

INTD 105 – Writing Seminars

SPRING 2015

**Intd 105 01/CRN 54951/Bailey 110/Krumrine, Kristi**  
**Sex, Skulls & Aliens**

**MF 11:30-12:45**

This course is designed to help students learn to think critically and to express themselves clearly in writing. The course is centered around controversial topics in anthropology, both from the history of the discipline as well as those currently debated. These topics include but are not limited to Margaret Mead's work in Samoa, early human finds, and alien explanations for the appearance of complex societies. The nature of the course content encourages students to think critically about the scientific method and human bias and the structure of the course provides students with the opportunity to learn about the writing process.

**Intd 105 02/CRN 53556/Bailey 103/Tomczak, Timothy**  
**Media and Madness**

**TR 5:30-6:45**

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

**Intd 105 03/CRN 56899/Sturges 223/Swartz, James**  
**Religion & Science in US History**

**TR 4:00-5:15**

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

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**Intd 105 04/CRN 53558/ISC 136/Donofrio, John**

**MW 1:00-2:15**

**Intd 105 05/CRN 53563/ISC 136/Donofrio, John**

**MW 11:30-12:45**

**Philosophy of Art**

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

**Intd 105 06/CRN 53566/Welles 132/Edgar, Stacy**

**MWF 9:30-10:20**

**Philosophy of Love**

What is love? How is true love to be distinguished from false or illusory love? What is the relationship between love and beauty, between love and sex, between love and friendship? These questions and other related issues (such as the role of imagination or fantasy in love) will be critically examined. The main texts are: Plato's *Phaedrus*, which is both about love and about the art of writing; Plato's *Symposium*, a major philosophical work about love and beauty and a masterful literary work; and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a literary work that insightfully examines the same philosophical questions (after all, it is set in Athens, the city of philosophers). Course material will be supplemented by poetry, art, music, and film clips related to the theme of romantic love. Essays will require a careful reading of the course texts, a developing skill in writing, and a critical ability to construct and evaluate arguments.

**Intd 105 07/CRN 55466/Monroe 105>Showers, Dennis**

**TR 4:00-5:15**

**Writing For & About the Sciences**

In 1811 Amedeo Avogadro formulated the hypothesis that equal volumes of gases at the same temperature and pressure contain equal numbers of molecules. This idea, and its extension to distinguish between atomic and molecular weights is the basis of modern analytical chemistry. And yet, it had little or no impact on the field of chemistry for almost a half of a century. In 1858 Stanislao Cannizzaro developed the outline for a course in chemistry based on Avogadro's obscure idea. Within two years other chemists became aware of the concept through Cannizzaro's writings and substantial change in the field began. This work directly led to the revision of the periodic table by Julius Meyer and Dmitri Mendeleev and the reality of quantitative chemistry. There are competing explanations for why Avogadro's work did not impact the science of chemistry until Cannizzaro got involved. The most often cited reason has to do with Avogadro's lack of ability to communicate effectively in writing. The Chemical Heritage web site states “By all

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accounts Cannizzaro was much clearer in his explanations than Avogadro,” This course is meant to develop your critical reading and writing skills both *for* the sciences and *in* the sciences. These are my ways of distinguishing communication supporting conversation within the scientific community and connections between the scientific community and the larger public. We will explore both purposes of effective communication and the similarities and differences between them.

**Intd 105 08/CRN 53592/Sturges 106/Ware, Linda**

**Disability in America**

**MW 1:00-2:15**

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

**Intd 105 09/CRN 53593/Welles 134/Pankratz, Ashley**

**War Stories**

**WF 4:00-5:15**

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

**Intd 105 10/CRN 55372/Sturges 221/Lofkrantz, Jennifer**

**Modern Day Slavery**

**MW 1:00-2:15**

Although every jurisdiction in the world has abolished slavery, slavery and enslavement did not end with legal abolition. Indeed, numerically, there are currently more people enslaved today than at any time in the past. Using freedom narratives of those who escaped enslavement as well as articles produced by researchers, this course will explore why slavery continues to exist in the contemporary world, how individuals are enslaved, the work of contemporary slaves, and the similarities and differences between historical and contemporary slavery.

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**Intd 105 11/CRN 53595/Welles 140/Scipione, Paul**

**TR 11:30-12:45**

**Intd 105 24/CRN 53625/Welles 138/Scipione, Paul**

**TR 4:00-5:15**

**Affluence in America**

What's more quintessential than the American Dream? It's even guaranteed in our Declaration of Independence as the "pursuit of happiness." Study hard and work even harder. Save and invest. Is the American Dream in need of redefinition? Have companies become too adept at "data mining" and exciting our passions to spend? Have "wants" somehow morphed into "needs?" And how do we explain pockets of poverty that have resisted four decades of social engineering? Class readings ranging from Steinbeck's the *Grapes of Wrath* to Stanley's *The Millionaire Next Door*, as well as shared nuggets discovered in the library, interviews with competing experts, and personal and family anecdotes will be used by students to develop both effective verbal and written positions on affluence in America. Our collective research will then be preserved in a written class *Proceedings* that we can share with others.

**Intd 105 12/CRN 53596/Sturges 111/Denton, Morgan**

**Imperialism, Revolution & Gender**

**TR 1:00-2:15**

The purpose of this course is for students to exercise and improve their ability to dissect, debate, and critically assess a source as well as to sharpen their ability to write persuasively, with strong arguments and evidentiary support. In this section, we will analyze a variety of imperial cultures and revolutionary movements in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Our common thread of analysis will be how gender roles affect, and are affected by, imperial and revolutionary situations. What kind of gender systems do various imperialists/revolutionaries embrace and why? How do these systems fit into their larger political goals and ideals? How convincing are these authors' arguments? This course will expose students to a variety of sources from the visual (political posters, cartoons) to the written (revolutionary tracts, autobiographical accounts, short fiction) to the auditory (popular songs, speeches). These will provide a rich tapestry for the class to evaluate in a series of writing exercises and assignments.

**Intd 105 13/CRN 56227/South 241/Henry, Sharon**

**Reading-to-Learn and the Use of Nontraditional Texts in the Classroom**

**TR 1:00-2:15**

Graphic novels, blogs, ebooks, wordless picture books, podcasts, art, movies, and other nontraditional forms of text have become popular in today's culture. Some of the world's great literature, biographies, autobiographies, fiction, and nonfiction can all be "read" in varying formats. They are written for the young as well as the older audience. However, some have questioned the legitimacy of their use in today's classrooms. Do these nontraditional forms of text promote critical thinking and, if so, how? Is the art of the English language compromised in these texts? Ultimately, this course will explore what value, if any, exists in the use of nontraditional texts when reading-to-learn in today's classrooms.

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**Intd 105 14/CRN 55429/Fraser 114/Tsang, Ronny**

**Themes in Contemporary American Literature**

**TR 6:00-7:15**

This interdisciplinary course will utilize the 2007 and 2009 editions of The Best American Nonrequired Reading Series to explore the themes and ideas addressed in contemporary American Literature. We'll set out on our journey through modern American Literature in the hopes of discovering some truth about the state of our nation and the people living in it. Our search will take us through mainstream and unconventional works of short fiction, graphic novels, speeches, excerpts from novels, photos and artwork, essays, music, film, non-fiction, interviews, internet documents, letters, and other assorted works. Students should be fully prepared to read and write about, analyze, respond to, and discuss a wide variety of themes and topics that include, but are not limited to: Love and companionship, god and religion, war and conflict, violence and crime, morality and belief systems, family structures and dynamics, science and scientific advancement, social inequality and poverty, the economy, and social norms. In short, we will attempt to better understand modern America through examining a wide range of literature written by the myriad of people who reside here.

**Intd 105 15/CRN 53599/South 241/Jensen, Mary**

**Illuminating Childhood: Portraits in Film**

**MW 11:30-12:45**

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

**Intd 105 16/CRN 53600/Milne 105/Sauter, Michael**

**Rooted and Local: The Thought of Wendell Berry**

**TR 10:00-11:15**

Wendell Berry is one of our greatest cultural, political, and spiritual critics. His work, (novels, poetry and essays), has addressed the challenges of community, agriculture, politics, education, family, work, and worship in a culture given to acquisitiveness, waste, and ignorance. His critique of the church and Christians as frequent contributors to our problems is insightful and relevant. We will discuss Berry's thought through discussion of selected readings and you will also be expected to develop independent and critical thinking skills and share your thoughts and arguments with the rest of your classmates.

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**Intd 105 17/CRN 53601/Welles 216/Beltz-Hosek, Caroline**

**The Woman Writer**

**TR 7:00-8:15**

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

**Intd 105 18/CRN 53602/Newton 206/Perri, Christopher**

**Metafiction**

**TR 10:00-11:15**

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

**Intd 105 19/CRN 53607/Newton 212/Paku, Gillian**

**Representing Autism**

**TR 1:00-2:15**

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

**Intd 105 20/53608/Monroe Hall – Room 105/Lima, Maria**

**Haiti Noir**

**TR 4:00-5:15**

As the first nation in the Americas to both abolish slavery and declare its independence from a European power, Haiti has been paying the price for such audacity since. Both history and natural disasters would have been enough to stifle the creativity of a people, but Haitians have continued to create at home and across the diaspora, despite the horrors that have driven many away from their homeland. Some of these tragedies (the cholera epidemic, for example) have been man-made and could have been avoided. Many Haitian writers have resorted to the noir genre to represent such realities, but their texts do not easily conform to conventional generic expectations—and there’s no reason they should. In a way they seem to mirror human rights struggles to rebuild Haiti. Our writing

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seminar will give you many opportunities to practice critical reading and writing, with a focus on persuasive skills. We will read each other's writing, collaborate on presentations, and revise our work to almost perfection. With this class, I hope, we'll see writing as both work and play, understanding that if language creates reality, *whose* language prevails makes all the difference in the world.

**Intd 105 21/CRN 53614/Sturges 223/Kleiman, Jordan**

**Supply Chain History**

**MW 1:00-2:15**

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

**Intd 105 22/CRN 56388/Milne 105/Hahn, David**

**TR 2:30-3:45**

**Intd 105 23/CRN 56360/Milne 105/Hahn, David**

**TR 4:00-5:15**

**Skepticism, Cons Theory & Critical Thinking**

Conspiracy theories are not a new phenomenon in American culture, but currently, what was once reserved for fringe elements and “crackpots” has now entered the mainstream. From assassination plots and fake birth certificates to fluoridation of water and genetically modified food; the suspicion of invisible controlling forces behind every aspect of life covers the political spectrum. Any serious investigation or critical analysis into “conspiracism” causes the various theories to collapse against the weight of evidence or common sense. If these theories are so weak why are they appealing? And what separates a conspiracy theory from a historical fact? This course will give the students the tools to identify conspiracy fiction from fact as well as engaging the student in the common facets that are inherent in all conspiracy theories.

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**Intd 105 25/CRN 53626/Newton 213/Anderson, Christopher  
Gods, Heroes, and Monsters: Myth-making in the Ancient Near Eastern World TR 10:00-11:15**

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

**Intd 105 26/CRN 55475/Bailey 246/Toothe, Hilary  
Influential Forces Behind 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art MW 1:00-2:15**

This course will provide students with an introduction into some of the artistic ideas and the significant events of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1900-2000) art in Europe and the United States. Students will have the opportunity to explore and learn about several individual groundbreaking artists and movements that challenged tradition with the new modern artistic language. They will also discover the intentions behind controversial exhibitions such as the Armory Show of 1913 and Hitler's Degenerate Art Exhibition of 1937, which left a mark on the art world forever. Through reading and writing assignments, looking at a variety of art, a gallery visit, films, and discussions students will create their own artistic opinion and voice by contributing to the overall conversation about art and have fun while doing so.