

INTD 105 – Writing Seminars

FALL 2014

Intd 105 01/15014/Sturges 111/Jones, Ryan

Latin American Visual Cultures

The course will provide students with opportunities to explore both Latin American visual cultures--films, comics, political cartoons, short films, photography, painting, and popular arts--and effective ways of writing arguments about these cultures. Students will write shorter papers on various media we discuss and then complete a larger paper of their choice using their new writing and research skills. Topics include colonization, Columbus, race and racism, gender and sexuality, the environment, the 1904 World's Fair, Day of the Dead, maps and mapping, botanical culture, state violence, populism, and more.

Intd 105 02/15374/Sturges 111/Goehle, Todd

German History, Media & Terror

This course will examine the West German terrorist organization The Red Army Faction (RAF), its origins, its philosophies, and its effects on German life and society. We will also explore the ways in which the RAF and the more general politics of the West German “Red Years” (1967-1977) have been represented in different media. Core texts will include a biography of the RAF founder Ulrike Meinhof, the memoir of a former urban guerrilla, and Heinrich Böll’s critical novel of how the West German “Establishment” responded to left-wing terror, *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum, or How Violence Develops and Where it can Lead*. The seminar will also examine a number of films, including Volker Schlöndorff and Margarethe von Trotta’s *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum* (1975) and Uli Edel’s *The Baader Meinhof Complex* (2008). Closely analyzing and writing about these topics and mediums, we will reflect as a group on a number of questions that are relevant to the study of the past and our contemporary present. These questions include: How does one define and/or think about terror and terrorism? How does one define and/or think about violence? What are the roles played by political actors, media personalities, and/or institutions of power such as the state, media, and the family, when defining violence and/or terror? From these questions, the course seeks two major objectives. First, through lecture, class discussions, and in-depth analysis of text and image, the seminar seeks to develop your critical reasoning skills. Second, through class discussion, peer review, and five essay assignments, the seminar looks to identify, advance, and refine the skills necessary for writing effective college level essays.

Intd 105 03/CRN 15375/Welles 24/Scipione, Paul

Affluence in America

What’s more quintessential than the American Dream? It’s even guaranteed in our Declaration of Independence as the “pursuit of happiness.” Study hard and work even harder. Save and invest. Is the American Dream in need of redefinition? Have companies become too adept at “data mining” and exciting our passions to spend? Have “wants” somehow morphed into “needs?” And how do

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we explain pockets of poverty that have resisted four decades of social engineering? Class readings ranging from Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* to Stanley's *The Millionaire Next Door*, as well as shared nuggets discovered in the library, interviews with competing experts, and personal and family anecdotes will be used by students to develop both effective verbal and written positions on affluence in America. Our collective research will then be preserved in a written class *Proceedings* that we can share with others.

Intd 105 04/CRN 15376/Monroe 105 /Lima, Maria

The Haitian Diaspora

As the first nation in the Americas to both abolish slavery and declare its independence from a European power, Haiti has been paying the price for such audacity since. Both history and natural disasters would have been enough to stifle the creativity of a people, but Haitians have continued to create at home and across the diaspora, despite the horrors that have driven many away from their homeland. Some of these tragedies (the cholera epidemic, for example) have been man-made and could have been avoided. Haitian writers across the diaspora have resorted to the *noir* genre to represent such realities—we will try to understand some of their choices. This course is a writing seminar designed to give you many opportunities to practice your critical thinking, argumentative and writing skills. We will read each other's writing, collaborate on presentations, and revise our work to almost perfection. With this class, I hope, we'll see writing as both work and play, understanding that if language creates reality, *whose* language prevails makes all the difference in the world. Yes, we are talking about power--about writing to persuade more often than not. The first argument you will be making is about yourself, in the shape of an autobiographical essay—more on this later ☺

Intd 105 05/CRN 15377/ISC 229/Donofrio, John

Intd 105 18/CRN 15402/ISC 325/Donofrio, John

Philosophy of Art

What is the meaning of “art”? Does art stem from a universal evolved instinct or is the category of art an 18th century European invention? Are video games art? Is an original artwork more valuable than a physically identical forgery? Does an artwork that takes morally problematic positions thereby lose aesthetic value? Should we take the artist's intentions into account when interpreting an artwork? Through an investigation of these questions this class will help students develop critical thinking abilities and academic writing skills. We will engage with a variety of historical and contemporary sources—reading and responding to work by philosophers, artists, writers and critics.

