

Course Descriptions
Courses Offered — Fall 2003

Freshman Colloquia

"Justice and Equality"

Dr. John Gunkel (Philosophy)

This course will examine questions of justice and equality and the complicated interrelations between these concepts from an interdisciplinary perspective. Readings will be drawn from fiction, philosophy, economics, political science, law, and medicine.

"Aspects and Uses of American Folklore"

Dr. Gerry Warshaver (Anthropology)

What is folklore? What are some of the ways folklorists study folklore? How can the study of folklore be used to help us understand our personal identity and the past and present social and cultural milieu of the United States? The answers to these questions will form the basis of this course. Methods of study will include readings, fieldwork, library research, and written reports.

History/Literature Linked Courses

History and Literature of Britain:

"Eighteenth Century"

Dr. Jack Lynch (English)

This course will cover the literature of Swift, Pope, and their contemporaries.

"British History"

Dr. Brian S. Weiser (History)

This course covers British history from the Roman occupation to the Tudor-Stuart period, emphasizing the interrelationship between constitutional and social developments.

History and Literature of France:

"French Literature in Translation"

Dr. Josephine Grieder (French)

This course will focus on important works by major writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The works will be chosen both for their literary merit and their suitability as a "social document" of the periods that produced them. Authors under consideration include Honoré de Balzac, Emile Zola, Colette, Jean-Paul Sartre, Tahar ben Jelloun, and Daniel Pennac. This is a writing intensive course.

"History of France II"

Dr. Jon Cowans (History)

This course covers French history from 1815 to the present, emphasizing ideas, politics, culture, and the development of national cohesion and identity.

History and Literature of Race in America:

"Topics in American Literature"

Dr. Ronald A. Tyson (English)

This course examines the complex literary relationship between race and literary expression in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Analysis will focus on intertextual connections that reveal the history of cultural attitudes and assumptions about race and ethnicity. The class will use America's division of race into black and white as the basis for a sustained broader, cross-cultural, multiethnic study.

"History of American Thought"

Dr. Jan Lewis (History)

An introduction to the history of race and ethnicity in the United States. The first semester covers the period to c. 1865. Topics will include European-Indian relations, the origins of slavery and racism, the crusade against slavery, sex across the color line, and race relations in both the North and South. Topics in the second semester will include the abolition of slavery; segregation and the response to it; and race and ethnic relations in the twentieth century. Both semesters will explore the construction of race and ethnicity.

Topic Seminars - Humanities

"Literature and the Moral Imagination"

Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell (English)

This course is based on the conviction that true art is moral. Students will engage in thoughtful consideration (and lively discussion) of ethical understanding as it is expressed, indeed, dramatized by literary masters. Texts include "About Schmidt," "Antigone," "The French Lieutenant's Woman," "The Reader," and "The Stranger." Supplemental readings from "Love's Knowledge" and "On Moral Fiction" will be provided to the students.

Topic Seminars - Social Sciences

"Globalization and Social Movements"

Dr. Kurt Schock (Sociology)

This course will examine social and historical processes that have led to international inequality and underdevelopment. We will critically examine the process of 'globalization' and compare and contrast 'globalization-from-above' with 'globalization-from-below'. We will consider the emergence of a global civil society and the role of transnational social movements and nongovernmental organizations in responding to global inequalities. Examination of human rights, women's, environmental, indigenous people's, labor, and anti-corporation movements, as well as struggles for sustainable development and land reform.

"Oral History"

Dr. Robert Snyder (Journalism)

In this course, students uncover buried treasures--people's memories of the past that come to life in oral history interviews. Over a semester we'll explore the craft of interviewing; the uses of oral history interviews in research, documentaries and public programs; and how these interviews raise new questions about the past and the present. Students will interview people from the communities around them and Rutgers-Newark.

Capstone Course

"Culture and Biology"

Dr. Brian Ferguson (Anthropology)

This advanced seminar will explore and critically evaluate current theories about the influence of biology on human culture. Among the topics to be considered are varieties of cultural and biological approaches to social organization and behavior, evolutionary theory and evidence, primate comparisons and phylogeny, language and cognition, race and intelligence, gender roles and reproductive strategies, ethnocentrism and xenophobia, and aggression and war.