

## FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

### SPRING 2017– COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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

**HSS4 A & B: Adorno.** This section of HSS4 focuses *on* one of the most significant philosophers of the 20th century, Theodor W. Adorno. In his work, Adorno analyzes the contradictory situations of modern society, which was founded on the myth of enlightened Reason and yet gave rise to Auschwitz. His effort, therefore, is to explore the very concept of modernity in order to understand the situations of crisis of our time. All this finds a natural application in his analysis of modern art. For Adorno, art should preserve memory and at the same time show the ‘other’ dimensions of what simply exists, in order to maintain that critical function that is at the basis of our own possibility of existence. *3 credits. Diego Malquori*

**HSS4 C & O: The End of the World.** An exploration of various depictions of the end of the world in modern literature, art, and film. Writers include Chinua Achebe, J.G. Ballard, Ray Bradbury, E.M. Forester, José Saramago, Karen Thompson Walker and Nevil Shute. *3 credits. Jeffrey Morris*

**HSS4 D & E: The Refugee.** *The Refugee: Transnational History, Global Present.* Our topic is the historical experience of flight, displacement, and forced migration in the twentieth and twenty first century. Starting with the global population “transfers” and refugee crises produced by the first World War and its aftermath, we trace the development of a “refugee problem” and “refugee nation” during World War II, the Holocaust and the postwar “DP” (displaced persons) era in Europe. We will then focus on the continuing refugee crises resulting from partition decisions in South Asia and the Middle East and the genocides of the post-1945 period, and finally paying particular attention to the present mass displacements, often described as “the greatest refugee crisis since World War II” which now so powerfully affect local, national, and global politics. Our “figure” is the “Refugee,” women, men, and children, embedded in a web of transnational family, ethnic and religious, and institutional contexts whom we seek to understand via multiple sources. Your task is gain perspective on the general topic in historical terms in and to delve deeply into the particular case you choose to examine in a research project. *3 credits. Atina Grossmann*

**HSS4 F: 20<sup>th</sup> 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*

**HSS4 G: Underground Political Writing (*samizdat*).** The samizdat as an underground and officially unauthorized production of literary, religious, political and other texts emerged in the Soviet Union in the second half of the twentieth century. The original

methods of self-publishing and self-distribution of censored materials spread in Soviet dominated countries and transformed with different types of media and technological development (resulting in the creation of, for instance, homemade phonograph records - roentgenizdat, magnitizdat or VHS cassette reproduction). In this way some samizdat production became not just a method of cultural (re)production of dissident elites but also a way of proliferating popular culture. As topical debates on piracy, copyright and censorship of internet content demonstrate, alternative ways of distributing political ideas and cultural artifacts remain relevant also in the age of electronic communication.

*3 credits. Filip Pospisil*

**HSS4 H: John Dewey.** Many people consider John Dewey (1859-1952) to be America's greatest philosopher. This course focuses on his accounts of pragmatism, democracy, education, art, science, technology, and religion. Students will take a midterm and final, give class presentations, and write a 15-page paper explaining how Dewey helps make sense of a current event. *3 credits. Nicholas Tampio*

**HSS4 I: Gandhi and Non-Violence.** Over the years, Mahatma Gandhi's ideas of nonviolence have informed movements for social justice and equality across the globe. This course will introduce students to the two key concepts of the Gandhian movement: Ahimsa (non-violence) and Satyagraha (seizing the truth). In the first half of the course we will read Gandhi's own writings to understand the philosophy of non-violence. When did Gandhi formulate the principles of non-violence? How powerful was it in driving India towards freedom from two hundred years of British colonial rule? Given the diverse linguistic, religious, and caste practices, did non-violence appeal to all people of India? The second half of the course will discuss the impact of non-violence in a broad, global framework: the Civil Rights movement, anti-apartheid movement, deep ecological movements, transgender movements, the occupy movements, and the Black Lives Matter campaigns, all of which have drawn on Gandhian non-violence. *3 credits. Nabaparna Ghosh*

**HSS4 J: Keywords for Modernity.** In his landmark study *Keywords: A Vocabulary of culture and society*, first published 40 years ago, Raymond Williams demonstrated how “important social and historical processes occur *within* language.” In other words, language doesn’t merely reflect our reality; it is a space where we debate and shape that reality. In this course, we will explore several approaches to studying how words relate to things before studying several clusters of keywords in areas like the arts, economics, gender and sexuality, race, identity and belonging, ecology, and technology. In doing so, we will track crucial movements and changes in the vocabulary that has brought us to this moment and that will have a part in determining our futures. *3 credits. Kit Nicholls*

**HSS4 K: James Baldwin.** James Baldwin (1924-1987) was a novelist, essayist, playwright, poet, and major figure in the American Civil Rights movement. The son of a Harlem preacher, and a teenage preacher himself, he ended up turning away from the church and devoting himself to his searing, truth-telling writing and to the fight for racial equality. In this class, we will read several works of fiction and excerpts from his non-fiction writing (on both personal and political themes, which were always entwined

for Baldwin in any case). We will engage in close reading and literary analysis, as well as using Baldwin's texts as a lens through which to explore questions of race, sexuality, and identity. Some specific explorations spurred by Baldwin may include the meaning of home/homeland; the role of art in social movements; the politics of identity; the troubled history of race in America; and the changing face of the discourses around race and sexuality, leading up to the present day. The major writing assignments will ask you to develop your own analytical interpretations of the texts, as well as do research on both literary criticism of Baldwin's work and political/historical topics related to his life and writing. *3 credits. Pam Newton*

**HSS4 L: Samuel Beckett.** The Irish novelist and playwright Samuel Beckett (1906-1989) is one of the towering figures of modern literature. Beckett's work explores the limits of expression and raises questions of what happens to the body, identity and history when language collapses; if language is exhausted, how can the self speak? In this section of HSS4, we will focus on selections of Beckett's work in which he explores the idea of "impoverishment...subtracting rather than...adding." We will read Beckett's plays *Krapp's Last Tape* and *Endgame*, the novel *The Unnameable*, and some of his essays on such writers as Dante, Joyce and Proust. Students will be 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 on 20th-century European artists. *3 credits. Avra Spector*

**HSS4 M: 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*

**HSS4 N: 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, radical attention, and language play --and explore how Stein's

seemingly nonsensical writing complicates our definitions of abstraction and realism. Our class discussions will engage such themes as ethnocentrism, social marginalization, expatriotism, 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*

## **HUMANITIES (3 credits)**

**HUM 107: 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 327: The History of Cinema.** A history of the motion picture from its origins until now, emphasizing the evolution of the language of cinematic representation in feature, documentary, animated and experimental filmmaking. Canonical works and the major figures of the silent and sound cinema are treated, including Griffith, Chaplin, Eisenstein, Vertov, Renoir, Welles, Deren, Hitchcock and Godard. *3 credits. Sueyoung Park-Primiano*

**HUM 352: 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*

**HUM 356: Issues in Contemporary Fiction.** Study of literary topics including particular genres, themes, sensibilities and critical approaches. The focus of this course will change in individual semesters. *3 credits. Sohnya Sayres*

**HUM 373 D: Seminar: The Global South.** Rather than a geographic divide, the divide between the Global North and Global South is a socio-economic and political one. Together, in this course, we will read pan-generic cultural representations that explore the revolutions, uprisings and resistances, which resulted in (and contributed to) this divide. Focusing on novels, memoirs, film and graffiti art, we will explore works by men and women reflecting on the Cuban Revolution, the Sandinista Movement, post South Africa's apartheid, the 2011 Egyptian Revolution and the Algerian War of independence. Studying the works of Frantz Fanon, Assia Djebar, J.M. Coetzee, and Canek Sanchez Guevara, among others, we will consider the terms "revolution", "disorder", and "resistance" as verbs, rather than nouns. That is, what is revolving in a revolution? What is being put into order? What and who is being resisted and through what linguistic, cultural and aesthetic modes? Most of the materials will be read in their English translation. *3 credits. Nada Ayad*

**HUM 383: Opera.** This course will examine the history, materials and structures of opera, a rich and complicated art that is both musical and theatrical. We will address such topics as the origins of opera in 17th-century Italy, the Baroque style, the art of bel canto, opera and politics, Wagner's revolutionary ideas, realism and impressionism in music, experiments in tonality, and opera in English. Several works will be considered in detail. Classes will combine lecture-discussion and screenings of performance on DVDs. An interest in music is essential, but no ability to read scores or play an instrument is required. *3 credits. William Germano*

**HUM 394: World Religions.** This course is an introduction to the five major world religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The course considers ancient and contemporary religious practices as it examines faith and belief, ritual, scripture and scriptural interpretation, religious art, orthodoxy and heresy, mysticism, and pilgrimage through a comparative lens. Focus is on origins, textual traditions and central doctrines with further attention to religion "on the ground" as a living and evolving phenomenon. *3 credits. Joseph Strife*

## **SOCIAL SCIENCES (3 credits)**

**SS318 J: Cities of South Asia.** How is Mumbai different from New York? What does the 'city' mean in South Asia? This course will explore the history of South Asian cities and their contexts: precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial. We will start by examining the spectacular gardens, courts, and monuments of Delhi and Lahore. We will then look into the music, culture, and everyday life in colonial cities like Mumbai and Calcutta. Following from this, we will discuss the very different spaces of postcolonial megacities: Dhaka and Bangalore. What do these different spaces of South Asian cities tell us about history? How have religion, gender, and caste mapped onto urban space? How have city dwellers used urban space? Is the planned city different from the lived city? Going beyond town plans and architectural designs, we will use fictions and films to reveal the "hidden stories" of South Asian cities. *3 credits. Nabaparna Ghosh*

**SS 318 K: Seminar: Psychology of Vision.** This course will provide you with an introduction to the psychology, neuroscience, and philosophy of visual perception. We will explore how we see. People tend to think, naively, that there is not much to this: we simply open our eyes and, hey presto, the world appears. However, there is a huge amount of complicated processing going on (most if not all of it unconsciously), and it is these processes, which have been discovered through empirical investigation, that we will look at. Hopefully, this course will make you question the nature of what is real and what is illusion, and cause you to wonder how we can ever be sure of the difference. It will make you think about the huge complexity of the brain and how it produces such a phenomenal world. You will also be amazed at how much of a talent you have. As vision scientist Donald Hoffman writes in the introduction to his book "Visual Intelligence": "your visual intelligence constructs what you see...in the phenomenal sense: you construct your visual experience. When you look at this book, everything you see, i.e., everything you visually experience, is your construction: the thickness of the

spine, the white color and rectangular shape of the pages, the black color and the curved shape of the letters...". Topics covered include motion perception, depth perception, color perception, and the role that attention plays in vision. *3 credits. Jason Clarke*

**SS 347A & B: Macroeconomics.** Macroeconomics is the study of fluctuations in aggregate output, employment and inflation. We begin by examining the nature and meaning of economic development, the theory of national income accounting and measures of human development. We then proceed to study the history of U.S. macroeconomic performance, with emphasis on the current crisis and its international dimensions. We then turn to competing theories on what drives macroeconomic activity in a capitalist economy. Topics covered include: Theories of economic growth, business cycle models, labor market dynamics, financial markets, foreign exchange rates and the impacts of monetary and fiscal policy on the trajectory of the system. *3 credits. John Sarich*

**SS 371: "AM I THAT NAME?" Topics in Gender and Sexuality.** This course offers an introduction to the fields of inquiry that have come to be known as women's, gender, and/or queer studies, and to the feminist theory that informs those studies. Students will engage in an interdisciplinary examination of the ways in which gender (that is, femininity and masculinity) has been constructed by visual media, literature, political theory, and social, political, and economic institutions; the historical bases for these constructions; and the activism that challenges some of these gender constructs. We will pay particular attention to the interlocking of gender with other forms of hierarchy, including race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality. We will read current scholarship in works of literature, film, history, social science, and theory, but above all, we will work our way through some of the "canonical" texts which inform that current scholarship, theory, and indeed popular culture (and our own ideas about women and men, gender and sexuality) *3 credits. Atina Grossmann*

**SS 374: Contemporary Social Psychology.** How do social forces and social groups impact our development our relationships with others and our environment and our everyday behavior? From family to friends; from work groups to anonymous crowds, how do such groups impact our lives and establish standards of conformity and deviance; right and wrong; a sense of self as well as a collective identity? We will consider how an understanding of the interplay of groups and individual actions facilitate better group dynamics and also the achievement of personal goals or hinder them. Utilizing a variety of social psychological perspectives, general issues such as human nature, socialization, attitude formation and change, the acquisition of language, interpersonal behavior and the art of persuasion we will attempt to address the central questions of this course. This course fosters the application of scientific methods to ethically investigate and analyze human social behavior, to read with comprehension, critically interpret written work in discipline-specific contexts, and to integrate sources effectively and ethically through proper citation. *3 credits. Gail Satler*

**SS 382: Game Theory.** Since its introduction in 1943 by John von Neumann and Oskar Morgenstern, the general theory of games has been instrumental to our understanding of

various social behaviors. With key contributions of such renowned scholars as John Nash, Robert Arrow, Thomas Schelling and John Harsanyi, among other Nobel Laureates, game theory has quickly gained a large following among students of economics, evolutionary biology and even political science. Though at times seemingly abstract, game theory has shown us that it has practical value with applications in firm-level management and strategic decisions making in military campaigns. The course has two dimensions: the first is to explore the theoretical basis of games; the second is to consider the application of these concepts in economics and political science.

