

The following descriptions are for topics courses that are being offered through the Honors Program in the Spring 2012. All other descriptions are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog.

Academic Writing

GSW 1120H (3) 2:30-3:45 TR; Rzicznek

Course # 11958

Food Matters: An Exploration of Food from Farm to Fridge

“You are what you eat.” In today’s global climate, this expression is no longer a playground joke. Our food choices not only affect our health, but also our local economies, the environment, and our core values. In this GSW 1120 Honors section, we’ll explore the medias, traditions, and politics of food through rigorous academic and critical research, including scholarly articles, relevant documentaries, pertinent field trips and seasoned guest speakers—all of which we’ll synthesize and use as support in several argumentative essays. (Be aware that some of these activities will take place outside of class time.) At the end of the semester these essays will culminate to create a portfolio of academic writing.

HUMANITIES

Representations of Muslim Women

ACS 3000H (3) 2:30-3:45 TR; Ruby

Course # 16532

This course explores historical and contemporary representations of Muslim women in Western discourses, particularly, in relation to American culture. It emphasizes that although the question of Muslim women’s rights has emerged as a much discussed and disputed arena in the West, it is not a subject that can be debated out of context. Drawing on literary representations, ethnographic narratives, media descriptions, blogs, and views of “Islamic feminists,” the course critiques the static, victim-centered, Orientalist images of Muslim women that have regained currency in the post 9/11 era. The course highlights that the global sociopolitical dynamics have shaped and continue to shape our perceptions and the manner in which we understand the social conditions of Muslim women. The following questions are critical to the course: how have Muslim women been represented in Western discourses? What is the relationship of these discourses to colonialism/imperialism? How have the dominant epistemologies and the media influenced our understating of the subject matter? Can one talk with confidence about “the position of women in Islam”? How successful have Muslim and non Muslim scholars been in articulating and challenging the dominant representations of Muslim women? Starting with theoretical readings on Orientalism and gender, the course moves on to specific topics, including *Shari’ah* and family laws, and issues of veiling.

Course Learning Objectives

At the end of this course you will be able to:

- 1) Identify and discuss the manner in which Muslim women have been represented in Western discourses .
- 2) Critique the ways in which Western descriptions about Islam, gender, and rights (re)produce Orientalist discourses.
- 3) Analyze implications of Western discourses in regard to colonialism/imperialism and sexual politics, e.g., how images of Muslim women are constructed in relation to other women, particularly white women.
- 4) Critically interpret and analyze information about Muslim women presented in various sources, such as newspapers, short stories, novels, television, film, and academic studies.
- 5) Recognize how Muslim and non Muslim scholars are critiquing and disrupting Western discourses about Muslim women’s representations.
- 6) Examine contradictions, challenges, and possibilities in relation to the representations of Muslim women in Western discourses.
- 7) Learn about the historical and contemporary global sociopolitical dynamics that have influenced our understanding about the social conditions of Muslim women .
- 8) Hone your analytical, communicative, and problem solving skills in a format requiring active participation

Contemporary British Literature
ENG 4200H (3) 1:30-2:20 MWF; Gearhart

Course # 17502

In the aftermath of the Second World War when promises of opportunity and equality did not quite materialize in Britain, discontent was rife, as the appearance of the Angry Young Man on the 1950s literary scene confirmed. In the 1980s, however, Margaret Thatcher would extol the immediate postwar period as idyllic and on this fiction she would build a new empire, one characterized by conservative individualism. Given the recent popularity of the Broadway musical *Billy Elliot* and the upcoming release of Phyllida Lloyd's film *The Iron Lady*, this is a good time to reexamine Thatcherism, which has been described by Louisa Hadley and Elizabeth Ho as creating "a symbolic 'wound' in the contemporary imagination, a palpable point where things can be said to have irrecoverably changed" (*Thatcher & After* 2010, 2). This course takes the Thatcher era as its starting point, examining texts written during and set in the 1980s that deal with issues such as conservatism, consumerism, class, race, homosexuality, growing up and growing older. Keeping in mind Alan Sinfield's assertion that literature does not "rise above" politics but rather actively participates in the formation of culture, we will ask if, as Hadley and Ho suggest, Thatcher was in fact able to silence all forms of resistance to her politics and how writers might tend, even if belatedly, to the "symbolic 'wound'" created by Thatcherism. The course will move on to feature texts produced in the 1990s and 2000s that deal with British identity, particularly in relation to the fall of Empire. We will discuss issues such as multiculturalism, nationhood, class, and the position of Scotland and Ireland in relation to England as we ask questions like, where do the discourses of gender and national identity overlap? How do the politics of language, class, and ethnicity shape definitions of British literature? And, what does it mean to be British in the postwar/Postmodern era? Near the end of the course, we will turn to texts that envision a new Britain for the new millennium, including a novella which champions the transformative power of literature by imagining how the nation would be affected if the Queen were to take up the rather subversive habit of reading. Texts to be studied may include Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*, Alan Hollinghurst's *The Line of Beauty*, Martin Amis's *Money*, Hanif Kureishi's *My Beautiful Laundrette*, Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*, Irvine Welsh's *Trainspotting*, Roddy Doyle's *Bullfighting*, Graham Swift's *Last Orders*, Julian Barnes' *England, England*, and Alan Bennett's *The Uncommon Reader*.

Women's Literature: Gender Renegades
ENG 4230H (3) 4:30-5:45 MW; Haught

Course # 17363

"Renegades—Outsiders and Outlaws within Women's Literature" (ENG 4230) will focus on lives lived outside of the patriarchal norms. We will consider such questions as: How are women's lives represented within patriarchal culture? How do women write their lives within phallogocentric language? What is the power of the outsider/outlaw within women's texts? We will use feminist epistemological theories in our readings of writers such as Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, Sandra Cisneros, Audre Lorde, Dorothy Allison, Leslie Feinberg, Emily Dickinson, Gloria Anzaldúa, Joy Harjo, Toni Morrison, et al.

This is a discussion-based class that will also require students to generate 20-25 pages of formal prose during the course of the semester through a combination of shorter essays and one longer essay (10-12 pages).

The End of Black Literature
ENG 4240H (3) 4:00-5:15 TR; Wester

Course # 17366

In *What Was African American Literature* Kenneth Warren questions "When was the last work of African American literature written?" The text continues on to note that African American literature has never been simply a collective enterprise but rather an enterprise that is significantly implicated in the political and economic fortunes and misfortunes of the nation's African-descended citizens. More specifically, Warren concludes that what made African American literature a literature was that whatever its subject matter, such texts could "plausibly taken as speaking to and for 'the race' as a whole as it struggled against constitutionally sanctioned racial segregation" and that "this is no longer the case."

This course will examine the diverse collection of works contributing to African American literature against Warren's claims, from Phillis Wheatley's poetry to Zora Neale Hurston's folk fiction to contemporary African American literature such as Randall Kenan. The course will examine the literature across genres to consider how various authors—producing before, after, and during the period of anti-segregationist writing that Warren posits as the defining marker for African American texts—repeatedly engage discourses beyond issues of racial injustice suffered amid dominant

American life. We will thus consider how African American writers have always spoken to “the race” but not necessarily for “the race” in challenging problematic notions, politics, and ideologies amongst African Americans themselves.

Embattled Avant-Gardes

ENG 4800H (3) 2:30-3:45 MW; Dickinson

Course # 16027

This course examines the relationship between postwar countercultural practices and late-capitalist consumer culture, and explores the debates surrounding this relationship. Our focus will be on those avant-garde and countercultural practices that emphasize an everyday poetics of 'lived experience' and the relationships between these practices and the myriad commodity forms thrown up by late-capitalism. Traditionally this relationship has been understood as a simplistic process of co-optation whereby 'authentic' forms get turned into what critic Thomas Frank calls the “symbolic and musical language for the endless cycles of rebellion and transgression that make up so much of our mass culture.” But how did a postwar countercultural avant-garde that professed anti-commercial values and leveled a harsh critique of mass culture give birth to an era of hip capitalism?

We'll take a close look at, among others, the “New American Poetry”/Beat poetics of the 1950s and 1960s; the abstract expressionism of Jackson Pollock and affiliated gestures in the arts and culture of the period (the experimental pedagogies of Black Mountain College, jazz and bebop, the ‘Zen boom’ of the 1950s etc.); the kinetic and musical forms of the so-called 'spontaneous underground' that emerged in the west in the mid-1960s; the Situationist International and the birth of punk culture, and recent developments in ‘culture-jamming’ and the digital open-content movement.

Critical Thinking about Great Ideas

HNRS 2020 (3)

11:30-12:45 MW; Steel

Course # 11990

10:30-12:00 MW; Jones

Course # 12125

11:30-12:20 MWF; Cruea

Course # 12129

11:30-12:45 TR; Browne

Course # 12135

2:30-3:45 TR; Diehl

Course #12135

2:30-3:20 MWF; Emery

Course # 12137

9:30-10:45 TR; Jesse

Course # 16241

This course will focus upon analysis and integration of ideas related to the following: Judeo-Christian thought, Greek Humanism, Markets, Democracy, and Feminism. Questions addressed will include: What makes these areas of thought "great ideas?" What assumptions underlie these ideas? How do these ideas relate to each other? to contemporary issues? The course will emphasize active thinking and discussion, readings from primary sources (many "classics"), and frequent writing. *Required Spring semester for first-year students.*

SPECIAL SEMINARS

How to Read Harry Potter Like a Professor

HNRS 3000 (2) 3:30-5:00 M; Diehl

Course # 13762

From women's studies to psychology, from philosophy to the natural sciences, from religious studies to historical inquiry, the *Harry Potter* series invites unique interdisciplinary understandings of its characters, its fictional landscape, and its themes and literary motifs.

This class, by contrast, will take us back to the basics. Using Thomas C. Foster's *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* as our guide, we will read and analyze the seven books of Rowling's *Harry Potter* series with special emphasis on identifying and analyzing the patterns of literary meaning that emerge in these rich books.

Through our study of J. K. Rowling's seven-book series, we will not only gain new insights into the fictional universe of Harry Potter and his friends, but also will more generally hone and refine a skill set that will enable us to engage more meaningfully and thoughtfully with all types of literary and cultural texts.

Issues in Japanese Thought: Maruyama Masao

HNRS 3000 (2) 4:00-4:50 TR; Saito

Course # 17774

This seminar focuses on two closely intertwined issues in the history of Japanese thought. One is the shaping influence of universalistic intellectual systems originating outside Japan (Confucianism, Buddhism, Modernism, Marxism, etc.); the

other is the ongoing effort of Japanese thinkers to set out what is “Japanese” in response to this influence. We will examine these issues through a consideration of major recurring themes in Japanese thought. We will focus particularly on the writings of the historian Maruyama Masao (1914-96), whose influential studies of the intellectual history of Tokugawa Japan (1952) redefined the master narrative about Japanese thought, and further examine the ways in which different versions of the past have been affected by changes in the present from the 1990s to the present. Methodologically the class is built around the close analysis of a number of key Japanese texts including philosophical writings, essays, and literature in translation. Students will write a substantial term paper on a topic of their choice at the end of the semester.

Vienna: City of Dreams and Nightmares

HNRS 4000 (1) 1:30-2:20 M; Howes

Course # 12616

This course is an introduction to the history and significance of the Austrian capital in two centuries, the nineteenth and twentieth, using two books, Frederic Morton’s *A Nervous Splendor: Vienna 1888-1889* and Peter Rosei’s *Metropolis Vienna*. Through Morton’s book students will be acquainted with the city as the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It is the world that engendered psychoanalysis, Zionism, atonal music, and a grand confrontation of modernity and tradition. In Rosei’s novel, the characters are typical of the Second Republic, the small postwar Austria that founded its identity of geopolitical neutrality and the cultural heritage of the empire it no longer commanded. The book traces a number of characters who represent various Austrian heritages: imperial, Jewish, National-Socialist, provincial, educational and cultural. They try to give their lives meaning but seem to be going nowhere.

Militias, Terrorists, and Insurgents

HNRS 4000 (3) 11:30-12:45 TR; Englehart

Course # 17770

Non-state and quasi-state armed groups such as militias and insurgents are responsible for an increasing proportion of the world’s political violence. Yet we know relatively little about them as a global phenomenon. The purpose of this seminar is two-fold: to educate students about these groups, and to help them increase our collective understanding of these groups by contributing to a research database. Students will also benefit by getting firsthand experience with a faculty research project, including training in using a variety of data sources.

We will begin with a brief introduction to non-state armed groups, which will occupy the first three or four weeks of the course. We will then transition into research on selected groups. This semester we will be focusing on groups in India and Pakistan. The information collected will be added to a research database on non-state armed groups. The primary teaching strategies employed will be close guidance of student research and group discussion of each student’s findings. Students will be evaluated on their seminar performance and research.

Zen Buddhism, Arts, and Everyday Life

HNRS 4000 (1) 4:30-5:20 M; Morgan-Russell and Dickinson

Course # 17835

This seminar examines the basic philosophical underpinnings of Zen Buddhism, its historical development as a school of Mahayana Buddhism and its influence on contemporary cultural and artistic practices. We will look at practices and forms such as the Japanese tea ceremony, poetry and haiku, music, yoga, painting and Beat writing among others, as well as Zen’s manifestation as a practice for everyday living.

Zen is famously described as a “special transmission outside [the] scriptures, not founded on words or letters,” and our goal is therefore not only to understand Zen conceptually, but to emphasize the *experiential* component of Zen’s practical expression in the arts as well as in such mundane activities as eating, cleaning, walking and, of course, sitting meditation (zazen).

How can we “understand”—and best of all *experience*—a practice that flourishes at precisely those moments when the limits of conceptual thinking are reached? This is our challenge, and our course objective!