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Intd 105 06/CRN 15378/Fraser 119/Fargnoli, Nicholas

The Internet in our Brains

This is a course with two purposes: One, we want to improve your already developed writing skills. Two, we want to consider what effect the Internet is having on our lives. We will look closely at the concepts of “progress,” “technology” and “worth” to determine whether humans and technology can in fact live symbiotic lives, or whether one must “win.”

Intd 105 07/CRN 15383/Sturges 104/Behrend, Justin

The Underground Railroad

Slavery is not simply the accumulation of horrible stories, and saintly ultra-moral slave resisters,” a journalist recently wrote; “it is our national epic poem, our great American romance.” To better understand the centrality of slavery to the American experience, we will examine Fergus Bordewich’s *Bound for Canaan: The Underground Railroad and the War for the Soul of America*. In addition to this work of history, we’ll also read selections from a few slave narratives. Our focus will be on the experience of enslavement, the risks that fugitive slaves took in trying to become free, and the remarkable network of ordinary people that helped those in bondage find freedom and restore their families.

Intd 105 08/CRN 15385/Milne 105/Kleiman, Jordan

Supply Chain History

The material standard of living in modern industrial societies depends increasingly on long, illegible supply chains. This course will focus on one of the most striking examples of this phenomenon: the industrial food system. What sorts of practices have illegible food supply chains allowed? Who has borne the burdens of these practices, and who has reaped the benefits? What strategies have food corporations developed to keep their more controversial practices out of public view? What strategies have consumer and sustainable agriculture advocates developed to cope with the illegibility of the modern food system? To get at these questions, we will read and analyze the writings of scholars and journalists who have attempted to “pull back the curtain” on the industrial food system to reveal its hidden costs. Readings will focus in particular on the historical development and environmental and social consequences of an extractive, chemical-intensive food production system; a far-flung, oil-dependent distribution system; and a highly exploitative labor system increasingly dependent on an immigrant workforce willing to toil in dangerous conditions for low wages. While the

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course will focus primarily on the shortcomings of the industrial food system, we will also grapple to a lesser extent with efforts to put our food system on a more humane and environmentally sustainable footing.

Intd 105 09/CRN 15386/Brodie 214/Braun, Justyna Science and Scientists in Fiction and Drama

The aim of this course is to improve students' ability to write a standard, college-level expository paper. All readings, class discussions, and writing assignments will center on the theme of science. By studying significant works of fiction and drama that depict scientists and scientific endeavors, we will examine how writers explore the purpose of science, reflect on the ethics of science, and consider the role of science in the modern world. These will include three expository papers and several short writing assignments such as summaries, personal responses, and rough drafts of expository papers.

Intd 105 10/15387/Sturges 109/Swarts, James Religion & Science in US History

Writing Seminar is a course focusing on a specific topic while emphasizing writing practice and instruction, potentially taught by any member of the College faculty. Because this is primarily a course in writing, reading assignments will be briefer than in traditional topic courses, and students will prove their understanding of the subject matter through writing compositions rather than taking examinations. (Official course description). My objective in this course will be to introduce you to long-standing, and contemporary, controversial topics in United States history relative to the relation between religion and science, and the effects the subjects have had on the political and educational systems in the past century. Mainly we will concentrate on the study of creationism and evolution, with other relevant topics such as women's health issues, slavery, etc., as time and interest allow.

Intd 105 11/CRN 15388/South 328/Kirk, Joanna Writing About the World in the Age of Terror

Fly Naked? So suggests Pulitzer Award-winning journalist Thomas Friedman. From enhanced airport screenings to wiretapping and waterboarding, the threat of Jihad and efforts to counter it have changed American and global society in the years since September 11, 2001. With a focus on Friedman's Attitudes and Longitudes, this class considers terrorism and counter-terrorism in the 21st century. By critically analyzing news, editorial and cartoon coverage, students will explore the distinction between fact, evidence and opinion, evaluate how journalists select and present information, and develop skills in effective presentation of controversial issues.

Intd 105 12/CRN15390/Fraser 104/Ware, Linda

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Disability in America

This section will address ableism in the example of disability and informed by disability studies. This interdisciplinary exploration of disability will draw from the humanities, the social sciences, and education in an effort to promote understanding disability as a richly complex human experience that exceeds the typical tropes of tragedy, cure, and care. Each week we will consider specific themes of representation in the texts and media sources assigned for the course.

