe and the United States. (Same as History 20.)]


Examines different strategies for preventing and controlling armed conflict in international society, and emphasizes the role of diplomacy, international law, and international organizations in the peace-making process.


The Korean War is often called “the forgotten war” because it is overshadowed by World War II and the Vietnam War, yet many important aspects and results of it are mirrored in the contemporary world. Korea is still divided and its situation as a buffer state between China, Russia, and Japan continues to have important policy ramifications for the United States. Focuses not just on the course of the war, but on the foreign policy assumptions of the two Korean governments, the United States, the People’s Republic of China, and Russia.

[Government 12b. Becoming Modern.]


Surveys the diverse political, social, and economic arrangements across East Asia. China, Japan, and North and South Korea are the main focus, but attention is also paid to the other countries in the region. Examines the relationship between democracy and economic change in East Asia, and asks if the relationship is different in Asia than elsewhere in the world. Other questions include: Are there common “Asian values” and if so, what are they? What is the role of Confucianism in shaping social, political, and economic life in the region? How are economic and technological developments affecting traditional social institutions such as families? How is the status of women changing? What lies ahead for Asia? (Same as Asian Studies 19.)


Examines the impact of media including the Internet, newspapers, and television, on politics and society in cross-national perspective. Asks how differences in the ownership and regulation of media affect how news is selected and presented, and looks at various forms of government censorship and commercial self-censorship. Also considers the role of the media and “pop culture” in creating national identities, perpetuating ethnic stereotypes, and providing regime legitimation; and explores the impact of satellite television and the Internet on rural societies and authoritarian governments. (Same as Asian Studies 20.)
Courses of Instruction


Especially since 9/11, America has been criticized for its global dominance and accused of harboring imperial ambitions. Examines a long history of conquest and control by strong countries over weak, focusing on the expansion of European influence over much of the globe, which involved both direct settlement and indirect control. Assesses the motivations for this expansion and the economic, social, and political consequences it had within Europe and in the peripheral areas of conquest. Considers whether the United States, as the current world hegemon and compared to historical world powers, is abusing its power or making the world a more peaceful place.

[Government 24b. Political Theory and Utopia.]


Explores the fundamental questions in political life: What is justice? What is happiness? Are human beings equal or unequal by nature? Do they even have a nature, or are they “socially constructed”? Are there ethical standards for political action that exist prior to law and, if so, where do they come from? Nature? God? History? Readings may include Plato, the Bible, Machiavelli, Shakespeare, Marx, Mill, and Nietzsche.


An introduction to the fundamental issues of political philosophy: human nature, the relationship between individual and political community, the nature of justice, the place of virtue, the idea of freedom, and the role of history. Readings span both ancient and modern philosophical literature. Authors include Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Rousseau, Hegel, Mill, and Nietzsche.

[History 10c. Monsters, Marvels, and Messiahs: Europe during the Age of Discovery.]

[History 11c. Memoirs and Memory in American History.]


An examination of the evolution of utopian visions and utopian experiments that begins in 1630 with John Winthrop’s “City upon a Hill,” explores the proliferation of both religious and secular communal ventures between 1780 and 1920, and concludes with an examination of twentieth-century counterculture communes, intentional communities, and dystopian separatists. Readings include primary source accounts by members (letters, diaries, essays, etc.), “community” histories and apostate exposés, utopian fiction, and scholarly historical analyses. Discussions and essays focus on teaching students how to subject primary and secondary source materials to critical analysis.

[History 13c.d. Living in the Sixteenth Century. (Same as Asian Studies 11. )]

[History 14c. The Atomic Bomb and American Society.]


What accounts for the persistence of the “frontier myth” in American history, and why do Americans continue to find the idea so attractive? Explores the creation of and disputes over what became of the western United States from 1763 to the present. Topics include Euro-American relations with Native Americans; the creation of borders and national identities; the effect of nature and ideology; the role of labor and gender in the backcountry; and the enduring influence of frontier imagery in popular culture. (Same as Environmental Studies 15.)
History 16c.d. From Montezuma to Bin Laden: Globalization and Its Critics.


Pursues a critical analysis of historical arguments in general and racial historical arguments in particular. Examines the debates over the 3/5 rule in the Constitution, slavery, Native American policy, segregation, nonwhite immigration, Japanese internment in World War II, the Civil Rights Movement, and post CRM “nonracial” racial policy including the Obama presidential campaign. Each debate will be looked at in its own context and for the structure of its argument. Includes online and classroom components.

History 20c. In Sickness and in Health: Public Health in Europe and the United States. (Same as Gender and Women’s Studies 20.)


Examines the cultural history of modern Europe through the eyes of those who rejected the popular notion that science and technology could bring about universal improvement. Examines skeptical visions of modernity’s future that existed alongside more hopeful views of progress. Examines imaginative works of dystopian fiction and science fiction films and contextualizes them by examining the real world events and historical transformations that inspired such nightmares. Topics include the expansion of the state; the birth of psychoanalysis, marketing, and propaganda; the development of industrial war technologies; the rise of totalitarianism; genocide; mass communication and the information revolution.


Explores the American Civil War through an examination of popular films dedicated to the topic. Students analyze films as a representation of the past, considering not simply their historical subject matter, but also the cultural and political contexts in which they are made. Films include The Birth of a Nation, Gone with the Wind, Glory, and Cold Mountain. Weekly evening film screenings. (Same as Africana Studies 25.)


Why have various types of social groups historically referred to themselves as “social movements”? Is this concept still relevant today? Does its mirror concept, “social arrest,” better describe the motion and principle behind political programs such as slow-food, conservationism (whether ecological or local-cultural), anti-globalization, and environmentalism? What does it mean that the nineteenth- and twentieth-century focus on “development” or “progress” toward a democratic or socialist ideal has given way to a twenty-first century struggle to “stop” global warming and unbridled capitalism? Through discussion of various historical readings, explores the centrality of kinetic language to the conception and performance of critical political struggle.


International as well as intranational, geographical as well as psychological, migratory movement is a powerful theme that offers explanations for modernity, memory, identity, and transnationalism. Examines selected writers engaged primarily with Caribbean migratory experience. Authors and texts may include Samuel Selvon, The Lonely Londoners; Claude McKay, Banjo; Jamaica Kincaid, Lucy; Maryse Conde, Tales from the Heart: True Stories from my Childhood; Caryl Phillips, The Final Passage; V. S. Naipaul, Mr Stone and the Knights Companion; and Edwidge Danticat, The Dew Breaker. (Same as Africana Studies 14 and English 14.)
Courses of Instruction

[Latin American Studies 25b,d. Tasting Hierarchies: Food in Latin America. (Same as Anthropology 25.)]

What is the nature of poetry? This is a philosophical question, considered by using traditional and contemporary poems as examples. Also considers the relation of philosophy to poetry in the particularly interesting case of the condemnation of poetry by the Greek philosopher Plato.

Examines some ethical problems and paradoxes that arise in ordinary life, some philosophical theories that bear upon them, and some strategies for making thoughtful decisions about them. Topics may include friendship, lying, love, family obligations, charity, the treatment of animals, abortion.

Philosophy 18c. Love. Fall 2009. Sarah Conly.
Love. What is the nature and value of love? Why is love so important to us? Is love necessary for a successful life? If so, why? Is life-long love possible? Is love selfish or unselfish? Is the search for love destructive? Uses philosophical texts and some fictional representations to examine these and other questions.

[Philosophy 27c. Moral History.]

Psychology 10b. What’s on Your Mind? An Introduction to the Brain and Behavior. Every fall. Seth J. Ramus.
A general introduction to the science of psychology, with a specific emphasis on the brain’s control of human and animal behavior. Uses historical texts, “popular” science books, and primary literature to explore the mind-body connections within topics such as learning and memory, perception, development, stress, social behavior, personality, and choice.

[Religion 14c. Heresy and Orthodoxy.]


An examination of the themes, varieties, and conflicts of Christian teachings and practices regarding sex and sexuality. Source materials include the Bible, historical analyses, Church dogmatics, and contemporary legal cases. Although the focus of the course is on Catholic traditions, the course will include comparative analyses of the sexual ethics of other Christian denominations. (Same as Gay and Lesbian Studies 16 and Gender and Women’s Studies 17.)

A critical reading of four autobiographies (Black Elk, Malcolm X, Gandhi, and Robert Pirsig) drawn from four separate religious traditions to analyze social, psychological, and historical processes that condition religious quests cross-culturally.

[Russian 22c. “It Happens Rarely, Maybe, but It Does Happen” – Fantasy and Satire in East Central Europe.]

Examines issues of racism in the United States, with attention to the social psychology of racism, its history, its relationship to social structure, and its ethical and moral implications. (Same as Africana Studies 10.)
Note: This course counts toward the major and minor in gender and women’s studies.

[Sociology 14b. America in the 1970s.]
[Sociology 16b. Deviance and Conformity.]


Explores new media forms through discourses of culture, race, space, and power. From the development of the first electronic messaging systems in the 1960s to the advent of interactive social networking Web sites such as Facebook, Bebo and hi5, the role of computer-mediated communication in shaping economies, politics, and societies is discussed. Uses a wide range of sources—recent social science research, Web sites, Facebook, YouTube videos—to examine the roles of new media both in the United States and abroad.

Gay and Lesbian Studies

Administered by the Gay and Lesbian Studies Committee; Associate Professor Aviva Briefel, Program Director

(See committee list, page 353.)

Gay and Lesbian Studies is an interdisciplinary program coordinating courses that incorporate research on sexuality, particularly on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. Drawing on a variety of approaches in several disciplines, such as queer theory and the history of sexuality, the program examines constructions of sexuality in institutions of knowledge, in aesthetic representation, and in modes of social practice, examining the question of sexual identity and performance across cultures and historical periods.

Requirements for the Minor in Gay and Lesbian Studies

The minor consists of five courses: Gay and Lesbian Studies 201 and four other courses from the offerings listed below, some of which will change with every academic year. Among the latter four courses, at least one must come from the social sciences and at least one from the arts and humanities division, and no more than two courses may come from any single department. Only one independent study may be counted toward the minor. Courses in which D grades are received will not count toward the minor.

First-Year Seminars

For a full description of first-year seminars, see pages 147–57.


(Same as Gender and Women’s Studies 17 and Religion 16.)


(Same as English 22 and Gender and Women’s Studies 19.)

Intermediate and Advanced Courses


An introduction to the materials, major themes, and defining methodologies of gay and lesbian studies. Considers in detail both the most visible contemporary dilemmas involving homosexuality (queer presence in pop culture, civil rights legislation, gay-bashing, AIDS, identity politics) as well as the great variety of interpretive approaches these dilemmas...