NYU Prison Education Program
Courses Descriptions & Degree Requirements

SPRING 2020

Writing I: Finding Ideas in the Objects and Spaces of Everyday Life - w/ Prof. Tom Jacobs
This course will take as a starting point a particular thing—a particular material object—that is important to you in some way, and begin to develop connections, conversations, and eventually ideas about its meaning significance in relation to the ideas expressed in a range of readings and discussions. What have writers, philosophers, artists, sociologists, and the like had to say about the way the things we surround ourselves with (or are surrounded by) shape and mold the lives we live? How might their writing help us develop original ideas of our own about the things around us? The semester’s reading, writing, and conceptual work will progress from the relatively simple to the more complex and demanding. Throughout the semester we will read, reflect on, and write about a shared group of texts that focus on how objects and spaces shape our sense of time, self, and other; on how these objects and spaces contribute to or interrupt our orientation to the world—on how, in short, they help create our “life-worlds.” We will read essays and excerpts from Emerson, Barbara Ehrenreich, Joan Didion, George Saunders, Bryan Doyle, Ta-Nahesi Coates, Toni Morrison, David Foster Wallace, and Zadie Smith, among others. Theoretical texts will include excerpts from thinkers like Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, Frantz Fanon, Eldridge Cleaver, Foucault, Sara Ahmed, and Matthew Crawford.

Writing II: Writing for Change: Visions, Transformations and Hope! - w/ Prof. Kim Wilson
This course introduces students to foundational writing skills including paragraph development, how to write a thesis statement, argumentation, and putting together a bibliography. The course uses readings and assignments that thematize vision, transformation, and hope from African and African American perspectives. The readings serve as examples of different ways that Black people throughout history have imagined and enacted personal, political, and social change. We consider how writers have used their lived experience, as expressed in different narrative forms, to reflect and work on the basis of evidence. To write critically requires that we do critical reading and learn to communicate our ideas orally. Toward this end, we will spend a great deal of time engaged in conversation about each text as we work to sharpen our analytical lenses, develop the confidence to write even if we are sometimes misunderstood, and build skills that will serve us beyond this course.

Elective: Ethnography and Fieldwork - w/ Prof. Tommaso Bardelli
This course aims to provide a "how to" of ethnographic research and, in the process, examine the epistemology, conduct, and politics of fieldwork. It is therefore designed for students who are willing to engage in focused, hands-on training on ethnographic theory and practice. The first part of the course discusses the relationship between theory, evidence, and method in ethnographic research. In the following sections, student will learn basic techniques for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing qualitative data, with an emphasis on the core ethnographic techniques of participant observation and in-depth interviewing. In consultation with the instructor, each participant develops a research plan to collect data on his or her chosen topics.
using a variety of ethnographic methods. Experience in ethnographic research is not required in order to enroll.

**Elective: Oral History - w/ Prof. Sarah Franklin**

History, as most of us are taught in school, has long been written by, and for, the powerful—that is to say, privileged white men. Oral history is a discipline and approach that was developed by scholars and activists in the mid-20th century in order to infuse and nuance history with the voices and histories of disempowered groups and peoples—people of color, women, indigenous communities, differently abled people, political radicals, laborers and the working poor, and the LGBTQ community. In this course, we’ll explore the ethics and principles that shape approaches to oral history. We’ll read and listen to examples of oral history interviews by some noted practitioners in the field, and practice analyzing oral histories by learning how to listen deeply to what is being said, and what is being carefully omitted. Additionally, students will carry out interviews and analysis of their own.

**Math: Intro to Statistics - w/ Prof. Dennis Kunichoff**

This course will introduce students to the quantitative and qualitative methods of research design and a basic foundation of statistical sciences in order to conduct meaningful and valid inquiry in the field of public health. We will consider the different topics of research – both historical and contemporary - and the various mathematical tools available to study different data types in different settings. The class will also reinforce the learning of basic mathematical sciences, including arithmetic and algebra.

**Social Foundations II: Slavery, Race and the Making of America w/ Prof. Steve Hahn**

This course will explore the histories of slavery and race and their influence on the development of the United States. We will begin with the seventeenth-century origins of North American slavery and end with the twenty-first century. Along the way – largely through the use of primary sources – we will see how people of African descent resisted their oppression as slaves, how African-American slavery was defended by slaveholders and fortified by the national government, how African Americans as slaves and free people helped destroy slavery and struggled over the meaning of freedom, how the Jim Crow system of segregation and disfranchisement came into being, and how twentieth century movements and leaders pressed for new forms of equality and justice.

**Cultural Foundations I: Facing Freedom in the Atlantic World - w/ Prof. Aisha Khan**

At least since the historical period known as the European Enlightenment (beginning in the early 18th century), the meaning and experience of “freedom” has been a key way that the quality and value of human life has been defined in Western thought. We tend to take the idea of freedom as universal: a given state of being that indicates individual liberty and self-determination, rational thought, and the ability to (rationally) perceive and choose various kinds of opportunities. This interpretation makes sense under certain historical and social conditions. But when approached not as a universal state of being but, instead, in terms of lived experience (as Anthropology does) and associated with a particular context (as History does), we can see that there are many ways to understand freedom and the different meanings it has, depending on perspective: for example, the distinction that some thinkers make between “positive freedom” and “negative freedom”, or the freedom from the control of fate or destiny; or the capacity to realize one’s potential—which may or may not constrain the freedom of others. This course will consider the idea of freedom through various examples of the ways that freedom has been envisioned and lived in the Atlantic World. These examples include indigenous Amerindians and their pre- and post-contact lives; maroons—runaway slaves who created vibrant communities
still important today; pirates—arguably the precursors of New World democracy; indenture—the post-emancipation system of voluntary labor; Negritude—the philosophical, literary, and political movement celebrating emancipated consciousness through blackness; and, finally, the complex legacies of Atlantic World racial, color, and class formations.

FALL 2019

Elective: Intro to Journalism - w/ Prof. Aaron Gell
In this introductory course, taught by a veteran editor and reporter, students will learn how to report and write various types of non-fiction stories. They’ll explore the difference between a news story, an editorial, a profile, a Q&A and a first-person essay, and will learn to write each form over the course of the semester. The class will explore how reporters uncover information, as well as providing a foundation in journalistic ethics, teaching students to identify their biases and strive for objectivity, accuracy and fairness. We’ll also explore how the internet has hammered the old business models that supported the news media, and how it’s opened up surprising opportunities for the rest of us to be heard. But most of all, we’ll look at how the techniques of journalism—research, critical thinking, investigation, sourcing, interviewing, fact-checking, persuasive writing, editing and most of all narrative storytelling—can be applied to everyday life.

Writing I: Finding Ideas in the Objects and Spaces of Everyday Life - w/ Prof. Tom Jacobs
This course will take as a starting point a particular thing—a particular material object—that is important to you in some way, and begin to develop connections, conversations, and eventually ideas about its meaning significance in relation to the ideas expressed in a range of readings and discussions. What have writers, philosophers, artists, sociologists, and the like had to say about the way the things we surround ourselves with (or are surrounded by) shape and mold the lives we live? How might their writing help us develop original ideas of our own about the things around us? The semester’s reading, writing, and conceptual work will progress from the relatively simple to the more complex and demanding. Throughout the semester we will read, reflect on, and write about a shared group of texts that focus on how objects and spaces shape our sense of time, self, and other; on how these objects and spaces contribute to or interrupt our orientation to the world—on how, in short, they help create our “life-worlds.” We will read essays and excerpts from Emerson, Barbara Ehrenreich, Joan Didion, George Saunders, Bryan Doyle, Ta-Nahesi Coates, Toni Morrison, David Foster Wallace, and Zadie Smith, among others. Theoretical texts will include excerpts from thinkers like Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, Frantz Fanon, Eldridge Cleaver, Foucault, Sara Ahmed, and Matthew Crawford.

