

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SPRING 2015 – COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

11/18/14

HSS4: The Modern Context: Figures and Topics (3 credits). This course is offered in multiple sections with different topics.

HSS4A: Samuel Beckett. The work of the Irish playwright and novelist Samuel Beckett (1906-1989) explores the limits of expression, raising questions of what happens to the body, identity, and history when language collapses; if language is exhausted, how can the self speak? We will focus our reading on Beckett's plays *Krapp's Last Tape* and *Endgame*, the novel *The Unnameable*, as well as some of his literary criticism and fragments. Students are encouraged to pursue research projects that consider Beckett's literary circle and lineage, his cross-genre exploration, bilingualism and practice of self-translating as well as the implication of his work for 20th-century European artists. 3 credits. Avra Spector.

HSS4B: Urban Anthropology: Perspectives on New York. This class is focused on New York City. Our theoretical approach will draw on the anthropological concept of perspectivism – originally developed by Nietzsche and recently adapted by anthropologists such as Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and others. Through perspectivism, we will be able to think about the relationship between forms of embodiment, practice, and ways of knowing as they pertain to urban life. Students will be asked to choose a practice or “perspective,” and to write about its role in constructing the city. How do thinking through exterminators and pest control, farmers' markets and food accessibility, finance, green architecture, or infrastructural networks and disaster preparedness help us rethink New York? 3 credits. Nicholas D'Avella

HSS4C: Gertrude Stein. The iconoclast poet Gertrude Stein is often credited with the birth of modern literature. Stein's position at the center of early modernist movements, from “the Lost Generation” to the Cubists, engages the question of what it means to be avant-garde. Yet because Stein was born just after the Civil War and died just after WWII, her life and career are also framed by the question of what kind of “making” is possible in the age of technological warfare. This HSS4 will consider Stein's experimental poetry and prose, focusing on her 1914, *Tender Buttons*, and 1932, Autobiography of *Alice B. Toklas*, as well as other texts by those she influenced in her own time and beyond. We will discuss Stein's creative process –automatic writing, collage, genre mixing, and language play -- and explore how Stein's seemingly nonsensical writing complicates our definitions of abstraction and realism. Our class discussion will engage such themes as ethnocentrism, social marginalization, ex-patriotism, and privilege. For the course project, students will choose from a broad range of literary and socio-historical topics relating to Stein's corpus and legacy. 3 credits. Karen Lepri.

HSS4D: 20th Century Drama. Close readings and discussions of plays by such writers as Chekhov, Ibsen, Strindberg, Ionesco, Synge, Jarry, Beckett, O'Neill, and Pinter. 3 credits. Brian Swann

HSS4E: Radical Education. "Radix," starting point for the etymology of the word "radical," points us to the notion of the "root," what is primary, fundamental, and vital. In this section of HSS4, we will investigate how different approaches to education, both those self-consciously "radical" and those arguably so, have functioned as critical democratic projects in the 20th century, as responses to accepted educational conventions, as forms of activism or resistance to economic and colonial oppressions both within and without education itself, as sets of pedagogical goals focused on creating and protecting freedoms and transforming teaching practices, and as starting points for utopian experiments. We will focus on a several key figures and organizations: John Dewey's Laboratory School in Chicago; Jane Addams' Hull House; Walter Gropius's Staatliches Bauhaus and its relationship to Black Mountain College; Paolo Freire's work as part of the Movimento Cultura de Popular in Brazil and beyond; as well as 1964's Freedom Schools and The Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, organized by the President of Goddard College. Student projects will be dedicated to researching a figure or feature of one of these educational environments in pursuit of its radical "roots"-specifically, to discover what understandings of education emerge when we study the relationship between its people, values, practices, governance, spaces, and socio-historical context. *3 credits. Sara Jane Stoner*

