determine what it means to be modern today and whether it makes sense to go beyond the modern to the postmodern.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-HIST
Identical With: COL214, HIST214
Prereq: None

CHUM224 "Public Freehold": Collective Strategies and the Commons in Art Since 1960

Art since 1960 has forged a contradictory alliance between the legal field of intellectual property and the expanded tradition of poststructural thought. Taking its title from conceptual artist Lawrence Weiner, this course navigates this contradiction via four units, each corresponding to a specific artistic strategy: appropriation, scoring, collaboration, and participation. Testing the limits of the signable, saleable, and stealable, such techniques have thrown traditional concepts of originality and possessive individualism into awe while giving rise, quite paradoxically, to some of the most celebrated careers and widely reported lawsuits involving allegations of creative property theft. Do such maneuvers amount to specious self-aggrandizement? Or do they indicate a renewed search to locate, foment, and protect sources of creative invention? The ever-expanding horizon of collaborative media access and increased pressures to enclose this new electronic commons have made such questions all the more urgent today.

Artists considered include Claire Fontaine, General Idea, Pierre Huyghe, Juliana Huxtable, Sherrie Levine, Tino Sehgal, Sturtevant, Hito Steyerl, Andy Warhol, and Lawrence Weiner.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: ARHA249
Prereq: None

CHUM228 Virtue and Vice in History, Literature, and Philosophy

Beginning with Aristotle and Confucius and reading our way through significant texts of Christianity, humanism, postmodernism, and contemporary cultural productions, we will explore the ethics, power, and politics intersecting in the idea of virtue.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-HIST
Identical With: HIST140, COL228, PHIL112
Prereq: None

CHUM226 Moving Through the Revolutionary Age: British Colonies and Early America, 1774–1815

Thomas Jefferson argued in his 1805 inaugural address that boundaries were less important than principles. Regardless of where they lived, Americans were Americans. British colonists were equally mobile and equally sure that their British liberties followed them wherever they went, which in no small part led to the Revolution. In the period during and after the American Revolution, with British liberties followed them wherever they went, which in no small part led to the Revolution. In the period during and after the American Revolution, with the creation of states and colonies in northern North America, people and ideas moved with regularity from one region to the next, thus testing Jefferson’s ideals and extant imperial bonds. This course will examine the movement of peoples and ideas within and across these new boundaries to explore the idea of mobility as a revolutionary, Native, and loyalist ideal. American settlers wanted to push west, and some later moved north; Natives desired to maintain their migratory patterns and traditional lands; and British Loyalists moved to American settlers and separated states were challenged and ignored as soon as they were created. By exploring the political ideals, territorial claims, and movement of people
during and after the American Revolution, students will be encouraged to study the Revolution not as an American event, but rather as a North American process shaped by those who moved through it.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CHUM
Identical With: HIST310
Prereq: None

CHUM289 Staging Race in Early Modern England
This course analyzes the dramatic representation of race in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. We will examine the historical emergence of race as a cultural construct in relation to related conceptions of complexion, the humoral body, gender, sexuality, and religious, ethnic, and national identity. Readings focus on three racialized groups: Moors, Jews, and Native American “Indians.” After reading the play-texts in relation to the historical moment in which they were first produced (using both primary and secondary sources) we will then consider their post-Renaissance performance histories, including literary, theatrical, and film adaptations.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: FGSS320, ENGL280
Prereq: None

CHUM300 Black Phoenix Rising: Death and Resurrection of Black Lives
The Black Lives Matter Movement has renewed our collective need to theorize the value of black lives within a deluge of death and disappearance in black communities. This movement is part of a deep transnational tradition in black radical praxis that aims to transform scholarly, activist, and public discourse and public policies concerning the systemic and epistemic effects of institutional racisms and the prospects for antiracist futures. How might we envision a black radical praxis that simultaneously recognizes the vitality of black lives and challenges the cultural ideas and social practices that generate and justify black people's death and suffering? This seminar traces a genealogy of black radical praxis that interrogates the necropolitics of race and positions this system of power against the prospect of thriving black people. In doing so, the course erects an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that features scholarship in critical race science studies, intersectionality, and transnational cultural studies as they inform how a black radical praxis can contribute to the uprising and raising up of black communities.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: AFAM300, SISP300
Prereq: None

CHUM302 Black Speculative Fictions and the Anthropocene
The genre of black speculative fiction--in the form of literature, art, music, and theory--provides a generative framework through which to (re)think understandings of race, gender, sexuality, class, the body, disability, citizenship, and the human. Often couched as taking place in the “future,” black speculative fictions also engage the past and critique the present. This makes the genre a critical resource for addressing the Anthropocene. The term "Anthropocene" first emerged from the discipline of geology in 2000. Scientists proposed that Earth had entered a new epoch (following the Holocene) in which "humans" had become geological forces, impacting the planet itself. However, the term Anthropocene raises numerous questions. What does it mean to think about the human at the level of a "species"? What constitutes evidence of the Anthropocene and when did it begin? Who is responsible for the Anthropocene's attendant catastrophes, which include earthquakes, altered ocean waters, and massive storms? Does the Anthropocene overemphasize the human and thus downplay other interspecies and human-nonhuman, animate-inanimate relations? Or does it demand a (potentially fruitful) reconceptualization of the human? Further, how does artificial intelligence complicate definitions of the human and, by extension, of the Anthropocene? Centering the work of black speculative thinkers and placing it in conversation with scientific studies ranging from marine biology and geology to cybernetics, this course takes an interdisciplinary approach to the Anthropocene that endeavors to (re)conceptualize the human, ecological relations, and Earth itself. Texts engaged will include: novels, art, music, theory, and scientific studies.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: E&ES125, AFAM312
Prereq: None

CHUM303 What If? Introduction to Counterfactual History
What if the Roman Empire had never collapsed? What if the South had won the Civil War? What if Hitler had never been born? To ask these questions is to delve into a new field of historical inquiry known as counterfactual history. In the last several decades, the exploration of “what if?” scenarios has become a notable phenomenon in Western culture. As seen in countless novels, films, television shows, comic books, plays, and historical essays, the question of how history might have been different has begun to fascinate audiences as never before.

This course explores the rise of counterfactual history as a new force in contemporary Western culture. After examining the emergence of counterfactual history against the background of recent political, cultural, and intellectual changes that have taken place in the West, we will investigate how “what if?” narratives help us better understand the larger dynamics of history. Counterfactual history, for example, can help us better grasp the deeper aspects of historical causality. Is history driven by great individuals or broad structural forces? If we remove Hitler from German history, do we still witness the rise of Nazism? Studying counterfactual history also helps us appreciate the complexity of drawing moral conclusions about historical events. We can only judge the wisdom of the United States dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, for example, by contemplating what might have happened had it not been done. Finally, we will also explore how counterfactual histories shed light upon the workings of collective memory. What do accounts of what never happened tell us about the memory of what did?

We will investigate these and other issues from a theoretical as well as from an empirical perspective, examining a wide range of academic scholarship on counterfactual history as well as primary examples of the genre from the realms of literature, film, and historiography. Our case studies will span many of the pivotal events of modern history, including the outbreak of the American Revolution, the Civil War, the rise of the Third Reich, the outbreak of World War II, the perpetration of the Holocaust, the dropping of the atomic bomb, and events of the post-9/11 world.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Prereq: None

CHUM304 Britons and Other Life Forms
George Eliot wrote in Middlemarch that "if we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence." This course will require us to think about the various ways in which writers conceive of and represent precisely our potential—or, as Eliot suggests, our inability—to comprehend "all" life, or even just "other" life forms. We will consider literary approaches to relationality, with an emphasis on
CHUM305 Matter, Community, Environment
In recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to consider human communities without also considering questions of "nature" or "environment." Actor-network theory condemns nature/society dualisms; ecological theory argues that there is indeed no "nature" or "society"—only the anthropocene; and, drawing from the former two positions, object-oriented ontology conceives of ideas (such as "community" or "society") as objects and ecological actors. In this seminar, we will consider various approaches taken in recent years to thinking about our relations to the world we inhabit. We will attempt to think not only outside a focus on "us" as humans in the first place but even outside a focus on sentient life or life in general. Examining theories of matter, community, and environment, we will discuss and analyze work by philosophers, evolutionary biologists, literary scholars, and sociologists, among others. We will pay special attention to how theorists and critics are blurring the boundaries between nature and society, environment and community, life and matter. In addition to class participation and a series of brief reading responses, students will be required to produce a final paper dealing with any topic related to the course.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: SISP303, ENGL302, COL303
Prereq: None

CHUM306 Techniques of the Liar: Performance, Artifice, Fraud
This seminar is a cultural and intellectual history of fraudulence, fiction, and faking it. We will explore both specific performance practices as well as theorizations of artifice, fraud, and authenticity. Topics will include illusion, ventriloquist, and sleight of hand; mimetic acting and the manufacture of "emotion"; dance technique and the concealment of effort; and musical improvisation and the politics of invention. We will also consider the complexities of drag, camp, and minstrelsy and historicize their surrounding discourses, centering the contributions of feminist, queer, and critical race studies. Looking at a range of (predominantly U.S.-based) practices from the mid-19th century to the present, we will consider how artifice and theatricality have been historically reviled as qualities inherent to femininity and queerness, respectively; how "authenticity" is both gendered and racialized; and how hiding, fabrication, exaggeration, and duplicity have also offered means of freedom or resistance.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Prereq: None

CHUM307 Anthropocene as Modern Grand Narrative
The Anthropocene refers to the new age in which humankind started to have a significant impact in altering or rupturing the Earth's system, and the Earth is now moving out of its current geological epoch (the Holocene) and into a less biologically diverse, less forested, much warmer, and probably wetter and stormier state." (Steffen, Crutzen, and McNeill 2007, Sciences Module, 614). This course begins by examining the debates on the definition and periodization. It then explores precursors to the concept of the Anthropocene, such as Confucian and Daoist writings on the taming of the natural environment for human needs, the catastrophism vs. uniformitarianism debate, and contesting definitions of sustainability. Finally, it looks at how recent works of environmental history engaged with the concept of the Anthropocene and brought our attention to the impact of the transition from organic economy to carbon economy. Is the Anthropocene a new meta-narrative that professes to be the theory that explains all human activity? Is the Anthropocene a call to arms for environmental justice? Is the Anthropocene just a declensionist fairy tale—one that leads us down a dead end, throwing up our arms in resignation over the irreversible destruction of the natural environment?
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: SISP382, HIST382
Prereq: None

CHUM312 Indigenous Religion and the New Age: Inspiration or Appropriation?
Is imitation the sincerest form of flattery? This course examines the way in which indigenous religious practices, images, and ideas become appropriated into New Age religion. In GOD IS RED, Native American philosopher Vine Deloria Jr. argued that indigenous religion is superior to western Christianity and the Christian West has much to learn from it, but many indigenous people understandably object when their practices are copied by outsiders, decontextualized, and used to make a profit. Where is the line between respectfully learning from and disrespectfully appropriating? Why are indigenous practices so appealing to the New Age? How do New Age desires intersect with the needs and desires of contemporary indigenous practitioners, as well as national legal structures and neo-liberal economies? What are the contexts within which decontextualized indigenous practices and ideas become re-contextualized as New Age? We will read and deconstruct the classic manifesto of New Age spirituality THE TEACHINGS OF DON JUAN, examine the Ayahuasca patent case, and consider questions of intellectual property, cultural appropriation, and spiritual tourism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: RELI312
Prereq: None

CHUM313 Concepts of Matter: A Brief Philosophical History of the Concept of Matter
In this course, we will explore changing notions of matter in Western thought from classical Greek thought through the quantum revolution in physics, and philosophical debates about their implications. We will begin with views of matter in Plato, Aristotle, and the ancient atomists and how they were interrelated with views of human beings: the devaluation of matter and the body in Platonist and Gnostic thought, the perhaps surprisingly positive attitude taken toward death without a hope of continued existence by the materialist Lucretius, and the appropriation of Aristotle's hylomorphic philosophy into Christian theology and scholastic science in the late middle ages. We will then look at the emergence of a conception of "material substance" in the 17th century, examining the differences between the mathematical formulations of Galileo and Descartes and those of atomists such as Gassendi. The remainder of the section will focus on the rise of materialism and reactions against it: Descartes and the concept...
and Hobbes on the question of whether human beings are merely machines, the Newton-Leibniz debate about the activity of God in nature, Laplace’s demon and the deterministic interpretation of classical mechanics, and the 19th-century reactions of romanticism and spiritualism. Finally, we will examine the radical and counterintuitive changes in the notion of matter occasioned by quantum mechanics, as well as interpretations that put consciousness and subjectivity back into the collapse of the wave function. We will consider whether contemporary physics really has the kind of notion of “material substance” needed for a traditional form of materialism before concluding with readings from philosophers and physicists in the recent revivals of dualism and panpsychism.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL310
Prereq: None

CHUM315 Emperor, Caliph, King: Comparing the Byzantines, Abbasids, and Carolingians
This seminar investigates a unique “age of empires” in the wider Mediterranean world—the ninth century—during which imperializing political revolutions inspired intense cultural production among the Byzantines in Constantinople, the Abbasids in Baghdad, and the Carolingians across Europe. Using the cultural artifacts surviving from these “renaissances,” we will investigate how political cultures accounted for their own contested identities through myths of rebirth and return, specifically of Greek, Roman, and Persian imperial traditions. The course uses a workshop environment that relies on both collaboration and independent research; students will apply skills of analysis, creative thinking, and persuasive communication to presentations and a (in-translation) source-based research project.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: COL347, HIST327
Prereq: None

CHUM317 Space and Materiality: Performing Place
Scenography explores and shapes the material world in and through the performative event. In site-specific performances, scenography transforms place and time to create an alternative reality in which the materiality of the artistic design and the performer’s body intervene in the architecture of a place and the spectator’s reception of meaning. In this course, we will study site interventions through the lens of street performance, immersive theater, and the theatrical apparatus to build a theoretical and hands-on understanding of the material potential and limitations of the four key elements involved in the scenographic project—artistic design, the actor’s body, local architecture, and time.

This course is divided in four units: site-specific interventions; street performance; immersive theater; and theatrical apparatus. Each unit includes scholarly readings, assignments in performance and scenography, and a response paper. The final project for the course is a performance intervention devised for a particular site on campus that demonstrates the student’s cumulative grasp of site specificity, scenography, and materiality.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-THEA
Identical With: THEA357
Prereq: None

CHUM318 Comparing Revolutions: The United States and Early Canada, 1774–1815
The American Revolution didn’t just create the United States. Loyalists fled to British colonies in what would become Canada, while Native nations reasserted their sovereignty over ancestral homelands. British, French, American, and Indigenous peoples in North America expanded (or moved) west, established new communities, and struggled to retain (or create) new identities.

Students in this seminar will read widely in the literature of the revolutionary era as it pertains to American, Canadian, and Native groups and will undertake specifically comparative research as part of Professor Lennox’s larger book project. What did Benjamin Franklin think of Montreal? Where did Iroquoia go after 1783? How did the creation of states such as Vermont compare to the division of Quebec the same year? What impact did David Thompson’s exploration for the Hudson’s Bay Company have on Lewis and Clark? By combining close reading of the most recent literature with in-depth exploration of primary sources, this seminar will encourage students to consider the Revolution as a continental rather than national event.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CHUM
Identical With: HIST349
Prereq: None

CHUM319 Zionism: A Political Theology
This seminar examines the political theology of Zionism by focusing on the intersections of secular aspirations and theological notions embedded in the ideology and practice of the national Jewish mission.

To this end, the seminar is designed to explore the modern concept of political theology. In analyzing a range of selected primary and secondary sources, it will also bring this concept to bear on an understanding of the Zionist secular adaptations of theological concepts, such as heresy, faith, inner experience, and redemption. Finally, the seminar will focus on how this type of political-theology informed the national Jewish language, symbolism, literature, social institutions, and social and political imagination.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: RELI319, CJST319
Prereq: None

CHUM320 Modern Intellectual History in Global Perspectives
Recently, postcolonial critics have urged historians to reconsider the emergence of ideas central to European intellectual history—including reason, society, and human rights—as part of a global process. In this course, we will explore intellectual history in dialogue with the non-West. Topics include the Enlightenment, romanticism, nationalism, modernity, and postmodernity. Discussions will address how these movements took shape through a series of cross-cultural exchanges and exclusions.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: FGSS319, COL320
Prereq: None

CHUM322 The Hope-lessness Photology of the Syrian Uprising
This course examines the Syrian uprising that started on March 15, 2011, and how photography can be produced to understand the social political factors in the creation of image language in “a hope-lessness photology.”
This course explores the trajectory of uprising through popular demonstrations and protest slogans in photography as the sinea qua non of a new revolutionary and artistic language in Syria since 2011 so far. In addition, this course will provide a survey of the principles aesthetic and political dimensions through the study of thematic photography based on several critical approaches.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Prereq: None

CHUM323 Necropolitics and Black "Fugitive" Politics
In his important essay interrogating the (im)possibility of black sociality, Fred Moten attempts to find an order of black social life which would unfold in the very confrontation between black (social) death and the law. However, as he argues, this form of black life would be "reducible neither to simple interdiction nor bare transgression." The form of black life that interests Moten is essentially one of "fugitivity." In a recent response to Moten’s text, David Marriott worries that "by writing blackness as ceaseless fugitivity," Moten advances "a position in which blackness is only black when it exceeds its racial disavowal" and therefore blackness "can only be recognized as black in so far as it escapes the racism of its history." In this course, we will trace and follow the implications of Moten’s intervention. More specifically, we will explore what forms and figures of sovereignty an aesthetics and politics of fugitive subjectivity could yield given that "black life" remains arguably the most precarious form of living under various contemporary "necropolitical" apparatuses of sanctioned racial exclusion, control, persecution and—in worse cases—genocide. Key figures will include Frantz Fanon, Achille Mbembe, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jared Sexton, David Marriott, Fred Moten, Christina Sharpe, Saidiya Hartman, Alexander G. Weheliye, Elizabeth Povinelli, and Gayatri Spivak.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CHUM
Identical With: PHIL355
Prereq: None

CHUM324 Race and the Enlightenment: A Historical and Philosophical Enquiry
It was during the Enlightenment Era (c. 1760-1800) that scientific reasoning, a belief in progress, and new claims on personal and political liberty swept away a tenacious medieval worldview. It was also during this era, however, that the notion of race crystalized in European and North American thought. Today, we still live with implications of this major shift, be it in classification schemes, anatomical prejudices, or ethnographical myths. This is particularly true for Africans or people of African descent. This class will bring some of the Enlightenment’s most prominent thinkers into dialogue with the emergency of the concept of race theory. In particular, we will focus on the clash between the Enlightenment era’s belief that “all men were created as equals” and the various ways that the Black African came to be studied within “natural history” and various philosophical models. This historical backdrop will lead us not only to a discussion of the economic imperatives of human slavery but to a series of contemporary reflections on the status of the Enlightenment put forward by postcolonial critics. Note: This class is offered in the context of the Wesleyan’s Center for the Humanities’ “Grand Narratives/Modest Proposals” theme and speakers series.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-AFAM
Identical With: AFAM325, SISP324, FIST325
Prereq: None

CHUM330 Women Make the World: Global Technologies and Gender
Women are only recently appearing as actors in global histories of technology, even though they have long been inventors and creative innovators in a wide range of fields from domestic textile production and technologies for household maintenance to industrial manufacture. Initially, scholars located women in relation to specifically gendered objects such as reproductive technologies such as the birth control pill and tools for “women’s work” such as the washing machine. Yet, women have also made “masculine” technological work such as engineering and computer programming their own. Few individual women are credited for their inventions, and one of our challenges will be to locate women’s creative production of technological tools and processes in diverse societies from the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia. What constitutes women’s technology, even women’s work, is an unstable category that we will unpack in this class. Moving beyond the domestic space and the family, women’s technological work contended with new and emerging state projects related to the economy and politics. Women found their technological identies entangled with discourses of state building and, increasingly, after the end of the Cold War, with narratives about international development. These histories of the state overlapped with the domestic, and, over the course of the semester, we will engage with women’s global technological stories in relation to big questions about the family, sexuality, and gender and labor. In turn, these same histories will allow us to unpack the ways in which women have engaged with state and international discourses on the economy and development.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM

CHUM341 Global Histories: Problems in Scale, Scope, Depth, and Time
How big is too big? How far back in time can historians go? How best to understand the relationship between science and history? What counts as evidence? What accounts for the rise (or return, some would argue) of macro-history? What does it portend for the future of microhistory? This advanced seminar will examine the history and historiographical implications of macro-historical frameworks, including comparative history, world history, global history, deep history, and big history.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST315
Prereq: None