Social Foundations I: Racial Capitalism - w/ Prof. Lydia Pelot Hobbs
In this course, we will examine how the production and reproduction of racism is central to capitalist development. Following the work of Cedric Robinson who first theorized and historicized racial capitalism in his book Black Marxism (1983), we will interrogate the ways that racial and gender exploitation, dispossession, and violence has structured capitalist state formations from the earliest days of European enclosures, settler colonialism, and chattel slavery. Focusing our attention on the US context, we will consider how the imperatives of racial capitalism are rooted in long-standing legacies and are reworked to meet changing needs from the history of immigration law, to the advent of the New Deal, to the current climate crisis. Drawing on interdisciplinary readings, we will trace how racial capitalism has shifted in response to crises from above and below – always keeping in mind the interchange between domination and resistance.
**Cultural Foundations I: Theorizing Beyoncé and the Black Fantastic - w/ Prof. Renee Blake**

Between 2016 and 2019, cultural icon Beyoncé Knowles-Carter released a body of music and art that paid tribute to Black Diasporic history and culture. This massive work includes the 2016 studio album, Lemonade, accompanied by a 65 minute HBO film, headlining the 2018 Coachella Music Festival, with a following 137-minute 2019 documentary and concert film Homecoming, and the 2019 Lion King album. Critically, the music and films include producers, artists and representations of the Black Diaspora, and both highlights and reimagines contemporary Black life in contrast to how it may be viewed in and by the mainstream. While this artistic work is viewed as cultural expression, it is also, arguably, doing political work. But what political work is that? The central question of this course, motivated by Richard Iton’s 2008 book, In Search of the Black Fantastic, is located at the intersection of culture and politics and asks: what is the political work, be it informal or formal, that Black artists do in the creation of art? While we start with Beyoncé, we undertake critical social, cultural and political analyses of other artists and performers, as well as artistic and creative mediums including music, film and literature. In this class, we will sharpen our critical lens with the help of bell hooks timeless book, Black Looks: Race and Representation, as we explore issues of blackness, whiteness, black subjectivity and positionality.

**Cultural Foundations II: Ancient Greek Drama: Kinship, Responsibility, Justice in American Literature - w/ Prof. Laura Slatkin & Prof. Amy Johnson**

This course will focus on ancient Greek tragedy, a dramatic art that was invented in Athens in the 5th century BCE and is still inspiring, challenging, and fascinating to playwrights and audiences today. Tragic drama developed in Athens at the same time as democracy -- another inspiring Athenian invention -- was taking shape for the very first time as a form of government. Athenian drama was not simple entertainment. It was free and open to all, sponsored by the state, and it functioned to unite the community in a civic activity with political, religious, social, and ethical dimensions. Performed by ordinary citizens at daylong festivals, the plays raised questions for the whole city: what is justice? What are the appropriate uses of power, and who holds it? What happens when family loyalties and the claims of comradeship clash with established civil laws? How does war affect communities and families? Does it bring them together or divide them? We will look closely at several Athenian tragedies, reading scenes aloud in class and discussing them in detail, exploring the plays’ visions of justice, responsibility, the individual’s relationship to the state, and how to repair the torn community. Supplementary modern material will be offered, including contemporary adaptations of the ancient plays.

**Social Foundations III: American Narratives: Race, Nation, and Politics in American Literature - w/ Prof. George Shulman**

The premise of this course is that profound thinking about politics occurs in—an only in—American literary art. Formally ‘political’ writers typically present a world that seems antithetical to the world presented by, for instance, Melville and Morrison: one depicts rational bargaining and self-interested contracts among men in markets and legislatures, whereas the other depicts racial and sexual violence, rape and slavery, in domestic spaces or on ‘the frontier.’ One depicts rationalist and progress, the other madness and tragedy. This literature makes visible what political rhetoric and canonical political thought make invisible—the centrality of race and gender in the formation of nationhood and in and in ordinary politics, but also the deep narrative forms that structure both popular culture and ideas of ‘America.’ Our goal, then, is to compare prevailing forms of political speech, theories of politics, and American literary art. How do literary artists narrate nationhood? How do they retell the stories Americans tell themselves
about themselves? What can literary art do that theory cannot? To pursue these questions we read Herman Melville’s Moby-Dick, and Toni Morrison’s Beloved, while surrounding each text with contemporary political speech and political theory.

**SUMMER 2019**

**Elective: Creating a Publication II* w/ Professor Allyson Paty**
After having each written and refined original writing through a series of workshops in early 2019, students will now compile and edit this writing into a print volume. The five editorial and design meetings will acquaint writers with each stage of the publishing process, from establishing an editorial vision to determining design features to acquiring the technical skills of copy editing and proofreading. The course will culminate in a printed volume, to be released and distributed at the end of the term. *This course can only be taken for credit by participants who attended all five of the Spring 2019 writing workshops.

**Elective: Design Thinking/Design Making w/ Professor Jordan Carver**
**Tuesdays, 12:15pm-3:15pm**
Design Thinking/Design Making will introduce students to key concepts in design and architecture. The course will focus on two key goals of spatial thinking: how to represent the world as it exists and how to represent the world as we want it to be in the future. Over the semester we will work in 2D and 3D at the scale of the body, the building, and the city, each presenting unique challenges. Through a series of creative exercises including collage work, drawing, and modeling students will learn to think more abstractly about space, bodies in space, and spatial politics. No drawing experience is necessary, only a desire to work patiently, visually, and creatively.

**Writing I: Finding Ideas in the Objects and Spaces of Everyday Life - w/ Prof. Tom Jacobs**
This course will take as a starting point a particular thing—a particular material object—that is important to you in some way, and begin to develop connections, conversations, and eventually ideas about its meaning significance in relation to the ideas expressed in a range of readings and discussions. What have writers, philosophers, artists, sociologists, and the like had to say about the way the things we surround ourselves with (or are surrounded by) shape and mold the lives we live? How might their writing help us develop original ideas of our own about the things around us? The semester’s reading, writing, and conceptual work will progress from the relatively simple to the more complex and demanding. Throughout the semester we will read, reflect on, and write about a shared group of texts that focus on how objects and spaces shape our sense of time, self, and other; on how these objects and spaces contribute to or interrupt our orientation to the world—on how, in short, they help create our “life-worlds.” We will read essays and excerpts from Emerson, Barbara Ehrenreich, Joan Didion, George Saunders, Bryan Doyle, Ta-Nahesi Coates, Toni Morrison, David Foster Wallace, and Zadie Smith, among others. Theoretical texts will include excerpts from thinkers like Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, Frantz Fanon, Eldridge Cleaver, Foucault, Sara Ahmed, and Matthew Crawford.

**Math: Intro to Computer Science and Coding w/ Prof. Arlene Ducao**
This course will prepare students to write basic software and web pages, and it will introduce a full foundation of computer science concepts that can be applied to many kinds of technical projects. Students will be exposed to HTML, CSS, Python, and the Unix operating system. This course will take place in the computer lab, so concepts will be demonstrated and discussed through hands-on computer exercises and assignments. Concepts include data types, data
structures, syntax, tags, elements, attributes, functions, variables, expressions, inheritance, statements, and version control.

**Writing II: The Writer’s Voice w/ Professor Danis Banks**

Writing II introduces students to advanced reading, critical thinking, and writing. It promotes drafting, receiving and using feedback, and revision; students practice a variety of written prose genres, which may include creative writing, literary criticism, and argumentative essays. Students will gain expertise in intertextual analysis, and compose both informal and formal writing. In this section, with its theme of "The Writer's Voice," we will look at how a writer's voice varies depending on the kind of narrative, and the effects that voice may have in fiction, poetry, and non-fiction. Through close readings, self-analysis, intertextual work, and collaboration, we will strengthen our own literary voices and improve our ability to assess, critique, and appreciate the voices of others. The class will be discussion-based, using group work and short, informal presentations as a way to develop critical thinking and communication skills. By the end of the course, students should have achieved improved clarity in their own spoken and written voice.