HSS4F: Borges. Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) once said that "maybe everything I have written is a mere metaphor, a mere variation on that central theme of being puzzled by things." The things that puzzled him included some of the central problems of modernity—how time moves, how to cope with an infinite expanse of information, how and why to read, what constitutes identity—as well as timeless questions like how to navigate a maze, what mirrors actually reflect, and how language works. Borges' stories read like essays and his essays read like stories: they investigate paradoxes and philosophical problems and the interplay of literature with literature rather than character or psychology, but they are nonetheless suspenseful, funny, and moving. In this exploration of his fiction and nonfiction, we will consider all that has come to be called Borgesian, along with issues of intertextuality, genre, and authorship. Students will write one short and one long source-based paper, using close reading and literary-critical, theoretical, and historical sources to analyze Borges' work. *3 credits. Martha Schulman*

HSS4G: V.S. Naipaul. This class is focused on the twentieth-century Trinidadian novelist and recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature (2001), V. S. Naipaul (b. 1932). His fictional and non-fictional works explore the varied conditionality of colonial and post-colonial life in the Caribbean, Africa, and South Asia. We will focus on three novels: *The Mystic Masseur*, *A House for Mr. Biswas* and *A Bend in the River*. Students will explore in their papers an interest arising from their close engagement with these texts. Brief selected readings in history, theory and criticism will further enrich the reading and writing processes. Open to debate in these novels are the ways notions of *home, colony, third world, underdeveloped, developed, history, race and gender* often complicate how characters formulate, perceive and express their identities. How do these identities change as characters inhabit alternative colonial, colonizing, and decolonizing spaces? How do characters experience and change in the face of decolonization,

independence, neo-colonialism and an expanding US/receding English presence in our texts? *3 credits. Harold Ramdass*

HSS4H: James Baldwin. This class is focused on James Baldwin (1924-1987), a prolific writer of fiction, poetry, drama, personal essay, and social criticism. Born in Harlem, Baldwin emigrated to Paris at the age of 24 to escape the racism and homophobia he encountered in America, spending most of the rest of his life in Europe. The height of his career was in the middle decades of the 20th century (the 50s, 60s, and 70s), during which time he wrote about the racial, sexual, and class strife he saw all around him. This class will concern itself mostly with his essays (both personal and political) and fiction. In this class, we will explore ideas about race and sexuality raised by Baldwin, particularly as they contribute to identity formation and as they play out in social relations. We will take up questions of the relationship between identifiers and identity; the meaning of home and homelands; the role of art in social movements; the troubled history of race in America; and the ever-changing face of the discourse about race and sexuality. Research projects may focus on literary figures who influenced Baldwin, those to whom he responded and reacted in his work, and those whose work he influenced, including W.E.B. DuBois, Richard Wright, Zora Neale Hurston, Lorraine Hansberry, and Countee Cullen. Readings will include the short story “Sonny’s Blues,” the novels *Giovanni’s Room* and *Go Tell it on the Mountain*, the book-length personal essay *The Fire Next Time*, and several of the essays in Baldwin’s collection *Notes of a Native Son*. We will also listen to excerpts of Baldwin’s talks and interviews, as well as sections of “Rap on Race,” his historic collaboration with Margaret Mead. *3 credits. Pam Newton*

HSS4 I: W.G. Sebald. Memory, Photography, and the Art of Wandering
This course focuses on novels by the German writer W.G. Sebald published in the mid-1990’s before his untimely death in 2001. The word ‘novel,’ as we will see, hardly encapsulates Sebald’s experimental work, which blends photography, history, memoir, biography, art, and architectural criticism into seamless and entrancing narratives. Sebald’s novels are unified by their obsession with memory and the aftermath of disaster—particularly the traumas of the Second World War—and they take as their foundational practice the art of walking and wandering. These are books, as Sebald wrote just before his death, about searching for “what the invisible connections that determine our lives are.” Among other topics, our course will pay close attention the relationship between image and text in Sebald’s work—the way the snapshots, paintings, maps, and architectural drawings that float uncaptioned through his novels function within his project of memory (and trauma). Students will be encouraged to develop research topics that are informed by Sebald’s own critical method, which uses close examination of the historical context of buildings, cities, objects, and works of art to trace out the multiple threads that weave together our current historical moment. *3 credits. Casey Walker*

