

Freshman Colloquia

"Justice and Equality"

Dr. John Gunkel (Philosophy)

This course is designed to sharpen critical and analytical abilities through an interdisciplinary investigation of issues and theories of justice and equality. Since the dawn of Classical thought, justice has been almost universally recognized as the hallmark of a "good" society, but few thinkers have been able to agree on the proper answer to the question, "What is justice?" Many have believed that a just society is, at the very least, one that is fundamentally characterized by an equal distribution of goods, but even this is controversial, and, furthermore, there is considerable disagreement regarding what sorts of goods need to be distributed equally among the members of a society and also regarding what would even count as an equal distribution. Readings will address divergent conceptions of justice and equality and will be drawn from current sources in sociology, economics, philosophy, and law, as well as contemporary fiction. The course roughly will be divided into thirds. The first part of the course will be primarily sociological in nature and will examine existing inequalities in the United States and selected other countries. The second part of the course will focus upon the philosophical dimensions of the topic and specifically focusing upon current theories about what justice is and about what kinds of equality, if any, should be seen as important. The third and final part of the course will look at political, legal, and administrative treatments of these issues as they arise in particular contexts. Special topics that will be considered in this connection include affirmative action admissions policies, access to scarce medical technologies, and government tolerance of or encouragement of the religious, linguistic, and other practices of minority groups.

"Attachment Awareness"

Dr. Harold I. Siegal (Psychology)

The essence of Attachment Theory is that the nature or quality of the early infant-parent bond strongly influences a variety of psychological processes over the entire life span. The origins of Attachment Theory will be explored and include Psychoanalysis, Developmental Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Evolutionary Biology, and Ethology. Students will become familiar with the major features of the theory and will become aware of how their past and current behavior has been affected by the ways in which they were raised. The course stresses understanding (not blaming) of parents, friends, romantic partners, significant others, and self. Topics include cognitive abilities, romantic relationships, coping with stress, mourning the loss of loved ones, and physical and psychological health.

History/Literature Linked Courses

History and Literature of the Trans-Atlantic World:

"Eighteenth Century"

Dr. Jack Lynch (English)

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

"History of the Age of Ideas"

Prof. Lucia McMahon (History)

TBA

History and Literature of Portugal:

"Portuguese Literature in Translation"

Dr. Kimberly Holton (Portuguese)

TBA

"Portugal and its Empire"

Dr. Jon Cowans (History)

This course covers Portuguese history, emphasizing ideas, politics, culture, and the development of national cohesion and identity.

History and Literature of Race in America:

"Race in America: 1920 to the Present"

Dr. Laura Lomas (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 Race and Ethnicity"

Prof. Amy Portwood (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 Seminar - Humanities

"I/Eye Witness: Autobiography Meets History"

Dr. Janet Larson (English)

When literature meets history in this interdisciplinary seminar, the "I" of autobiographical writing becomes an active eyewitness to large public events and movements that shaped the world we live in now, in 2004. The people we will read about discovered themselves - new strengths, loves, questions - when their private lives were "interrupted by history." At the same time, in confronting social problems, "other" ethnic groups, or situations of collective danger, in bonding and fighting, in resisting prejudice or unjust power, they learn how our destinies are woven together - that no "I" can be only "President of Me, Inc.," as a New York subway ad pitches the ideal of the private self. In turn, these writers generously bear witness to us of amazing possibilities for what it means to be social human beings.

Our course texts - films, photographs, painting, and music as well as literature - will also help us think together about our world "interrupted" by 9/11 and the people who are working to bring peace and justice, love and light, into a time of terrorism, ethnic persecution, hardship, and war. The class will help choose one of the texts. On the list of possibilities are personal accounts (some fictional, some selections from longer autobiographies) that plunge us into the rise of Nazi Germany (Ursula Hegi, *Stones from the River*), the Civil Rights and Black Power movements (some memoirs; James McBride, *The Color of Water*), the Vietnam War era and its aftermath (autobiographies by a U.S. soldier and by a Vietnamese woman), the American Indian Movement (Mary Crow Dog, *Lakota Woman*; Leonard Peltier, *Prison Writings: My Life Is My Sun Dance*); and the future - or is it now? (Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*). We will decide on a field trip as time permits.

Topic Seminar - Social Sciences

"Political Economy Urban Sports Complexes"

Dr. Robert Curvin (Honors College)

Over the last three years, there has been a continuing debate over a proposal to build a basketball and hockey arena in downtown Newark, with the city and the State of New Jersey providing a substantial portion of the costs of construction. The supporters of the arena proposal argue that substantial public investment in the arena will return to the city and surrounding communities substantial economic returns in the form of improved businesses and expansion of job opportunities. Opponents argue that the proposal would unfairly take public monies to support private ownership, and the payoffs would not be substantial. The debate in New Jersey is one that has been played out in numerous other cities.

This course will evaluate the political dynamics surrounding sports facility development as well as assess the effectiveness of the economic analyses of sports facilities that comprise the most influential literature. For example, do the standard analyses adequately evaluate non-pecuniary benefits? After a fairly comprehensive review of case examples from other places, evaluation of the literature, and individual study and presentation, students will draft their own plan for a sports facility for Newark, outlining the financing scheme and the details for gaining public acceptance.

Note that it is recommended that students wishing to enroll in this course have completed Introduction to Microeconomics. Supplementary readings covering the necessary material, however, will be made available for those who have not taken the economics course yet.

Topic Seminar - Natural Sciences

"Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroanatomy"

Dr. Laszlo Zaborszky (Neuroscience)

The anatomy of the human brain and spinal cord will be covered in detail. The course format will be a combination of lectures and laboratory sessions and will consist of three major parts. Part 1 will cover brain dissection, CNS vasculature, imaging and neuroanatomical techniques. Part 2 deals with the anatomy and function of the somatosensory and motor systems. Extra sessions will be devoted to Parkinson's Huntington's diseases and diseases of the cerebrovascular systems, including stroke. Part 3 will overview the functional anatomical basis of cognitive functions, including perception, memory, learning, emotion and attention. An important goal of this course is to familiarize the students with functionally relevant anatomical features, and to get an insight of how dynamic interactions among specific neuronal systems contribute to cognitive and sensorimotor processing. Readings draw from classical papers in the field and short papers, discussing current research trends, media coverage, and movies of brain-behavior-mind issues.

Note that it is strongly recommended that students wishing to enroll in this course have completed General Biology, and preferably Mammalian Physiology(21:120:340) or Anatomy and Physiology (21:120:241) or Comparative Anatomy of Vertebrates(21 & 62:120:320) as well.

Special Topics (2 Credits)

"The Art of Revitalization"

Dr. Leo Masculli (Honors College)

TBA

Capstone Course

"Culture and Biology"

Dr. Colin Beer (Psychology)

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.