**Social and Cultural Foundations II: Introduction to Sociology w/ Professor Jeff Manza**

This course will introduce you to the discipline of Sociology, and we will develop what is known as “the sociological imagination,” that is, the ability to see the connections between individual lives and the social, economic, and political forces in the world. Sociology is concerned with a broad canvass of contemporary societies. Our questions range from individuals and their interactions with one another, to the groups and organizations we are a part of (including social categories defined by our race, gender, class, religion, and others), all the way up to the rapidly-changing global economy that is impacting all of our social relationships. At the center of our course will be questions about how social inequalities work to create power and hierarchies in social life.

**Cultural Foundations 1: Environmental Systems Science w/ Professor Andrew Bell**

A comprehensive survey of critical issues in environmental systems science, focusing on: human population; the global chemical cycles; ecosystems and biodiversity; endangered species and wildlife; nature preserves; energy flows in nature; agriculture and the environment; Earth’s waters; and Earth’s atmosphere. This course is a gateway to the Environmental Studies major and minor, and one of its core courses. It will cover a very significant amount of demanding material, in order to prepare students for upper-level courses. This course will be challenging, and students should expect a steep learning curve.

**SPRING 2019**

**Social Foundations II: Black English - w/ Professor Renee Blake**

What is the relationship between language and identity? What really is Black Language if it is not slang or hip-hop talk? Who speaks it? Who has the right to speak it? Why do speakers continue to speak stigmatized dialects? What are the social, attitudinal and educational implications connected to Black Language? These are some of the questions we will explore in this introductory course to Black Language- a distinct dialect of American English that has influenced U.S. and world cultures. Combining research and theory from linguistics, anthropology, sociology and education, this course emphasizes the relationship between language and culture. Students learn basic linguistic concepts, followed by the linguistic features, structure and discourse functions of Black Language. Thus, this course is about language, specifically the many ways that people express their personal and community identities. The course focuses primarily on the
language variety known as Black Language or African American Language. In this course, students learn about the structure of Black Language, theories about its origins, its use in various social contexts, and its link to current social, political and educational issues. We explore how language is used to convey social identity, particularly regarding race and ethnicity, and make meaning of one’s life. Issues addressed include language variation, language contact and change, language appropriation, in addition to social and linguistic discrimination. Finally, we consider Black Language as the nexus of ideas on race, identity, sexuality, and equality in the United States and globally. We connect the human condition in America to historical trajectories of forced and voluntary migrations of the Black or African Diaspora. The exploration of social being and language is through reading academic texts, listening to creative spoken and written word, as well as music, and exposure to data gathered from digital media and personal stories. Students hone skills in the areas of critical thinking, constructive criticism, data analysis, social and linguistic analysis, and structuring arguments. The hope of teaching such a course is to broaden what is meant by Black or African American to include other communities of the African Diaspora who are similarly affected by linguistic, social and educational issues as those who are descendants of U.S. slaves.

**Writing I: Matter: Finding Ideas in the Objects and Spaces of Everyday Life**  
* w/ Prof. Tom Jacobs

This course will take as a starting point a particular thing—a particular material object—that is important to you in some way, and begin to develop connections, conversations, and eventually ideas about its meaning significance in relation to the ideas expressed in a range of readings and discussions. What have writers, philosophers, artists, sociologists, and the like had to say about the way the things we surround ourselves with (or are surrounded by) shape and mold the lives we live? How might their writing help us develop original ideas of our own about the things around us? The semester’s reading, writing, and conceptual work will progress from the relatively simple to the more complex and demanding. Throughout the semester we will read, reflect on, and write about a shared group of texts that focus on how objects and spaces shape our sense of time, self, and other; on how these objects and spaces contribute to or interrupt our orientation to the world—on how, in short, they help create our “life-worlds.” The objects could be anything from an item of clothing, to a tool or technology, or a cosmetic item, etc. The spaces could be any space from everyday life, and these objects and spaces could also be drawn from memory. We will read essays and excerpts from Emerson, Barbara Ehrenreich, Joan Didion, George Saunders, Bryan Doyle, Ta-Nahesi Coates, Toni Morrison, David Foster Wallace, and Zadie Smith, among others. Theoretical texts will include excerpts from thinkers like Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, Frantz Fanon, Eldridge Cleaver, Foucault, Sara Ahmed, and Matthew Crawford.

**Math: Principles of Macroeconomics - w/ Professor Gian Luca Clementi**

This class is about Macroeconomics, the sub-field of Economics that studies the evolution and the determinants of aggregate quantities such as GDP, unemployment, international trade, government debt, ... and of prices such as exchange rates, interest rates, ... Among the cool questions that macroeconomists ask are: (i) why are some countries very rich and others are very poor? (ii) what causes inflation? (iii) is international trade beneficial to everybody? (iv) does a large federal budget deficit today imply high interest rates in the future? (v) why sometimes countries plunge in devastating financial crisis? Why should college students take a full semester of Macroeconomics, regardless of their goals? Because it makes them wiser citizens, wiser consumers, and wiser in- vestors. Knowing a little macroeconomics helps in a variety of decision processes, among which career choice, financial investment, housing. It also helps reading through what politicians and a variety of pundits argue every day. This course is designed in such a way that by the end of the semester, you will be able to: (i) Comment
intelligently on economic events and trends. (ii) Assess and critique the opinions of analysts, journalists, and opinion-makers.

**Social Foundations III: American History Makers – w/ Prof. Steven Hahn**

When we think of people who “make” history, we usually think about the high and the mighty, important political officials or intellectuals, prominent military or diplomatic leaders. But when we look at the past, the great changes that take place are often made possible by men and women who are not rich and famous, who don’t occupy places of power – who in fact come from humble roots, from minority populations, who struggle for power, and who envision the world in ways that elites cannot understand or outright reject. This course will explore some of these history makers, few of whom you’ve probably ever heard of, from back in the eighteenth century to our own day. Each week we will focus on a different history maker. We will read about them, read their texts, and learn about the differences they made to our history as well as the legacies they may leave for us. The history of the United States will look different by the end of the semester.

**Elective: Oral History: Theory and Practice - w/ Professor Sara Franklin**

History, as most of us are taught it in school, has long been written by, and for, the powerful—that is to say, privileged white men. Oral history is a discipline and approach that was developed by scholars and activists in the mid-20th century in order to infuse and nuance history with the voices and histories of disempowered groups and peoples-- people of color, women, indigenous communities, differently abled people, political radicals, laborers and the working poor, and the LGBTQ community. In this course, we'll explore the ethics and principles that shape approaches to oral history. We'll read and listen to examples of oral history interviews by some noted practitioners in the field, and practice analyzing oral histories by learning how to listen deeply to what is being said, and what is being carefully omitted. Additionally, students will carry out interviews and analysis of their own.

**Cultural Foundations I: History of the Caribbean - w/ Professor Aisha Khan**

Famous for its beauty, cultural vitality, and diverse mix of peoples, cultures, and languages, the Caribbean, we know today has a long history, whose legacies remain powerful forces there. The plantation economy that in some fashion dominated the lives of everyone in the region was linked to a colonial project of enslaved African and indentured Asian labor. These labor diasporas made the Caribbean the site of massive transplantations of peoples and cultures from Africa for four centuries, from Asia as well as the Middle East for two centuries, and, throughout, a sizeable influx of peoples from Europe. At the center of questions about western philosophical notions of “freedom,” “equality,” and “justice,” the Caribbean is where globalization began some 500 years ago, where the idea of “modernity” took shape, and where the contradictions of “ideal” agendas and “real” lived experience have always been stark. This course examines Caribbean colonial and postcolonial histories and cultures, focusing on the relationship between Euro-colonial expansion and early capitalism (processes of development and exploitation) that have significantly shaped the region. We will inquire into the ways that epistemologies, or ways of knowing, both define and are defined by the colonial-capitalist mission that massively altered the physical, social, and cultural environment. The course also explores how local ideas about racial, class, cultural, gender, and sexuality hierarchies have both justified and challenged these processes. We will tack between the past and the present, in order to better understand the relationship between historical and contemporary processes. Our coverage will be interdisciplinary and will include ethnographic and other non-fiction works, fiction, and films. We will work with case studies from the English-speaking, Spanish-speaking, and French-speaking Caribbean and their diasporas.
FALL 2018

Elective: Public Health
w/ Professor Julie Avina
This course examines social, behavioral and cultural factors that have an impact on public health in community and national contexts. We will consider how health is influenced by factors such as age, gender, culture, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social class. Public health problems and their solutions will be analyzed in light of individual risk factors as well as larger structural forces.