CHUM343 Imitations of Life: Experimental Bodies at the Interface of Science and Culture
This seminar will examine scientific and cultural practices of corporeal simulation, or, practices of bodily substitution, imitation, and re/modeling. Topics examined will include: reproductive surrogacy; gender reassignment surgeries; experimental subject protocols; prosthetic enhancements; xenotransplantation; biometrics and alternative forms of bodily imaging; the use of nonhuman animals as human proxies; the rise of personalized medicine, and more. Students will engage with a wide range of case studies and theoretical materials from interdisciplinary perspectives. Special attention will be paid to the relationship between scientific discourses of “universality” and “particularity,” where socio-cultural forms of difference (e.g., race, gender, disability, etc.) are at once ignored and exacerbated. While most of the material addressed in the class will relate to recent phenomena, we will also be attentive to relevant histories of corporeal differentiation and reimaging.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM, SBS-CHUM
we will study the practice of “sitting on a man” by which women addressed the supernatural. The widespread practice is also a gendered technique of spirit possession, which marks the body as a site for human engagement body histories in Africa? In this course we will examine embodied rituals such as social value and symbolic meaning. What can we learned from these and other practices; sexual identities prior to the homo/hetero divide; and the histories of pornography and masturbation.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL349, FGSS350
Prereq: None

CHUM347 Sound Systems: The How of Hearing

Since the late 19th century artists, corporations and composers have all proposed, developed, presented, and occasionally commercialized physical systems that reconfigure how sound can be experienced. The early impact of the entertainment industry ranged from the introduction of stereo to movie theaters in Walt Disney’s Fantasia to the development of close miking for the crooning of Bing Crosby to McCune sound service’s introduction of stage monitors for the benefit of Judy Garland. Artists and composers used related methods to propose entirely new understandings of how music can be. Futurist Luigi Russolo’s Intonarumori of 1913 proposed an Art of Noise, while Pauline Oliveros’ concept of deep listening developed listening as a foundational form of music making. R. Murray Schafer’s concepts of soundscape and acoustic ecology project a music of environmental relations mediated through sound, while Maryanne Amacher’s sound characters create individual sounds understood as capable development and change beyond the expanse of any one performance or composition.

This class will be a performing ensemble focused on “sound systems” as musical instruments and musical practices performing live and fixed media sound pieces through sound systems we will configure for different sites on campus. Together with developing the technical skills required to mount these pieces, we will also investigate and discuss the varied musical, social, acoustical, and psycho-acoustical understandings of music and sound that influenced their shaping.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC461
Prereq: MUSC109

CHUM349 Body Histories in Africa

African bodies have long generated intrigue and misunderstanding. Outside observers, such as missionaries, travelers, colonial administrators, and anthropologists, have documented practices such as scarification and spirit possession as they simultaneously rendered their African practitioners “other.” All too often the body as an instrument for creative expression, ritual healing, or social action was lost in translation. More recently Western feminists have focused their attentions on female circumcision. The persistence of circumcision (for both girls and boys) and other bodily practices speaks to their enduring social value and symbolic meaning. What can we learned from these and other body histories in Africa? In this course we will examine embodied rituals such as spirit possession, which marks the body as a site for human engagement with the supernatural. The widespread practice is also a gendered technique of healing documenting shifting understandings of health and illness. In addition, we will study the practice of “sitting on a man” by which women addressed the body politic through dance and collective nudity. The revealed body in motion shamed men into action and has been employed in the 21st century to shame oil companies for their greed and environmental destruction. In this and other examples, we will approach the body as an archive: it is an archive in motion and subject to social renewal. Our embodied evidence will allow us to explore shifting histories of religion, art, sexuality, the economy, and politics from the precolonial era to the contemporary moment. By taking the body as our lens we will also learn new ways to examine the African past through histories of aesthetics, value, labor, hierarchy, and knowledge production.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Identical With: HIST341
Prereq: None

CHUM350 The Affective Power of Music

“Hope,” Johann Mattheson tells us, “is a raising of the spirits. Despair, however, is a depression of the same. These can be very naturally represented with tones, especially when other factors such as tempo contribute their part.” When Mattheson penned these words in the early 18th century, he was contributing to a growing body of theory known as the Affektenlehre, or the doctrine of affections in music. The aim of this hopeful Enlightenment project was to specify how, exactly, musical tones were able to evoke basic emotions in listeners. For Mattheson, the project was straightforward: use tones in a way that is directly homologous to the operation of the “animal spirits” within the body. Although Mattheson’s ideas—and the Affektenlehre in general—faded into obscurity by the early 19th century, the notion that music has a power to touch our emotions has persisted from antiquity to the present day. This course will explore the sound world of various moments in intellectual history in an effort to understand how theory and aesthetics have aduced music as a chief progenitor of basic affects such as hope, fear, despair, and joy. In addition to the Affektenlehre, we will explore classical warnings about the power of music, medieval accounts of music’s ability to afford religious transport, the use of music in the theoretical work of the Frankfort School (including its important role in Ernst Bloch’s Spirit of Utopia), and selected writings from the recent “affective turn.” Together we will discover how the nondiscursive medium of musical tones has been used to speak so eloquently on the basic forms of human feeling.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Prereq: None

CHUM351 Melodrama Since 1700

Although today melodrama calls up ideas related to film, the term has musical origins: it originally indicated a work in which melos (music) and spoken drama were united in one multimedia format. Eighteenth-century melodrama admitted of many manifestations, encompassing everything from comic operas (like Mozart’s Magic Flute, which alternated singing with spoken dialogue) to experimental symphonic works (in which a narrator’s declaimed monologue was emotionally painted by the accompanying orchestra). Melodrama in this musical sense persisted through to the twentieth century, and included notable works such as Schoenberg’s Pierrot Lunaire. But slowly melodrama as a term began to take on connotations relating to one of comic opera’s central conceits: hyperbole and exaggeration. Melodrama became synonymous with comic excesses of emotional portrayal. Eventually, during the twentieth century, this meaning fastened onto a constellation of generic implications within the domain of film (think, for example, of Joan Crawford in Mildred Pierce). In its afterlife during the twenty-first century, melodrama has sometimes been used pejoratively: it can be employed as an epithet to disqualify the performance of emotion as inappropriately intense, or to designate emotion connected to an ostensibly inappropriate subject. But even in this new sense, melodrama retains an element
of its early history insofar as it can be appropriated within subcultures in order
to comically mock the traditions of mass culture. This course examines the long
history of melodramatic art forms from the eighteenth century through to the
present day. Together we will perform close readings of the objects within this
rich tradition, supplemented by readings in queer theory, critical theory, and
performance studies.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: THEA351
Prereq: MUSC201 OR MUSC202

CHUM354 Hope and Hopelessness in an Age of Mass Incarceration
The United States incarcerates more people than any other country in the
world. Over 2 million people are caught in the criminal justice system today. A
disproportionate number of those incarcerated are people of color, particularly
black, Latino/a, and indigenous men. Women, too, are a growing part of the
prison population, as are queer, transgender, and gender-nonconforming
people. Young people, particularly impoverished black youth, are funneled into
correctional supervision through the school-to-prison pipeline. For many people
in the country today, avoiding prison seems hopeless.

This interdisciplinary course, grounded on philosophical reflections on hope,
liberty, respect, and exclusion, will critically explore the moral, psychological,
ethical, social, and political issues raised by mass incarceration in the United
States. We will be particularly interested in whether and under what conditions
hope is possible for those marginalized under the carceral system.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: PHIL354
Prereq: None

CHUM356 Queer Necropolitics
Since the 1980s AIDS epidemic, the politics of death have been central to queer
conceptualizations of identity, selfhood, and community. Queer writers reflecting
upon the early AIDS years often express a sense of ambivalence about their
own survival in the midst of their friends and family dying with impunity. At the
same time, queer studies scholars have argued that the AIDS epidemic literalized
long-existing forms of symbolic death experienced by queer people. Indeed, the
idea that “social death” is a precondition for queer identity has been taken up
by many scholars across fields, especially at sites of intersectionality between
sexuality, race, and class.

In this course, we will explore the concept of necropolitics as it pertains to
queer communities and ideologies. We will examine sites of literal queer death,
through the history of the AIDS epidemic, the emergence of hate crime statutes,
incidences of transphobic/homophobic violence, and the disproportionate
incarceration of queer people of color. We will also examine sites of symbolic
queer death, through the discourses of citizenship and belonging, criminalization,
civil rights and exclusions. Concepts covered will include: Michel Foucault’s work
on biopolitics, Sarah Schulman’s idea of homophobia as a pleasure system, Jose
Esteban Munoz’s work on queer futurity, Lee Edelman’s work on queerness as
the Freudian death drive, Judith Butler’s work on the value of queer lives, Jasbir
Puar’s work on homonationalism and debility, and the burgeoning field of queer
(in)humanism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: AMST356
Prereq: None