Intd 105 13/CRN 15391/Milne 105 /Jensen, Mary

Illuminating Childhood: Portraits in Film

We have all been children, but what does this mean? This course will consider international films as a window on children's lives and development. As we investigate how films represent childhood, we will pay particular attention to the many ways that childhood is constructed and experienced across boundaries of nationality, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, and ability. Sociocultural theory will be used to explore the impact of cultural contexts on children's development and the ways that children understand and navigate their worlds. Primary goals of this writing seminar are for students to develop critical thinking and reading skills and the ability to clearly express their ideas in writing. Course material will be presented through lectures, films, and readings, and will be processed in class discussions and written analyses.

Intd 105 14/CRN 15392/Welles 216/Pankratz, Ashley

War Stories

This course will examine a range of fiction written in response to the World Wars and to the United States' conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. We will consider novels and selections from various sides and perspectives, including the works of Erich Maria Remarque, Henri Barbusse, John Dos Passos, Dalton Trumbo, Rebecca West, Kurt Vonnegut, Irwin Shaw, Tim O'Brien, Louise Murphy, Wallace Terry, Bao Ninh, Kevin Powers, and Hassan Blasim. Students are expected to engage in class discussion and to craft written analytical responses to the body of texts and the complex issues presented therein.

Intd 105 15/CRN 15393/Newton 212/Barin-Akman, Filiz

Post-Colonial Perspectives: Transculturation and Concepts of the "Self" and the "Other"

With a focus on development of academic writing skills, this course will consist of writing projects and reading assignments which are geared toward generating contemplation and discussion about the 'self' and the 'other.' Who do we identify as the 'others'? What do we know about other cultures and minorities? How does the dominant visual and textual rhetoric about the 'other' inform the ways in which we perceive culturally, ethnically and religiously different? What are the constituents of discourses about the 'other'? As the theoretical basis of our readings, we will also spend some time learning about Postcolonialism and Orientalism (studying some short

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introductory texts from the scholars in this field) and examine the ways in which we can apply this theoretical background in our analysis of visual and written texts about the ‘other’ (We will also view and analyze films as well as visual texts such as paintings, posters and advertisements). Some of the texts we will study: “Pearls and the Swine” by Leonard Woolf, “The Old Chief Mshlanga” by Doris Lessing, “Passion in the Desert” by Balzac, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, “Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift and films, *The Wind and the Lion*, and *Harem*. Students are expected to work collaboratively and engage in peer revisions.

Intd 105 16/CRN 15394/Welles 216/Beltz-Hosek, Caroline

The Woman Writer

This course centers on writings by notable 19th-20th century female authors, which students will examine from a feminist critical perspective. Works by Emily Bronte, Sylvia Plath, and Virginia Woolf will be thoughtfully analyzed in conjunction with seminal sociopolitical literature by Mary Wollstonecraft and Simone de Beauvoir. With each text we will explore how the author approaches the domestic sphere, sexual agency in patriarchal culture, and the transcendental power of creative expression.

Intd 105 17/CRN 15395/Welles 117/Roth, Amanda

Feminist Perspective on Pornography

This course will focus on the feminist debate over pornography. In drawing on readings from philosophy, women's studies, porn studies, and other disciplines we will look at the legal status of pornography today, the difference between traditional obscenity objections to pornography and feminist objections to it, and will trace the fault lines within feminist thinking on the issue. In doing so we will ask: Is pornography a fundamental part of women's oppression? Does it silence women and contribute to sexual violence in the real world as some feminists have argued? If such a case can be made, we must then ask if the state is justified in using the law to discourage pornography or whether this would violate the liberty or free speech rights of those who wish to make, distribute, or consume pornography. On the other hand, is it possible as other feminists have insisted that pornography is not inherently problematic and can often be a benign outlet for healthy sexual curiosity and expression? Is the idea of feminist porn an oxymoron, or can porn be an important resource for women's and lgbtq people's sexual empowerment? If some porn is benign or helpful and other porn is objectionable and harmful, on what basis can we distinguish the good from the bad? (Please note, no pornography will be viewed as a part of this course. However, readings and course discussions will often involve frank descriptions of sexuality, body parts, and sex acts and various aspects of sexual expression more generally.)

Intd 105 19/CRN 15403/Welles 119/Perri, Christopher

Metafiction

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Metafiction is a realm of literature that is chiefly concerned with its own nature as a verbal construct. Novels and stories of this genre possess a self-awareness of their essence as little more than words on a page. Thus, the business of metafiction is *not* to render the world as we know it, but to *make* a world from the medium of language. This course will examine the medium of storytelling as it applies to metafiction and its “linguistic oversoul,” as well as the questions raised regarding the messages (or lack thereof) inherent within the form.