Social Foundations I: Sociology of Education
w/ Professor Nikhil Goyal
In this course, we examine the sociological dynamics that underpin American schooling, including the constellation of institutions and systems from housing to criminal justice to neoliberalism that intersect with it. We explore: What are the purposes of schooling? How can schools be examined temporally and spatially? Does education reproduce or curtail inequality? Are there new logics of social reproduction, resistance, and marginalization emerging during the market-based school reform era? What are the core features of an equitable, democratic public education system? To grapple with these questions, we draw on an interdisciplinary framework, including sociology, history, geography, public policy, and economics, and a myriad of scholars and thinkers. This is an interactive, discussion-oriented class, so it is critical that you complete all the readings. I have also provided a list of additional readings if you are interested. Each week, you will be asked to write a short essay on the readings to prepare you for the discussion. These essays will be due on the day of the class. Additionally, there will be a final essay due on the last day of class. Please note that the schedule may change slightly over the course of the semester. There is some time built in for you to get help on course material and essays.

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w/ Professor Tom Jacobs
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Cultural Foundations III: Challenges, Issues and Ideas in Covering Sub-Saharan Africa
w/ Professor Frankie Edozien
This reading, writing and discussion seminar will provide students with an understanding of contemporary issues around the various regions on the African continent. We will examine the role of religion, including religious extremism that has led to the near-splintering of several societies; the struggles to develop viable democratic models; cultural norms and practices; and issues of economic development and empowerment. We will focus on the challenges of telling stories from Sub-Saharan Africa that are not the same old stories, with the same tired clichés.

**Writing II: Seeing the Other**  
**w/ Professor Danis Banks**

Writing II increases students’ familiarity with the essay genre and offers occasions to practice essay writing across disciplines and in several modes, including personal, critical, academic, and creative. It emphasizes writing as a means of critical thinking, inquiry, and discovery, through drafting, feedback, and revision. In this section, with its theme of “Seeing the Other,” we will look at how people who are often considered others are viewed in society, and what may go into understanding another person’s perspective. Texts will include fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and film, including work by Plato, Paulo Freire, Karl Marx, Herman Melville, W. E. B. Du Bois, Elijah Anderson, and James Baldwin. Students will write about such texts in relation to one another and to their own experience. Ideally, a new understanding will emerge of how our views toward other people shape our feelings about—and behavior toward—humanity, through close readings, self-analysis, intertextual work, and collaboration. The class will be discussion-based, using group work and short, informal presentations to develop critical thinking and communication skills. Students will write three papers, each with a rough and final draft, practicing the art of revision, and complete several shorter assignments, including interpretations of and personal responses to the texts.

**Cultural Foundations II: Sociology of New York City**  
**w/ Professor Zhandarka Kurti**  
*(Thursdays 12:15-3:15pm beginning September 6th)*

For the first time in human history most of the world’s population lives in cities. Today, people are no longer tied to the land but instead forced to make a living in urban spaces around the world. Yet, what do we really know about these urban environments? What exactly is a city? What are the conditions that shaped and produced these urban spaces and how are they expressed in the physical environment and the social, economic and political life of its inhabitants? How do social interactions in the city connect to large scale processes like distribution of political power, economic and racial inequalities, and environmental issues? This course focuses on New York City to examine the various social, political and economic forces that shape global cities today. What’s so special about New York City? Different monikers such as “the City That Never Sleeps,” “Gotham,” “Empire City,” or “the Big Apple,” reflect its diverse population, the tenth largest in the world. Wealth, grandeur and the American Dream are embedded in the cityscape—the Empire State Building and the Statue of Liberty are symbols that represent the city’s development into a manufacturing and commercial powerhouse starting in the 19th century, creating immense wealth and power for one small group of people and brutal work, suffering and hope for the rest. Using a sociological framework, we will explore the deep historical and geographical roots of contemporary inequality in New York City and situate them within the rise of other global cities including Tokyo, Mumbai, Mexico City and London to understand their role as nodes in a wider global economic network. Together we will examine what is general and specific about the social, cultural and political transformations of New York City including deindustrialization, patterns of production, consumption and work as well as changing immigration patterns, policing, and gentrification. The course will bring sociology and urban ethnography together with the writings, photography, art and music of older and newer
generations of New Yorkers to explore how urban space has become the most important and contested ground for unfolding struggles over political and economic rights today.

**SUMMER 2018**

**Social Foundations I: Work, Labor, and Power w/ Professor Andrew Ross**  
(Mondays beginning May 14)  
Why do we work so hard? How are the benefits from our labor distributed? In this class we look at the history of work and labor in the United States, from early attitudes toward agricultural livelihoods, and the emergence of plantation slavery, through the industrial period and the emergence of white-collar labor up to today's landscape of post-industrial work in which trade unions are in decline.  
*This course can be taken as an elective if the Social Foundations I requirement has been fulfilled.

**Social Foundations II: Strategies in Social and Cultural Analysis**  
w/ Professors Nikhil Singh and Thuy Linh Tu  
(Tuesdays beginning May 15)  
This course introduces students to a range of research methods and sources used in social and cultural analysis: from the analysis of images, sounds and objects, to the understanding of material culture and infrastructure, to ethnography, oral history, and the investigation of texts and archives. The main goal of the course is to understand the relationship between theory, evidence, and method in the effort to produce new knowledge. In thinking about research strategies we will consider: 1) how specific methods align to particular questions, 2) the politics and limits of knowledge production, and 3) the relationship between method, interpretation and argument. Course readings will provide insights into how scholars choose and develop research strategies, and practical individual and group exercises will introduce students to the challenge of designing and conducting original investigation.  
*This course can be taken as an elective if the Social Foundations II requirement has been fulfilled.

**Elective: Foundations of Speech Communications w/ Professor Piper Anderson**  
(Wednesdays beginning May 23)  
In this course students will develop effective speech communication skills that will prepare them for a range of academic and professional activities where formal presentations are required. Central components of the course include generating topics, organizing ideas for written and oral presentation, mastering elements of audience psychology, and practicing techniques of speech presentation in a public forum. Students will be required to participate in a culminating event presenting their persuasive speeches on a social topic of their choosing.

**Elective: Creating a Publication* w/ Professor Allyson Paty**  
(Wednesdays from June 13 – July 11)  
After having each written and refined original writing through a series of workshops in early 2018, students will now compile and edit this writing into a print volume. The five editorial and design meetings will acquaint writers with each stage of the publishing process, from establishing an editorial vision to determining design features to acquiring the technical skills of copy editing and proofreading. The course will culminate in a printed volume, to be released and distributed at the end of the term. *This course can only be taken for credit by participants who attended all five of the Spring 2018 writing workshops.
**Writing I: On Humane-ism**  
Professor Laurie Woodard  
(Mondays beginning June 18)  
The focus of this first-year writing seminar is the human condition. As students develop their reading and writing skills, especially close readings, observation, critical analysis, thesis development, utilization of textual evidence, rhetorical structure, and formation of an argument, we will explore themes including identity, race, ethnicity, gender, class, nation, capitalism, power, empathy, and humane-ism. Students will also develop their own literary voice, style and tone as they work towards becoming more engaging and effective writers. Class meetings will include in-class writing, discussion of texts, grammar and syntax exercises, and workshopping of student work. Readings will include, but are not limited to, works by James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, George Monbiot, and Twyla Tharp.

**Writing I: Fiction and Memoir**  
Professor Ethan Loewi  
(Tuesdays beginning May 29)  
This course offers a wide-ranging, intensive study of two closely intertwined genres: fiction and memoir. Students will read, discuss, and critically investigate great works of literature while developing every facet of their core writing skills. Each author we’ll examine has something vital to tell us about the art of storytelling: how to form an identity on identity on the page, write great sentences, craft compelling story arcs, and combine powerful true events with style and drama. Developing core writing skills will be paramount: students will write critical essays on the stories and novels we read, as well as produce original creative work. The course will also include a workshop component, giving students the chance to share their stories with each other and receive feedback from their peers. Writing is a vital tool for enacting social change and critiquing institutional power structures. The course will explore this aspect of fiction, and develop the skills of grammar, style, and structure that are needed to produce great writing. By examining our class texts through critical, creative, and historical lenses, this course will empower students to tell their own stories, and better understand the stories of others.

**S.P.R.I.N.G. 2018**

**Writing I: Stories of Racial Formations**  
Professor Julia Mendoza  
There are many ways to express yourself: through memoirs, autobiographies, poems, letters, diaries, and even tattoos. In this course, we will ask ourselves what it means to not only write one’s own story, but to also be thoughtful to the sensitive task of writing someone else’s story. This class will explore the importance of telling stories in order to understand how stories can illuminate our understanding of social justice. Accordingly, we will seek to read stories along relative interdisciplinary scholarship in order to understand how the power of a narrative can be used for thinking about broader notions of racial formations.

**Elective: Practical Journalism**  
Professor Aaron Gell  
In this introductory course, taught by a veteran editor and reporter, students will learn how to report and write non-fiction news articles in a variety of formats. They’ll explore the difference between a news story, an editorial, a news analysis, a profile, a first-person essay, a Q&A, a critical review, and a long-form narrative feature, completing assignments in each form over the course of the semester. The class will explore how reporters uncover information, and how to
identify "fake news." It will provide a foundation in journalistic ethics, teaching students to recognize their own biases and untested assumptions and to strive for objectivity, accuracy and fairness. It will explore how the internet has hammered the old business models that supported the news media, and how it’s opened up surprising opportunities for the rest of us to be heard. And most of all, it will identify the ways in which the techniques of journalism—research, critical thinking, interviewing, fact-checking, persuasive writing, editing and all narrative storytelling—can be applied to everyday life.

Cultural Foundations I: *Representations of Women in Literature*
Professor Carolyn Dinshaw
In this course, we will read literature – essays, novels, and poetry – by women. But this immediately begs some questions: What is a woman, and who gets to decide? We will need to read theories of gender and sexuality in order to help us start to address such questions as well as the questions that flow from those: How do we think about differences among women? What are the forms of power that separate women from each other, and from men? What about people who are not very well described by the terms “woman” and “man”? Our literary texts are written mostly by writers from the U.S. and England in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including Virginia Woolf, Charlotte Brontë, Jean Rhys, Toni Morrison, Ana Castillo, and Dorothy Allison.

Elective: *Introduction to Social Work*
Professor Carol Tosone
In this introductory social work course students will learn about the history of the social work profession and its development in the United States, including the dual focus on advocacy for social justice and core counseling skills to engage at-risk clients from diverse backgrounds. Students will learn about the fields of practice in which social workers operate: aging, child welfare, criminal justice, health and mental health, substance abuse, trauma and disaster. Students will also learn about the impact of poverty, oppression, racism, and trauma on individual, family, and group development, and the role of the social welfare system in clients' everyday lives. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of students developing core assessment, communication and engagement skills, as well as the ability to self-reflect and work ethically to enhance the lives of clients in need.

Social Foundations III: *Introduction to Food Studies*
Professor Sara Franklin
How do food, culture, the natural environment and human society relate to one another? In this course, we look at food's role in constructing individual and group identities, considering identity in terms of the body, race, class, gender and religion, as well as geo-political situation. We will read and watch selections representing a range of food media, past and present; explore connections between trends in food culture and media and contemporary politics; introduce methods and analytical approaches used in the emerging field of food studies; and practice some of those approaches and methodologies (ex: participant observation, autoethnography, oral history) in class assignments.

**FALL 2017**

Cultural Foundations III: *Major Texts in Critical Theory*
Professor Elaine Freedgood
In this course we will come to understand why nothing is obvious, why language is not transparent, and how various thinkers have thought about power, subjectivity, race, caste, class,
capital, sexual identity, and knowledge. Every idea has a history; nothing is given or natural in this course.

Social Foundations II: Environmental Systems Science  
Professor Andrew Bell  
A comprehensive survey of critical issues in environmental systems science, focusing on: human population; Earth’s waters; Earth’s atmosphere; the global chemical cycles; energy flows in nature; humans and global change; ecosystems and biodiversity; endangered species and wildlife; energy systems from fossil fuels to renewable forms; urban environments; wastes; and paths to a sustainable future. This course will cover a very significant amount of demanding material. This course will be challenging, and students should expect a steep learning curve.

Social Foundations I: Slavery, Race, and the Making of America  
Professor Steve Hahn  
This course will explore and histories of slavery and race and their influence on the development of the United States. We will begin with the seventeenth-century origins of North American slavery and end with the twenty-first century system of mass incarceration. Along the way – largely through the use of primary sources – we will see how people of African resisted their oppression as slaves, how African-American slavery was defended by slaveholders and fortified by the national government, how African Americans as slaves and free people helped destroy slavery and struggled over the meaning of freedom, how the Jim Crow system of segregation and disenfranchisement came into being, and how twentieth century movements and leaders pressed for new forms of equality and justice.

Cultural Foundations I: Ancient Greek Epic: War and Homecoming  
Professors Laura Slatkin and Amy Johnson  
In this course we will focus on one of the foundational texts of the Western tradition, the Iliad. An epic of war, the Iliad (composed in ancient Greece) is also the poem of friendship, marriage, abduction, warrior bonds, and honor. Brilliantly constructed, enormously influential, the Iliad explores complex cultural values (e.g. martial glory, sacrifice, loyalty, remembrance), gender norms, social order, kinship, and the nature of the human being -- how are humans different from animals or divinities? We will approach this epic from a number of angles, supplemented by some readings by contemporary thinkers; and we will consider some recent adaptations of the Iliad in literature and film. In the final weeks of the course, we will read selections from the Iliad’s epic counterpart, the Odyssey, and discuss its treatment of the challenges that face the returning veteran.

Cultural Foundations II: Thinking Politically  
Professor George Shulman  
This course analyzes what “politics” -as a concept and as a practice- has meant in history, means to us now, and could mean. That topic makes this a course in “political theory.” We will ask a cluster of questions. What distinguishes “politics” from other kinds of human activities? (What makes an action or practice “political,” as compared to “aesthetic” or “moral”?) Does the meaning of politics (as a noun) and of political (as an adjective) change over time? (Do the words evoke different practices, varying by time and culture, or is there a continuity?) Is this thing called politics inescapable? morally necessary or compromised? A noble vocation or the activity of con men and bullies? In turn, do our ideas (theories) of politics influence how we act in the world? Most of all, why are Americans so “cynical” about “politics”? (Is our cynicism an insight into the essential and unchanging nature of politics? A symptom of human ambivalence about conflict and power? A symptom of a regime that is illegitimate because it is so unjust?) In a historical
moment of intensely racialized nationalism, polarized culture, open lying, “alternative facts,” and widespread cynicism, how should we think about collective action and the chances of social justice?

We begin by closely reading two canonical theorists. First is Thomas More, who invented the word “Utopia” for his dialogue about just these questions. Then we read Machiavelli, whose very name now denotes our sense that politics is only about force and fraud. Then we read more recent texts to explore various “dimensions” of political life -especially the forging of group identities and the creation and use of narratives and symbols to create a “we,” name the source of our suffering, and define what is to be done. We focus on the relation between race and nation, and between racial domination and “democratic” politics, in the formation of the “American” regime. In the final weeks we analyze the causes and implications of Donald Trump’s election and Presidency. We conclude by exploring Tupac Shakur's “Makaveli,” a musical and political appropriation that resonates Machiavelli’s enduring themes.

**SUMMER 2017**

**Social Foundations II: Introduction to Media Studies;**
**Professor Aurora Wallace**  
This course introduces students of media studies to some of the issues and theories that have been central to the study of mediated forms of communication. It will examine the factors that influence the media and, in turn, examine the influence of the media on prevailing attitudes, values and behaviors. Students will be expected to understand the strengths and weaknesses of various media theories and to arrive at some thoughtful conclusions regarding their own theoretical preferences.

**Writing II: Utopia, Dystopia, and Political Theory;**
**Professor Anthony Galluzo**  
Utopia—literally “no place”—and dystopia are all over the place these days. From the utopian chants of “another world is possible” taken up by insurgent protest movements, such as Occupy and Black Lives Matter, to the dystopian visions of zombie apocalypse that dominate popular culture, radical change (for better or worse) is on our minds. Why? And what is the relationship between these visions of the human future and a present characterized by environmental collapse, stagnant capitalism, and political turmoil? We will address these questions by looking at utopian and dystopian literature past and present in terms of the political and social questions this literature seeks to answer. This course aims to introduce you to a range of academic writing skills and strategies—argument and argumentative summary, rhetorical analysis and strategy, close reading and literary criticism—through an immersion in different discourses or genres of writing: literary, philosophical, political, and polemical. In keeping with these course aims, students will be required to work in a variety of forms over the course of the semester— which will include informal writing, structured group presentations, journal entries, and individual presentations in addition to three formal written assignments and the requisite drafts.

**Not-for-credit: Creating a Publication;**
**Professor Alyson Paty**  
Students serve as contributors to and editors of a new print journal. Students who participate as contributors will write original poems, stories, and/or essays; engage with contemporary literature as possible prompts and models; read their peers’ work and make suggestions; and hone their writing for publication through multiple revisions. Students who also wish to participate as editors will become familiar with all aspects of the publishing process, from
establishing an editorial vision to production. Editors will analyze the form and content of existing print journals, and then determine editorial and design elements for their own publication. Editors will give feedback to a designer and will copy edit and proofread using a style guide. The semester will culminate in a printed volume.

**Writing I: America, A Place;**  
**Professor Sara Franklin**  
What is America, really? A dream? A symbol? Or merely a collection of cities and country, mountains and coasts? In this course, we will explore narratives of America through a number of genres, including journalism, fiction, personal essay, poetry, film and television. How do Americans of various ages, races, creeds and socio-economic and geographic backgrounds view their America, both past and present? How do they view the America of "the other"? And how do those who hail from American borders see this place when they arrive here, seeking to understand and belong? Students will write about their own America as well as the America of "the other," and will also practice analyzing and critiquing the work of others. Class time will be devoted to short writing exercises, discussing assigned readings and viewings, and group writing workshops. Students will complete several writing assignments over the course of the semester, choosing one piece to workshop and revise as a final assignment for submission to the PEN Annual Prison Writing Contest.

**Cultural Foundations 1: Environmental Science;**  
**Professor Drew Bush**  
A comprehensive survey of critical issues in environmental systems science, focusing on: human population; Earth's waters; Earth's atmosphere; the global chemical cycles; energy flows in nature; humans and global change; ecosystems and biodiversity; endangered species and wildlife; energy systems from fossil fuels to renewable forms; urban environments; wastes; and paths to a sustainable future. This course will cover a very significant amount of demanding material. This course will be challenging, and students should expect a steep learning curve.

**Elective: Devising Social Justice Theatre: A Practice and Reflection;**  
**Professor Ashley Hamilton**  
In this course we will lay a foundation of knowledge through a close and thoughtful read of several "theatre for social change" texts including looking at various case studies of theatre that has been created in oppressed spaces, with marginalized communities - including others prisons, slum communities, war zones, etc. We will be looking at how theatre can be used to share stories and create change. Simultaneously, we will be working on creating our own process - as an ensemble in class - to write our own play about the stories you want to tell. I will lead you through a playwriting/creation process around the theme of prison, rehabilitation and re-entry. You will be asked to write creatively (fiction and non-fiction) and to participate on your feet with the group to create new material from scratch. We will then "produce" the play through a rehearsal process and finish the course with performing the play at Wallkill and writing reflective papers on our process. This course offers an opportunity for you to explore and share your own thoughts about prison and re-entry in a creative, unique way - while opening up a dialogue with your classmates and community about issues that matter to you. No previous performance or "theatre" experience is necessary.
Social Foundations III: *Criminalization and Its Discontents*;  
Professor Chase Madar  
This class will study the increasing use of criminal law and its institutions—police, prosecutors, prisons—to enforce social order in the United States, with an eye to alternative forms of social regulation. The class will examine individual spheres of everyday life colonized by criminal law (education, mental health, drug and alcohol use, sexuality, immigration, family life, the economy) and look at demonstrably effective alternatives to our punishment-heavy social order. We will also look at on a thematic level, looking at the historical and cultural currents of racism, settler-colonialism and Puritanism that have brought us to our present moment of world-historical mass incarceration.

**Elective: Leadership Skills;**  
Professor Dolly Chugh  
Leadership Skills will focus on the personal, interpersonal, and group skills needed to effectively inspire trust and motivate action in others. The emphasis will be on practice and skill development.  
My hope is that you will leave this course with ...  
- A view of leadership that is grounded in behaviors, not titles or jobs or rank  
- A clearer sense of who you are and your own approach to leadership  
- Concrete tools you can practice and utilize beyond this course  
- A lifelong learning approach to future situations you encounter

Social Foundations I: *The Right to the City: Urban Struggles in a Globalizing World*;  
Professor Gianpaolo Baiocchi  
The world is very rapidly becoming urban. By 2030, the United Nations projects three out of five people on the planet will live in cities, many of them in the projected forty-one “megacities” with populations greater than 10 million to be in existence at the time. In contrast, in the 1950 less than one-third of the world population was urban, and there were only two megacities. This course explores the urban question currently facing large cities in the United States and beyond. After an introduction to these trends and to contemporary debates in urban theory, the course turns to case studies in the United States, Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Compared to just twenty years ago, large cities are more interconnected (and subject to more complex governance arrangements), more unequal, more subject to volatile financial investments, and more environmentally vulnerable. At the same time, cities have been home to important experiments in urban democracy. The study of contemporary cities is brimming with exciting stories of political struggles for land, for justice, for racial equality, for political voice, and for survival. This course explores both the changes facing urban residents and the responses they have developed.
Cultural Foundations II: Value of Life; 
Professor Michael Ralph
This course examines ideas and practices that have shaped how we think about the value of life. We will focus our discussion on the value of a human life, specifically the way that competing notions of value shape our understanding of human and civil rights. But, we will also consider systems of dehumanization that make it difficult to disentangle the rights of human beings from animals. We will also consider the value of priceless resources, like “nature,” or “the environment.” In fleshing out these considerations, we will discuss moments like Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, when the monetary value of human beings in relation to nature is a matter of profound importance. In considering protocols used to inscribe and regiment the value of life, we will consider the pivotal role of actuarial science, crime statistics, and insurance in the context of slavery, colonialism, war, and terrorism.

FALL 2016

Professor Julie Livingston
Across the globe an estimated 14 and a half million people will develop cancer this year. One in three Americans will die of the disease. Cancer is everywhere. It is the cause of much human suffering and also the engine of a multi-billion dollar medical, legal, and pharmaceutical industry. This course asks: What is cancer? And what do the high prevalence and devastating effects of cancer tell us about ourselves and our society? Over the semester we will pursue an in-depth study of the history, politics, and experience of cancer across a range of registers from the intimacies of the sick body to the global reach of the cancer industrial complex to the changing meanings of hope and chance in American society. Themes for the course may include: relationships of cancer to capitalism (via cigarettes, uranium, and pharmaceuticals); the race and class dimensions of environmental toxicity; bioethics and end of life care; patient activism; experiences of dying and grief. Our analysis will range across both social science and humanities approaches. Readings will be drawn from history, law, journalism, anthropology, public health, memoir etc.

Cultural Foundations III: Machiavelli; 
Professor Karl Appuhn
Often credited as the inventor of modern political science, Niccolò Machiavelli’s name has become synonymous with power, ambition, and political trickery of all kinds. In this course we will get to know Machiavelli through careful study of his writings on politics, his personal letters and his theatrical play The Mandrake Root. We will also explore the turbulent political and social context of Machiavelli’s Florence, a city-state caught in a struggle between republican rule and the autocratic ambitions of the Medici family. Through careful study of Machiavelli in his historical context we will seek a better understanding of why he is such an enduring, controversial, and important political thinker.
Writing I:  *Empire at Sea;*
Professor Elaine Freedgood
We will read Benito Cereno, Herman Melville’s short novel of a slave mutiny on a Spanish ship in the South Pacific, and Greg Grandin’s historical exploration of its background in Empire of Necessity, to think about the sea as a place of trade, battle, piracy, and finally, a grave. Olaudah Equiano’s controversial slave narrative from the late 1700s will be our second text: issues of selfhood, authenticity and the slave as sailor/merchant will surround our discussion of this text, which has been read as an autobiography, a novel, a conversion narrative, an ethnography, and a travelogue. We will read theoretical, critical, historical, biographical, and autobiographical works to think about how to write about fiction and history, the self and the soul. Weekly writing assignments; one 8-10 page research paper, which students will work on from a research packet that will be provided; and a final personal essay of 4-5 pages. Reading and writing will be treated as processes that we are always improving and always at least somewhat frustrated about, and also delighted and surprised by what can happen between books, our thinking together about them, and the putting of pen to paper, or fingers to computer keys.

Writing I:  *Stories of Racial Formations;*
Professor Julia Mendoza
There are many ways to express yourself: through memoirs, autobiographies, poems, letters, diaries, and even tattoos. In this course, we will ask ourselves what it means to not only write one’s own story, but to also be thoughtful to the sensitive task of writing someone else’s story. This class will explore the importance of telling stories in order to understand how stories can illuminate our understanding of social conditions. Accordingly, we will seek to read stories along relative interdisciplinary scholarship in order to understand how the power of a narrative can be used for thinking about broader considerations of racial formations. With a focus on story telling, the reading for this course will specifically survey literature that examines how different people understand processes of racialization throughout various social and cultural histories. The goal of this class is to not only consider how stories are situated in relation to a broader understanding of racial formations, but also to understand how racialized bodies conceive of justice and freedom.

**SUMMER 2016**

Cultural Foundations II/III:  *History and Memory in the Early Modern Atlantic World;*
Professor Laurie Woodard
History and Memory in the Early Modern Atlantic World explores the history, memory, and representation of enslavement and abolition in the Atlantic World, circa 1500 to 1888. The key questions we are posing are: how do we recover the unrecoverable and how do we remember the “unrememberable?” We will consider the history of enslavement in the Atlantic World, the gaps in our knowledge, the global trauma of Atlantic World Slavery, and contemporary and contemporaneous representations. Key themes include: the formation of the Atlantic World, enslavement, the transatlantic slave trade, the formation of African American cultures, the emergence of race and racism, resistance and rebellion, abolition, emancipation and the meaning of freedom.

Elective:  *Foundations of Speech Communication;*
Professor Piper Anderson
In this course students will develop effective speech communication skills that will prepare them for a range of academic and professional activities where formal presentations are required. Central components of the course include generating topics, organizing ideas for written and oral
presentation, mastering elements of audience psychology, and practicing techniques of speech presentation in a public forum. Students will be required to participate in a culminating event presenting their persuasive speeches on a social topic of their choosing.

Social Foundations III: Advanced Seminar in Urbanism;  
Professor Andrew Ross  
This course offers a broad survey of the history of urban and suburban development since the late-nineteenth century. It looks at some of the major movements in town planning and in housing and transportation policy, and examines several schools of thought associated with urbanism over that period of time. Suburbanization, where most Americans live, is a focus of attention, as well as environmental justice and the struggle for urban sustainability. Urban forms under scrutiny include the creation of streetcar suburbs, garden cities, greenbelt towns, master-planned and gated communities, edge cities, and global cities. The course analyzes ghetto- and barrio-formation alongside ethnic enclaves, gentrification, and the rise of neo-traditional New Urbanism.

Elective: Interpersonal Communication;  
Professor Ashley Hamilton  
Communication is central to our lives. It's what makes our lives rewarding, but, done badly, causes many of our deepest hurts. In this course you will study and analyze the principle elements of interpersonal communication. We will analyze how people communicate verbally and nonverbally in a variety of personal and social contexts. This richer understanding will significantly improve the quality of our own interactions and provide a deeper understanding of ourselves.

S P R I N G  2 0 1 6

Writing II: Forms of Change;  
Professor Gabriel Heller  
At heart, every piece of strong writing enacts a transformation—a transformation of chaos into form, experience into language, isolation into communication; a transformation in our way of thinking, seeing, understanding. All strong writing is about change. This is a course for students interested in exploring the forms of change that writing and reading make available to us.

Over the course of the semester, we will work hard to become stronger communicators and critical thinkers. We will practice different forms of the essay—from the autobiographical, to the argumentative, to the critical—and think deeply about the ways in which writing can help us express ourselves with greater power and open up more reflective space in our lives to facilitate growth and change. We will read a broad range of top-notch professional writers, who will challenge and inspire us on our own paths. Students will be expected to complete three essays, a variety of writing exercises, and an ongoing reflective journal.

Social Foundations II: Environmental Systems Science;  
Professor Andrew Bell  
A comprehensive survey of critical issues in environmental systems science, focusing on: human population; the global chemical cycles; ecosystems and biodiversity; endangered species and wildlife; nature preserves; energy flows in nature; agriculture and the environment; energy systems from fossil fuels to renewable forms; Earth's waters; Earth's atmosphere; carbon dioxide and global warming; urban environments; wastes; and paths to a sustainable future. This course
will cover a very significant amount of demanding material. This course will be challenging, and students should expect a steep learning curve.

**Cultural Foundations I: Political Theology;**
**Professor George Shulman**
“Political theology” is the study of how faith shapes politics. It is readily apparent that the meaning of a scripture or of a faith is not self-evident, but requires interpretation, and as a result, people who profess faith in the same god or scripture still practice that faith very differently. This is manifest in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, etc. At the same time, the concept of “faith” denotes not only faith IN a specific doctrine or belief about the sacred or the divine, but a form of life, a set of habitual practices and an orientation to living. As “political theology” thus signals the bonds between faith and life, so we will trace the bonds relating faith to politics. In the first half of the semester we will focus specifically on the Hebrew Bible and Christian gospels, reading slowly and out loud to see how “The Bible” contains stories and texts that provoke opposed interpretations with radically different implications. Then we explore how modern commentators have analyzed this whole history of interpretation, worldly practice, and conflict, as they argued about faith, nihilism, modernity, and democracy. In the final weeks, we will focus on the role of Biblical texts and broadly Biblical ideas in American politics, specifically regarding opposition to slavery and racial domination. Texts include: the Hebrew Bible, the Christian "New Testament;” selected readings by Machiavelli, Rousseau, Marx, and Kierkergaard, as well as Nietzsche’s The Genealogy of Morals and Baldwin’s The Fire Next Time in their entirety. Readings will also include texts central to civil rights politics the United States.

**Writing II: Working;**
**Professor Chinnie Ding**
Visible and invisible, lonesome and collaborative, inspired and endured, work makes and maintains the world we live in. To learn about work is to learn how most people spend most of the day, securing means, chasing dreams, existing in direct or indirect relation to other people. How do we come to choose the work we do, and how to assess and redress the inequalities that often accompany the division of labor? What are the ethical and economic relationships that connect us to the faraway strangers, or familiar faces we greet everyday, whose work maintains our ways of daily life, or whose lives our work affects? How have artists and writers depicted working people, and in what ways does creative work fit into or fall outside the economy at large? How has work structured our beliefs about money, status, and self-actualization, and how has it shaped our experience of time? Through topics such as globalization, migration, slavery, and unemployment, this course explores the challenges that work has posed to political thought, political action, and aesthetic representation alike. Readings spanning fiction, oral history, poetry, philosophy, and cultural criticism will be supplemented by films and artworks.

**FALL 2015**

**Writing I: Empire at Sea;**
**Professor Elaine Freedgood**
We will read *Benito Cereno*, Herman Melville’s short novel of a slave mutiny on a Spanish ship in the South Pacific, and Greg Grandin’s historical exploration of its background in *Empire of Necessity*, to think about the sea as a place of trade, battle, piracy, and finally, a grave. Olaudah Equiano’s controversial slave narrative from the late 1700s will be our second text: issues of selfhood, authenticity and the slave as sailor/merchant will surround our discussion of this text, which has been read as an autobiography, a novel, a conversion narrative, an ethnography, and a
Writing I: Stories of Racial Formations;  
Professor Julia Mendoza  
There are many ways to express yourself: through memoirs, autobiographies, poems, letters, diaries, and even tattoos. In this course, we will ask ourselves what it means to not only write one’s own story, but to also be thoughtful to the sensitive task of writing someone else’s story. This class will not only explore the importance of telling stories, but also seek to understand how stories can illuminate our understanding of social conditions. Accordingly, we will seek to read stories along relative interdisciplinary scholarship in order to understand how the power of a narrative can be used for thinking about broader considerations of racial formations. With a focus on storytelling, the reading for this course will specifically survey literature that examines how different people understand processes of racialization. The interdisciplinary scholarship for this course will survey literature that examines the processes of racialization as understood through various social and cultural histories. Although broad in scope, this scholarship is an attempt to comprehend the operation of racialization throughout different socio-historical moments, from the Black Atlantic slave trade to the current crisis of the War on Terror. The goal of this class is to not only consider how stories are situated in relation to a broader understanding of racial formations, but also to understand how racialized bodies conceive of justice and freedom.

Cultural Foundations II: Island Literature;  
Professor Kristin Ross  
In this course we will examine the island as topos and literary archetype in a variety of novels, plays and films. Topics to be discussed include islands and western desire; nationalism and insularity; islands and utopian fantasy; femininity, exoticism, and colonialism. The first half of the course will focus on canonical western texts (Homer to H.G. Wells); the second half will primarily examine 20th century cultural production from the Caribbean.

Social Foundations II: Introduction to Media Studies;  
Professor Aurora Wallace  
This course introduces students of media studies to some of the issues and theories that have been central to the study of mediated forms of communication. It will examine the factors that influence the media and, in turn, examine the influence of the media on prevailing attitudes, values and behaviors. Students will be expected to understand the strengths and weaknesses of various media theories and to arrive at some thoughtful conclusions regarding their own theoretical preferences.

SUMMER 2015

Social Foundations I: Introduction to Sociology;  
Professor Jeff Manza  
This course will introduce you to the discipline of sociology – the study of how social contexts such as families, communities, schools, churches, and organizations shape individual lives. Our primary goal in this course is to develop what C. Wright Mills once famously described as “the sociological imagination,” that is, the ability to see the connections between individual biographies and history, and begin to apply its insights to understand how societies work. Sociology is concerned with a broad canvass of the modern world. Our question ranges widely from the basic units of human life—or individuals’ relationships with others—to the groups and
organizations we are a part of (including our race, gender, class, religion, and groups we are assigned to or choose to belong to), all the way up to a now rapidly-changing global economy that is impacting all of our social relationships. Sociologists ask questions that are similar to the other social sciences (such as Economics, Political Science, Psychology, or Anthropology), but we have distinctive theories and methods that lead us to approach problems in a unique way. This course will give you some tools to analyze social problems using a sociological imagination. It will also introduce you to some of the research and leading theories in contemporary sociology.

**Social Foundations I: Approaches to American Studies;**  
**Professor Andrew Ross**  
This course is an introduction to American Studies. It covers approaches to topics that are central to US history, society, and culture. These include Native American dispossession, constitutional law, nationalism and race, labor and democracy, frontier settlement, empire, capitalism and morality, social movements, and consumerism.

**Writing I: Identity and the Cultural Constructions of Race and Ethnicity;**  
**Professor Laurie Woodard**  
Identity: the ways in which we see ourselves; the ways in which others see us; the dynamic relationship between these two seemingly distinct and often irreconcilable poles is the underlying theme of this first-year writing seminar. We will explore the ways in which we create, build, rebuild, and live our racial and ethnic identities in constant dialogue with contemporary American societal constructions of race and ethnicity. As students develop and hone their writing skills, we will pose questions including: What is race? Is it immutable? How do we know it when we see it? How is it distinct from ethnicity? What is gained and/or lost by considering or not considering race today? In what ways do other facets of identity, for example gender, sexuality, religion, nationality, and class, inform, challenge, reconstruct, or deconstruct our racial identities? We will examine a variety of primary and secondary texts - fiction, nonfiction, essays, and plays – by Malcolm X, Soloman Northrup, Barbara C. Fields, Edward Said, Ayad Akhtar, Chandra Prasad, and Tricia Rose. Focusing on the various stages of the writing process, including free writing, crafting an argument, employing evidence, drafting, revision, and polishing essays, we will delve into forms including autobiography and memoir, textual analysis, and critical analysis. Students will also provide and receive feedback during in-class workshops.

**Elective: Foundations of Speech Communication;**  
**Professor Piper Anderson**  
In this course students will develop effective speech communication skills that will prepare them for a range of academic and professional activities where formal presentations are required. Central components of the course include generating topics, organizing ideas for written and oral presentation, mastering elements of audience psychology, and practicing techniques of speech presentation in a public forum. Students will be required to participate in a culminating event presenting their persuasive speeches on a social topic of their choosing.

**SPRING 2015**

**Cultural Foundations I: Introduction to Literary Analysis and the Politics of Interpretation;**  
**Professor Toral Gajawarala**  
This course serves as an introduction to college-level literary analysis. Our goal this term is to familiarize you with basic tools of reading and analysis and to provide you with opportunities to think, discuss, and write about the texts that you study in a clear, insightful and argumentative
fashion. In this sense, this is a course in reading, in writing and in discussion. This is also a course designed to expose you to questions of genre and aesthetic form: how do we define and evaluate, the novel, or the epic? What makes a drama ‘dramatic’ or a poem ‘poetic’? What counts as a sonnet, and how do we define realism? By the end of the term you should have a clearer understanding of the major features of several genres and be able to incisively identify their representatives. Finally, this course makes the case for interpretation, as a critical act that is both scientific and aesthetic, and one that has political consequences. What does it mean, as Euripides asks, to defend Medea’s murder of her own children? Or to suggest, as Ngugi wa Thiong’o does, that African literature shouldn’t be written in English, only in the indigenous languages of the continent? This class will ask you to make a claim, to take a position, and to defend it with all the technical and rhetorical tools in your arsenal. Some of the texts that we will put under our microscope include: Euripides’ Medea, Shakespeare’s The Tempest, Gogol’s “Diary of a Madman”, Chinua Achebe’s “Girls at War”, the sonnets of Shakespeare, William Wordsworth, Ted Berrigan, and Daniil Kharms, the free verse of Marina Tsvaeteva, Derek Walcott, Frank O’Hara, and Gwendolyn Brooks, essays by James Baldwin and Ngugi wa Thiong’o, and the contemporary magical realist novel The Arc of the Rainforest, by Karen Tei Yamashita.

**Cultural Foundations I: Critical Perspectives on Justice Through Creative Writing; Professors George Shulman and Bryonn Bain**

This course has two main goals. First, we study different interpretations of justice as an ideal, while we also study how ideas of justice are practiced – implemented, enacted, and embodied, also corrupted and violated, as well as asserted, protested, recovered, revised. We look at the articulation of justice as an ideal, but we also look at claims about “justice” in relation to the state, law, hierarchies and institutions, like slavery and white supremacy, patriarchy and the family, capitalism and the workplace. We explore the gap between what is CALLED justice by dominant groups and institutions in a society, and what the ideal might really be. We explore how people try to expose, protest, and close that gap. At the same time we use texts and class discussion to practice and improve our writing skills. The readings take a wide variety of forms – philosophical dialogue, utopian fantasy, prison writing, legal opinion, spoken word poetry, non-fiction essay, etc. – so our writing assignments will take a variety of forms.