HSS4J: Michel Foucault. French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984) worked across disciplines to investigate power, knowledge and agency. His work on the organization of practices that regulate behavior in society is one of the most significant contributions to critical thought in the second half of the 20th century and raises

questions about the human sciences, social institutions and subjectivity. In this section of HSS4, we will focus on Foucault's work on discipline, power and knowledge. We will read from his lectures including the "Discourse on Language" and *Lectures on the Will to Know* as well as selections from his critical works *The Order of Things* and *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* and his essay "Preface to Transgression." Students will be encouraged to pursue research projects that examine a contemporary issue through the lens of Foucault's work; critically engage one of his arguments; explore his influence on contemporary thinkers; or investigate how he situates himself within the philosophic tradition. *3 credits. Avra Spector*

HSS4K: Louise Bourgeois. This class is focused on the twentieth century French artist Louise Bourgeois (1911-2010). Her career spans a trajectory from the Surrealist scene in Paris before the Second World War through the post-war period in New York to her involvement in the 1970s with the feminist movement. Our approach will focus on Bourgeois and the concept of fantastic reality, taking our cue from the title of Mignon Nixon study of Bourgeois and modern art. Through Bourgeois, we will be able to think about the relationship of psychoanalysis and art, and especially her emphasis on the role of aggression in art making and its reception. For the course project, students will be asked to pick from a broad range of figures, ranging from the generation of French artists Bourgeois is reacting against to the artists of the 1980s and 1990s who are influenced by her work. *3 credits. Natasha Marie Llorens*

HSS4L: Billie Holiday: Genius While Black. The greatest of all jazz vocalists, Billie Holiday (1915-1959) was a musician of the first rank whose peers include Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Charlie Parker. Redefining jazz as American classical music, Holiday (nicknamed "Lady Day") and other mid-twentieth-century innovators continue to influence not only musicians but also writers and visual artists, including Alice Walker, Ntozake Shange, Amiri Baraka, and Audra McDonald, recently on Broadway in *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*. As an icon of black female success, however, Holiday's legacy is mixed - popular culture has emphasized a life constrained by racism and cut short by drug addiction, even as recent scholarly biographies foreground her artistic achievement against all odds. But everyone agrees with Count Basie that "Nobody sounded like her." Studying popular and scholarly biographies and criticism, films, poetry, fiction, visual art, history, and her music, we will consider the meaning of Holiday's life and art in many contexts. Students may choose to write on Holiday from artistic and/or social perspectives, to study her literary or visual representations, and to use the lens of race and/or gender in their work. *3 credits. Maren Stange*

HSS4M: Baden-Powell and the Scouting Movement. In the wake of what historians have titled the "Crisis of Masculinity", the turn of the 20th century marked a shift in the construction of boyhood and gendered youth organizations beginning in Britain and then spreading throughout the world. This course will explore this shift using Robert Baden-Powell and the origins of the Scouting Movement. Through Baden-Powell and the Boy Scouts, we will be able to examine: homosocial youth organizations; childhood, charity, and class; Muscular Christianity; masculinity and the outdoors; public school education; and the impact of militarism in the build up to World War I. Students will engage in both

primary and secondary source research connecting the establishment of gendered youth organizations with any lens of their choosing. *3 credits. Sophie Muller.*

HUMANITIES (3 credits)

HUM105: Fundamentals of Music. A study of the elements and forms of music and a consideration of how they define the stylistic characteristics of the music from the late Renaissance to the present. There will be extensive use of recordings, as well as attendance at concerts and recitals. *3 credits. Jason Oakes*

HUM107: Introduction to Creative Writing. Starting with exercises and word games, then moving to, e.g., the objective poem, collage and concrete poetry, metrics, translations. As well as writing, students are expected to read widely in poetry and fiction. Attendance at a poetry or prose reading is obligatory. Grade based on class performance and portfolio of work. *3 credits. Brian Swann*

HUM 316: United States Cultural History: "The American Century". "The twentieth century must be an American Century," proclaimed publisher Henry Luce in his widely influential magazine *LIFE* (1941). As "the powerhouse of the ideals of Freedom and Justice," the U.S. at midcentury was entitled to act on the global stage "for such purposes and by such means as we see fit." However ironic they may appear in twenty-first century hindsight, Luce's blunt words suggest ideas, assumptions - and powers - that underpinned many currents of post-World War II U.S. culture as well as politics: displaced European artists, architects, and intellectuals such as Mies van der Rohe and Robert Frank settled in New York and throughout the country, their work fostering a global avant-garde; the non-conformist Beat generation writers including Alan Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and Ken Kesey found space in the U.S. to rebel; and the Civil Rights and black liberation movements, linking their demand for Constitutionally-guaranteed rights to world-wide independence struggles achieving dozens of new nations by 1970, forged a newly heterogeneous American culture and a newly transnational black consciousness. We will study cultural expression in literature, visual art, photography, and architecture between 1945 and 1965, making frequent use of our New York resources. *3 credits. Maren Stange*

HUM321: The Novel: 21st Century Literature. This course takes as its subject American novels produced after the turn of the 21st century. Our question here is what it means to be of the 21st century. Our topics include 9/11 and after; technology and innovation; the life and death (and death-in-life) of the city; community; nostalgia; and contemporary understandings of gender, class, race, Americanness, New York-ness. We'll look at boom and bust, at boys and girls, at immigrant experiences and homegrown angst. Our question here is how we write ourselves at the dawn of the new century. Texts include Junot Diaz's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, John Wray's *Lowboy*, Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, and others. For this course students will write two literary-critical papers of 8 to 12 pages each. *3 credits. Gwen Hyman*

HUM352: The Personal Essay. In this course we will study and discuss essays in Phillip Lopate, ed., *The Art of the Personal Essay*, and we will also write our own, on any topics we choose, on all manner of subjects--the daily round, pleasures and pains, taking a walk, solitude, friendship, in short, our personal responses to any number of objects and situations, multiplying ourselves in the process. *3 credits. Brian Swann*

HUM361: Modern Philosophy: Knowledge and Mind. This course examines the ways in which the issues of knowledge and mind overlap, particularly in terms of questions concerning knowledge of language, knowledge of other minds, and self-knowledge. A principal consideration in the course will be the question of the extent to which cognitive science and contemporary philosophy can continue to be held apart from one another. *3 credits. tba*

HUM373B: Greek Tragedy. An in-depth introduction to Greek tragedy. The methodology throughout will be close-reading, using comparative translations, with the most significant passages checked alongside the original Greek text under the guidance of the instructor. The genre of tragedy will be presented against the background of its historical and cultural context, Athens of the fifth century, B.C. The most significant surviving ancient critical treatise on Greek tragedy, Aristotle's *Poetics*, will be measured against the authority of surviving works. Some important secondary readings will be assigned, but the emphasis throughout will be on primary source materials.

Texts:

Aeschylus, *Oresteia* trilogy (in two different translations)
Sophocles, *Philoctetes*
Euripides, *Alcestris*
Thucydides, selections (Melian debate, Sicilian expedition)
Aristotle, *Poetics*
3 credits. Mary Stieber

HUM373C: Queer Theory. This course will examine selections from the work of four figures (Foucault, Butler, Sedgwick, and Halperin) who have been key to the development of contemporary queer theory. Notably, the first three texts hold in common the fact that they do not deploy the word "queer" in their theorizations of culture and literature. So an important motivating question for us and our research will be: how have these works been interpreted and wielded as foundational queer texts? Starting from Foucault's "repressive hypothesis" and ending with selections from Halperin's recent epic cultural-theoretical tome, the course will focus specifically on theorizations of the body, and how the body is read through and disciplined by moral and psychological discourses, gender and sexual performativity, literary spaces, and cultural-critical productions. Disciplined, student-designed topics will take center-stage, and will be used to generate further opportunities for reading and study. *3 credits. Sara Jane Stoner*

HUM375: Critical Theory. This course begins with the post-World War II generation of social thinkers and critics, such as Barthes, de Beauvoir, Foucault, Adorno, Horkheimer, and Lacan, in the development of what later became known as the critical

theory of culture. We then proceed to more recent critics, each time taking our cues from real-life examples. This course emphasizes learning how to “see” and think “cultural practices.” It offers a chance to have our understanding extended into everyday life and its way of making us cultural beings. *3 credits. Sohnya Sayres*

SOCIAL SCIENCES (3 credits)

SS318C: Psychology of Visual Perception. In this course we will explore how we *see*, and by the end of it, you will have been introduced to the investigation of scientific questions in the psychology, neuroscience, and philosophy of visual perception. People tend to think, naively, that there is not much to seeing: we simply open our eyes and, hey presto, the highly-detailed spatio-temporal world of color and motion appears *as if for free*. However, what you see is the construction of your brain. There is a huge amount of fascinating neural and psychological processing going on between the impinging of photons on the retina and our visual experience of a world (most if not all of it unconsciously), and it is these processes that we will look at in this course. Some questions we will be asking are the following: How does the mind/brain create a visual experience of three-dimensional space from a two-dimensional pattern of photons impinging on the retina? What happens to perception when the brain is damaged? Can we create perceiving machines? What is color and where is it? What is the relationship between visual consciousness and the mind/brain? Will we ever create an artificial consciousness? What do babies see? Why do astronauts suffer from visual reorientation illusions? What can visual illusions tell us about how our minds and brains work? How the brain and mind go about constructing a visual experience of color, motion, shape, the third dimension, and other perceptual properties will be the subject of this course. Along the way, we will touch on related issues in physics, biology, art, machine intelligence and other disciplines. *3 credits. Jason Clarke*

SS318E: History of the Scientific Method (Seminar in Social Science). Many disciplines consider the scientific method the acme of thought-and-presentation processes. The adoption of its tenets is encouraged by non-scientific or non-technological disciplines. But what *is* the scientific method? Is it one technique, or several? What is the relationship between scientific methods and scientific theories? What is its significance to “experimental method?” Has the scientific method always held the privileged place it now has? If the methodology of scientific presentation has changed with time, how do those different descriptions of “scientific method” reflect contemporary definitions of science or technology . . . or rational ideas? In this course, students will study the different ways that knowledge has been collected and presented over time. We will connect the different methods of explaining information to the time and place when it became important, and explore ways that any appropriately scientific method reflects larger concerns about the place of science and technology in daily life, and in the world. We will also look at the ways its adoption may restrain information and (if time permits) examine alternatives. *3 credits. Sarah Lowengard*

SS318F: Maps/Charts/Drawings: Visualization and the Anthropology of Knowledge (Seminar in Social Science). The world is full of people making representations of the world around them: compiling charts, drawing sketches, mapping genomes, and running simulations. This seminar is a sustained examination of these tools of knowledge. Drawing on anthropological and historical texts about modern science, indigenous knowledge, and other forms of knowledge production, the class situates tools of knowing within the social and historical contexts of their development and use. Readings will include close studies of visual media in fields such as engineering, cartography, physics, medicine, and architecture. Throughout the class we will be interested in how practices of representation produce – rather than just depict – the world around them. *3 credits. Nicholas D’Avella*

SS318G: Contemporary Political Theory (Seminar in Social Science). This course introduces students to the most important thinkers and debates in contemporary political theory. We will read books by Friedrich Nietzsche, John Rawls, Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss, Charles Taylor, William Connolly, and Tariq Ramadan. We will discuss issues such as political pluralism, religious freedom, and economic justice. *3 credits. Nicholas Tampio*

SS345: What Economics Can Teach Us—and What It Can’t (Raymond G. Brown Seminar). Almost no economists predicted the crash of 2008 and the depth of the Great Recession. But worse, many of the ideas of the mainstream set the stage for the crash to come and, moreover, had already led to disappointing economic performance since the 1980s, such as stagnating wages, higher inequality, and financial crisis after financial crisis. Ironically, until 2008, many economists believed, and proudly proclaimed, they had solved the problems of managing the economy. What went wrong? What can economics really tell us about maximizing wages, investment and prosperity in general? What are its true limitations? This course will examine the state of economics from Adam Smith to the present day. It will examine economic policies and Wall Street excesses. We will analyze what went wrong and what the nation must do to produce good jobs, adequate investment, and rebuild America’s infrastructure and educational system, as well as assure true economic opportunity for all. When the course is finished, students should have a good understanding of what makes economies grow, the pluses and minuses of globalization, and whether and to what degree prosperity will be maintained in America in light of global competition and rising inequality. *3 credits. Jeff Madrick*

SS347: Macroeconomics. The development of modern macroeconomic theory as it evolves in response to a succession of economic problems and crises. Emphasis on the recent Keynesian/monetarist debates and the role of the Federal Reserve Bank. *3 credits. John Sarich*

SS348: Global Cities. The overriding goal of this course is to define and then apply the one outcome of current economic, social and cultural forces--global cities. By examining current premier global cities such as—New York, London, and Tokyo, those emerging and those on the decline, for example--Toronto, Sao Paulo, Sydney, Hong Kong, Singapore; Istanbul, Baghdad and Los Angeles, Detroit, Beijing-- we will consider

factors that contribute to the rise of global cities, and then consider how such cities impact how we live and work. Among the forces underpinning globalization we will consider: shifts from industrial to informational based economies; the shift from formal to informal work and lifestyle, and the new immigration. These will in turn be considered in terms of how they impact urban design/morphology and urban life including transportation and entertainment- music, art and food. The latter frames the second interest of study for this course, that is: the impact of global cities and globalization on our daily lives. Here, we will consider, among other questions: whether globalization is bringing us closer together or driving us further apart; whether it promotes greater diversity or homogenizes us in cultural and normative outcomes. Our exploration will utilize macro and microscopic vantage points to unravel the complexities of global processes in urban terrains. *3 credits. Gail Satler*

SS396: North American Environmental History. This course examines recent historical work that makes claims for the “environment” in the development of the North American continent. We will look at land use in pre-colonial times, the spread of slave-based extensive agriculture in the South, wood lot management in the North, Midwestern farming, Western mining, the parameters of nineteenth-century urban growth as well as the consequences of the arrival of the automobile. We will also look at the growth of the environmental movement over the last two centuries. *3 credits. Peter Buckley*

SS421: History of the Modern Middle East. This course will focus on the major intellectual, political and cultural issues of the modern Middle East. It will analyze the most important events ideas and movements such as modernization, colonialism, nationalism, creation of modern states, Islamism, regional conflicts, and the “Arab Spring,” through a variety of readings, from primary sources and historiographies, to fiction and film. By contextualizing the issues, personalities and events that shaped the Middle East over the past century, this course will provide an understanding of the region, as well as different approaches to interpreting history and its sources. *3 credits. Leyla Amzi-Erdogdular*

ART HISTORY (2 credits)

HTA102A-D: Modern to Contemporary: An Introduction to Art History

This is the second of a two-semester sequence intended to introduce students to the history and development of modern art. As students progress through HTA101 and 102 they will be able to identify and critically evaluate significant works, figures and movements in the history of art in the modern period; describe the main social and political contexts for the changes in art over the last two hundred years; and engage with relevant theoretical issues in the history of art and visual culture. HTA102, the second half of the sequence, offers a thematic overview of various figures and movements within 20th and 21st Century Art. It explores topics related to Cubism, Dada, Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, Pop, Fluxus, Minimalism, Conceptual Art, Institutional Critique, Post-Modernism, and associated theoretical ideas. The course will involve museum visits.

Grading will be based on classroom discussion and participation, museum reports, essays, and exams. *2 credits. Raffaele Bedarida, Natasha Marie Llorens, Allison Leigh*

HTA273 Topics in the History of Photography: The Middle East. Photography arrived in the Middle East almost immediately following the announcement of its patent in France and England and, from the moment of its invention, photography was at the crossroads of scientific discovery, technology, and new areas of study such as archaeology and anthropology, as well as colonial expansion, nationalism and art. This course approaches photography from the parallel photographic practices of European travelers, colonialists and missionaries as well as local residents of the region: Armenian, Arab, Kurdish and Iranian. We will trace photography from its arrival alongside 19th-century European colonial interests through the early 20th-century portrait studios of the region, to the lively cinema of Egypt, the political revolutions of the last 50 years, and into the flourishing contemporary art practices that are taking the international art scene by storm. Note: this course satisfies global distribution requirement in art history for School of Art students. *2 credits. Mitra Abbaspour*

HTA276A & B: Moments in 20th Century Art. Considers the flourishing “isms” of the 20th century, as well as historical events, intellectual currents and conflicting aesthetic views, explored in relation to such enduring artists as Picasso, Matisse, Malevich, Kandinsky, Miro, Klee, Dubuffet, Giacometti, Pollock, Smith, Calder and others. *2 credits. Dore Ashton*

HTA285: Single Work Seminar: The Ghent Altarpiece. Jan Van Eyck’s 1432 *Ghent Altarpiece* gathers together as a central quilting point the primary threads of Medieval and Renaissance art. Yet no other work in the history of art presents such tangled unresolved questions, a veritable riddle wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma (as Churchill famously called Russia), as if Rome were inaccessible, its context unknown. We will address Van Eyck’s adaptation of his primary sources, his Northern precedents and development from manuscript painter through his *New York Diptych*, to his *Arnolfini Portrait* of 1434, the first genre scene. These new perspectives on *The Ghent Altarpiece* will illuminate connections among Byzantine and Gothic, medieval and modern art, the subsequent development of Netherlandish and Northern painting, and the relation between art and its frame (in several senses). Note: this course satisfies pre-1700 distribution requirement in art history for School of Art students. *2 credits. Benjamin Binstock.*

HTA298: History of Graphic Design. This overview course covers works, movements, events, and texts critical to the history of graphic design. From early forms of visual communication to the emergence of today’s diverse practice, students will study the origins and development of the field, while learning to analyze how a piece of graphic design communicates within a broader cultural context. Rather than a continuous chronological account, the course is structured to investigate a broad range of relevant themes including: art nouveau, art deco, and the origins of modernism; advertising and corporate graphics; schisms, such as International versus Push Pin Style, and arguments, like the legendary fight between Dutch practitioners Wim Crouwel and Jan van Toorn; postmodernism and the “cult of the ugly”; exhibiting practice in graphic design; and

debates around authorship, form, content, and production. Class format will vary but will combine lecture, group discussion of readings, and writing assignments. Emphasis is on design from the twentieth century to the present. *2 credits. Bryn Smith*

HTA313B: Post-WWII Events in the Arts (Seminar in Art History).

2 credits. Dore Ashton

HTA313C: The Art and Architecture of the Assyrian Empire and the Mediterranean World. (Seminar in Art History) From a series of fortified capitals in what is today northern Iraq, the Assyrians dominated most of the Ancient Near East during the heyday of their empire. Assyrian kings used the spoils of their victories and the tribute extorted from conquered territories to build palaces whose walls were arrayed with colorful reliefs and paintings and filled with ivory-inlaid furniture. The influence of Assyrian imperial styles and themes radiated far and wide up, to and beyond the empire's frontiers: in Greece, it inspired an artistic renaissance known as the "Orientalizing" style. Building on the Metropolitan Museum's exhibition "Assyria to Iberia at the Dawn of the Classical Age" and using its catalogue as our textbook, this course will survey the art and architecture of the ancient Near East and Mediterranean from the dawn of the Assyrian empire in the late 2nd millennium B.C.E. through the golden age of the Babylonian empire in the 6th century B.C.E. Note: students registering for this course are expected to see the "Assyria to Iberia" exhibition at least once before it closes on January 4, 2015. Note: this course satisfies either global OR pre-1700 distribution requirement in art history for School of Art students. *2 credits. Celia Bergoffen*

HTA313D: Latin American Modernisms (Seminar in Art History). This course examines the emergence and development of Latin American modernisms in their so-called first and second waves. The first one, which unfolded from the 1920s to the 1940s in Brazil, Mexico and Cuba, witnessed the artists' combination of imported European avant-garde tendencies—such as post-impressionism and Cubism—with local motifs to produce an art that could reflect a national identity. The second wave pertains to the post World War II rise of abstract tendencies in South America, specifically, concrete abstraction in Argentina and Brazil, and op and kinetic art in Venezuela. Artistic modernisms in the region will be studied in connection with the political and cultural context in Latin American countries, specifically, the process of nation-state building, the rise of populist ideologies, and the incidence of *developmentalism* in the Southern Cone during the 1950s and 1960s. We will analyze a range of artists, such as Tarsila do Amaral, Candido Portinari, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Frida Kahlo, Wifredo Lam, Mario Carreño, Pedro Figari, group MADÍ, Lygia Clark, Helio Oiticica, Carlos Cruz-Diez and Jesús Rafael Soto. Topics might include: the strategies of modernity in Latin America, the new concept of "inverted utopia," the role of the avant-garde group manifestos, the post-colonial, and the meaning of abstraction within a turbulent political milieu. We discuss crucial concepts that define cultural modernism in Latin America; among them, identity, *indigenismo*, *costumbrismo*, *transculturation*, *syncretism*, *hybridization*, and *race politics*. Note: this course satisfies global distribution requirement in art history for School of Art students. *2 credits. Iliana Cepero-Amador*

HTA317: Art and Architecture of Ancient Peru. An introduction to the ancient cultures of Peru from about 3000 B.C.E. to the Spanish conquest, as seen in architecture, stone sculpture, ceramics, metalwork, and textiles. Note: this course satisfied global OR pre-1700 distribution requirement in art history for School of Art students. *2 credits.*
Heidi King

HTA331: The Arts of China. A chronological consideration of the arts of China from the pottery-making and jade-carving cultures of the Neolithic up to contemporary works of art. A brief discussion of historical events as well as background in Chinese philosophy, political systems, and religious practices will be presented in order to allow students to recontextualize selected works within their originating culture. The course is designed to provide students with a foundation in visual literacy of China, facilitate written expression, and familiarize them with New York City's cultural institutions exhibiting Chinese art. Note: this course satisfies global OR pre-1700 distribution requirement in art history for School of Art students. *2 credits.* *Yasuko Tsuchikane*

HTA337: Russian Art and Culture. The class will survey the history of Russian art, reaching back to its pre-modern origins. It will address Russian arts and culture in their specific political and ideological context(s). Special attention will be paid to examining the interdisciplinary character (art, architecture, design, film and theater) of Constructivism and Suprematism of the early 20th century. The course will also address the impact of the historical (or revolutionary) avant-garde on contemporary art practices. Students will be required to prepare short in-class presentation on a specific modern or contemporary artist, architect, or designer, who uses or used the constructivist vocabulary in his or her work, and, as a final project, write a ten page research paper. *2 credits.*
Marek Bartelik

HTA400: Single Artist Seminar: Jacques-Louis David. A course devoted entirely to the life and work of one important artist, this seminar is designed to allow for an in-depth experience in the discipline of art history that extends beyond what is possible in survey courses. This semester's artist, Jacques-Louis David (1748-1825), is a pivotal figure in the history of modern art. David was the most influential artist in Europe at the turn of the 19th century, helming both important revolutionary and later Napoleonic-era propaganda projects and an atelier with pupils numbering in the hundreds, many of whom would prove the most important figures of the following century. Seen by many as the last vestige of devotion to the classical past, he has in recent scholarship been recast as one of the first arch-modernists. In this class we will assess how David's influence extends into the modern period – even to figures as varied as Edouard Manet, Pablo Picasso, and Andy Warhol. In addition, we will analyze David's works in relation not only to his tumultuous personal biography, the revolutionary politics of the time, and changing gender ideologies, but also in terms of what scholarship on his work can tell us about the nature of art historical inquiry itself. *2 credits.* *Allison Leigh*