The information presented here is as of 10/21/2009. For up-to-date course offerings, please return to the previous page and select “Courses Offered.”

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

(Dev. II, with some exceptions as noted in course descriptions)

Chair, Professor PETER JUST

Advisory Committee: Professors: DARROW, JUST, ZIMMERBERG*. Associate Professor: CRUZ. Assistant Professor: HAMMERSCHLAG.

This program is designed to facilitate and promote innovations in curricular offerings in relation both to interdisciplinary conceptual focus and experimental pedagogical form. It provides support for faculty and student efforts to develop a curriculum that creatively responds to intellectual needs and modes of teaching/learning that currently fall outside the conventional pattern.

EXPR 245 (Re)presenting Sex: Shakespeare on Page and Stage (Same as Theatre 245 and Women’s and Gender Studies 245) (Not offered 2009-2010)

This experimental course approach questions the assumption that sex and sexual identity are portrayed in Shakespeare from two different directions—close reading focusing on the page and acting centered on the stage. These two critical methods can be used in a reading of the text by using the script-are often treated in compartmentalized fashion as separate, even incompatible activities. Our goal is to take up the challenge of integrating the two perspectives together within the framework of a single, integrated course. The teaching method is to bridge the gap between the two modes not by magically dissolving, but by actively engaging, the tensions between them. For example, no performance can include all the possible interpretations; performance decisions raise questions about what alternatives have been left out. Similarly, when all interpretive possibilities are held in imaginative suspension, the specificity of bodily movement and face-to-face interaction whose meanings emerge when enacted are lost.

We propose to put the two orientations in a productive and innovative dialogue that enables students to experience the tension from both sides, to articulate the opportunities and limits of each side, and to combine their respective strengths.

The mix of assignments (papers and scene work) will vary depending on whether students designate themselves as primarily “scholars” or “actors,” but some overlap will be built in to ensure that “scholars” gain understanding of acting and “actors” gain access to scholarship. All students will be expected to demonstrate versatility in traversing the full spectrum from interpretation through reading to interpretation through performance.

The specific topic that will bring these theoretical issues into focus is the matter of sex and sexual identity, as illuminated through the analysis of language, psychology, and theatrical embodiment. Six plays will be studied in depth: The Merchant of Venice, Twelfth Night, Othello, King Lear, Antony and Cleopatra, and The Winter’s Tale.

Format: lecture/discussion, with additional periods set aside for scene presentation. Evaluation will be based on several short papers, plus a final exam. All students will take the final: “scholar” students will have rigorous expectations in the writing of papers; “actor” students will have intensive (graded) performance expectations.

No prerequisites; students wishing to enroll as Acting Students should consult with instructors. Enrollment limit: 15-20 (expected: 15).

Satisfies one semester of the Division I requirement.

BAKER-WHITE, ERICKSON

EXPR 309(F) Exploring Creativity (Same as ArtS 309, English 309, Mathematics 309 and Philosophy 307)

This course centers on the creative process involved in generating original ideas, theories, and artistic works. Here, in three-week blocks, we will explore intentionally the creativity involved in studio art, philosophy, creative writing/poetry, and mathematics by attempting to produce original works in each of these areas of study. Our focus will be more on the creative process rather than the final products. Students will be encouraged to take risks, experiment, push their imaginations beyond their limits, and explore consequences of failed attempts. Questions with which we will struggle include: What constitutes art, poetry, philosophy, and mathematics? How can we judge the quality and aesthetics within these areas? What are the similarities and differences in the act of creating within these seemingly disparate contexts? How can we become more creative by intent?

Format: Primarily student led discussions and hands-on “studio” work. Evaluation will be based on presentations, participation, short papers, and projects.

No prerequisites; permission of the instructor. As this course is designed to be an exploration into unfamiliar intellectual worlds, students with expertise in one or perhaps two of the areas (art, creative writing, philosophy, and mathematics) are especially encouraged to participate. Evaluation limit: 12 (expected: 12). Preference will be given to juniors and senior majors of at least one of these areas.

Satisfies one semester of the Division I, II or III requirement. Each student may choose the division for which he or she wishes credit.

Hour: 1:10-3:50 W and noon-12:50 p.m. F

Instructor: E. BURGER (Mathematics)

Faculty Advisors: W. Dudley (Philosophy); M. Glier (Studio Art); L. Raab (English)

EXPR 497(F), 498(S) Independent Study

INTR 110 Geopolitics, Religion, and Oil: The Case of Iraq and Iran (Same as International Studies 101 and Political Science 258) (Not offered 2009-2010 to be offered 2010-2011) (See under INST 101 for full description.)

DARROW and MACDONALD

INTR 150(S) Dimensions of Public Health

Public health is concerned with protecting and improving health at the level of a community or population. Although individual behavior is an essential element of public health, collective, rather than individual, outcomes are the focus of public health study. The field of public health relies on contributions from multiple disciplines—economics, philosophy, epidemiology, sociology and political science, among others. In this course we will survey the field of public health, introducing students to core concepts and methods that highlight the interrelationship of individual and social choice with environmental and biological factors in producing health outcomes at the population level. We will develop these concepts and methods within the context of recent and public health crises, both historical and contemporary, including, for example, London’s Broad Street cholera epidemic, tuberculosis control/eradication efforts, HIV/AIDS, lead poisoning, and obesity. Throughout our study of these cases, we will focus on key questions at the heart of public health. For example, what is the most effective public health policy and how can we measure its effectiveness? How do we reconcile competing moral and economic claims in shaping such policy? How do our fundamental beliefs and understanding of mortality determine our approach to public health decisions? How are these decisions made?

Format: lecture/discussion. Evaluation will be based upon five mid-length papers (5-7 pages each) and the quality of contributions to class discussion.


Instructor: E. BURGER (Mathematics)

Hour: 2:35-3:50 MR

PEDRONI and SHORE-SHEPPARD

INTR 160 Mathematical Politics: Voting, Power, and Conflict (Same as Mathematics 175) (Not offered 2009-2010) (Q)

(Pace: under MATH 175 for full description.)

PACELLI

Satisfies one semester of the Division III requirement.

INTR 210 Race, Culture, and Incarceration (Same as African Studies 210 and Political Science 302) (Not offered 2009-2010)

This seminar examines poverty, race, policing and incarceration, and the death penalty. The United States has the highest incarceration and execution rates in the industrialized world—estimated at about 2 million detained, with over 3000 on death row. Poor people and people of color comprise the majority of those imprisoned due to differential policing and sentencing.

Format: seminar. Requirements: two collective group working or policy papers; one individual research paper; group presentation; class participation.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 30 (expected: 20).

Instructor: K. PEDRONI

INTR 211 Presidential Politics and the (Un)Making of “Blackness” (Same as Africana Studies 211) (Not offered 2009-2010)

This survey course examines presidential campaigns and administrations in which racial politics were central in three eras: civil war; civil rights; contemporary multiculturalism. The presidencies central to our discussions include those of: Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson; John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson; and the 2008 presidential campaigns and election.

Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: final research paper, portfolio and presentation; class participation.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 30 (expected: 20).

Instructor: JAMES

INTR 223(S) Image, Imaging and Imagining: The Brain and Visual Arts (Same as Neuroscience 318 and Psychology 318)

(See under PSYC 318 for full description.)

ZIMMERBERG

INTR 225(F) Natural History of the Berkshires (Same as Biology 225 and Environmental Studies 225) (W)

(See under BIOL 225 for full description.)

ART

Satisfies one semester of the Division III requirement.
INTR 252(S)  The Human Image: Photographing People and Their Stories (Same as ArtS 252)  

The single most photographed subject is the human form. The motivations and strategies for imaging faces and bodies, both individual and aggregate, are as varied as the subjects themselves. In this course, we will examine some of the many approaches used to photograph people. We'll start by exploring self-portraiture, and progress to photographing others — both familiar and strangers, in the studio and and in less controlled environments. We'll end with a consideration of "documentary" photography and other visual narratives. In each case, we'll examine our reasons for making an image, and the methods available for achieving these goals. Thus, the class will have a significant technical component, dealing with the creative use of camera controls, the properties and uses of light, and digital capture and processing. We will also examine the conceptual and scientific bases for how we perceive and evaluate images. Students will initially use school-supplied digital cameras, and later have the option of using film. Lab fee: $100-150.

Format: Studio/lecture. Requirements: Students will be expected a) to photograph extensively outside of scheduled class hours b) to participate in class discussion and in both oral and written critique, c) to present one paper, and d) to exhibit their work at the end of the semester. No prerequisites.

Enrollment limit: 12 (expected: 12). Preference to upper class students.

Hour: B. GOLDSTEIN

INTR 287 African Music: Interdisciplinary Studies (Same as Music 233 and Africana Studies 250) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)  

(See under MUS 233 for full description)  

E. D. BROWN  

Satisfies one semester of the Division II requirement if taken as INTR 287.

INTR 290 The Philosophy and Economics of Higher Education (Same as Economics 214 and Philosophy 290) (Not offered 2009-2010)  

(W)  

(See under PHIL 290 for full description.)  

DUDLEY and SCHAPIRO

INTR 309T Black Gender Theory: Intimacy, Memory and Violence (Same as Africana Studies 309 and Women's and Gender Studies 309) (Not offered 2009-2010)  

(W)  

This tutorial examines race, gender, sexuality, and intimacy and violence in American political culture. Study begins with the late 19th century anti-lynching and anti-sexual violence campaigns, and explores writings and movements throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries that constructed or challenged stereotypes about race, sex, and black identity.

Format: tutorial. Requirements: weekly papers and/or responses.

No prerequisites.  

Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 6). Preference to advanced students.

JAMES

INTR 313T (formerly AFR 323T) The Origins of Totalitarianism (Same as Philosophy 313T and Political Science 313T) (Not offered 2009-2010)  

(W)  

(See Intr. 313T for full description.)  

Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference to upper class students.

IRWIN

INTR 315 Computational Biology (Same as Computer Science 315 and Physics 315) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (Q)  

(See under PHYS 315 for full description.)  

JAMES

INTR 326 Black Women in National Politics, 1964-Present (Same as Africana Studies 326, Political Science 306 and Women's and Gender Studies 326) (Not offered 2009-2010)  

Students will study U.S. political history and electoral and grassroots campaigns from the perspectives of black women activists and politicians. This seminar examines the roles of black women elected and/or appointed to national office from the administration of Lyndon B. Johnson to the administration of Barack Obama. Women studied include civil rights activist Fannie Lou Hamer; Congresswomen Barbara Jordan, Shirley Chisholm, Cynthia McKinney, Maxine Waters, Barbara Lee; Senator Carole Moseley Braun; former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and current UN Ambassador Susan Rice. Students will compile a portfolio/case study of a public servant and analyze her impact on U.S. domestic/foreign policies.

Format: seminar. Requirements: one individual final research paper; portfolio and presentation; class participation.

No prerequisites.  

Enrollment limit: 12 (expected: 12). Preference to advanced students.

JAMES

INTR 391(F) Insurgencies: Revolts, Revolutions, Wars of National Liberation, and Jihads (Same as Anthropology 391 and History 391)  

(See under ANTH 391 for full description.)  

JUST

INTR 397(F), 398(S) Independent Study

INTR 461T(F) Writing about Bodies (Same as ARTH 461 and Women's and Gender Studies 461) (W)  

(See under ARTH 461 for full description.)  

OCKMAN