

NEW HUMANITIES COURSES AY 2023–2024

English

En/Wr 83. Personal Narrative and STEM Research. *3-0-6; third term.* This course focuses on personal narrative and memoir writing by STEM researchers. STEM research strives for objectivity and replicability, and key genres of STEM research writing require that writers repress their subjectivity and individuality. However, a researcher's experience of inquiry is often deeply personal and emotional, and some researchers choose to write about those experiences in personal essays and memoirs. We will analyze a wide variety of this narrative writing, and we will examine connections between the narratives' formal features and the rhetorical effects they might have on readers. Drawing on what we learn, students will compose an excerpt of their own memoir or a stand-alone personal narrative essay. The course will also explore current approaches to spoken storytelling sometimes utilized by researchers, such as the Moth story and the TED talk. Satisfies the Institute scientific writing requirement and the option oral communications requirement for humanities majors. Instructor. Hall.

Hum/En 27. Introduction to the Modern Novel. *3-0-6; third term.* This course is an introduction to the study of the contemporary novel in English. We will explore the value of reading novels both for their own sake and for what they might tell us about the history, culture, and politics of the contemporary English language. We will read around three novels from the twenty-first century, along with relevant essays, keywords, and short stories. Authors read may include Zadie Smith, Bernadine Evaristo, Angie Cruz, Tommy Orange, Julie Buntin, Akwaeke Emezi, and Ocean Vuong. Instructor: Murphy.

Hum/En 28. Telling Time in American Modernism. *3-0-6; first term.* This course will explore modernist literature's relationship to time. We will identify the methods that modernist narratives use to characterize the experience of lived time, or temporality, such as stream of consciousness, non-linear storytelling, and narrative omissions. We will ask: what challenges does temporal experience pose to clock time and, more broadly, historical time? The course will emphasize the influence of new technologies on modernist representations of time and space, including rural and

urban space, and modernism's engagement with changing attitudes regarding race, gender and sexuality. Students will learn about key movements within American modernism, including the Harlem Renaissance, and may opt to analyze modernist literature's relationships to other genres, including music and visual culture. Instructor. Sherazi.

En 140. African American Expatriate Culture in Postwar Europe. *3-0-6; second term.* In the years following World War II, an unprecedented number of African American writers and artists moved to Paris and Rome, many seeking greater personal liberties and a refuge from racial discrimination at home. As we explore literature, nonfiction, and visual culture created by African Americans in postwar Europe, we will consider: how and why does the postwar creative scene in Paris differ from that of Rome? We will analyze postwar African American expatriate writing's unique and often critical perspectives regarding American society and culture and identify the literary strategies that writers used to address the changing times, promote social justice, and advance new narrative forms, often by crossing traditional boundaries of genre and nation. Authors and artists studied may include: James Baldwin, Richard Wright, Barbara Chase-Riboud, William Demby, Maya Angelou, and Ralph Ellison. Instructor. Sherazi.

En 141. Science on Stage. *3-0-6; first term.* Science is no stranger to performance. There is a long tradition of presenting scientific ideas on various stages, whether for audiences comprised of experts or for a curious public, and there is an equally long tradition of integrating scientific ideas into theatrical works. In this course, we will read several scientifically informed plays, with a focus on the twentieth century. We will explore the ways in which scientific ideas shape the dialogue, plot, and staging of theatrical works and how theater can cause us to consider scientific thought from a new perspective. Readings are likely to include *The Physicists* (Dürrenmatt), *Kopenhagen* (Frayn), *Arcadia* (Stoppard), and *Inherit the Wind* (Lawrence and Lee), among other examples, including contemporary works. This course will also invite both scientists and playwrights into the classroom in order to enrich classroom discussions. Instructor: Holland.

En 142. U.S. Literature Before the Civil War. *3-0-6; second term.* The course will focus on the literature – what F.O. Matthiessen called “The American Renaissance” -- produced in the period leading up to the Civil War. We will consider representations of gender, race, and class, as well as

the aesthetic sensibilities in works by the following: Frederick Douglass, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Harriet Jacobs, Herman Melville, Edgar Allan Poe, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Henry David Thoreau. Instructor: Weinstein.

En 149. The Literature of Crisis. *3-0-6; third term.* Novels, poetry, and memoirs often hinge on experiences of crisis. They can be individual and/or general, historically particular and/or universal: a plane crash; a war; a sudden death; a prolonged one. This course will examine representations of crisis, with a specific focus on their narrative implications. What are the temporal, spatial, and aesthetic effects of crisis? Authors covered may include Joan Didion, Percival Everett, Allen Ginsberg, Tom McCarthy, Toni Morrison, Kurt Vonnegut, Virginia Woolf, Elie Wiesel, Joy Williams. Instructor: Weinstein.

History and Philosophy of Science

HPS/H 169. Selected Topics in the History of Science and Technology – The Occult Origins of Modern Science: Alchemy, Astrology, and Magic. *3-0-6; second term.* Modern science is often described as a rational, empirical, and objective search for truth about nature. But how, when, and why did science come to acquire these qualities? Many scholars look to the exciting developments and discoveries of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe—the so-called “Scientific Revolution”—as the defining period for the emergence of modern science. If “modern” science is defined in these terms, then “premodern” science must have looked more like pseudo-science, superstition, or myth. However, that is far from the truth. In this course, we’ll work to uncover the role that the occult sciences, including alchemy, astrology, and magic, played in the formation of modern science. Our studies of the occult sciences will force us to think more deeply about what distinguishes modern science from the occult sciences, and to question why their role in the development of modern science has also been obscured.

Languages

L 177. Advanced Chinese – Classical Chinese. 3-0-6; *second term*. Prerequisites: L 171abc, L 172abc or equivalent. This course provides students with solid grasp of the basic patterns and vocabulary of classical Chinese through classical fables, and gradually introduce students to more complex and lengthy readings including philosophical and historical works, prose, and poetry. The class will also focus on the differences and similarities of word choices and expressions in modern and classical Chinese, in order to facilitate students' understanding of modern Chinese literary styles. Instructor: Wang.

L 169 (H 169). Chinese Cinema. 3-0-6; *third term*. Offered concurrently with Hum 169. This course offers an overview of Chinese-language films from the early twentieth century to the present. We will view a selection of cinematic masterpieces and place each film in its historical context, considering both the aesthetic form and socio-cultural content of the film. Lecture topics include the Golden Ages of early Chinese cinema, Hong Kong New Wave, the Fifth Generation of Chinese filmmakers, Taiwan New Cinema, the Sixth Generation of Chinese filmmakers, Chinese animation, Asia-Pacific co-productions, and sci-fi movies. Students who write papers in Chinese may enroll in this class as L 169. Students who write papers in English may enroll in this class as Hum 169, which satisfies the advanced humanities requirement. This course can be repeated for credit when the course content changes. Instructor: Wang.

Philosophy

PI/HPS 183. Bioethics. 3-0-6; *first and third terms*. A survey of issues in bioethics. Topics may include: abortion and reproductive rights; euthanasia; physician-patient relationship; use of human embryos and stem cells in research; use of human subjects in research and the concept of informed consent; research on and treatment of non-human animals; organ transplantation, distribution, and sale; genetic modification of organisms (including humans); synthetic biology; cure vs. enhancement and other issues in biotechnology and neuroethics. Instructors: Gurcan, Helou.

Visual Culture

Hum/VC 49. Seeing Race. 3-0-6; *first and second term.* From colorblind casting to racial profiling, visual culture is at the heart of contemporary conversations about race and racism. We are living in a moment where representations of racial differences are both highly visible and highly contested in art, popular culture, and mass media across the US and in many other parts of the world. Rather than treat these representations as reflections of reality, this course takes a critical look at the relationship between visual culture and the production of (racialized) knowledge and situates this relationship in a broader global and historical context. We will consider how images shape our ‘common sense’ ideas about race and its intersections with ability, gender, and sexuality, and explore how race informs what – and how - we see. In addition to reading landmark literature by scholars like Frantz Fanon, bell hooks, Richard Dyer, Edward Said, and Jodi Byrd, students will engage with artists, filmmakers, and activists who work to dismantle what Nicholas Mirzoeff (2023) calls “white sight,” or the distinctive ways of seeing that characterize white supremacy. Instructor: Stielau.

VC 131. Visual Culture and the California Environment. 3-0-6; *second term.* This course examines historical and contemporary visual representations of the natural world and resources in art and science through a political, economic and social lens. We will draw upon theory and practices from art, science, geography and landscape studies to critically analyze how artists, scientists, corporations, government agencies, activists, and local inhabitants use environmental imagery for diverse purposes with sometimes conflicting interests. Each term will center on a specific theme related to California and climate change, for example, water or energy. The course includes projects, lectures, readings, discussions and a 2-day field trip. Students will learn to think critically while developing creative, culturally complex approaches to observing, recording, and representing the natural world. Instructors: Jacobson, Mushkin.

VC 132. Visual Activism. 3-0-6; *third term.* Toppling monuments and cellphone footage. Meme-essays and flyers. Vandalized paintings and crowdsourced image libraries. Now more than ever, practices of protest and resistance depend on the force and reach of visual media, alongside tactics of spectacle, visibility, and selective opacity. The term “visual activism” coined by the queer South

African photographer Zanele Muholi usefully connects a wide array of approaches to catalyzing change, but it also prompts questions. Why do activists turn to visual culture to make demands legible? What are the limits of the visual in communicating claims? Can different media help us to think or do politics differently? In this course, we will take our lead from Muholi to investigate the evolving relationship between contemporary activist practices and visual culture across a range of case studies from Tahrir Square to Rhodes Must Fall. Topics include but are not limited to the relevance of aesthetics to politics; tactical media; creativity and efficacy; the role and risks of activism in the art world, and the ethics of harnessing an image. As a key part of this course, students will hear from artist-organizers in the United States and abroad and apply their lessons in creative disobedience to a practical project. Instructor: Stielau.