*3 credits. Jennifer Wilson*

## **ART HISTORY (2 credits)**

### **HTA 102 A-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 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> 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, Colby Chamberlain, Stephanie Jeanjean*

**HTA 220: Japanese Painting.** An introduction to the art of Edo period Japan (1603-1867), covering painting, printmaking, and the allied arts. *2 credits. Kyunghee Pyun*

**HTA 264: Black Artists of the Americas.** Studies the influence of African art and culture on black painters and sculptors in North and South America. Symbols, myths, religious rituals and deities will be explicated in terms of the correspondence they develop between distant antiquity and the present, allowing, in some cases, for new creative possibilities. *2 credits. James Wylie*

**HTA 274: History of Photography (1835-1965.)** This course is a survey of the history of photography, with special emphasis on 19th and early 20th century photographers, processes, movements. How photography began, how it became a popular past time, a provocative art, and a powerful means of communication will be explored. Class attendance and weekly reading assignments are mandatory. Two class trips to view vintage photographs are planned. One short paper, one mid-term paper and a final project are class requisites (and a pop-up quiz is always a possibility.)  
*2 credits. Gail Buckland*

**HTA 283: The Genius of Baroque.** This course examines the genius of European Baroque art as distilled in the work of its greatest exemplars. We will also address the

ideology of the counter-reformation church, the emergence of Protestant capitalism and a pluralist, bourgeois society in the north, patronage and social identity, propaganda, religious faith, skepticism, sexual identity and the family, all focused through the position of the artist in society. In no other period were body and spirit, sensual and sublime, so closely intermeshed. Art history resides precisely in the relation between our present interest in these artists and the past conditions in which they worked.

*2 credits. Benjamin Binstock*

**HTA 313 I: History of Video.** This course is organized chronologically and thematically and intends to define major moments, preoccupations, and opportunities offered by video, as a new medium for visual artists. We will examine the beginning of video art, in the 1960s and early 1970s, with video sculptures and installations, militant and sociological video, as well as within Fluxus and Body Art. In this context we will discuss the use of video in relationship with other media such as: painting, performance, television, and cinema. Considering the evolution of video art in contemporary works and artists' films, we will reflect on themes such as: self-representation, narration & fictional, immersion and viewer's relationship with the screen. The course will also approach questions relative to the formats and temporalities specific to video, its terminology, its access and institutionalization learning from exhibition and collection histories. Examples discussed in the course will be found principally in the United States, UK, and France and present a significant number of works by women, as a result of them being pioneers and major contributors to the history of video. *2 credits. Stephanie Jeanjean*

**HTA 313 J: Seminar: The Animal in Contemporary Art.** This course will explore the theoretical issues and practical implications of the recent proliferation of nonhuman animals in contemporary art. Historical precedents, such as Surrealism, Arte Povera, Joseph Beuys's performances, and the films of Chris Marker will form the backdrop to the course's main focus on more recent forms of advanced art practices, such as bio-art, ecological art, and inter-species collaborations (Eija-Liisa Ahtila, Terike Haapoja, Natalie Jeremijenko, Miru Kim, and Martin Roth, to name only a few). Emphasis will be placed on tracing the profound ways animals have come to be reconfigured in art, culture, and philosophy, culminating in the emergence of critical animal studies today. To further their own thinking and practice in relation to these themes, students will also gain critical proficiency through essential readings across a number of pertinent fields, including animal ethics, biopolitics, cognitive ethology, cultural anthropology, ecofeminism, and posthumanist theory. *2 credits. Arnaud Gerspacher*

**HTA 328: Dada and Surrealism.** Since their appearance early in the 20th century, Dada and Surrealism have had a profound and lasting influence on the arts. This course explores the art and ideas of these two movements within the social, political, intellectual and art historical context of the years 1914–1947. *2 credits. Andrew Weinstein*

**HTA 335: Art and Architecture of the Ancient Near East.** Though often called “the Cradle of Western Civilization,” ancient Mesopotamia is nevertheless often strange to the uninitiated. Nestled between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in modern-day Iraq, cultural traditions were born there that affected the Middle East—from Turkey in the north to



Arabia in the south; from Egypt in the west to Iran in the east—and echoed across 10,000 years of human history. This course will introduce students to those traditions—writing, kingship, agriculture, trade, religion, and urbanism, from the earliest villages through the empires of the First Millennium—and explore, in Mesopotamian art and architecture, their significance and persistence into the modern day. *2 credits. Paul Zimmerman*