Intd 105 20/CRN 15404/Welles 115/Paku, Gillian **Representing Autism**

This section will ask you to focus on how autism is represented in literary texts. We start from the assumption that autism is not just a medical category of *dis*-ability that should be “fixed,” but rather a category that is also created by social assumptions and that can encompass strongly positive attributes. Because autism affects communication skills, we will read literary texts that are remarkable for what they can communicate through what they do *not* say.

Intd 105 21/CRN 15405/Sturges 104/West, Stephen **Critical Writing and Reading: Visions of the Future**

From Plato’s *Republic* to *The Matrix Trilogy*, thinkers, artists, and writers throughout history have hypothesized the future in many different forms. Through regular reading, discussion, research, and writing assignments, students will rhetorically analyze visions of the future presented in a range of historical texts. The ultimate goal is to discover how and why the future is addressed in political and artistic contexts of our current cultural moment.

Intd 105 22/CRN 15406/Welles 117/Davis-Filice, Karen **Dystopian Fiction**

This course will discuss dystopian literature, emphasizing themes dealing with the imagination of better worlds and worse worlds, including post-nuclear apocalyptic societies and the modern post-9/11 world. Because dystopian literature expresses what an author sees as possible, hopes is possible, and fears is possible, it is inherently a political and social critique. We will discuss the causes and effects of these critiques. Texts will include various novels such as *The Hunger Games*, *The Uglies*, and *The Giver*.

Intd 105 23/CRN 15407/Fraser 114/Tsang, Ronny **Themes in Contemporary American Literature**

This interdisciplinary course will utilize the 2007 and 2009 editions of The Best American Nonrequired Reading Series to explore the themes and ideas addressed in contemporary American Literature. We’ll set out on our journey through modern American Literature in

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the hopes of discovering some truth about the state of our nation and the people living in it. Our search will take us through mainstream and unconventional works of short fiction, graphic novels, speeches, excerpts from novels, photos and artwork, essays, music, film, non-fiction, interviews, internet documents, letters, and other assorted works. Students should be fully prepared to read and write about, analyze, respond to, and discuss a wide variety of themes and topics that include, but are not limited to: Love and companionship, god and religion, war and conflict, violence and crime, morality and belief systems, family structures and dynamics, science and scientific advancement, social inequality and poverty, the economy, and social norms. In short, we will attempt to better understand modern America through examining a wide range of literature written by the myriad of people who reside here.

Intd 105 24/CRN 15410/Newton 206/Anderson, Christopher

Intd 105 26/CRN 15432/Newton 206/Anderson, Christopher

Gods, Heroes, & Monsters

The ancient Near East was the birthplace of writing and home to the first literate urban civilization. The invention of writing made history possible by allowing humans to record their thoughts, stories, and everyday activities. This course will explore a number of mythic and other texts from several cultures of the ancient Near Eastern world, most prominently Mesopotamia and Canaan (present-day Iraq, Syria, Palestine, and Israel, ca. 3200 BCE to 323 BCE). The literature of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament will also be discussed within this context. The texts covered will treat such themes as creation and order, death and afterlife, ritual and magic, prophecy and divination, and the relation between human and divine. In addition to reading primary source material, we will read modern secondary literature that discusses various approaches to these texts. Of course, we will always want to ask how these texts illuminate the cultures from which they come, but we will also ask what they say about human creativity and experience more broadly. The goal of this course is also to develop critical reading and writing skills such as forming opinions, formulating arguments in support of those opinions, and expressing them in written academic form.

Intd 105 25/CRN 15416/Newton 213/Okada, Jun

Cinematic Refugees: Displacement, Borders, and Migration

This course examines the representation of the forced migration of refugees across contested borders in cinema. These displaced persons migrate for various reasons—war, poverty, political or religious intolerance or some other form of oppression. These films and supporting literature will allow us to think about the circumstances of displacement and what they mean in the effort to live in a humane world. In looking at films that represent this phenomenon all over the world, we will explore the themes/logics/paradoxes of borders, exile, home, war, economics, gender, sexuality, and race.

Intd 105 29/CRN 17767/Bailey 103/Tomczak, Timothy

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Media and Madness

Considers the portrayal of individuals with mental illness and their treatment in film and literature. Students will be required to critically and reflectively evaluate the content of various short and extended pieces of literature and at least two feature films with respect to the quality and accuracy of the information provided.