CHUM359 Making the Psychological: Discovering, Manufacturing, and
Circulating
Psychology is dedicated to explanations of human experiences and thoughts,
including unconscious ones. Using the scientific method psychology produces
representations of human nature, names them, and circulates this knowledge
for its truth value and usefulness to society and individuals. Yet despite success
in these aims, psychology is distinctive among the sciences in being challenged
about the robustness of its findings, challenges that are evident in recent
concerns about the reproducibility of experiments. We will explore the epistemic
grounds of psychology’s truth claims and consider the alternative views that
understand the truth claims as enactments, constructions, or ideologies that
rehearse cultural beliefs. Case studies of science-based knowledge that was
eventually found to be inaccurate or exaggerated (priming research; the
power pose) is used to examine how truth claims are made and challenged.
Case studies of robust research are used to explore how psychology’s truth
claims acquire credibility inside and outside the laboratory as new scientific
explanations. We ask, too, how these claims travel to be taken up as new
ways for individuals to experience the self and social world. Throughout these
explorations serious attention is given to the public’s and our own aspirations to
expand consciousness and act otherwise.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-CHUM
Identical With: PSYC359, SISP360
Prereq: PSYC105

CHUM362 Television Storytelling: Consuming Darkness
This course investigates how and why a “dark sensibility” has emerged in
television serials, with attention to its implications for television storytelling,
on the one hand, and for viewer practices and subjectivities, on the other
hand. While most evident on premium and basic cable channels, where it
crosses dramatic and comedic genres, the downbeat tone has also been
selectively incorporated into broadcast television and processed for wider
distribution. What industrial and sociocultural conditions have enabled such
an affective shift in an industry that, since its early days, has been known for
telling reassuring stories and promoting an ethic of consumption? Does the shift
constitute a break, or can it be interpreted as an intensification of features long
present in televisual formats? Is the contemporary taste for darkness among
demographically valued viewers merely a marker of distinction, or does it reflect
and reinforce a significant shift in mood among segments of the professional
middle class? Can narratives about flawed protagonists, failed institutions,
and limited possibilities nourish new forms of hope and provide resources for
remaking subjectivities and reimagining futures?
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-FILM
Identical With: FILM362, AMST362, ANTH361
Prereq: None

CHUM366 The Sounds of Black and Brown Performance
This course organizes itself as a scene of listening with care to black and brown
sounds, where listening is conceived as a mode of audience engagement of
performances informed by avant-garde, queer, and critical race theories.
Listening, then, is part of the artistic-theoretical practices that students will both
read about and act out in this course. Here, we will engage theater, dance, and
performance with the demand of listening in brown for the distinct sounds made
in different performances, whether by identifiably racialized artist-subjects or
not, and how they compel us to think of embodiment. If to say black is to say
abjection, prison, AIDS, as well as the generative, the contra-rationally beautiful
(Moten), and if to say “gender-y” is to say threatening, off-kilter, violable, as
well playful, and transformative (Sedgwick, Doyle), then what happens when we
listen in brown, that is, with the headphones of melancholia, depression, as well
as wildness, the excessive, the "hot and spicy" as critiques of the violence of the
whitened norm (Muñoz)?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: THEA366, ENGL363, AFAM362
Prereq: None

CHUM368 Comparative Philosophy
This seminar will explore the substantive and methodological issues that arise
when one takes seriously the idea that philosophy has been, and continues
to be, practiced within multiple traditions of inquiry, in many different ways,
and in many different languages. We will examine and critique some of the
ways in which "comparison" has been used, as well as examine arguments
that comparison across traditions is, in fact, impossible. Although most of our
attention will be focused on written academic research, we will also attend to
the challenges and benefits of interacting directly with philosophers in other
countries and cultures.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: PHIL337, CEAS258
Prereq: None

CHUM381 Student Fellowship
The student fellowship entails full participation in the lectures and colloquia.
Student fellows read, hear, and converse on the common themes. They are
to work on their research projects and give a presentation to the Center for
Humanities fellows.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Prereq: None

CHUM401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

CHUM402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

CHUM407 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with
the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

CHUM408 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with
the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

CHUM409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT