ANTHROPOLOGY

http://anthropology.jhu.edu/

The Anthropology Department specializes in socio-cultural anthropology: the study of social and cultural forms of human life using ethnographic, historical, and comparative methods. Faculty in our department are engaged in research that addresses topics considered traditional such as the study of ethnicity, language, religion, family and kinship, or medical pluralism, and also new and emergent issues such as those relating to childhood, technological imaginaries, biomedicine, ecology, state, violence, and popular economies. In all cases, the acute awareness of shifting contexts in which institutions are embedded and the impact of global, regional, and national politics on social life is built into the methodology and the theory engaged by faculty and students. Faculty in our department have research expertise in the Americas, South Asia, the Middle East, and sub-Saharan Africa. Our research is oriented toward the investigation of a number of cross-cutting themes of trans-regional concern rather than a comprehensive coverage of global cultural areas.

The department's distinctive orientation to anthropology can be characterized in terms of its orientation to non-European anthropological and philosophical traditions, alongside the dominant anthropologies which have been seen as definitive of the discipline in the past. In terms of specific topics, faculty in our department are engaged in research on violence, social suffering and theories of everyday life; the material and moral force of the state; money and value; environments; new kinship; anthropology of religion and secularism; anthropology of medicine; media and visual anthropology; health and well-being; and anthropology of language.

The department offers a B.A. program and a Ph.D. program. The B.A. prepares students either to continue to various employment opportunities or degree in anthropology (and related fields) or to develop anthropological skills and imagination as complementary to pre-professional training, such as medicine, engineering, and international relations. Undergraduate course work offers an introduction to the basic methodologies and theories of contemporary anthropology through discussion and directed research on these and other topical issues. Student advising helps interested students to develop concentrations, through sequences of complementary courses tailored to their own interests, including electives outside the department. In addition, majors have the option to pursue an honors program.

Undergraduate majors in anthropology are required to do ten courses, six electives, at least four of which must be taken at 300-level or higher, and one of which can be a cross-listed course taught outside the department. After consultation with faculty, majors can take an independent study course that will count toward the major. All anthropology majors must also meet a foreign language requirement (intermediate level). Native speakers of another language, or those fluent in a language not taught at the university, can devise a plan to meet this requirement in consultation with the department. Students wishing to write an honors thesis are also required to do two additional courses in which they work on their dissertation topics. Minors are required to take five courses, two required courses and three electives, at least two electives must be 300 level or higher.

The core curriculum for majors develops a step-wise sequence from the freshman seminar to the senior honors option. We offer an elective 100-level Freshman Seminar that introduces anthropological approaches to a broad range of contemporary issues. Here, we hope to develop curiosity in anthropology as a way of knowing the world, and to encourage critical reflection by students on their own life experiences. Our 100-level introductory course, Invitation to Anthropology, is geared toward freshmen and sophomores. The objective of this course is twofold: to offer anthropological knowledge and analytic skills to a broad range of students, and to prepare potential majors for further training in social theory and fieldwork methods. Following from this introductory course, our 200-level Ethnographies course furthers student understanding of essential themes through close attention to classic and contemporary ethnographic works in the discipline. The 300-level Methods course is an additional requirement for majors, deepening students' capacity to link theory and method, preparing students to carry out field research, and guiding students in the writing up and presentation of original research. Building on these foundations, the 400-level Logic of Anthropological Inquiry course, also required of majors, is a thematic capstone course that demands an extended engagement with classic debates and encourages integrative thinking across the range of anthropology courses taken. Majors in anthropology may decide to pursue an honors thesis based on an extended research project. They should discuss their interest in writing a thesis with their faculty advisor in their sophomore year and before the summer of their junior year. Drawing from their previous course preparation and working closely with a faculty advisor, such students spend one summer conducting field research, one semester conducting secondary literature review, and the final semester writing their honors thesis.

Outside of the core curriculum, both majors and minors may take a wide variety of courses. Thematic courses are highly varied and reflect faculty interests, usually including (in any one year) courses in religion and philosophy; medical, legal, economic and linguistic anthropology; and study of diverse areas of the world. Courses on the state, law, and money offer a critical and comparative approach for students aiming toward political, economic, and legal careers. Courses in medical anthropology serve pre-med and public health students. Philosophical and theoretical courses are attractive to humanities students. We see teaching and research as integrally linked, and invite undergraduate students to envisage research as they take introductory and advanced courses in anthropology.

The training of graduate students focuses on providing students with a vocabulary and grammar to engage in anthropological reasoning in socio-cultural anthropology and with skills in research methods. The department emphasizes training in anthropological theory in relation to new developments in other disciplines within the social sciences; understanding of regions in terms of cross-cutting questions rather than geographical questions alone; and the capability to place a problem within a broad history of anthropology that is engaged through multiple national and regional traditions.

Our faculty brings into the classroom an extraordinary range of personal and professional experiences. We are proud to have one of the most diverse faculties in the discipline worldwide, both in terms of gender and ethnic or national origins. Their collective fieldwork experience spans the world, including the Americas, the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia.

Facilities

In addition to the regular departmental colloquium where invited speakers from Hopkins and other campuses around the world present their ongoing research, the department holds one or two special symposia every year, including one organized by graduate students. The department also invites a distinguished scholar each year to present
the Sidney W. Mintz Lecture. The purpose of the Mintz lectures is to integrate scholarly and social concerns, focusing on questions of political and economic inequality, racism, gender, and ethnic differences from an interdisciplinary perspective. Previous lectures have subsequently been published in Current Anthropology.

The Baltimore-Washington area is unusually rich in library, archival, and museum resources relating to anthropology. In addition to the excellent collection in the Milton S. Eisenhower Library, the William H. Welch Medical Library, and other libraries at Johns Hopkins, major anthropological holdings are available at the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and the other specialized libraries and museums in nearby Washington, D.C. Students can use the Smithsonian Institution’s ethnological and library collection through a cooperative arrangement.

Financial Aid
Undergraduate majors and non-majors are eligible to apply for a Provost’s Undergraduate Research Award to support special research and write-up projects in their senior year.

Graduate fellowships and teaching assistantships are available, and most students admitted receive support. Stipends are currently offered at $29,000 per year plus fellowships that cover tuition and health insurance. Some additional funds are usually available on a competitive basis for summer field research (including travel grants from the Institute for Global Studies, the Program for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, and the Program for Latin American Studies), and for special language-learning needs. Write-up students may apply for a Dean’s Teaching Fellowship.

Programs
- Anthropology, Bachelor of Arts (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/anthropology/anthropology-bachelor-arts/)
- Anthropology, Minor (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/anthropology/anthropology-minor/)
- Anthropology, PhD (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/anthropology/anthropology-phd/)

For current course information and registration go to https://sis.jhu.edu/classes/

Courses
AS.070.125. Technology and Politics in Native North America. 3 Credits.
How have biodiversity protection measures, cultural heritage NGOs, genomic science, and transnational science altered the lives of Indigenous groups in North America in the twenty-first century? What does "recognition" mean for these people, and how does it actually work in practice? This course will explore the emergence of new spaces and technologies of Indigenous politics and their new roles in shaping everyday experiences, from Inuit communities in Arctic Canada to urban centers in the United States.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.132. Invitation to Anthropology. 3 Credits.
The question what it means to be human requires continual investigation. Anthropology offers conceptual tools and an ethical groundwork for understanding humanity in its diverse manifestations. This course familiarizes students with anthropological concepts and methods, and engages in critical analysis of a broad range of subjects including language, exchange, class, race, gender, kinship, sexuality, religion, and capitalism.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.140. Anthropology of Food. 3 Credits.
This introductory course investigates what we eat and, as a consequence, who we are. By taking a cross-cultural perspective, students will examine the politics of food production, the values associated with food preparation, and the material and social dynamics of food consumption. Through readings, films, field trips, demonstrations, and tastings, the course offers an interdisciplinary and dynamic pedagogical approach to analyzing cooking and eating—activities central to daily life and social forms more broadly. Local- and global-level issues will be addressed as students explore histories, economics, social issues, and identity formation related to food.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.154. Maps and Mapping. 3 Credits.
This course explores maps as cultural documents and ethnographic sites. Students will learn how cultural understandings of space, time, and the visible world shape cartographic conventions. Through mapping exercises we will explore how ethnographer can use maps to theorize the nature of political, cultural, and economic life.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.201. Picturizing Climate Change. 3 Credits.
Climate change is represented in many pictures, such as those of tables, graphs, iconic photographs and filmic images. It materializes in many objects and qualities in our everyday lives, such as emissions, heat, solar grids and taxes. Artists attempt to picturize climate through photographs, installations and performance art. In this class we will examine these myriad representations, materializations and artistic efforts to see what ethical, political and aesthetic issues are at stake within them. We will ask to what concerns and desires does climate change give expression? Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.212. Minorites in South Asia. 3 Credits.
This course will introduce first-year students to the anthropology of modern South Asia from the lens of its varied minorities. We will interrogate ideas of nation, community, tradition, and belonging across the region to understand contemporary dilemmas of diversity, heterogeneity, and cultural citizenship.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive
AS.070.213. Data and Society. 3 Credits.
This course explores the context, experience, and consequences of data proliferation in the contemporary moment. Both experts and laypeople generate and study data at unprecedented rates to make decisions, communicate with each other, and process their environments. How do data advance or constrain our social, political, and economic relationships at large? How is knowledge transformed when it is mediated by large volumes of data? What are the consequences of trusting sociopolitical decisions to data-processing algorithms? What happens when everyday users generate data about themselves and volunteer their data to for-profit entities? The course consists of different modules zeroing in on topics ranging from the economy, to public health, climate change, media, and the law. Each module consists of lectures and seminar-type discussions, as well as interactions with invited speakers. Students will be expected to actively participate in all discussions and develop one independent project. The course content and activities tie into the 2019-2021 Sawyer Seminar on “Precision and Uncertainty in a World of Data” led by the Departments of Anthropology and the History of Medicine.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.221. Cityness: Anthropology and the Urban Experience. 3 Credits.
This course is an introduction to urban anthropology through the study of diverse "urban experiences," to explore how they are shaped by power relations as well as resistance. We will read about crowds and anonymity, finance and poverty, media and public space to understand how they change through the evolution of technology, shifts in capital investment and flows of migration. We will examine the scope and limitations of classical (Western) notions of foundational studies city life. We will also explore how the notion of "cityness" better captures the variety of affects and dynamics of contemporary urban everyday life.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.239. Hinduism and Ethics: The Epics. 3 Credits.
We will read sections of the two major epics Ramayana and Mahabharata to see how issues of morality and ethics are posed in these texts and the disutations around these issues.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.241. African Cities. 3 Credits.
Over the past two decades, African cities have absorbed rapid population increase without accompanying economic growth. Students will review the major challenges of this mode of urbanization and explore the vibrant ways residents have sought to meet them. Following anthropology’s commitment to lived experience, we will track these issues through the twists and turns of everyday life, and consider what they may say about urbanity more broadly in the 21st century. Topics include livelihood, the built environment, conflict and membership, and popular culture.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.250. Power and Place in the Segregated City. 3 Credits.
Identifying residential segregation as a principle driver of racial inequity, the Fair Housing Act of 1968 sought to end housing discrimination and advance the racial integration American cities. Fifty years after this landmark legislation, however, American cities are in most cases more segregated than ever before. New and urgent demands for racial justice, coalescing in transnational movements like Black Lives Matter, have brought a renewed focus onto the deep and abiding social harms wrought by decades of urban segregation. Drawing on anthropological and sociological scholarship on cities both in and outside the United States, this course will examine the social forces that drive segregation, reify boundaries in urban space, and reproduce persistent power asymmetries.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.253. Introduction to Medical Anthropology. 3 Credits.
Is illness bound within an individual body, or is it entangled with our relations? What are the ethics and politics of the doctor/patient relation? How are medical technologies changing the way we experience illness and healing? How have global institutions responded to the problems posed by disease and development? Drawing on ethnography, film, and literature, this course introduces students to how anthropologists have explored and researched problems related to health and illness.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.256. Locavores, Vegans, Freegans: Lifestyle Activism from an Anthropological Perspective. 3 Credits.
From social media usage to popular public figures such as Greta Thunberg, we are inundated every day by messages on how we should change our daily habits to save the planet or consume certain brands to help particular causes. This course offers an anthropological perspective on such endeavors of lifestyle activism, broadly defined as the changing of one’s lifestyle and consumption habits to enact some form of social and political change. We will ask: How can we distinguish between lifestyle activism and non-activist concerns with lifestyle? What makes pursuing certain daily actions activist? What kind of self-cultivation and moral aspiration play into the transformation of habits? What does it take for daily habits to become a lifestyle movement that could enact larger and meaningful social and political change? Drawing from a variety of social and political contexts, we will explore topics such as voluntary simplicity, bicycling, zero waste, boycotts, and back-to-landers, while maintaining a larger focus on food and food activism.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.267. Culture, Religion and Politics in Iran. 3 Credits.
This is an introductory course for those interested in gaining basic knowledge about contemporary Iran. The focus will be on culture and religion and the ways they in which they become interwoven into different kinds of political stakes.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.273. Ethnographies. 3 Credits.
What does it mean to translate the field onto the page? This course explores the craft of ethnography and its relationship to anthropological knowledge. Reading a series of classic and contemporary works, and engaging in our own writing experiments, we attend to the knotty problem of rendering lived experience, attending to narrative, voice, structure, and the relationship between description and analysis.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive
AS.070.295. Conflict and Security in a Global World. 3 Credits.
Students will be introduced to problems of global governance in the context of transnational conflicts, changing nature of war, new epidemics and pandemics, and the threats of planetary extinction. What are the ways security is imagined and what kinds of political passions are mobilized for security of people versus security of states.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.317. Methods. 3 Credits.
This course aims to teach basic fieldwork skills: Choosing and entering a community; establishing contacts; learning to listen and to ask questions and locating archival material that might be relevant. It is a hands-on course that increases student familiarity with various neighborhoods such as the Arts District in Baltimore. Recommended Course Background: two or more prior courses in anthropology (not cross-listed courses).
Course is a requirement for anthropology major.
Prerequisite(s): AS.070.132 OR AS.070.273
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.324. Latin America in a Fracturing World. 3 Credits.
This course examines the multiple and overlapping crises afflicting Latin America today through an ethnographic lens. Featuring conversations with authors of recent work on the region’s most pressing issues, we will explore the contours of knowledge production itself under conditions of precarity and violence. Discussions will include the retrenchment of borders, migration crises, the state management of life and death, the resurgence of authoritarianism, food insecurity, and resource conflicts.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.329. An Introduction to Reality. 3 Credits.
Reality is a key concept we often think with more than we think about. And yet reality is not a self-evident thing. This seminar explores a central paradox in the concept of reality: a totality—an ‘everything’—nonetheless produced and maintained from a partial and situated practice of making. The course begins with historical examinations of reality-making and undoing and then proceeds to approaches from anthropological theory and ethnography. It looks critically at the role of scientific knowledge, technological development, and capitalist and socialist ideological regimes in making realities in their own image. The course puts forth the case that anthropology is uniquely situated to understand how systems of knowledge come into being and stabilize a social order while investigating the inherent contestability and fragility of those systems.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.330. Sheltering in Places: Architecture and Anthropology in Conversation. 3 Credits.
What is the relation between social life and shelter? How do the kinds of buildings we move through shape our sense of what is important, beautiful, or possible? Why do some buildings feel good and others bad? And how do buildings evolve as people inhabit, repurpose, repair or degrade them over time? The course begins with philosophical reflections on spheres, shells, and containers in relation to childhood and memory. It then explores the long interdisciplinary conversation between architecture and anthropology, focusing on the social and cultural dimensions of built structures. Finally, it considers how architectural practice is responding to contemporary challenges of migration, pandemics, and climate change.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.332. Reverberations Of The Korean War. 3 Credits.
This course will take the reverberations of the Korean War to examine the ways in which catastrophic violence is absorbed into and corrodes social life. Particular attention is paid to the transnational nature of conflict, how boundaries around peace and war are established, and how recent scholarly and artistic work on the Korean War has critically engaged dominant frameworks of memory and trauma. Readings will draw from fiction, ethnography, historiography and will also include film. This course also draws from the public syllabus on Ending the Korean War.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.334. Contemporary Anthropology. 1 Credit.
Students are invited to attend, for credit, the departmental research colloquium in anthropology. The colloquium meets most (but not all) Tuesday afternoons during the semester. Students are expected to attend and listen, encouraged to ask questions when they wish, and to write one brief reflection on contemporary trends in the field, based on what they have observed during these sessions. Prerequisite: Students must have completed one Anthropology course previously.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.336. Ethnographic Perspectives on Brazil. 3 Credits.
This seminar offers an examination of Brazilian culture and politics through close readings of classic and contemporary ethnography. The course will track how anthropologists have approached the complexities and contradictions of Brazilian society. And, conversely, we investigate how studies in Brazil have prompted challenges to and generated innovations in anthropological thought.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.342. Common Ground: Shared Resources, Social Economies. 3 Credits.
This course explores the idea and practice of the commons through various sites and objects (money, work, natural resources, urban land, knowledge and culture, etc.). We will examine the promise and limitations of local, grassroots social and economic forms of organization that propose alternatives to the market economy. Focusing on workers, consumers and housing cooperatives; community currencies; urban gardens; self-help associations; fair trade organizations and knowledge networks; we will enquire how these social economies propose autonomous forms of living together, and sharing resources, property and labor.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.359. Korean War. 3 Credits.
This course takes the Korean War as a site to both explore: 1) contemporary historical and political transformations in East Asia and globally and 2) the ways in which violence, catastrophic loss, and separation are woven into everyday life. It will explore the Korean War through film, fiction, historiography, and draw on comparative materials in anthropology.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive
AS.070.363. Religious Freedom and Prisons in America. 3 Credits.

"Although we often think of religious freedom as a fixed philosophical doctrine of Enlightenment liberalism, it is a concept continually being (re)made from the ground up in increasingly important ways that today affect national politics and the judiciary. Nowadays, religious freedom has cultivated oppositional meanings: it holds together both a freedom from and to supersede government regulation; where actions in the name of religious freedom seek both to separate from government and to radically engage it as a theological force. We begin by taking this tension as a provocation to look locally and draw widely from a variety of ethnographic, historical, philosophical, literary, and other present-day texts and media, which will deepen how we understand the significant scope of what is at play and at stake in contemporary America and its politics. Through our readings and discussions, we will better grasp how religious freedom and its legal interpretations have grown from the bottom up, moving through local policies, social geographies and institutions, such as churches and prisons, as much as through any singular adherence to transcendent philosophical doctrine. While this class is an overarching exploration of how American Christianity has developed, it will pay particular attention to the Alabama and Louisiana prison systems and their distinctive religious histories. And we will focus on how the varied conceptual forms of religious freedom relate to the social geographies, religious discourses, literary texts, and media produced in and through ideas of the American South."

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.373. Housing Matters. 3 Credits.

This course will collectively craft an anthropological critique of housing, both as a social concern and as an object of public policy and urban planning. As a key component of the structure and functioning of cities, housing is instrumental to urban governance, segregation, and citizenship, as well as to cultures of consumption and class formation, identities, solidarities and the imagination of alternative social orders. We will study several ethnographies to examine how the material and social effects of housing shape the politics of difference, rights, markets and property relations, consumption and activism in the US urban context.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.375. Technology, Trust, and Expertise. 3 Credits.

How does an idea or an observation become a "fact"? How does one study "science" anthropologically? This course will introduce students to the field of science and technology studies (STS) by asking how different societies have defined the relationship between experimentation, knowledge, and power. Through ethnographic portraits of laboratories, clinics, toxic landscapes, and virtual simulations, we will explore how scientists and other experts have understood their relationships with other citizens, the state, and the physical environment.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.376. Social Ecology. 3 Credits.

This course will explore social and cultural dimensions of contemporary ecological problems, thinking between ecological anthropology, environmental philosophy, and activist literature and media. It will be taught as a community-based learning course in partnership with the Center for Social Concern and a Baltimore environmental organization. Coursework will be organized on a collaborative studio basis and a project-based approach. Recommended Course Background: One prior course in either Anthropology or Environmental Studies.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.379. Social Ecology Studio. 3 Credits.

This course will grapple with the social and cultural dimensions of contemporary ecological problems through a local, project-based approach. Coursework will be organized on a studio basis in partnership with a local environmental organization, Friends of Stony Run. Continuing a collaborative project initiated in the fall of 2019, we will work together to develop interpretive materials for the Stony Run stream and urban watershed adjoining our campus.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.380. Slumworld: Life in informal Settlements. 3 Credits.

One quarter of the planet’s urban population lives today in slums, shantytowns, favelas, chawls, colonias and other forms of rudimentary settlements (according to UN Habitat). Despite their prevalence throughout the world, these places are still depicted as spaces of informality and abjection, rather than as sites of emergence of innovative - even if disadvantaged-, makeshift ways of producing the city. This course will combine ethnographic and geographical literature, as well as works of fiction and film to explore the lives of squatters and slum-dwellers in many regions of the world and examine in what way their practices, forms of dwelling, sociality, conflict and cooperation are constitutive of the urban experience.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.389. Precarity in South Korea through TV and Film: Aesthetics and everyday life. 3 Credits.

This seminar explores how precarity in South Korea gains expression in the medium of TV and film. In particular, this seminar will focus on how the moving image brings the viewer into the texture of everyday life. We will focus on the TV show Misaeng and include films such as Parasite and Burning. TV and film will be paired with readings on the transformations of intimate life in contemporary South Korea and comparative work on precarity.

Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.402. Sustainable Design Studio. 3 Credits.

Environmental justice issues require sustainable design solutions founded on social scientific practice, technical expertise, and solidarity with community partners. Building on theoretical and methodological knowledge gained in the Fall 2020 Sustainable Design course (AS.070.433/633), the Sustainable Design Studio will bring together students, members of Baltimore social justice organizations, and practitioners from a variety of disciplines to work in collaboration to research and design solutions to complex social-ecological problems faced by partner organizations. This studio class provides students with practical, project-based design experience through community collaboration. Instructor permission required.

Area: Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences
AS.070.407. Design Anthropology. 3 Credits.
From casinos to canoes, algorithms to animal traps, our worlds are bursting with intentional objects. The word design has come to evoke the prestige of such objects, and their power to shape our collective habits and sensations. This course explores the anthropology of designed artifacts and their complex social trajectories. Beginning with philosophical investigations into the relationship between materials, form, and craft, we will proceed through ethnographic case studies of design as expert discourse and ordinary practice. Ultimately we will consider the affinities between the ethnography and design as open-ended and not entirely predictable engagements with the world.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.413. Reading Marx. 3 Credits.
This seminar offers a close reading of selected works of Karl Marx, along with supplemental secondary literature. We will explore how the central pillars of Marx's thought— including dialectical materialism, critical political economy, and utopian socialist thought—shape his critical method in interrogating the logic of capital.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.419. Logic of Anthropological Inquiry. 3 Credits.
Anthropology is an endeavor to think with the empirical richness of the world at hand, a field science with both literary and philosophical pretensions. This course grapples with the nature of anthropological inquiry, reading classic works in the discipline as well as contemporary efforts to reimagine its foundations. Required for anthropology majors.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.424. Normal and Pathological. 3 Credits.
This seminar explores the shifting lines of the normal and the pathological and the constitution of disease in the complex of medicine, public health, and the social. Readings include the works of Canguilhem and Foucault, historical monographs and ethnographies. Students will have the opportunity to develop substantial research or review papers throughout the course of the seminar.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.425. Anthropology of Epidemics. 3 Credits.
In this course we will examine how forms of governance, politics, expert knowledge, and citizen actions are implicated in the emergence and management of epidemics.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.426. Kinship: Old and New. 3 Credits.
We will track the transformations in kinship theory in relation to wider changes in legal theory, biomedicine, and the relation between state and family. In particular we will ask how the concepts of sovereignty, gift, exchange, human and non-human milieux affect notions of relations.
Co-listed with AS.070.639
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.433. Sustainable Design. 3 Credits.
Sustainable design involves the development of socially engaging and ecologically sensitive interventions and alternatives, a task both social and technical in nature. Through interdisciplinary readings and collaborative workshops in social science, environmental engineering, and planning and design, this seminar focuses on both theoretical and practical dimensions of this challenge. The first of a two-course sequence, to be followed by a studio practicum in the spring semester.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.435. New War/ Civil Conflicts/ Policing. 3 Credits.
This is an advanced course in which we will interrogate the boundaries between war, civil conflict and techniques of policing. Students should be prepared to work through texts of an interdisciplinary character.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.465. Concepts: How to Read Hindu and Islamic Texts. 3 Credits.
What is the nature of anthropological concepts and what relations do they bear to concepts internal to a society? We invite students to think with key ideas from Hindu and Islamic traditions, asking if anthropological concepts are best seen as abstractions from the particular or as intertwined with ongoing lines of inquiry, say into the nature of the real and continual efforts to test it? Topics in ritual theory, grammar, aesthetics, translation, revelation, luminosity, figuration and the mythological among those to be considered.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.472. Rumors, Conspiracy Theories And Disinformation. 3 Credits.
Our present is said to be rife with more rumors, conspiracy theories and disinformation than ever before. Is this moment so different from previous, historical moments of crisis? Haven't these modes of expression always been present, albeit at the margins of the political order? What does it say about knowledge to have multiple "regimes of truth" (Foucault)? How does a new media landscape based in algorithmic modularity, and particularly social media, change the set up from an old analogue media economy? This course, co-taught by an, a literary theorist, and a media theorist, aims to provide a diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives to help us examine the current state of reality.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.495. Householding on a Warming Earth. 3 Credits.
The household appears as commonsensical to us. It is where people, most often those of a family, reside together, sharing its resources, labor and collective fate. However, anthropologists have been arguing against this commonsense since it emerged in the 1950s. Yet the household is back again in climate change policy discussions as being most vulnerable to the problems associated with climate change, such as, temperature extremes, food insecurity, exacerbated disease, enhanced competition and violence. How might anthropological debates and controversies relating to households and householding as an activity within the context of war, famine and migration, provide important insights into today's urgencies?
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.503. Independent Study. 3 Credits.
Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration &gt; Online Forms.
AS.070.604. Independent Study. 1 - 3 Credits.
Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.070.508. Directed Readings. 1 - 3 Credits.
Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.070.561. Senior Essay-Fall. 3 Credits.
Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.070.562. Senior Essay - Spring. 3 Credits.
Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.070.596. Independent Study. 3 Credits.
Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

AS.070.602. Sustainable Design Studio.
Environmental justice issues require sustainable design solutions founded on social scientific practice, technical expertise, and solidarity with community partners. Building on theoretical and methodological knowledge gained in the Fall 2020 Sustainable Design course (AS.070.433/633), the Sustainable Design Studio will bring together students, members of Baltimore social justice organizations, and practitioners from a variety of disciplines to work in collaboration to research and design solutions to complex social-ecological problems faced by partner organizations. This studio class provides students with practical, project-based design experience through community collaboration. Instructor permission required.
Area: Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.613. Reading Marx.
This seminar offers a close reading of selected works of Karl Marx, along with supplemental secondary literature. We will explore how the central pillars of Marx’s thought—including dialectical materialism, critical political economy, and utopian socialist thought—shape his critical method in interrogating the logic of capital.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.616. Proseminar.
This course will consist of close reading of anthropological and philosophical texts to trace some important aspects of the underlying presuppositions of social theory. We will try to see how regions generate both data and theory; and also see how some abiding concerns around the relation between structural formations and formations of subjects are expressed in classical and current anthropological thought.

The seminar will offer a forum for students to reflect on preliminary field research and think further about problems of ethnographic method. We will proceed in the manner of a workshop for ongoing projects. Open to anthropology graduate students only.

AS.070.624. Normal and Pathological.
This seminar explores the shifting lines of the normal and the pathological and the constitution of disease in the complex of medicine, public health, and the social. Readings include the works of Canguilhem and Foucault, historical monographs and ethnographies. Students will have the opportunity to develop substantial research or review papers throughout the course of the seminar.
Writing Intensive

AS.070.625. Anthropology of Epidemics.
In this course we will examine how forms of governance, politics, expert knowledge, and citizen actions are implicated in the emergence and management of epidemics.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.629. Play, Performance, And Personhood.
To approach social life as performative marked a pivotal moment in anthropology and related disciplines, and even as an implicit framework it continues to undergird more recent theoretical orientations. Revisiting foundational works in ethnography and critical theory and tracing their resonances in contemporary turns and experiments, this seminar explores play and performance as both subject and method.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.633. Sustainable Design.
Sustainable design involves the development of socially engaging and ecologically sensitive interventions and alternatives, a task both social and technical in nature. Through interdisciplinary readings and collaborative workshops in social science, environmental engineering, and planning and design, this seminar focuses on both theoretical and practical dimensions of this challenge. The first of a two-course sequence, to be followed by a studio practicum in the spring semester.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.635. New War/ Civil Conflicts/ Policing.
This is an advanced course in which we will interrogate the boundaries between war, civil conflict and techniques of policing. Students should be prepared to work through texts of an interdisciplinary character.
Writing Intensive

We will track the transformations in kinship theory in relation to wider changes in legal theory, biomedicine, and the relation between state and family. In particular, we will ask how the concepts of sovereignty, gift, exchange, human and non-human milieus affect notions of relations. Open to undergraduate anthropology majors with instructors approval. Co-listed with AS.070.426
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.642. Design Anthropology.
From casinos to canoes, algorithms to animal traps, our worlds are bursting with intentional objects. The word design has come to evoke the prestige of such objects, and their power to shape our collective habits and sensations. This course explores the anthropology of designed artifacts and their complex social trajectories. Beginning with philosophical investigations into the relationship between materials, form, and craft, we will proceed through ethnographic case studies of design as expert discourse and ordinary practice. Ultimately we will consider the affinities between the ethnography and design as open-ended and not entirely predictable engagements with the world.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive
AS.070.659. Proposal Writing.
The seminar will offer a forum for students to discuss research projects, prepare grant proposals and think further about issues of ethnographic methodology and writing. Open to Anthropology graduate students only.
Writing Intensive

AS.070.664. in the Shadow of War: Korea, Violence, and Poverty.
This seminar will explore how violence and catastrophe are embedded in everyday life in Korea. It will focus on how to interconnect the catastrophic with the everyday, and focus on the level of the household and on forms of state knowledge of the population and the unit called “the family”. This is a research seminar. Students are expected to discuss their research in depth each week and should be prepared to write a significant research paper during the course.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

What is the nature of anthropological concepts and what relations do they bear to concepts internal to a society? We invite students to think with key ideas from Hindu and Islamic traditions, asking if anthropological concepts are best seen as abstractions from the particular or as intertwined with ongoing lines of inquiry, say into the nature of the real and continual efforts to test it? Topics in ritual theory, grammar, aesthetics, translation, revelation, luminosity, figuration and the mythological among those to be considered.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.672. Rumors, Conspiracy Theories And Disinformation.
Our present is said to be rife with more rumors, conspiracy theories and disinformation than ever before. Is this moment so different from previous, historical moments of crisis? Haven't these modes of expression always been present, albeit at the margins of the political order? What does it say about knowledge to have multiple “regimes of truth” (Foucault)? How does a new media landscape based in algorithmic modularity, and particularly social media, change the set up from an old analogue media economy? This course, co-taught by an, a literary theorist, and a media theorist, aims to provide a diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives to help us examine the current state of reality.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.674. Readings in Anthropology.
In this course we will engage classical texts from the anthropological archives and explore debates and contemporary salience.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.676. Semiotics and its Discontents.
The relationship between speakers, communities, and forms of language-in-use (ritual, everyday life, oral literature) can only partly be captured by conceptions of language as a sign system. In this course, we will review structuralist approaches most closely identified with semiotics and move on to explore the concept of “presence” and its explanatory potential for anthropological attempts in understanding language.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.682. Readings in Anthropology.
This course introduces classical texts from the anthropological archives in relation to contemporary debates in the discipline. In this year’s iteration, our readings and discussion will explore the idea of a public and engaged anthropology.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.687. Romanticism and Anthropology.
The word "romantic" has long carried negative connotations within anthropology meaning the tendency to idealize, exoticize, or seek out the irrational. Instead, through a focus on the themes of magic, art, myth, nature and creativity, we suggest that romantic philosophy has offered and continues to offer much of interest for contemporary anthropology. Drawing on select readings in philosophy and anthropology, we will explore the suppressed romantic legacy of anthropology. This is an undergraduate and graduate combined course. Recommended Course Background: Undergraduates have to have taken at least one anthropology course (any level) to register. Or else they need the permission of the instructor.
Writing Intensive

AS.070.691. The Anthropological Tone in Philosophy.
This course will ask: what constitutes an anthropological tone in philosophy? We will take up classical topics such as rule following, everyday life, skepticism, concept formation, realism, and signification in selected texts of anthropology and philosophy for understanding if these crisscross and overlap.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.698. Defining Region.
This course is open to anthropology graduate students only and is to be run on a workshop model. It is to help those students writing their regional essay for the comprehensive exams to acquire expertise in regional debates and literature relevant to their field research. Our understanding of regions is one of cross-cutting concepts and questions rather than geographical framings alone. After identifying a concept or question, each student will create an annotated bibliography, trace the shape of arguments as they emerge within the readings, create an outline and work toward a draft of the final essay.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.070.801. Dissertation Research.

AS.070.866. Directed Readings and Research.
AS.070.867. Directed Reading and Research.
AS.070.871. Directed Reading and Research.
AS.070.872. Directed Readings and Research.
AS.070.874. Directed Readings and Research.
AS.070.886. Dir Readings & Research.
AS.070.892. Directed Readings and Research.
Cross Listed Courses

Comparative Thought and Literature
AS.300.320. Lover’s Discourse. 3 Credits.
Much of what we know about love and desire we owe to fiction’s ability to evoke these experiences. Consider for example that the publication, in Germany, of The Sorrows of Young Werther inspired young men across Europe to dress and behave just like him. We will study in this course a selection of love stories chosen because they break the mold and question their conventions. Taking a critical distance from these tales of seduction, we will examine not only the manifestations and meanings of love, but also the configurations of gender they inspire and reflect. Indeed, just as nowadays film and television represent, as well as mold, our identities as desiring subject, fictions from the eighteenth-century onwards have shaped our current understanding of gendered subjectivities. The readings for this seminar (all available in English) include: Austen, “Persuasion”; Balzac, “The Girl with the Golden Eyes” and “Sarrasine”; Barthes, “Lover’s Discourse”; Goethe, “The Sorrows of Young Werther”; Mann, “Death in Venice”; Rousseau, excerpts from “Julie or The New Heloise”; Sulzer, “A Perfect Waifer”; Winterson, “Written on the Body”.
Area: Humanities

Earth & Planetary Sciences
AS.271.405. Energy and Politics. 3 Credits.
In the 21st century, energy supply and consumption are critical subjects for international politics, social development, and the future of the environment. Policies that determine energy supply and consumption come to being in complex institutional, national, and international contexts. This course will equip students with the necessary background to analyze energy policy issues and contribute to them in a meaningful manner. It also involves examination of wide-ranging debates over the switch to renewables, the use of unconventional energy sources, and the environmental consequences of energy choices.
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

English
AS.060.157. Literature and Anti-slavery in the Caribbean and Beyond. 3 Credits.
This course provides an introduction to the texts and rhetoric of the movement that abolished slavery in the Caribbean. Among other topics, we examine: how the formerly enslaved represented their experiences of slavery; how abolitionism emerged across the West Indies, Cuba, and Haiti; and the techniques artists used to imagine radical, post-slavery worlds. Authors include: Olaudah Equiano, Mary Prince, Esteban Montejo, Frederick Douglass, Herman Melville, and Aimé Césaire (all texts will be available in English).
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive

History
AS.100.365. Culture & Society in the High Middle Ages. 3 Credits.
This course will cover the period commonly known as the High Middle Ages, that is, the civilization of Western Europe in the period roughly from 1050 to 1350. It is a period of exceptional creativity in the history of Western Europe and in medieval history specifically, a time when many of the most characteristic institutions of Europe came into being.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.100.421. Sex, Law and Islam. 3 Credits.
ISIS, “virgins” in paradise, the sexual slavery of Yazidi women... This course will use anthropological and historical studies to examine the long history of how rules and understandings about sex, sexuality, and gender have mattered in how people think about Islam.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

History of Art
AS.010.382. The Politics of Display in South Asia. 3 Credits.
Through an examination of colonial exhibitions, the rise of national, regional, and archaeological museums, and current practices of display and representation in institutions, we will explore how the image of South Asia has been constructed in the colonial, modern, and contemporary eras. We will engage with the politics of representation, spectacle, and the economies of desire as related to colonialism and the rise of modernity. Readings from postcolonial theory, museum studies, anthropology, history, and art history.
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive

AS.010.452. Death and the State: Archaeologies of Governance in the Americas. 3 Credits.
This seminar explores the relationship between death and governance, with a focus on the archaeology and art history of the Americas. Our readings will examine key social and anthropological theories of death, questioning whether and how they might apply to the archaeological record through in-class archaeological case studies. Themes include interactions with ancestors and spirits, records of political struggles and war, questions about race and ethnicity, incidents of mass killings, debates on power and sovereignty, crime and punishment, and the archaeology of institutional care, science and medicine.
Prerequisite(s): AS.010.205 OR AS.010.302 OR AS.010.320 OR AS.010.389 OR AS.010.365 OR AS.010.366 OR AS.010.398 OR AS.010.407 OR Permission of Instructor
Area: Humanities

AS.010.634. Rethinking the Renaissance: Alternatives to "Early Modernity".
"The Renaissance" as a periodization under attack, and its persistance; the hermeneutics of the Pre-Modern Image since Panofsky; the critique of Eurocentrism; challenges to and recuperations of iconology, assessing the contributions of semiotics, psycholanalysis and queer theory.
Area: Humanities
Islamic Studies
AS.194.202. Never Forget: Muslims, Islamophobia, and Dissent after 9/11. 3 Credits.
In partnership with the social justice organization Justice for Muslims Collective, this community-engaged course and oral history project will explore how diverse Muslim communities navigated and contested belonging and political and cultural agency amidst state-sponsored violence and national debates on race, gender, citizenship and national security after 9/11 and during the ongoing War on Terror. Through history, ethnography, first-person narratives, film, fiction, and online resources, students will learn about the impact of 9/11 on American Muslim communities. This includes cultural and political resistance to imperialism, racism, and Islamophobia as well as to intersectional inequities within Muslim communities that were intensified in the context of Islamophobia. Students will learn about community activism and organizing from JMC, and complete a participatory action research project with the organization. This project is an oral history archive that will address gaps in the documentation of movement histories when it comes to early organizing against War on Terror policies by Muslim communities and communities racialized or perceived as Muslim. Students will be trained to record stories of resistance among leaders who organized and responded at the local and national-level in the Greater Washington region, to support the building of an archive that will shape a wide variety of future organizing and advocacy efforts.

AS.194.305. Cultures of Pilgrimage in Islam. 3 Credits.
The hajj pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the pillars of Islam. But Muslims around the world also take part in many other pilgrimages, from the massive annual Shi'a pilgrimage to Karbala to the smaller ziyarat “visits” to Sufi saint shrines, to travel to centers of Islamic learning, to pilgrimage to isolated natural features like mountains, trees, valleys. What are the theologies that propel the act of travel in Islam? How are cities, architectures, economies shaped by these cultures? And how are these traditions affected by the wars and colonial projects that plague many Muslim-majority countries in the contemporary world? Readings in this course will draw from anthropology, philosophy, Islamic interpretive texts (tafsir), and travelogues.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

Medicine, Science and the Humanities
AS.145.219. Science Studies and Medical Humanities: Theory and Methods. 3 Credits.
The knowledge and practices of science and medicine are not as self-evident as they may appear. When we observe, what do we see? What counts as evidence? How does evidence become fact? How do facts circulate and what are their effects? Who is included in and excluded from our common-sense notions of science, medicine, and technology? This course will introduce students to central theoretical concerns in Science and Technology Studies and the Medical Humanities, focusing on enduring problematics that animate scholars. In conjunction with examinations of theoretical bases, students will learn to evaluate the methodological tools used in different fields in the humanities to study the production and circulation of scientific knowledge and the structures of medical care and public health. This problem-centered approach will help students understand and apply key concepts and approaches in critical studies of science, technology, and medicine.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

Modern Languages and Literatures
AS.211.337. Wandering Jews? Jewish Migration in Film and Literature. 3 Credits.
Migration in all its forms has played a major role in shaping Jewish identity throughout history. From the Biblical exodus from Egypt through the beginnings of the diaspora under the Romans to the massive European Jewish immigration to America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to the founding of the state of Israel, the migrations of Jews have also had a major place in Jewish literature. Going all the way back to the Bible, but focusing on the 20th century, this course will explore the ways in which literature and film represent the experience of migration, whether negative (compelled by expulsion or violence); positive (lured by economic or social opportunity); or somewhere in-between. We will examine poetry, plays, prose and film in Yiddish, German, Hebrew, and English (all in translation) on aspects of Jewish migration including the social and political factors motivating migration from the countryside to the shtetl (town) to the city and from Central and Eastern Europe to the Americas, Palestine, and Israel. Issues under discussion will include: adaptation and assimilation; minority rights; what is the relationship of old and new or major and minor languages and literatures?; what is the place of tradition and heritage in a diasporic context? We will also consider the resonances between contemporary debates on migration and historical examples of these issues as they are reflected in literature and film.
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive

AS.211.641. Women Filmmakers from the Margins.
Film making remains an overwhelmingly male-dominated profession, but women are making significant inroads, and in so doing are leaving their distinctive mark on the medium. In this seminar we will examine the films of a group of women auteurs (those who write and direct their own films) who have endeavored to speak from the margins—be they social, geographical, or sexual—and whose work has challenged mainstream cinematic norms. The filmmakers whose work we will analyze may include Jane Campion, Australia; Aurora Guerrero, Mexico-USA; Claudia Llosa, Peru; Mira Nair, India-USA; Marialy Rivas, Chile; So Yong Kim, Korea.
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive

AS.211.748. Media Theory in the Age of Big Data.
This seminar will explore some key themes in contemporary media theory in an age when five tech giants have succeeded in infiltrating the daily lives of global citizens to an unprecedented degree in history. We will study the impact of this saturation on socioeconomic inequality as well as the implications of an almost total loss of privacy. Among the strategies of resistance to the capacity for surveillance these companies have developed we will focus in particular on current examples of feminist media art and voices from the global and cultural periphery as well as tendencies in these practices to emphasize a return to interpersonal connections and the embodied here and now. As case studies we may include #metoo, slo-film movements from Southern Bahia in Brazil, and the financing and distribution of ar films by mega media companies like Netflix.
Area: Humanities
AS.211.754. Modernist Primitivism.
This course will explore the aesthetics and politics of primitivism in European modernity, focusing on the visual arts and literature in German and Yiddish, but looking at the wider European context, including France and Russia. We will begin with the backgrounds of primitivism in Romanticism, looking especially at its ethnographic and colonial sources. We will then focus on the presence of anthropological and ethnographic discourses within various registers of modernist thought, literature, and visual culture, with special attention to visual and literary primitivism. Our central concerns will include: the attempt to create a modernist aesthetics grounded in ethnography; the primitivist critique of modernity; the place of primitivism in the historical avant-garde; the development of the notion of "culture" in modernity; and the aesthetics of modern ethnic and national identity. &nbsp;Key thinkers, artists, and writers to be considered include Herder; Gauguin; Picasso; Wilhelm Worringer; Carl Einstein; Hannah Höch; and Emil Nolde.
Area: Humanities

AS.215.406. Novelist Intellectuals. 3 Credits.
What does a novelist’s op-ed about economics have to do with her literary writing? In what ways does a fiction writer's essays on the environment inform how we read her novels? What happens when we find the political opinions of a writer objectionable? This undergraduate seminar will consider what the Spanish writer Francisco Ayala termed “novelist intellectuals,” that is, literary writers who actively participate in a society's public sphere. Considering writers from Madrid to New York, from London to Buenos Aires, we will ask how one should hold a novelist’s fictional and non-fictional writings in the balance and explore ways of reading that allow us to consider the public intellectual side and the aesthetic side of a novelist together.
Area: Humanities

AS.215.412. Populism. 3 Credits.
What do Hugo Chávez, Marine Le Pen, and Donald Trump have in common? According to many across the political spectrum, they are all populists. But what is populism, exactly, and how can it describe such disparate phenomena as left-wing social movements, xenophobic anti-immigrant policies, and economic redistribution? This advanced seminar will examine the history, culture, and political theory of populism. We will pay special attention to the resurgence of populism after the Great Recession and examine a number of cases from Latin America, Europe, and the United States.

AS.215.417. Literature of the Great Recession. 3 Credits.
The Great Recession—sometimes called the financial crisis or the economic crisis of 2008—brought financial markets to a halt and created significant political turmoil across the North Atlantic. But its impact on culture, and literature especially, has often been ignored. This seminar will travel across Europe, from Dublin to Madrid, from London to Reykjavík in order to examine how literature has registered this most recent economic crisis. We will focus on how crisis is narrated and the ways in which literary works have managed to provide a voice for marginalized social, economic, and political demands.
Area: Humanities

How should one study contemporary literature and culture? Is “the contemporary” a period in and of itself? Does it require a distinct conceptual approach? This graduate seminar will examine various approaches that have emerged since Michel Foucault called his genealogies a “history of the present.” We will pay special attention to contemporary literature and culture’s most distinguishing feature today: crisis. Considering theories of crisis and “the contemporary” together, the course will explore how living in a time of overlapping crises—economic, political, social, cultural, environmental, and others—affects the way we interpret the world.
Area: Humanities

Near Eastern Studies
AS.130.125. Gods and Monsters in Ancient Egypt. 3 Credits.
A basic introduction to Egyptian Religion, with a special focus on the nature of the gods and how humans interact with them. We will devote particular time to the Book of the Dead and to the "magical" aspects of religion designed for protective purposes.
Area: Humanities

AS.130.214. The Origins of Civilization: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. 3 Credits.
One of the most significant transformations in human history was the “urban revolution” in which cities, writing, and social classes formed for the first time. In this course, we compare five areas where this development occurred: China, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, Egypt, and Mesoamerica (Mexico/Guatemala/Honduras/Belize). In each region, we review the physical setting, the archaeological and textual evidence, and the theories advanced to explain the rise (and eventual collapse) of these complex societies.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.130.387. The Poetics of Biblical Prose and Verse. 3 Credits.
An exploration of how ancient Israelite techniques of literary textual and inter-textual patterning contributes to cohesion and meaning in biblical prose and verse. Attention will be given to the distinguishing characteristics of Hebrew verse in relation to prose, and to a range of different kinds of prose in Israelite literature. These poetics will be exemplified in close readings of selected texts from the Hebrew Bible in English.
Area: Humanities

Political Science
AS.190.608. Influx and Efflux.
“While many contemporary philosophies of the self, and of human agency, tend to emphasize the activity of expression – the enactment or externalization of an intention, desire, will, or purpose, this course will explore the process through which the outside comes in. Influence: the default condition of intrinsically porous and relational bodies. We will examine different models of the process through which individuals are psychically and physiologically affected by forces, shapes, ideas, affects, and tendencies coming from the “outside.” Readings include Walt Whitman’s experimentation with the democratic potential of “sympathy,” Alfred North Whitehead’s theory of “affective tone” (which focuses on unconscious and in-sensible modes of influence), Roger Caillois’s theory of the “instinct of abandon” (developed at the time of an emergent fascism in Europe), and contemporary theories (in behavioral psychology and cognitive science) of embodied cognition.”
AS.190.609. Law, Critique, Genealogy.
This course will offer a survey of classical and contemporary trends in
critical theory through the prism of the law. The readings will trace the
development of two modes of critical reflection emerging from Kant’s
philosophical project, critique and genealogy, exploring the tensions
between them through the study of categories such as judgment, case,
and jurisdiction. We will examine how these categories themselves reflect
the question of “modernity” and the Enlightenment as that question is
posed and answered by thinkers from Kant to Foucault and Habermas
and beyond. To ground this study, we will focus on critical engagements
with human rights, property, and institutional justice around the world.
Within an arch of readings that goes from Kant to Butler, the course
will include key texts by Hegel, Marx, Benjamin, Horkheimer, Adorno,
Marcuse, Habermas, Foucault, and Nancy, as well as texts drawn from
critical legal studies and the anthropology of law and justice. There are no
prerequisites for this interdisciplinary course. To receive credit, students
will be required to attend seminar, prepare for class discussions, and turn
in a 20-30 page final research paper, a draft of which will be presented at
a workshop at the end of the year.

AS.191.344. Belonging to Nature in the Anthropocene. 3 Credits.
This course explores debates in contemporary environmental
political thought concerning humanity’s relationship to nature in the
Anthropocene. The Anthropocene refers to the era in which “human”
activity becomes a force of “nature”—when the impact of human activity
on natural processes manifests itself in the stuff of the Earth. For many
of us, these planetary transformations are hardly noticeable in day-to-day
life, but they are dramatic: we are living through the Earth’s sixth mass
extinction. What is our relationship to these transformations? Do we have
the power to stop them, or at least to minimize their harmful effects?
Course readings and films introduce multiple visions of the human/nature
relationship and examine the responses they recommend to these and
other questions. The political stakes of these visions are brought to light
as we consider: How do visions of the human/nature relationship shape
and texture core political concepts like freedom, agency, responsibility,
and progress? What do they suggest about the strategies most likely to
motivate action amid the uncertainty of the Anthropocene? How do these
visions subtly (and not so subtly) relegate some to the realm of “nature”
so that others can be classified as “human”?
Writing Intensive

Program in Museums and Society
AS.389.303. World of Things. 3 Credits.
The course introduces and applies new concepts about materials,
and materiality to museum objects. It treats the museum as a site for
investigating the relationship between people and things.

Sociology
AS.230.367. Islamic Finance. 3 Credits.
Today, Islamic finance is a global industry comprising nearly $2 trillion
in assets, with hubs from Kuala Lumpur to Dubai to London. But half
a century ago, nothing called “Islamic finance” existed. So where did
Islamic finance come from? Why is it growing so fast? And what does it
mean for finance to be Islamic? We discuss the ban on riba in the Quran
and hadith, finance in early and medieval Islamic societies, petrodollars
and the birth of Islamic banking in the 1970s, the rise of Islamic capital
markets since 2000, contemporary shariah-compliant financial structures,
and the constitution of piety through financial practice.
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences