The College of Letters (COL) is a three-year interdisciplinary major for the study of European literature, history, and philosophy, from antiquity to the present. During these three years, students participate as a cohort in a series of five colloquia in which they read and discuss (in English) major literary, philosophical, and historical texts and concepts drawn from the three disciplinary fields, and also from monothetic religious traditions. Majors are invited to think critically about texts in relation to their contexts and influences—both European and non-European—and in relation to the disciplines that shape and are shaped by those texts. Majors also become proficient in a foreign language and study abroad to deepen their knowledge of another culture. As a unique college within the University, the COL has its own library and workspace where students can study together, attend talks, and meet informally with their professors, whose offices surround the library.

Professor of English; Professor of Letters; Editor, Diaspora; Professor, German Studies

Kari Weil
BA, Cornell University; MA, Princeton University; PHD, Princeton University
University Professor of Letters; University Professor, College of the Environment; University Professor, Environmental Studies; University Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Co-Coordinator, Animal Studies

Ulrich Plass
MA, University of Michigan; PHD, New York University
Professor of German Studies; Chair, College of Letters; Professor, Letters

Charles Barber
BA, Harvard University; MFA, Columbia University
Writer-in-Residence in Letters

Elizabeth A. Bobrick
BA, Marlboro College; MA, Johns Hopkins University; PHD, Johns Hopkins University
Visiting Asst Prof in Lib Stud; Visiting Assistant Professor in Liberal Studies; Writing Consultant; Visiting Assistant Professor of Letters; Visiting Scholar in Classical Studies

Howard I. Needler
BA, Oxford University; BS, Yale University; MA, Oxford University; PHD, Columbia University
Professor of Letters, Emeritus

Laurie Nussdorfer
BA, Yale University; MA, Princeton University; MSC, London School of Economics and Political Science; PHD, Princeton University
William Armstrong Professor of History, Emerita; Professor of Letters, Emerita

Paul Schwaber
BA, Wesleyan University; MA, University of California, Berkeley; PHD, Columbia University
Professor of Letters, Emeritus

Tushar Irani; Typhaine Leservot; Ethan Kleinberg; Ulrich Plass; Gabrielle Piedad Ponce-Hegenauer, Khachig Tölölyan; Jesse Torgerson; Kari Weil

- Undergraduate College of Letters Major (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/col/ugrd-col)

COL108F Language (FYS)

This course, beyond providing an introduction to the science of linguistics, is designed to give students in their first year an awareness of the importance of language in everyday life and of the range of its uses and abuses as a cultural and class marker, vehicle of knowledge, and instrument of power. It is an objective...
of this course that students who complete it should be better prepared than they were before for the sensitive and exacting study not only of literature but of whatever specialized studies they subsequently undertake. Topics to be considered include whether language is a cultural artifact that is learned or is instinctual; the varieties of languages; language as expression of culture; linguistic imperialism; problems of translation; the distinction between speech and writing; stenolanguage, metalanguage, and poetic language; metaphor and symbol; and semiotics.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL110 What Does Art Mean? Studies in Aesthetics and Cultural Relevance
Humans have felt compelled to make what we now call "art" for millennia; clearly, the drive to create and express is a pressing one in our species. Can we define that drive? The title of this course encompasses multiple questions. What do we mean when we say "art," and is there a way to legitimately wield or deny that designation? Does that designation have universal meaning? Is there an inherent exclusion, or exclusivity, within it? Also, what is art communicating? Is there a common thread or purpose to what we call art? Can there ever be a "right" answer to that question? Or, put another way, if art means one particular thing, does it then cease to be art? Several thinkers in several disciplines, from art history and practice to philosophy to sociology to religion to feminist thought, have weighed in on this question; we will read and analyze some of their arguments and, because this is a writing course, students will have the chance to formulate their own. We will also visit the Davison Art Center, the Yale Art Gallery, and other locations where art can be viewed, experienced, and discussed firsthand.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL112F The European Novel from Cervantes to Calvino (FYS)
This course provides an introductory survey that tracks the development of the European novel through its major periods—from its origins in DON QUIXOTE through the rise of the novel in 18th-century Britain to romanticism, realism, and modernism.

We will focus on texts that had tremendous impact (and long afterlives) throughout Europe, that inspired responses and imitations in many different languages, and that provided European intellectual culture with archetypal characters and plots through which problems of history, politics, and philosophy were articulated—Voltaire's naif and Dostoevsky's nihilist; Defoe's heroic bourgeois individualist and Kafka's victim of modern bureaucratic rationality. The readings will also introduce students to some of the European novel's important subgenres (e.g., romance, gothic, grotesque, the philosophical novel) and important narrative forms (e.g., epistolary novel, unreliable narration, free indirect discourse).

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL115 How to Read a Literary Text
This course will introduce students to the practice of close reading and to the formal study of literary texts. Working with selections of poetry and prose (including texts that have been translated from languages other than English), students will learn to analyze and make arguments according to the disciplinary methods of literary studies.

Primary readings will include texts from a wide range of historical periods, national literatures, and cultural contexts. Secondary readings will include exemplary works of literary criticism and theoretical writings on critical method. In addition to performing close readings of the primary texts, we will discuss theoretical problems of genre, author, closure, and ambiguity, along with the limitations of formal analysis and the text/context binary.

The governing purpose of this course is to teach students to perform in the written genre of literary close reading as it is practiced in a college essay. The writing assignments, which will include revisions and workshop, will be treated as an integral part of our course of study.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL117 Writing Love: Myth-Making and Experience in the Literature of Amour
What does it mean to experience love? How do we write about it? What beliefs about love do we hold most dear? What stories or myths do we use to inscribe the indescribable? This course investigates several myths, literary works, and philosophical treatises that attempt to represent, understand, and immortalize the experience of love. From contemporary pop lyrics to Renaissance love poetry and Romanticism, we will look at the ways in which social, personal, and metaphysical experiences of love are illustrated and reimagined in the art of verbal language and literary representation. Beginning with 21st-century pop records like those of Adele, we will rediscover the tradition of love that has come down to us. This course is taught in translation and focused on close readings and discussions of the assigned texts. Students will be given the opportunity to write analytically and creatively in response to the assigned readings.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL120 Muslims, Jews, and Christians: Getting Along in Medieval Spain
For eight centuries, Muslims, Jews, and Christians lived side by side as neighbors on the Iberian Peninsula in a carefully negotiated state of coexistence known as "convivencia." While much of the written record is often full of enmity, religious polemic, and mutual suspicion, the artistic record tells another version, of lives lived in close proximity giving rise to shared cultural practices, artistic tastes, and long interludes of mutual well-being.

This seminar will explore the works produced by the pluralistic societies of medieval Iberia from the perspectives of art, architecture, history, archaeology, literature, and music. As we study renowned monuments such as the synagogues of Toledo, the Alhambra, and the Way of St. James, we will learn to decode the different artistic traditions that coexisted within the peninsula. As we study the intermingling of different artistic traditions, we will explore the effects of this coexistence on the cultures of the three religious groups, and the influence of medieval Iberia on the modern world.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: RL&L122
Prereq: None
COL121F Writing About Social Issues (FYS)
This FYS course will involve close reading of classic journalistic books on complex social issues and opportunities for students to write their own articles on social and political concerns of interest to them. Texts will include William Finnegan’s COLD NEW WORLD, Charles Barber’s CITIZEN OUTLAW, Bryan Stevenson’s JUST MERCY, Rebecca Skloot’s THE IMMORTAL LIFE OF HENRIETTA LACKS, Barbara Ehrenreich’s NICKEL AND DIMED, and Jennifer Gonnerman’s reporting in “The New Yorker.” The distinction and tensions between advocacy and “objective” reporting will be an ongoing point of discussion in the course. Students will produce three feature-style pieces based on their own original research and reporting. To apply please email the instructor at cmbarber@wesleyan.edu.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL

COL123 Love, Sex, and Marriage in Renaissance Europe
This writing-intensive seminar will compare literary and artistic depictions of love, sex, and marriage during the Renaissance by authors and artists from England, Spain, France, Flanders, Germany, and Italy. We will read both male and female writers in genres ranging from poetry, the short story, and theater to the essay, the travel narrative, and the sermon. We will also examine other arts such as painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts (e.g., wedding chests). Questions we will explore include, but are not limited to, How were love and marriage related during the Renaissance? What role did sex, gender, and violence play in relationships between couples and within society? How do gender and genre affect the ways in which love, sex, and marriage are depicted? How did cultural differences influence writers’ and artists’ interpretations of love, sex, and marriage? And what about same-sex unions? Other topics will include virginity and celibacy, erotic literature, family and class structures, and divorce.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: RL&L129, FGS5123, MDST125
Prereq: None

COL125F Staging America: Modern American Drama (FYS)
Can modern American drama—as cultural analysis—teach us to reread how America ticks? Together we will explore this question as we read and discuss some of the most provocative classic and uncannonized plays written between the 1910s and the present. Plays by Susan Glaspell, Eugene O’Neill, Mike Gold, workers theater troupes, Clifford Odets, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Amiri Baraka, Arthur Kopit, Ntozake Shange, Luis Valdez, David Mamet, Tony Kushner, Ayad Akhtar, and others will help us think about what’s at stake in staging America and equip us as cultural analysts, critical thinkers, close readers of literature, and imaginative historians of culture and theater. This seminar will introduce first-year students to the kind of critical thinking developed in majors such as English; American Studies; African American Studies; Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; College of Letters; Theater Studies; and the Social and Cultural Theory Certificate.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL175F, AMST125F, AFAM152F, FGS5175F, THEA172F
Prereq: None

COL129 Writing the French Revolution
“Liberty, equality, and fraternity” was the slogan of the French Revolution and features three concepts of enduring interest. In this seminar we will explore the French Revolution and its antecedents—and what these can mean for us today. In the process we will delve into a number of ways of thinking and modes of representation: historical thinking, of course, but we will also get a sense of the origins of sociology and political science, the power of scientific thinking, and differences between literary and visual representation (especially films). This course will also serve as a writing workshop emphasizing the nuts and bolts of good writing and experimenting with such rhetorical modes as argument, personal narrative, persuasion, and fiction-writing.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: RL&L129
Prereq: None

COL130F Thinking Animals: An Introduction to Animal Studies (FYS)
The question of “the animal” has become a recent focus across the disciplines, extending debates over identity and difference to our so-called nonspeaking others. This course will examine a range of theories and representations of the animal to examine how human identity and its various gendered, classed, and racial manifestations have been conceived of through and against notions of animality, as well as how such conceptions have affected human-animal relations and practices such as pet-keeping and zoos. We will seek to understand the desire to tame or objectify animals as well as evidence of a contrasting desire that they remain guardians of inaccessible experience and knowledge. Readings may include Darwin, Poe, Kafka, Mann, Woolf, Coetzee, and Hearne.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: FGS5130F
Prereq: None

COL138F Masculinities (FYS)
This course offers an interdisciplinary approach to the study of masculinities, focusing on the difficulty of disentangling the (social-) scientific questions of what men are (and how they come to be that way) from the interpretive question of what masculinity means. We will survey a range of perspectives from evolutionary theory, cognitive psychology, psychoanalysis, social psychology, anthropology, feminist studies, and queer theory that describe and attempt to account for masculinities. In order to understand how these scholarly accounts might fit together to form a more comprehensive interpretive framework, we will also be engaging in critical analysis of examples from contemporary television and film that will help us to understand the role that representation plays in our cultural constructions of masculinity.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: PSYC138F
Prereq: None

COL150F Great Books Unbound: Lives at Stake (FYS)
This course offers students a series of conceptual starting points and critical tools for engaging with important works of western cultural and intellectual history. Combining small discussion sections with occasional lectures by professors from the disciplines of history, philosophy, and literary studies, we will closely analyze three texts, pulling them apart at their seams to understand what they are, how they work, and why they matter.
This year’s course will begin with the Greek ALEXANDER ROMANCE, asking how various writers working in different times and places throughout the middle ages narrated, revised, and re-contextualized the life of Alexander the Great. Beyond the seeming unities of a written text and a lived life, we will trace out the vagaries and complexities of both the manuscript tradition and the struggle for authority in the writing of history.
Next, we will turn to Shakespeare's MerchAND OF VENICE, in which disparate thematic concerns—about fidelity and mercy, race and social class, money and love—are woven together into the literary forms of character and plot. In the life-or-death stakes of a courtroom drama we'll find a model of interpretation in which the competing claims of the letter and the spirit (of the law; of the text) are weighed and judged.

Finally, we will engage with Descartes's MEDITATIONS ON FIRST PHILOSOPHY as an investigation into the possibility and structure of human knowledge. We will analyze and evaluate Descartes's method of radical doubt, which he employs to establish a complex hierarchy of foundational certainties—starting with "I think, therefore I am" and building to the immateriality of the soul, the existence of a supreme being, and the independence of the mind from the body.

This course is not a prerequisite but is strongly recommended for students considering the College of Letters major. Like other First Year Seminars, it will be writing-intensive, with assignments designed to help students analyze texts and develop compelling claims and arguments about texts within the disciplinary frameworks of history, philosophy, and literary studies.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

This course will discuss eleven novels, exploring changes in the styles, concerns, and attitudes of fiction from World War II to the present. The first half of the course addresses the hegemony of certain forms and issues in novels written primarily by white male authors between 1945 and 1965. The second half is devoted to diverse novels that represent some of the literary, social and political forces that have led to the heterogeneity of the contemporary American novel. The course will explicitly address ways of reading and interpreting.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL186
Prereq: None

COL201 Writing Nonfiction
In this creative course, students will address the elements of creative nonfiction, such as narrative, character, voice, tone, conflict, dialogue, process, and argument. The work of nonfiction writers such as James Agee, George Orwell, Joseph Mitchell, Walker Percy, Anne Lamott, Caroline Knapp, and Dave Eggers will serve as models and inspiration. The course will be taught in workshop fashion, with selected students presenting their writing in class each week.

Charles Barber is the author of two works of nonfiction and a novel in progress. He is a lecturer in psychiatry at Yale Medical School and a visiting writer at the College of Letters.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: ENGL201
Prereq: None

COL202 Poetry and Politics: Pound, Arendt, Lowell
By focusing on the connections among two poets and a political philosopher, this seminar will explore the problematic relationship between art and political life. Robert Lowell sought Ezra Pound as a poetic mentor; Lowell and Hannah Arendt were friends; and all three became embroiled in controversies over the relationship between morality and aesthetics after World War II. The course will ask to what extent poetry can be politically destructive and morally culpable and, conversely, consider whether the writing of poetry can be a redemptive act. Writing assignments will encourage students to focus their discussions of political and aesthetic theory through case studies and to relate ideas to poetry through close readings.

The class will read selections from Pound's CANTOS, including the PISAN CANTOS (1948), giving careful consideration both to his poetic theory and to his attraction to fascism. Our discussion of Pound will conclude with a sustained study of the debates that erupted when the fascist Pound was awarded the 1949 Bollingen Prize for poetry. We will then focus on Arendt's critique of fascism and totalitarianism and her belief that writing, or storytelling, can be morally and politically redemptive. Readings from Arendt will range from THE ORIGINS OF TOTALITARIANISM (1950) to "Thinking and Moral Considerations" (1984; posthumously published). We will read EICHMANN IN JERUSALEM (1963) in its entirety and consider it as both a treatise in political theory and as a historical narrative. By revisiting the controversy that greeted its publication, we will again take a public debate as a case study that allows us to consider the relation of art and morality. Finally, we will discuss Lowell's poetry as a possible example of the kind of storytelling Arendt endorses, reading LIFE STUDIES (1959) and much of NOTEBOOK (1970). At the same time, we will explore Lowell's admiration for Pound (he was on the committee that awarded Pound the Bollingen prize) and ask to what extent his poetry adequately responds to the dilemmas posed by Pound's example.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL204 British Literature in the Enlightenment: Individualism, Consumer Culture, and the Public Sphere
England was changing rapidly in the 17th and 18th centuries. Indeed, it is often said that this period was crucial for the emergence of individualism, consumer culture, and the public sphere—for the modern world itself. The period is sometimes described as the Age of Reason, but it was also an age of bawdy laughter, intense emotion, brazen self-promotion, serious faith, and gossip in coffeehouses and magazines. It was an age, too, of flourishing marketplaces, imperial expansion, slavery and abolition. This course will track how literary writers celebrated, condemned, participated in, or simply tried to make sense of their changing moment (and the changing understandings of literature available in it).

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL204
Prereq: None

COL214 The Modern and the Postmodern
In this course we will examine how the idea of "the modern" develops at the end of the 18th century and how being modern (or progressive, or hip) became one of the crucial criteria for understanding and evaluating cultural change during the last 200 years. Our readings will be drawn from a variety of areas—philosophy, novels, music, painting, and photography—and we will be concerned with the relations between culture and historical change. Finally, we shall try to 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: HIST214, CHUM214
Prereq: None

COL217 Love and Loss in Medieval and Early Modern French Literature and Culture
The interconnected themes of love and loss encompass others such as desire, passion, friendship, death, separation, and grief. This course introduces students to the uses of these themes in French literature of the medieval and early modern periods by reading a range of texts, from the courtly romance and lyric poetry, to the essay, the novella, and theater. We will examine how men and women treat these themes, and we will be especially sensitive to the ways in which women write in genres traditionally dominated by men. Topics of study will include the body, virtues and vices, marriage, sexuality, seduction, chastity, and violence. We will also place emphasis on improving French pronunciation and on developing oral presentation and written skills. Readings, papers, and discussions will be in French.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: FREN222, MDST220
Prereq: None

COL219 Modern Spain: Literature, Painting, and the Arts in Their Historical Context
In this course, we study the so-called "masterpieces" of modern and contemporary Spanish literature, painting, and film (18th century to the present). The works chosen represent the major literary and cultural movements of the past three centuries: the Enlightenment, Romanticism, realism, and naturalism, the generations of 98 and 27, the avant-garde, neorealism, and postmodernism. As masterpieces, they have achieved canonical status through either the influence they have come to exercise over successive generations or their popular reception at the time of their production. In our close analysis of these works, we will interrogate the processes and conditions of canonicity. We will emphasize the relationship between cultural production and historical context, seeking to draw analogies at all times between the short stories, novels, poems, plays, paintings, and movies under consideration and the social, political, and economic milieu from which they emerged.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: SPAN250
Prereq: None

COL220 Modern Christian Thought
This course will provide an introduction to the field of Christian thought by exploring the relationship between conceptions of God and conceptions of selfhood, from St. Augustine through liberation, feminist, evangelical, process, and eco-theologies. How do the ways people think about God reflect, support, or interrupt the ways they think about the human subject? And what sorts of ethics, communities, and political decisions do these models underwrite?
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: RELI220
Prereq: None

COL221 The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Rethinking the Italian Renaissance
In this course we explore the intellectual achievements of the Italian Renaissance. We study the development of new secular values and the quest for the fulfillment of body and soul, glory, and exuberant pleasures. We question notions of beauty, symmetry, proportion, and order. We also unveil often-neglected aspects of Renaissance counter-cultures, such as the aesthetics of ugliness and obscenity and practices of marginalization (e.g., misogyny, homophobia). We inquire into the rediscovery of classical civilizations. We consider how the study of antiquity fundamentally changed the politics, literatures, arts, and philosophies of Italy at the dawn of the modern era. Through a close reading of texts by authors such as Francesco Petrarca, Niccolo Machiavelli, and Michelangelo, we investigate continuities and ruptures between their quest for human identity and ours. This course is conducted in English, and all primary and secondary sources are in English.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: RL&L224, ITAL224, MDST223
Prereq: None

COL225 20th-Century Franco-Caribbean Literature and the Search for Identity
This course investigates how 20th-century Francophone literature from the Caribbean defines Caribbean identity. Through a study of literary texts, films, and paintings from Guadeloupe, Martinique, Haiti, Guyana, and Louisiana, we will explore the evolution of Caribbean self-definition, focusing on the major concepts of Negritude, Antillanite, Creolite, and Louisianitude.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: AFAM223, AMST226, FREN225, LAST220
Prereq: None

COL226 Dialogue of Poets: Classical and 20th-Century Poetry in Spain and Latin America
This course samples the rich tradition of Spanish-language verse from its beginnings to the present. It is organized around four primary dialogues: (1) the creative reception by leading 20th-century poets from Spain and Latin America (e.g., Neruda, Lorca, Machado, Borges, Paz, Rossetti) of classical poets (Saint John of the Cross, Góngora, Quevedo, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz); (2) the interplay of poetry and essays by those same poets; (3) the round-trip fertilization of popular and elite, oral and written forms of poetry; and (4) the crossing of linguistic, ethnic, religious, and gender boundaries that has shaped Spanish-language verse from its beginnings as love lyrics embedded in Hebrew and Arabic poems (jarchas) to the creative stimulus of other Romance languages (especially Galician and Catalan) in Spain, through Latin American poets open to Amerindian and African influences, and Hispanic-American poets exploring bilingualism in the U.S. We will read lyric, epic, and burlesque verse on a wide variety of themes (mysticism, sex, history, reason, travel, love, politics, sensory perception, death, and poetry itself); reflect on how poetry can best be enjoyed and understood; and consider how poetry has been produced, heard, read, and used (ritual and spontaneous song; minstrel performance of epic and ballads; courtly patronage, literary academies, and manuscript circulation; private reading of printed texts and commodification; and 20th-century singer-songwriter musical settings and politics). Although no prior expertise in poetry is expected, a willingness to engage it closely (textually and historically) is essential.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: SPAN232, LAST232
Prereq: None

COL227 Life Writing: Writing About the Self and from Experience
This course will examine both the power and the complexities of writing that derives from personal experience. Topics to be addressed, in turn, are memory (and its reliability); experience (authoritative/reportorial vs. interpretative/symbolic); identity and voice of the narrator; and agency (the degree to which the narrator is in control, or not in control, of the narrative). Types of life writing
that will be explored are coming-of-age narratives, illness and trauma narratives, confessional narratives, autobiographical poetry and song lyrics, and interviews/oral histories. Readings and materials include Shadd Maruna, William Stylon, Mary Karr, Donna Tartt, James Joyce, and many others.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: WRTC227, ENGL228
Prereq: None

COL228 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: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: CHUM228, PHIL112, HIST140
Prereq: None

COL229 Heroes, Lovers, and Swindlers: Medieval and Renaissance Spanish Literature and History
This course is designed to develop students' ability to make informed and creative sense of four fascinating, complex, and influential medieval and Renaissance Spanish texts in their multiple (literary, historical) contexts: the "national" epic EL CID (12th–13th century); the bawdy and highly theatrical prose dialogue known as LA CELESTINA (1499); the anonymous LAZARILLO (1554), the first picaresque novel; and María de Zayas's proto-feminist novella THE WAGES OF VICE (1647). Through these and selected historical readings, the course is also intended to provide students with a basic knowledge of Spanish culture (in its plurality) from the 11th through the 17th centuries, the texture of everyday life, and the larger movements of long-term historical change. We will draw on literature and history to imagine the world of chivalry and crusade in the medieval Spain of "the three religions of the book" (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam); of mercantile values, courtly love, and prostitution in the Renaissance city; of social injustice and religious hypocrisy in imperial Spain; and of the exacerbated gender and caste tensions that followed from the political crises of the 1640s. We will reflect on the interplay of literature and history in our efforts to come to grips with a past both familiar and strange; address the crossing of linguistic, artistic, ethnic, religious, caste, and gender boundaries that has long been a conspicuous feature of Spanish society; and consider what texts and lives of the past might still have to say to us today. No prior historical or literary preparation is required, only a willingness to engage the readings closely (textually and historically).

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: SPAN230, MDST228
Prereq: None

COL230 Introduction to European Avant-Garde, 1880–1940
This course will introduce students to the major avant-garde art movements from the first half of the 20th century as they took root in France, Germany, Italy, Holland, and Russia. Our focus will be on painting, but we will also look at attempts to go beyond painting in an attempt to gain greater immediacy or social relevance for art. Topics that will receive special emphasis include the relationship between abstraction and figuration, the impact of primitivism and contact with non-Western arts, modernism's relationship to mass culture, war and revolution, gender and representation, art and dictatorship, and the utopian impulse to have the arts redesign society as a whole.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: AHAR241, RL&L241, GRST241
Prereq: None

COL231 Orientalism: Spain and Africa
Over the past several decades, North African and Middle Eastern cultures have become conspicuously important within the Spanish cultural arena. Translations of writers from Lebanon to Morocco abound in Spanish bookstores. Spanish writers have begun addressing North African and Middle Eastern issues with greater frequency, especially in their novels. The dramatic rise in the African immigrant population in Spain during the 1980s and 1990s, meanwhile, has been matched by a rise in press coverage of issues pertaining to Africa and the Middle East. These factors constitute the point of departure for our historical overview of the treatment of Islamic cultures in modern Spain, from early 19th century to the present. Guided by Edward Said's seminal essay, ORIENTALISM, we will assess the extent to which (and the process by which) Spain passes from the Orientalized subject of European Romanticism (painting, literature, music) to an Orientalizing European power in the late 20th century. In doing so, we will seek to relate the representation of Islamic cultures in Spanish literature and painting to social, political, and economic factors, most important of which was Spain's military invasion into Morocco in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. We will also survey changing attitudes among Spanish intellectuals with regard to the Islamic world and toward Spain's Islamic heritage, the result, perhaps, of 20th-century modernization and, most recently, of Spain's full integration, after Franco's death, into Europe's military and political structures. The tools for this study include works of literature primarily, but we will also focus on painting, historical essays, newspaper articles, and film.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: SPAN264
Prereq: None

COL233 Tales of Transcendental Homelessness: Journey, Adventure, and the Foreigner Before the Novel
"Happy are those ages when the starry sky is the map of all possible paths. The world is wide and yet it is like a home," wrote Georg Lukács in his 1916 Theory of the Novel. How do the conditions of linguistic, cultural, metaphysical, and material homelessness occasion the ways in which identity is lexically structured and recast? This course examines the role that travel, new encounters, playing the foreigner, greeting the visitor, and sojourning through multicultural landscapes played in the growth of imaginative literature during the European Renaissance. In addition to a focus on early modern rise of novelistic storytelling in Boccaccio, de Navarre, Colonna, Montalvo, Montemayor, Cervantes, Basho, Voltaire, Sterne, and anonymous authors, readings will include selections from Ancient Greek, Latin, and Medieval forms of novelistic prose. We will conclude with a contemporary piece of journalistic storytelling—Fraughted Lands (August 14, 2016)—a full-length narrative account of life in the Middle East following the Arab Spring. Through a discussion of the ways in which previously observed narrative forms are employed to recast international news within the context of a national newspaper we will engage our study of narrative structure with several contemporary problematics involved in the representation of life outside the United States. Throughout this course we will engage with Lukács's sense of our own modern transcendental homelessness and examine how the historical conditions of various cultures gave rise to the invention and transmutation of aesthetic forms. Special attention will be paid to the ways in which characters and authors navigate literary (and self-) representation in the absence of a set linguistic home.

Offering: Host
COL234 The Cosmos of Dante’s Comedy
This course provides an in-depth introduction to Dante Alighieri’s 14th-century masterpiece as a point of entry to the history of Western literature, philosophy, and science. The core of the course consists of an intensive study of Dante’s encyclopedic poem in relation to the culture and history of Medieval Europe. Major topics include: representations of the afterlife; the soul’s relation to the divine; concepts of modernity and antiquity in the Middle Ages; notions of authorship and authority during the 13th and 14th centuries; vernacular poetics and the medieval genre system; the culture and materiality of manuscripts in the Middle Ages; gender and genre in Dante and the 12th- to 14th-century lyric; intertextuality and imitation; classical and medieval language theory; the role of the classics in the Middle Ages; Dante’s concepts of governance; myth and theology in Dante’s Christian poetics; and the reception to Dante’s work from the 14th-century to present. The course combines a close analysis of Dante’s literary strategies with exercises in critical writing and in multimedia translation and adaptation, aimed at prompting critical reflection on the ways in which present cultural practices are built upon the practices of the past. This course is conducted in English; no previous knowledge of Italian is required.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: RL&L226, ITAL226, RELI218, MDST226
Prereq: None

COL235 The Spanish Inquisition
Few institutions are as notorious as the Spanish Inquisition. Reviled in literature (most famously by Dostoyevsky in his Brothers Karamazov) and lampooned in popular culture (by Monty Python, among others), the Spanish Inquisition remains a potent symbol of both religious fanaticism and ecclesiastical power run amok. In this seminar, we will consider the history and legacy of the Spanish Inquisition, which existed for 356 years (1478–1834) and operated in both Spain and Spain’s colonies overseas. We will examine not only the historical record itself (e.g., transcripts of actual trials, individual case studies) but also various depictions of the Inquisition found in imaginative media (art, literature, and film). Our subject, then, will be the Spanish Inquisition both real and imagined. Why did this institution arise? How did it survive for as long as it did? And does the legend of the Spanish Inquisition match its history?
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: FGSS239, ENGL252
Prereq: None

COL237 Introduction to The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)
The Hebrew Bible is one of the most influential texts in the world. From antiquity to the present, it has served as a source of philosophical, literary, and artistic reflection. It is a fascinating document, combining narrative, poetry, law, prophetic proclamations, and puzzling parables. What kind of book is the Hebrew Bible? Who wrote it and why? How do we approach such a text across the distance of time? Through a systematic reading from the very beginning, we will place the Bible in its historical context while giving special attention to the philosophical and literary questions it raises: Is obedience to authority always justified? Why do good people suffer unjustly? What gender is God? In answering these and other questions, you will gain an understanding of the ways contesting interpretations make authoritative claims.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT

COL238 Animal Theories/Human Fictions
The question of “the animal” has become a recent focus of theory, although depictions of nonhuman animals can be traced to the very origins of representation. This course will move among literature, philosophy, art, and theory in an effort to trace the changing conceptions of human-animal difference and human-animal relations from 18th-century fictions of savage men and wild children to current theories of the posthuman. We will consider the ways that the representation of “the animal” intersects with theories of gender and race as it also contests the grounds of representation itself. Authors may include Rousseau, Poe, Sewell, Mann, Colette, Coetzee, Heidegger, Agamben, Derrida, and Harway.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: FGSS239, ENGL252
Prereq: None

COL240 Modernism and Modernity in 19th-Century French Painting
This course looks at factors that contributed to Paris’s rise as the preeminent artistic center in the West at the time of the French Revolution and traces the evolution of French art throughout what would prove to be an extraordinary century of formal advance and experiment ending in Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. The story of French art is one in which timeless ideals and triumphal narratives were continually put under pressure by the imperative to model the contingency of modern experience. Themes we will explore in this class include the significance of a public sphere for art making and the relationship between artistic advance and appeals to an ever-widening public; painting and revolution; history painting; the persistence of classical ideals and their relationship to modern subjects and experience; the new focus on sensation and the rise of landscape painting; the decline of narrative in painting in favor of form and surface; the relationship between modern art and academic practice; the rise of feminism and attempts on the part of women artists to find their own voice in a masculine practice; the conflict between the unabashed pursuit of artistic individualism and the need to define collective values and experience; the significance of a “scientific” language in painting; and the relationship between art’s embrace of privacy, domesticity, and intimacy at the end of the century and France’s revolutionary legacy.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA240, RL&L240
Prereq: None

COL241 Sophomore Colloquium
This is the first of the five multidisciplinary colloquia required of all COL majors. It must be taken during the first semester of the major’s sophomore year. The topic is antiquity, and the course covers major texts of the Greek and Roman/Latin traditions, along with selections from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-COL
Prereq: None

COL243 Junior Colloquium
This is the second of the five multidisciplinary colloquia required of all COL majors and must be taken in the first semester of the major’s junior year. The
topic is the medieval period, and the course covers the literature, philosophy, and history of roughly a millennium, from 500 CE to 1475 CE.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-COL
Prereq: None

COL244 Junior Colloquium
This is the third of the five multidisciplinary colloquia required of all COL majors and must be taken in the second semester of the major's junior year. Its topics are drawn from the literature, history, and philosophy of Europe in the period 1475–1800.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-COL
Prereq: None

COL245 Senior Colloquium
This is the fourth of the five multidisciplinary colloquia required of all COL majors and must be taken in the first semester of the major's senior year. The subject matters covered include literature, history, and philosophy in the 19th century, which in this context, can extend from 1789 to 1900.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-COL
Prereq: None

COL246 Senior Colloquium
This is the fifth and final of the five multidisciplinary colloquia required of all COL majors and must be taken in the second semester of the major's senior year. It includes texts from the literature, history, and philosophy of the 20th century, extending from 1900 to 2015.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-COL
Prereq: None

COL247 The Fall of Rome and Other Stories
The fifth-century fall of Rome to barbarian invaders is an idea that slowly crystallized over time. This course will examine the birth and development of this "fall"—one of the most persistent stories in history—using the very texts in which it was first articulated. We will work with selections from a range of authors—Suetonius, Eusebius of Caesarea, Ammianus Marcellinus, Augustine of Hippo, Jordanes, Procopius of Caesarea and many others—to connect the fall of Rome with other attempts to explain catastrophe and change. The course will conclude by surveying the persistence of the fall of Rome as an idea, through the medieval, early modern, and modern periods, right into contemporary discourse.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: CCIV118, HIST247
Prereq: None

COL249 Narrative and Ideology
When ballads were popular songs that told stories, Andrew Fletcher (1655–1716) emphasized the importance of controlling dominant narratives: "If a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation." Nowadays, stories take various forms, among them cinematic, and they circulate and are consumed in vast quantities. People make stories, and the consumption of those stories, in turn, "makes" people, helping to construct individual subjectivity and collective discourse. How do narratives function as the vehicles for both overt and covert ideologies? How do stories change as they become such vehicles, and how do ideologies change when they are embedded in stories? This course pursues these questions through the analysis of the narrative structure of post-1980 American films, supplemental by reading some film theory. It combines short lectures (mainly in the first few weeks) with much discussion.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: ENGL247
Prereq: None

COL250 The Renaissance Woman
This course takes seriously the socio-economic, cultural, religious and aesthetic restrictions placed on early modern women, and the ways in which early modern women exercised considerable authorial agency in the aesthetic-fashioning of literary tropes and forms of thought. Often reforming, reinventing, revising and re-imagining literary, scientific, and philosophical outlooks, these women fostered and created forms of resistance, subversion and cultural influence from within and without their historically specific cultural norms. This course recovers works that were frequently written out of the study of the Renaissance during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries in order to grapple with the imaginative, scientific and philosophical voices of women writing under the constraints of their time.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-COL
Identical With: ENGL250
Prereq: None

COL251 Kafka: Literature, Law, and Power
Elias Canetti claimed that among all writers, Kafka was "the greatest expert on power." In this course we will focus on Kafka's narratives of power relations. We will read and discuss Kafka's sometimes painfully precise descriptions of how power is exerted in the family and in personal relationships and how scrutiny and discipline are exercised over the body. We will also consider Kafka's depictions of physical violence and of apparatuses and institutions of power and the ethical and political implications of these depictions. The working hypothesis of this course is that Kafka not only tells stories about power, but that his stories also contain an implicit theory of how power works in modern society.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: GRST251
Prereq: None

COL252 Writing Love: Articulations of Passion, Genres of Intimacy
What is love? How do we understand the amorous? How do we write the erotic? Is the passionate necessarily opposed to the intimate? Can the prosaic be poetic? This course investigates literary works that depict, problematize, immortalize, and give expression to the varied and nuanced forms of erotic love in human relationships. We will examine and employ the art of verbal language in articulations of passion and genres of intimacy found in philosophical discourse, lyric verse, epistolary exchanges, prose fiction, and dramaturgical and cinematic representations. By working through a liminal space between the sensible and the intelligible, desire and devotion, ineffability and fidelity, absence and presence, mortality and immortality, we will posit and discuss the perennial question: What is love?
Students will be given the opportunity to write analytically and creatively in response to the assigned readings.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL253 Existentialism
This course is an introduction to 20th-century French existentialism. "Existentialism" is both a philosophical tradition and a term that is central to the intellectual history of Western thought. The term was explicitly adopted as a self-description by Jean-Paul Sartre and was widely disseminated both by his own literary and philosophical contributions and those of his associates—notably Simone de Beauvoir, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Albert Camus. Existentialism became identified with a cultural movement that flourished in Europe in the 1940s and '50s. It also resonated widely with anti-colonial thinkers across the globe. Thus, through the work of Frantz Fanon, Richard Wright, and Sartre's own intellectual engagement with colonialism and oppression, we will also explore the ways in which existentialism gradually became an intellectual and political tool for contestation against racism and European imperialism.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHI
Identical With: PHIL256
Prereq: None

COL254 Folly & Enlightenment: Madness Before and After the Mind/Body Split
This course examines a variety of ways in which madness has been conceptualized in the history of literature, philosophy, and medicine. Through close readings of classical, early modern, and modern works we will consider forms of human disquiet which have been framed as amorous rapture, poetic furor, the wisdom of folly, visionary experience, satiric subversion, apotheosis, and enlightenment. We will reconsider Foucault’s observation that madness is contingent on society by exploring the ways in which perceiveably mad characters interact with the limits of their social restrictions and the boundaries of consciousness in order to reveal truths and manifest new outcomes. Special attention will be paid to relationship between insanity and intellect. What is madness? What does it reveal to us about ourselves and our worlds? How does the history of madness inform our understanding of contemporary discourse in mental health and psychic well-being? In addition to the primary texts listed below, readings will be supplemented with brief excerpts from Hippocrates, Galen, Cicero, Ficino, Huarte de San Juan, Bruno, Freud, Jung, Laing, Foucault and Deleuze.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL

COL255 The Invention of Fiction: Giovanni Boccaccio's Decameron
In this course we read and discuss Giovanni Boccaccio’s Decameron (ca. 1353), a collection of 100 short stories traded by an “honest brigade” of 10 Florentine men and women. They tell each other these stories while sheltered in a secluded villa as the plague of 1348 rages in Florence. We study the Decameron as both a product and an interpretation of the world Boccaccio inhabited. We examine the Decameron’s tales and narrative frame as a point of entry into the cultural and social environment of medieval Italy. We look at its scurrilous, amusing, and provocative innuendos as traces of erotic, religious, ethnic, and cultural questions. We investigate the sexual exuberance of many of Boccaccio’s tales and the tension between “high” and “low” culture. We consider the development of mercantilism and literacy in early-modern Europe and its emerging virtues of wit and self-reliance. We review the dynamics of composition and reception in manuscript culture and the book’s adaptation into different media, from illuminations to film. And by impersonating the 10 Florentines, we will reenact their pastime of telling stories and appreciate Boccaccio’s remarkably modern sensibility and unsurpassed art of writing fiction. This course is conducted in Italian.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: ITAL235, MDST245
Prereq: None

COL256 The Emergence of World Literature(s)
In the past four decades, the traditional study of national territories, their cultures, and literatures has been supplemented and challenged by concepts and phenomena such as the transnational, the diasporic, the global, and the cosmopolitan, as well as by new curricular categories such as world history, world politics, and world literature. This course will focus on world literature and will examine literary, historical, and theoretical texts to ask what is at stake in this new area. Topics will include, but are not limited to, the networks along which narratives circulate; the aesthetic and other standards that regulate the selection of plots and themes that appeal to the cultural gatekeepers; the politics of continued domination, subordination, and cultural imperialism; inclusion and exclusion; and margins, peripheries, and centers. There is as yet no single accepted theory, no consensus history, and no established canon or geography of world literature—all are evolving as literary scholars attempt to weave together elements of comparative and postcolonial literatures with the above-mentioned concepts into a new object of readerly experience and critical knowledge. We will use literary and theoretical texts to explore how world literature is being created.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-COL
Identical With: ENGL256
Prereq: None

COL257 Remembering Selves: Forces and Forms of Autobiography
The Delphic Oracle commands "know thyself," and perhaps in response, authors have felt compelled to confess, condemn, forget, and remember past selves in an effort to narrate and so envision who they are in the present. This course will look at a range of autobiographical works from The Confessions of Saint Augustine to contemporary graphic memoirs. We will ask how memory works to conserve, construct, or distance past selves; how bodies delimit selves; and how selves are conceived in and through our relations with others and with our worlds (material, social, and historical).
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL

COL258 The Word for World is Information: Ideologies of Language in Science Fiction & Film
By the middle of the 20th century, it had begun to seem possible to produce a grand theory of communication that would use language as a basis for understanding all of human thought, behavior, and culture. As competing versions of such a theory circulated through academic disciplines as disparate as anthropology, neurophysiology, and the emerging field of computer science, they also filtered out—sometimes in strangely warped or oversimplified forms—into popular culture.
This course will examine the most interesting and influential of these theories, both in their scholarly origins and in their most puzzling and promising elaborations in works of literary and filmic science fiction. We will be particularly attentive to the ways that the narrative logic of science fiction texts can gloss
over certain logical and philosophical inconsistencies in these theories while revealing others.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: ENGL260
Prereq: None

COL259 The Human Condition: Arendt, Nietzsche, Marx

"God is dead," the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche wrote in 1882, "and we have killed him!" Nietzsche presents these words as being proclaimed by "a madman who in the bright morning lit a lantern and ran around the marketplace crying incessantly." Both the content of this famous quotation and its setting express a concern with the internal and external conditions under which modern humans live, act, and think: without divine guidance and protection (internally), encountering one another only as buyers and sellers on the marketplace (externally). In this seminar, we will study three strikingly unique yet nonetheless intersecting ways of addressing the human condition after the death of god.

We will start with Hannah Arendt's magisterial THE HUMAN CONDITION (1958) and her attempt to establish three fundamental human conditions connected to the activities of labor, work, and action. From Arendt, we will proceed in reverse chronological order, first by examining Nietzsche's critical genealogy of the human condition as having been distorted and made sick by the debilitating rationality of metaphysical first principles and Christian morality, then by investigating Marx's attempts to historicize and rethink the interdependence of humans and their natural environment in terms of an alienation of practice and the transformation of human labor into an abstract power of domination over humans and, eventually, the whole planet.

Each of our three thinkers has a distinct normative concept of what constitutes an unalienated human condition, each has a distinct diagnosis of the ills of the modern human condition and its historical genesis, and each has a distinct theory of how to confront these ills. Now is the time to read them and think about, with, and against their philosophies of the human condition.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: GRST288
Prereq: None

COL262 Tolstoy

During the 19th century when Tolstoy wrote his novels and stories, literature was viewed in Russia as the intelligentsia's primary medium for debating its big questions (such as how to resolve the inequalities that had been institutionalized under serfdom, or how to choose between new and old values as Russia experienced modernization). Writers like Tolstoy and Dostoevsky willingly assumed the responsibility to address a broad range of political, historical, and philosophical-religious questions in their fiction, and they wrote novels with radical formulations as well as solutions to these questions. However, they also viewed literature, particularly the novel, as a medium with rich potential for innovative formal experimentation, and so they resisted the call for conventional ideological novels. Each of Tolstoy's best works is an innovative formal experiment that creates an unprecedented, new type of novel. This course will study how Tolstoy's writings both responded to and transcended their times by creating new novelistic forms and new truths within those forms.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: ITAL260
Prereq: ITAL112

COL264 Critical Theory: From Karl Marx to Angela Davis

According to the Frankfurt School philosopher Max Horkheimer's 1937 essay "Traditional and Critical Theory," Critical Theory aims at dislodging traditional theory's reliance on the assumption that to theorize means to categorize and explain facts from a trans-historically fixed position. Instead, Critical Theory wants to uncover the formative socio-economic processes of exploitation, struggle, and domination that underpin both the objective appearance of reality and our subjective ability to become conscious of them. In doing so, it not only wants to critique the very foundations of society and subjectivity but also wants to ignite a utopian imagination. Although Critical Theory draws on the concepts of the Western philosophical tradition (in particular on Kant and Hegel), it views them as being tainted by the "irrational totality" of bourgeois society that structurally blocks the realization of genuine freedom, equality, and liberation from fear. Hence, Critical Theory is concerned not only with the critique of specific social ills but also with the abolition of their systemic causal conditions. For this reason, it is by design a practical and activist mode of theory, as exemplified by an insight Herbert Marcuse attributes to Angela Davis: "the philosophical idea, unless it was a lie, must be translated into reality."

In this seminar, we will do three things: 1) Retrace the genesis of Critical Theory from Marx's appropriation of Hegel's dialectical method to Lukács's theory of reification; 2) Explore the Frankfurt School's ambition to establish Critical Theory as an encompassing, multi-disciplinary research program addressing the pathologies of capitalism from the interlocking perspectives of social and economic theory, psychoanalysis, empirical social research, aesthetics, and ethics; 3) Examine how contemporary heirs to the tradition of Critical Theory such as Angela Davis, Siinne Ngai, or Rei Terada have challenged and advanced the concerns of the earlier theory in light of our current neoliberal and authoritarian predicament.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-GRST, SBS-GRST
Identical With: GRST254
the city itself, as a coherent totality that might explain those relations and individual experiences that realism wants to describe; problematic because since the 19th century, the city has been both a privileged and a problematic \textit{course complements, but does not presuppose COL 266: History and Limits of Aesthetic Theory.}

This class will engage significant contributions to Aesthetic Theory in the West from antiquity to the modern period along three dimensions: theoretical, critical, and historical. From a theoretical standpoint, we will address perennial questions in aesthetics, such as what makes something a work of art in the first place, what it means for art to be "beautiful" or otherwise "successful," how differences in media condition and contribute to artistic meaning, what genera are and how they evolve, whether and how art can be ethically or politically significant, why we care about fiction, why and how we "enjoy" tragic plays or horror films, and how artistic tradition can (and should) inform individual works. From a critical standpoint, we will consider how works of art contemporaneous with each theoretical account either reinforce or challenge its specific proposals. And from a historical standpoint, we will seek to understand how aesthetic theories both respond to the specificities of their own epoch and situate themselves relative to the artistic and aesthetic traditions of their predecessors. Readings will include texts by Aristotle, Hume, Kant, Lessing, and Hegel.

This course will trace the development of Nabokov's art from its origins in Russian literature by close readings of the motifs that spiral outward through his (principally English-language) novels. Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-REES
Identical With: RUSS263, REES263, RULE263
Prereq: None

This course will consider the fascination with the exotic--with foreign landscapes, customs, and culture--in 18th- and 19th-century French fiction and, to a lesser extent, poetry. Discussions will focus on the representation of foreignness and the construction of the exotic woman, as well as on the status of the European gaze. Major authors may include Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Chateaubriand, Balzac, Mérimée, Loti, Flaubert, Hugo, Baudelaire, and Gautier.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: SPAN257
Prereq: None

The city, as a coherent totality that might explain those relations and experiences, is too vast, heterogeneous, and complex to be represented through the traditional techniques of realism.

This course will approach the problems and possibilities of the city for realism through a close reading of two large, ambitious texts that attempt to represent the city as a totality: James Joyce's novel \textit{Ulysses} (1922) and David Simon's television series \textit{The Wire} (2002-2008). We will be particularly concerned with two techniques, pioneered by Joyce, for representing the city: stream of consciousness, which creates a tour of the city from the perspective of a single, mobile flâneur; and montage, which creates a map of the city by juxtaposing various cross-sections of social life or various institutions central to the city's functioning.

COL266 History and Limits of Aesthetic Theory
Prereq: None

COL2671 Performing Ethnicity: Gypsies and the Culture of Flamenco in Spain
In this course, we will analyze how Gypsies and flamenco are associated, in fact and in fiction, and how and why they have emerged into the limelight of Spanish national cultural discourses. Although they represent discrete realities--not all Gypsies identify with flamenco and not all flamenco artists are Gypsies--correlations between the two have nonetheless been exploited by the media and by artists as an often unwanted emblem of Spanishness. The tensions surrounding this practice seem related to an undisputed fact of Spanish cultural history: Flamenco is unique within European culture; with a population of nearly one million, Gypsies are Spain's dominant minority; yet recognition of the artistic value of the former and acceptance and assimilation of the latter have been slow to congeal within Spanish society. Our practical aim will be to analyze these important aspects of Spanish culture in their historical context. We will study how the connection between Gypsies and flamenco has emerged; we will evaluate the extent to which it is valid; and we will attempt to assess what seems to be at stake in the struggles between those who promote and those who resist this connection as distinctive of Spanish national culture. In doing so, we seek to foster a deeper understanding of the importance of the Roma community within the framework of European and Spanish culture and a deeper appreciation for flamenco as a unique form of cultural expression. On the theoretical plane, we seek to understand how music, dance, literature, cinema, performance, and art can give expression to ethnicity; how cultural hegemonies emerge; and what role artists play in supporting or contesting those hegemonies. In general, this course is designed to help students develop critical skills of cultural analysis while increasing their proficiency in Spanish.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: PHIL267
Prereq: None

COL269 Modern Aesthetic Theory
Prereq: None

COL270 Modernist City-Texts
Since the 19th century, the city has been both a privileged and a problematic object of representation for narrative realism: privileged because urban spaces have increasingly been seen as shaping or producing the very social relations and individual experiences that realism wants to describe; problematic because the city itself, as a coherent totality that might explain those relations and experiences, is too vast, heterogeneous, and complex to be represented through the traditional techniques of realism.
Identical With: FREN372
Prereq: None

COL273 The Agony and the Ecstasy: The German Novel and Novella
Starting with Goethe in the 18th century, German, Austrian, and Swiss authors have made major contributions to the literary genre of the novel and the sub-genre of the novella, typically shorter than a novel and restricted to one plot line. German prose works often grapple with profound ethical questions, particularly those that bear on the meaning of life, the relation of the individual to society and to other individuals, the character of justice, definitions of ethics and morality, the nature and calling of the artist, and the tension between thought and emotion. In this course we will read, in English translation, longer or shorter works by some of the most significant and enduring authors writing in German between the 18th and 21st centuries. Particular attention will be paid to the portrayal of social and political issues, to narrative strategies and style, and to thematic continuities in the cultures of the German-speaking regions. We will also consider the challenges of translating fiction from one language and culture to another. Several films based on works read in the course will be viewed and analyzed. Ample opportunities will be provided for writing, in both expository and creative veins, and receiving detailed feedback.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-GRST
Identical With: GRST260, GELT260
Prereq: None

COL274 Outsiders in European Literature
Modern literature is replete with protagonists who represent a position or identity that is outside an accepted mainstream; they are different, peculiar and/or attractive, and potentially dangerous. This course will focus on the experience of being or being made into such an outsider, or other, and on the moral, cultural, racial, gendered, sexual, or national norms or boundaries such an outsider establishes for the inside. Reading both fiction and theory, we will ask how the terms of inside and outside are culturally and historically constructed as we also look for proposals for dealing with outsiders and their otherness. Authors may include Kafka, Mann, Camus, Colette, Fanon, Sartre, Beauvoir, Duras.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: ENGL264
Prereq: None

COL275 Virtue Ethics: Traditional, Comparative, and Contemporary Approaches
This course provides an overview and evaluation of various virtue-based approaches to ethics in the Western and Eastern traditions. In the first part of the course, we will get a basic sense for the structure and distinctive features of ancient virtue-based ethical theories. In the second part of the course, we will follow the trajectory of these approaches through to their revival in the late 20th century in the contemporary virtue ethics movement.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL276
Prereq: None

COL276 Creativity and Crisis: Germany 1918-1933
This course investigates the fascinating culture of the Weimar Republic, Germany’s first, heady, and ultimately unsuccessful experience with democracy between the end of the First World War and the Nazis’ rise to power. We will focus particularly on Berlin, coming into its own as Germany’s first true metropolis, but will also look at Munich, another hub of cultural activity and the site of Hitler’s early organizing activities. Among the topics to be studied may be the increasing influence of film, radio, and the press; modernism in literature; new impulses in art; the economic and social impact of hyperinflation and the Great Depression; changes in the roles of women; assertion of previously taboo gender identities; competing political ideologies; reactions to the immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe; the emergence of proletarian mass culture; and the observations of cultural critics such as Walter Benjamin and Siegfried Kracauer on the world taking shape before their eyes. We will also read works set in Berlin but written by outsiders (Isherwood and Porter).
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-GRST
Identical With: GRST275, GELT275
Prereq: None

COL278 European Realist Novels
The realist novel has a strangely ambivalent legacy. On the one hand, like other literary forms, it is repeatedly consigned, dismissively, to an earlier moment in literary history: surpassed by modernism, reimagined by postmodernism, and replaced by film, television, and whatever forms of new media might presently emerge. Yet it has also clearly endured—in the popular imagination as well as in the academy—as a pervasive norm, continually setting the standard against which popular narratives may be judged to be successful and (more importantly) serious. Reading these novels, then, does not just teach about an important period in literary history (though it does that, too); it gives us a better understanding of what we continue to expect from the fictional stories that claim to represent the world around us.

We will spend the first six weeks on an overview of the influential tradition of French realism, reading representative texts by Stendhal, Balzac, and Zola. In the second half of the semester, we will delve into two longer novels that have often been regarded as exemplary (even paradigmatic) works of realist fiction: Eliot’s Middlemarch and Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina. While the emphasis will be on the novels themselves—what they do and how they work—we will also read a small selection of secondary texts (variously critical, historical, and theoretical) on realism, narrative, and the novel as genre.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: RL&L278
Prereq: None

COL279F Good, Evil, Human: German Fairy Tales and Their Cultural Impact (FYS)
The collected folk tales of Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm have had a substantial impact on the cultural history of Germany and beyond. Despite our sense that we already know these texts, it is worth taking a closer look at their messages. Deceptively simple, these little tales communicate and negotiate extraordinarily important and complicated messages about what it means to be human, to behave in acceptable ways, to have and control unwelcome desires, and to (be able to) imagine a better world. We will read selected fairy tales from the Grimm collection and other texts, investigate the historical context in which the Grimms undertook their ambitious project, learn about ways in which scholarship has framed fairy tales, and discuss adaptations of the fairy-tale tradition in films and texts of the 20th century.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-GRST
Identical With: GRST279F, GELT279F
Prereq: None
COL280 Work: Its History and Future
In this course, we will explore one of the fundamental concerns of human existence: “the creation of man through human labor,” as Karl Marx once put it. Marx’s interest in self-creation through work and the possibility of overcoming all forms of alienated work is arguably at the heart of what we imagine living well means today. For many of us, an idle life without work has become unthinkable. We live to work and we work to live. Yet while we have become ever more immersed in intimate forms of immaterial labor (keeping in touch with clients at all times, collaborating via digital platforms no matter where we are, tackling our jobs with ceaseless enthusiasm and creativity), waged labor has diminished and might now be thought of as a rare good. Soon the work of truck drivers will be replaced by self-driving vehicles, and the bulk of industrial production will be designated to robots. Automation and artificial intelligence will increasingly restructure intellectual labor, like that of lawyers, accountants, and data analysts, as well. What may once have been the dream of a liberated life is now motivating a feeling of dystopian dread: Fear of losing one’s job, of being replaceable, is an all too common feeling. The jobs that remain are demanding but often monotonous. Moreover, deindustrialization in Western countries has created real misery in what used to be the core zones of global wealth accumulation—a development that right-wing populists in the United States and in Europe have been eagerly exploiting to advance protectionist and racist policies.

Against the social backdrop of precarious employment, stagnant wages, deindustrialization, the rapid expansion of vast unemployed and underemployed surplus populations, looming ecological disaster, and, crucially, the financialization of a structurally unstable global economy that seems to have exhausted its capacity for substantial growth in productivity, the future of work must be interrogated with renewed urgency. In addition to reading past and present theories of work, including some essential selections from Karl Marx and critical theory (e.g., Lukács, Adorno, Benjamin, Kraeauer), Hannah Arendt’s response to Marx in her distinction between labor and work, as well as recent academic work by feminists, affect theorists, and crisis theorists (e.g., Federici, Berlant, La Berge, Weeks, Clover), we will examine narratives and representations of work in films by Fritz Lang, Charlie Chaplin, Laurent Cantet, and Alexander Kluge, and literary texts by Brecht, Kafka, Dickens, Twain, Melville, Steinbeck, and Vonnegut. These thinkers and artists will give us a foundation for understanding the radical historical changes in the meaning of work in the past 200 years as well as its uncertain status in our immediate future.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: GRST280
Prereq: None

COL287 Nietzsche als Versucher (CLAC)
The term “Versucher” combines three meanings: (i) a writer of essays, (ii) a maker of experiments and hypotheses, and (iii) a tempter who seductively tests
convictions and provokes latent desires. Friedrich Nietzsche draws on all these senses when he proposes "Versucher" as "the not-undangerous name [he] dares to bestow" on the "philosophers of the future"—a coming generation of free spirits who will (finally) be capable of appreciating and continuing his intellectual legacy (Beyond Good and Evil, §42).

This course will interrogate Nietzsche's conception of a philosophical Versucher and examine how this concept might apply to Nietzsche himself: as an experimenter with literary style and genre (including the essay form) and as a polarizing cult figure who has attracted the fascination of generations of teenagers and the most diverse (often diametrically opposed) ideological movements. How is it that Nietzsche inspires such passionate attachment in such radically different readers? What is about his philosophical style and literary form that cultivates a feeling of intimacy and fierce allegiance while also admitting such aggressively divergent interpretations? To explore these questions, we will read and discuss excerpts from Nietzsche's writings and correspondence alongside texts by his friends and interlocutors—such as Richard Wagner, Paul Rée, and Nietzsche's unrequited paramour, Lou Andreas-Salomé. We will also look at prominent cases of his cultural reception—notably by the Nazi party (due to the influence of Nietzsche's sister, who was a party member) and simultaneously by opponents of totalitarianism such as Robert Musil, Karl Löwith, and Walter Kaufmann.

This course is part of the Fries Center for Global Studies' Cultures and Languages Across the Curriculum (CLAC) initiative. It is taught in German and associated with COL290/PHIL252 "Nietzsche - Science, Psychology, Genealogy," though students can take either course independent of the other. No background in philosophy or literature is required for this course, but advanced-intermediate (B2+) reading and spoken German is a must.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: None
Identical With: CGST290, GRST330, PHIL253
Prereq: None

COL290 Nietzsche - Science, Psychology, Genealogy
This course offers an intermediate survey of Friedrich Nietzsche's mature philosophical writings. Nietzsche's thought is centrally concerned, throughout his career, with a cluster of classical philosophical questions—does human life have meaning? What makes an action right or wrong? Can we comprehend the true nature of reality? What undergirds our normative judgments (of beauty or justice)? We will be especially concerned with tracking Nietzsche's reflections on the impact of modern science (especially the advent of Newton's mechanical physics and Darwin's evolutionary biology) on our conceptions of value and meaning in human life.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: PHIL252, GRST290
Prereq: None

COL291 Forward, Without Forgetting: The GDR in Literature and Film
In 1949, postwar Germany officially split into two separate countries with the formation of the German Democratic Republic. Also known as East Germany, the GDR was isolated from the Western world for four decades, and it developed its own, equally rich, literary and cinematic cultures. By looking at a range of textual and visual sources, students will engage critically with ways of understanding this "other" Germany and its distinctive cultural expressions, ideology, and history, including the role of the government and the Stasi. The course also explores phenomena like the "Ostalgie" and retro-chic that manifested themselves after the Fall of the Wall in 1989. The readings include short stories, songs, and excerpts by and among others: Wolf Biermann, Johannes Becher, Günther de Bryn, Stefan Heim, Rainer Kunze, Brigitte Reimann, Claudia Rusch, Susanne Schädlich, Maxi Wander, Christa Wolf. Participants will view and discuss films and TV series produced before and after unification.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-GRST
Identical With: GRST302
Prereq: GRST213

COL292 Reason and Its Limits
This course offers a close study of Immanuel Kant's magnum opus, the Critique of Pure Reason, supplemented by related writings by Kant and some secondary literature. Kant observes that the history of philosophy is rife with disagreements, even though philosophers purport to track in necessary truths disclosed by reason alone. This scandalous fractiousness calls into question reason's ability to offer substantive insights into necessary truths. Kant's "critique" aims to vindicate reason by distinguishing, in a principled manner, the sorts of things we can know with certainty from those that lie beyond the limits of human understanding. His central thesis, "transcendental idealism," holds that "reason has insight only into what it produces after its own plan" (Bxiii). In other words, we can indeed be certain of key structural features of reality such as its spatiotemporality and causal interconnectedness—but only because those features are, in some crucial sense, mind-dependent. This class will explore in detail the arguments for these claims as well as prominent interpretations of their philosophical upshot.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL291
Prereq: None

COL295 Constantinople: A Digital Archaeology of Medieval Rome
Constantinople was founded as New Rome by Emperor Constantine the Great in 330. From there, its history is that of the heart of the medieval Roman (Byzantine) Empire, which lasted until 1453, when it was succeeded by the Ottoman Empire and the city was called Istanbul. Now, we're making medieval Constantinople come alive again with an interactive map-based digital encyclopedia. In this course—which requires no previous background in history—students will be introduced to the history of Constantinople and medieval Rome. Then, after exploring the textual and material relics of this medieval metropolis, students will pursue their own research interests by collaborating on a public digital database (https://arcg.is/0e4Lb4). At the end of the course, students will draw from this database to craft their own histories, applying both imagination and analysis into believable and reliable stories that convey the diversities and paradoxes of life in The City.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: HIST230, MDST128
Prereq: None

COL297 Reading Nietzsche
Friedrich Nietzsche, trained philologist and self-proclaimed "free spirit," remains one of the most controversial figures in modern thought, a source of fascination and outrage alike. Best known as the philosopher of the "Dionysian," the "will to power," the "eternal return of the same," the "transvaluation of all values," and the "over-man," Nietzsche also proudly considered himself the most accomplished prose stylist in the German language. In this course, we will examine two closely interrelated issues: (1) the genesis of Nietzsche's major philosophical thoughts in the areas of epistemology, aesthetics, ethics, and the critique of religion, from his earliest to his latest writings; (2) the cultivation of a
COL303 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 worlds 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: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: GRST261
Prereq: None

COL308 Medievals on the Move: Pilgrimage, Jihad, Crusade, and Apocalypse

Medieval people moved: They traded and sent emissaries; they invaded and migrated; they wandered, begged, and ascended the heavens; they went on crusade, jihad, and pilgrimage. This course will first analyze the most consistently preserved sources on medieval movement: accounts of pious travel "for God's sake and not for pleasure." We will then contextualize such accounts with two other types of movement: the physical journeys of traders, diplomats, and warriors, as well as the interiorized journeys of the prophet, the mystic, and the storyteller. By encompassing this variety we will be able to pursue a larger question: Can patterns of exchange across the physical and cultural barriers of geography, language, religion, and governance reveal a more global medieval world than we usually envision?

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: MDST308, HIST303
Prereq: None

COL309 Truth & the Poet: Lyric Subjectivity and Phenomenology

Who is the poet? What is subjectivity? How is the "Lyric I" located and articulated? How do lyrics reify their own claims to truth? Is there a role for the poet in society? What is the relationship between critique and creation? This course examines the poet in relation to various formulations of subjectivity in the history of phenomenology. We will explore how lyric subjectivity may speak truth without deferring to or differing from empirical and objective truth claims. We will consider whether the history of the lyric can be read as a series of observations that contribute to understandings of subjectivity, agency, and intersubjectivity before and after the theological turn in French phenomenology. Readings in lyric poetry will be paired with readings in phenomenology as a way of putting poetry and philosophy into conversation. Assignments will be both analytic and creative.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL313 Classic Spanish Plays: Love, Violence, and (Poetic) Justice on the Early Modern Stage

From 1580 to 1680, Spanish playwrights created one of the great dramatic repertories of world literature, as inventive, varied, and influential as the classical Greek and Elizabethan-Jacobean English traditions. A distinguishing feature of this theatrical tradition is the unusual prominence it lent to actresses (and roles written for them), as well as to women in the paying audiences. This profit-driven popular entertainment of its day appealed to the learned and illiterate,
to women and men, and to rich and poor alike. And the plays correspondingly mixed high and low characters, language, genres, and sources, with results regularly attacked by moralists. Vital, surprising, and ingenious, they exposed the creative tension between art and profit on a new scale, a tension that remains alive for us. We will examine five of the greatest of these plays by Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca, and Tirso de Molina in a variety of genres and modes (history, epic, romantic comedy, tragedy, Islamic borderland, metatheater, parody, siege play, philosophical and theological drama), with their deft character portraits (the original Don Juan by Tirso; Calderón’s “Spanish Hamlet” Segismundo; Lope’s spitfire diva Diana, the Countess of Belflor; and Cervantes’s border-crossing Catalina, the Ottoman sultan’s Spanish queen) and their virtuoso dialogue, inventive plots, and dazzling metrical variety. We will look at the social conditions that enabled the Spanish stage to serve as a kind of civic forum, where conflicts between freedom and authority or desire and conformism could be acted out and the fears, hopes, dangers, and pleasures generated by conquest, urbanization, trade, shifting gender roles, social mobility, religious reform, regulation of matrimony and violence, and clashing intellectual and political ideals could be aired. We pay particular attention to the shaping influence of women on the professional stage (in contrast to England) and to performance spaces and traditions. Organized around the careful reading of five key play-texts in Spanish, together with historical, critical, and theoretical readings, this course assumes no familiarity with the texts, with Spanish history, or with literary analysis. However, an interest in engaging these wonderful plays closely, imaginatively, and historically is essential. There will be opportunities to pursue performance, adaptation, and translation.

This counts as a Theater Method course for the Theater Major.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: SPAN231, THEA231
Prereq: None

COL317 (Un)Popular Performances/Performances (lm)Populaires
In 1607, a young Scotsman named William Drummond was studying law in Bourges, France, a popular "study abroad destination" for Scottish students as well as an important stopover city on the routes of itinerant professional and amateur actors. While in Bourges, these actors varied their performance of different kinds of plays, including tragedies, comedies, tragiocomedies, pastoral, and farces. Although these performances were often met with hostility from the city's religious authorities, Drummond attended several plays during his stay and, lucky for us, took rather detailed notes about them. His observations from the 1607 "season" are preserved in his personal papers in the National Library of Scotland.

This course will use Drummond's notes as a guide to discover and examine other forms of evidence—both traditional and non-traditional—that help us understand what was at stake in theater, performance, and (un)popular culture in late 16th- and early 17th-century France. We will study the ways the past has been organized and cataloged, how traditional sources and research have shaped our view of the past, and how unconventional methodologies can help us locate new sites of knowledge and culture. Written assignments, class discussions, and (most) readings will be in French.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM327, FREN327
Prereq: None

COL320 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: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM320, FGSS319
Prereq: None

COL324 Interpreting the "New World": France and the Early Modern Americas
The impact and long-lasting effects of the "discovery" of the "New World" on Europeans cannot be overestimated. This advanced seminar will compare and contrast styles of expedition and conquest among the European nations, though the course will focus on the French context and the various events and encounters that occurred in the early modern Americas, particularly between 1492 and 1610, a period that laid the groundwork for the subsequent colonial project. Throughout the course, we will pay special attention to the Amerindians' points of view. In turn, students will examine the insights and blind spots in 16th-century French navigators', cosmographers', cartographers', and intellectuals' interpretations, representations, and negotiations of difference by critically engaging with concepts such as nature, culture, alterity, gender, sexuality, marriage, religion, exchange, possession, conquest, and war. Reading, writing, and class discussions will be in French.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: FREN324, FGSS324
Prereq: None

COL327 Cervantes
Cervantes is known chiefly for DON QUIXOTE, often described as the first modern novel and fountainhead of one of the great modern myths of individualism. DON QUIXOTE also reimagines virtually every fashionable, popular, and disreputable literary genre of its time: chivalric, pastoral, picaresque, sentimental, adventure, and Moorish novels; the novella; verse forms; drama; and even the ways these kinds of literary entertainment were circulated and consumed, debated, celebrated, and reviled. It is a book about the life-enhancing (and endangering) power of books and reading and the interplay of fiction and history and truths and lies. Cervantes' art remains fresh and unsettling, sparing no one and nothing, including the author and his work. Distinguished by its commitment to the serious business of humor, make-believe, and play, the novel is at once a literary tour de force and a fascinating lens through which to examine the political, social, religious, and intellectual debates of its moment. Characteristic themes include social reality as artifact or fiction, the paradoxical character of truth, the irreducible diversity of taste and perception, the call for consent in politics and love, and personal identity (including gender) as a heroic quest. In this course, we will read, discuss, and write about DON QUIXOTE, along with a sampling of critical, philosophical, literary, and artistic responses it has inspired.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: SPAN236, MDST254
Prereq: None

COL328 History and Theory
This seminar will explore the contemporary theory and philosophy of history, giving special attention to the publications of "History and Theory," the academic journal owned and edited by Wesleyan University faculty for the past 50 years. We might discuss such topics as the nature of historical truth; history as a
science, with laws, and as an art, with style; the nature of historical time; gender history; agency and causation; history of the emotions; and history's moral imperatives; as well as the ramifications of the postmodern turn. We will give special attention to recent arguments about the theory of history and the nature of the past.

Key figures are likely to include Walter Benjamin, R. G. Collingwood, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Hayden White, Frank Ankersmit, Barbara Rosenwein, Joan Scott, and Dominick LaCapra.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST338
Prereq: None

COL332 European Intellectual History since the Renaissance
This class will examine some of the major texts in Western thought since the Renaissance. Emphasis will be placed on close reading and analysis of the texts.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST216
Prereq: None

COL332L European Intellectual History since the Renaissance- Service Learning
This class will examine some of the major texts in Western thought since the Renaissance. Emphasis will be placed on close reading and analysis of the texts.

This course is designed for Service Learning. Students in this course will read short selections about Aging, meet with a specific senior citizen to talk about the books we are reading for class (5 times in the semester), and write 2-page papers responding to those meetings. Otherwise, both History 216L and History 216 will have the same class requirements.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST216L
Prereq: None

COL334 The History of Spanish Cinema
This course explores the development of Spanish cinema from the early 20th century to the present. We will evaluate how social, political, and economic circumstances condition Spanish cinematography at key junctures of Spanish cultural history in terms of the production and distribution of films, cinematographic style, and thematics. The course will also highlight key facets of the Spanish star system as well as the auteurism of those directors who have achieved international acclaim by reworking a national film idiom within international frames of reference.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: RL&L301, SPAN301, FILM301
Prereq: None

COL335 Sophist, Statesman, Philosopher: Plato’s Later Metaphysics and Politics
How is it possible to speak falsely? Plato connects this question with a puzzle he inherits from the great pre-Socratic philosopher Parmenides: to speak falsely is to speak about what is not; but in speaking about what is not, we ascribe being somehow to not-being, which sounds like a contradiction. This seminar will focus on the metaphysical, epistemological, and political issues generated by Parmenides’ puzzle and explore Plato’s solution to them in two of his later-period works: the Sophist and the Statesman. In the process, we will see how Plato rethinks his theory of forms in these dialogues, how he learns to let go of Socrates, how a sophist should be distinguished from a philosopher, and how all of this is relevant to politics and the art of ruling.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL

COL336 Theories of Translation
This course will examine a range of predominately 20th-century theoretical approaches to literary translation in the fields of philosophy, linguistics, literary criticism, and translation studies. In an effort to derive a definition of literary translation, we will focus on two questions. First: What is literal (or word-for-word) translation? How does it differ from other kinds of translation; how does it conceptualize meaning; what are its purposes; and what oppositions (e.g., literal vs. figurative) can we use to make sense of it? Second: What is the relationship between language and culture? Can translation give us access to an unfamiliar culture; can literary translation affect the culture in which it is produced; or does translation simply colonize foreign texts by transforming them into something legible to a domestic culture?

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL

COL338 Utter Nonsense: Modernist Experiments with Meaning
In "The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism" (1933) T.S. Eliot wrote, "The chief use of the ‘meaning’ of a poem, in the ordinary sense, may be [...] to satisfy one habit of the reader, to keep his mind diverted and quiet, while the poem does its work upon him: much as the imaginary burglar is always provided with a bit of nice meat for the house-dog."

To extend this analogy: this course will look at texts by meatless burglars, writers who set out not to sedate but to conscript the sense-sniffing house-dog as they pillage the house for things of value.

This course will survey some of literary modernism’s most defamiliarizing texts, ones that challenge interpreters by withholding or avoiding that digestible (and perhaps soporific) “meaning” Eliot referred to. We will look at modernist formal experiments from Gertrude Stein and Guillaume Apollinaire through Dada, surrealism, the French New Novel, and the theater of the absurd, alongside the less prominent but equally influential exploration of aleatory, procedural, and machine-generated poetry by writers such as Jackson Mac Low and the Oulipo. Working with authors' manifestos and critics' interpretations alongside the primary texts, we'll pay special attention to the varied relationships to meaning that can be found at work in texts that a casual reader might lump together as simply meaningless or nonsensical.

As the semester progresses and we get a clearer sense of what these texts require from their readers, we'll begin to ask (with the help of some basic readings in semiotic and psychoanalytic literary theory) how our interpretive behavior when confronted with seeming nonsense might relate to the various things we do when we read normal or typical texts—ones that strike us as already or obviously meaningful. Is making sense something that a text can ever do on its own or something that we must always do to (or for) the text?

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
COL339 Reading Theories
In this survey of theories that have shaped the reading of literature and the analysis of culture, emphasis is on key concepts--language, identity, subjectivity, gender, power, and knowledge--and on key figures and schools such as Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Saussure, Barthes, Gramsci, Benjamin, Althusser, Foucault, Lacan, Deleuze, Jameson, postmodernism, and U.S. feminism.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL295, CCIV393, CEAS340, RL&L290, GRST231, RUSS340, RULE340, REES340
Prereq: None

COL341 Plato's REPUBLIC
"The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato." This declaration, famously made by Alfred North Whitehead in the early 20th century, seems especially true of Plato's Republic. No other work in the Western tradition can lay claim to setting the tone so influentially for the development of philosophy as a discipline. Almost every branch of philosophical thought we are familiar with today--on matters of ethics, politics, moral psychology, epistemology, metaphysics, and aesthetics--receives a major formulation in this text. This seminar will be devoted to a close reading of each of the 10 books of The Republic alongside various perspectives that have been taken on this magisterial work in contemporary philosophy, journalism, and literature. We will focus on The Republic primarily as a work of moral psychology by investigating the topical question of the dialogue: Why is it better to live justly rather than unjustly? For Plato, a just life is one governed by the pursuit of wisdom or learning, and this he believes will also be a psychologically healthy one. By contrast, a life governed by the indiscriminate pursuit of power--the life of a tyrant--is psychologically corrupted. These are bold claims. What is Plato's argument for them? In raising this question, we will consider the political project Plato embarks upon in the Republic in constructing a just society, as well as connected issues he raises in the dialogue concerning the nature of human motivation, the distinction between belief and knowledge, the distinction between appearance and reality, the importance of a proper education to the human good, and the role of art and beauty in furthering the common good. Alongside Plato, we will read various works of secondary literature, journalistic pieces, and works of fiction this semester, all inspired by The Republic.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL303, CCIV257
Prereq: None

COL342 The Word for World is Information: Ideologies of Language in Science Fiction & Film
By the middle of the 20th century, it had begun to seem possible to produce a grand theory of communication that would use language as a basis for understanding all of human thought, behavior, and culture. As competing versions of such a theory circulated through academic disciplines as disparate as anthropology, neurophysiology, and the emerging field of computer science, they also filtered out--sometimes in strangely warped or oversimplified forms--into popular culture.
This course will examine the most interesting and influential of these theories, both in their scholarly origins and in their most puzzling and promising elaborations in works of literary and filmic science fiction. We will be particularly attentive to the ways that the narrative logics of science fiction texts can gloss over certain logical and philosophical inconsistencies in these theories while revealing others.
Readings will likely include scholarly works by Norbert Wiener, Benjamin Lee Whorf, Roman Jakobson, Noam Chomsky, Warren Weaver, and others alongside science fiction texts by George Orwell, Damon Knight, Samuel Delaney, Ursula K. Le Guin, Suzette Haden Elgin, Neal Stephenson, Koji Suzuki, and Ted Chiang (with special attention to television and film adaptations).
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None

COL347 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: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: CHUM315, HIST327
Prereq: None

COL348 Cybernetics and Ghosts: Narrative Machines and Posthumanist Fiction
Within certain texts that have been canonized under the various rubrics of postmodernist, posthumanist, and cyber fiction, there is a yearning to either discover or banish what in the mid-20th century was quaintly referred to as the "ghost in the machine." On the one hand, these texts offer a model of literature and of narrative as machine: produced algorithmically (e.g. via combinatorial recursion) or through the application of some experimental constraint, conceit, or gimmick, they seem to be functioning according to a program or plan rather than relating the events of a human life. Against or within this formal framing, these novels find themselves having to account for their human characters (and readers) in one of two ways: either by mechanizing them (in their motivations, their behaviors, and even their narrative desires) or by appealing ultimately to some sort of spirit, inspiration, or even ghost.
This course will examine the ways that several of these texts attempt to make sense--simultaneously--of mechanist models of the human (particularly derived from cybernetics) and of their own seemingly inorganic--and even alienating--narrative forms.
Primary texts will include novels and stories by Georges Perec, Jorge Luis Borges, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Italo Calvinio, Vladimir Nabokov, John Barth, Julio Cortázar, Gabriel García Márquez, Mark Danielewski.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Prereq: None
COL349 Modernism and the Total Work of Art
The term “total work of art” refers to the German concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk, which took on new urgency in the 19th century amid social upheaval and revolution. Understood as the intention to reunite the arts into one integrated work, the total work of art was tied from the beginning to the desire to recover and renew the public function of art. While there exist many approaches to totality in the modern era, this course focuses on modernist theories and practices that simultaneously critiqued existing society and posited a utopian alternative. We will begin by studying formulations of totality in response to a cultural crisis initiated by the 1789 French Revolution. From there, we turn to German idealism and to an analysis of composer Richard Wagner’s ideas and compositions that made the idea of the synthesis of the arts a central focus for European modernism. Yet if Wagner’s works and writings provided the dominant reference for subsequent developments from the 1880s onward, these most often consisted of a search for alternatives to his own theory and practice, particularly in the visual arts. We will examine attempts to envision totality after Wagner in Impressionist painting and German Expressionism. Ideas of totality and utopia continued to carry positive associations for modern artists until the 1930s, when they became co-opted by totalitarian governments. The course concludes by examining the perversion of modernist dreams in Nazi festivals and art exhibitions.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA339, GRST239, GELT239, RL&L339
Prereq: None

COL350 History as Tragedy: Genre, Gender, and Power in the Alexiad of Anna Komnena
Why did it take until the 11th century for a woman to write a work in the genre of history? What did it take for Anna Komnena—a renowned student of ancient literature, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy, and a princess of the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire—to finally break into this most gendered of genres? And, how has Anna Komnena’s accomplishment been received? This course will spend an entire semester delving into this deeply literary history, and its influence from the Middle Ages to the present. Students will engage with “The Alexiad” through close intertextual readings, critical scholarship in history, relevant work in theory, and digital research methods.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: MDST350, HIST328
Prereq: None

COL359 Philosophical Classics I: Ancient Western Philosophy
This course provides an overview of the development of Ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, from its inception in the 6th century BCE through to Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, the Epicureans, and the Stoics. In exploring this material, we will touch on all or nearly all of the central concerns of the Western philosophical tradition: metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, politics, aesthetics, religion, and logic. Our focus in class will be on the close analysis of primary texts. Students must be willing to engage with readings that are fascinating but at the same time dense, difficult, and perplexing. The course requires no prior experience in philosophy and should be of equal interest to students who are pursuing or intend to pursue other majors.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL201, CCIV217
Prereq: None

COL360 Philosophical Classics II: Early Modern Philosophy from Descartes Through Kant
Can we ever hope to attain certain knowledge of the external world? Can we know ourselves? How is our mind related to our body? Are our senses more reliable than our intellect? Or is it the other way round? Can we have science without a belief in God? These are some of the questions that excited the philosophical imagination of the major intellectual figures of the early modern period, an era of unparalleled collaboration between science and philosophy. In this course we will examine how the Scientific Revolution encouraged philosophers toward radical innovation in epistemology and philosophy of mind, laying the foundations for our own modern conceptions of natural law, scientific explanation, consciousness and self-consciousness, knowledge and belief. We will be reading, analyzing, and arguing with some of the most influential works in the history of Western philosophy, including Descartes’ MEDITATIONS, Locke’s ESSAY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING, Hume’s ENQUIRY CONCERNING HUMAN UNDERSTANDING, and Kant’s CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL202
Prereq: None

COL390 Romanticism-Realism-Modernism
In the study of German literature (and art), the terms romanticism, realism, and modernism designate a span of time extending from the “Age of Goethe” to the mid-20th century literary cultures of West Germany, East Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. In this seminar, we will want to take a closer look at representative examples for each of the three categories: What kind of subject matters are prevalent in each respective period, what narrative, dramatic, and poetic devices and forms are typically employed? What distinguishes these periods from one another, how useful are these distinctions? What, finally, is the purpose of such periodizing of literature?

The purpose of this seminar is twofold: 1. It is intended to provide a historical overview of German literature by engaging with representative romanticist, realist, and modernist works of prose, drama, and lyric; 2. It is designed to critically probe the concepts of romanticism, realism, and modernism: How useful are these categories in making us understand the evolution of fiction, authorship and readership, literary subjectivity, or narrative form? What are some pitfalls of using these categories?

All readings, papers, and discussions will be in German.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-GRST
Identical With: GRST390
Prereq: None

COL391 Diderot
In this class we will come to know the most progressive and often radical thinker of the French Enlightenment, Denis Diderot (1713-1784). We will begin this seminar with an examination of how this country abbot grew into the most well known atheist of his generation. We will then move onto his famous 74,000 page Encyclopédie, a book that not only dragged sacrilege and freethinking out into the open, but triggered a decades-long scandal that involved the Sorbonne, the Paris Parliament, the King, and the Pope. (During this portion of the class, students will undertake translations of select entries [from French to English] of the “dictionnaire” for possible publication.) In the second half of the semester, we will also study the writer’s freewheeling art criticism. Finally, we will read two groundbreaking novels. The first of these, “La Religieuse”, is a gripping pseudo-memoir of a nun who suffers unspeakably cruel abuse after she announces that she wants to leave her convent. The second, “Jacques le Fataliste”, is a
freewheeling anti-novel where Diderot used fiction to take up the problem of free will. In the final portion of the class, we will also read selections from his anticolonial and antislavery writings.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: FREN391
Prereq: None

COL401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

COL402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

COL403 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

COL404 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

COL407 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

COL408 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

COL409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

COL410 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

COL411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

COL412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

COL419 Student Forum
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

COL420 Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.