Cogut Institute for the Humanities

Director
Amanda S. Anderson

Brown University has long played a distinctive role advancing innovation and excellence in the humanities. The humanities speak to some of our most basic human activities — creative expression, interpretation, and critical reflection — and participate in the effort to address the most vital challenges of our time. The humanities at Brown today encompass specific disciplines such as history of art and architecture, languages, literature, music, philosophy, religious studies, and visual art. They also include the interpretive dimensions of social sciences such as anthropology, history, and political science, and interdisciplinary initiatives such as gender and sexuality studies, media studies, and the study of race and ethnicity.

Named for Craig M. Cogut ’75 and Deborah Cogut in recognition of their generous support, the Cogut Institute for the Humanities was launched in the fall of 2003 as the Brown Humanities Center to support collaborative research and curricular innovation in the humanities and across the university. A rich array of programming — conferences, lecture series, and colloquia — creates a lively space of inquiry and dialogue that draws in faculty, students, and members of the larger Providence community.

The Cogut Institute is home to several Initiatives and Centers, including Economies of Aesthetics, Environmental Humanities, Humanities in the World, Political Concepts, the Center for the Study of the Early Modern World, and the French Center of Excellence.

Each year, our fellowship program brings together faculty, postdoctoral, graduate, and undergraduate scholars to explore work-in-progress in a dynamic workshop setting. The Cogut Institute administers Brown University’s Humanities Initiative, which provides for annual faculty programming funds and six faculty chairs that combine scholarly, teaching, and disciplinary distinction with collaborative projects within and beyond the humanities. Each semester, the Institute’s faculty and fellows present unique courses for undergraduate and graduate credit.

As part of its Collaborative Humanities Initiative, the Institute features undergraduate collaborative humanities courses on a research theme, method, practice, or problem that has relevance across disciplines, divisions, or schools. Additionally, the Institute offers a Graduate Certificate in Collaborative Humanities available to students pursuing doctorates in the humanities and the humanistic social sciences. Collaboration is built into the teaching model as well as the requirements for students. Read more at https://www.brown.edu/academics/humanities/collaborative-humanities

The Center for the Study of the Early Modern World also administers an interdisciplinary undergraduate concentration. Information about the concentration may be found at https://www.brown.edu/academics/early-modern-world/concentration

More information about the Cogut Institute is available at https://www.brown.edu/academics/humanities/ Courses

HMAN 0800A. The Humanities in Context: Literature, Media, Critique. The humanities attend to questions that shape individual and collective life. Literatures, media, music, and performing arts inform reflections on issues that are either pressing (justice, the environment) or constitutive of an experience (of art or medicine, for example). Does humanity have a shared heritage? Should we feel alike in the face of art? Does one have obligations toward strangers? Does history compel us to act in a certain way? Whose responsibility is the planet? What identities can one choose? Should one aspire to posthuman life? Drawing from various disciplines, this seminar pursues not one, but multiple takes on these questions.

HMAN 0900B. Fake: A History of the Inauthentic. What is a fake? Are “fake” and “authentic” absolute and antithetical categories? Who gets to decide what is authentic? Greek statues, Chinese bronzes, Maya glyphs—what gets faked and why? Have fakes always existed? Galileo’s moons, a centaur’s skeleton, Buddhas bearing swastikas—are all fakes the same? If not, how are they different? Why do people make fakes? Who wins? Who loses? This course revolves around the history of the inauthentic through a diachronic exploration of art objects and other forms of material culture. We will range widely in time and space, focusing primarily on the pre-modern.

HMAN 0900C. Heritage in the Metropolis: Remembering and Preserving the Urban Past (ARCH 0317). Interested students must register for ARCH 0317.

HMAN 0900D. Introduction to Indigenous Politics with Pacific Islander Focus (POL S 0920B). Interested students must register for POLS 0920B.

HMAN 1000B. The Cogut Institute for the Humanities Research Seminar. This seminar involves reading and discussing in-progress research by the annual fellows of the Cogut Institute for the Humanities, an interdisciplinary group of faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and undergraduates engaged in extended research on a major project or honors thesis. Students read a wide range of works-in-progress, prepare questions and participate in seminar discussions, intervene as first questioners for specific sessions assigned to them in advance, and present their own work twice during the year. Admission to the course requires that students have received the Cogut Institute Undergraduate Fellowship for the year in which they enroll.


HMAN 1970A. Religion, Secularization, and the International. For the past several decades (but especially since 2001), internationalists have been increasingly preoccupied by the perceived “return of religion.” Religion is often proclaimed to pose the single greatest threat to a liberal legal/political order and, less often, to be the greatest hope for that order. We will explore genealogies of the three key terms at stake in this conundrum — “religion,” “secularization,” and “the international.” We begin from the proposition that none of these terms refer to ahistorical essences, but have been subject to continual theoretical/practical contestation/reconfiguration. We focus on that contestation as it has emerged in “modernity.” Enrollment limited to 20 juniors, seniors, and graduate students.

HMAN 1970B. The Question of the Animal. This course is built around the question of the animal as a difficulty posed to representation and thought at a time when animals have largely disappeared from humans’ living environment, but proliferate as strange protagonists, specters or figures of ambiguity in literature and philosophy. We will consider a range of texts and films that “cast” the animal critically, protagonists, specters or figures of ambiguity in literature and philosophy. We will consider a range of texts and films that “cast” the animal critically, that is, as a body that strains or scrambles meaning (interruption, irony, illegibility, haunting) and forces us to reconsider the work of language and narrative (indeed, of the “human”). Authors include Kafka, Coetzee, Hofmannsthal, Kofman, Chevillard, Darrieussecq, Derrida, Agamben, de Fontenay, Herzog. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.
This course introduces students to the 19th/early 20th century Arab thought - the "Nahda" (Arab Renaissance). Through primary and secondary English texts, we will explore questions raised by thinkers of this epoch pertaining to perceived civilizational crisis, and examine the diagnoses/proposals offered by them. The course underlines the changes and continuities in these concerns under the impact of dramatic socio-political events of the epoch. We will discuss the strengths/weaknesses of "Nahda" thought that continues to inform/preoccupy contemporary Arab debates on culture, democracy, gender and Islam. We will examine the significance of this legacy in today's Arab world. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

From antiquity to our day, therapeutic landscapes such as: mineral and thermal springs; shrines and churches built at sacred springs; volcanic ash mud baths; rocky landscapes emitting odorous gasses; and ponds filled with medicinal leeches, attract health pilgrims who search for healing. Storytelling transformed these into places of memory and pilgrimage. This seminar investigates places of bodily healing and miracle from a cultural studies perspective. The case studies will be drawn from the Mediterranean world and Western Asia (including Lourdes in France, Hierapolis in Southeastern Turkey and the Agiasma churches of Byzantine Istanbul). Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

HMAN 1970E. The Precarious University.
The intensification of student protest-occupy movements across the country particularly in California, and the proliferation of OWS movements across the world has rejuvenated social movements against cutbacks for the people and kickbacks for the wealthy. In this seminar, we will address the epistemic shifts and intellectual costs of these ongoing upheavals, particularly the fight against the U.S. university's neoliberalization. We will imagine the kind of progressive university that is sustainable for the arts and humanities, and how the precarious work of artists and humanists are fundamental to 21st century global universities. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

Does pain and reflection on pain teach us something about ourselves, the world, our relation to it? This seminar approaches the question by examining the meaning of pain in Russian/Polish literature/literary theory of the 20th century. Our concern is with pain's resistance to language and representation. The works analyzed offer a variety of responses to problem of pain as it appears in theology, experimental medicine, discussions of materialism, the philosophy of Schopenhauer, and above all, the giants of Russian literature, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, in whom these debates are dramatized; they also form the ground on which Russian and Polish literature meet. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

HMAN 1970G. International Perspectives on NGOs, Public Health, and Health Care Inequalities.
Non-governmental and other non-state organizations play an expanding role in the provision of health care across much of the globe. Growth and expansion, critically assessing texts on NGOs and health and drawing from the arts, literature, history, theology, and other fields. The case studies will be drawn from the Mediterranean world and Western Asia (including Lourdes in France, Hierapolis in Southeastern Turkey and the Agiasma churches of Byzantine Istanbul). Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

Comparison, which posits a likeness between the dissimilar, is always profoundly haunted by the question of its ground and judgment. This seminar will examine the comparative logic of capitalist modernity in the works of Marx, Weber, Adorno and Horkheimer, Foucault, Heidegger, and Benjamin. We will ask the following questions: How is equivalence established between nonexistent objects? How are actual social relations quantified and measured, and is there an ethics to modern forms of comparability? How does language reflect and produce these operations? Or, to put it differently: What are the forms through which difference "haunts" us? We will pay special attention to figures of the double and the ghost in Hoffmann and Freud. Other topics to be covered include rationalization and the disenchantment of the world, the modern uncanny, "mediauras," colonial comparison, and the ethics of incommensurability.

What happens when a particular 'orthodoxy' becomes able to impose itself on others? This course examines the imposition of post-Constantinian catholicism on Jews, Samaritans, other Christians (Arians, Miaphysites, etc.) and the remaining ancient Mediterranean populace (4th-7th centuries) to consider a larger cultural phenomenon. We'll draw on ancient authors and legal sources (in translation), archaeological data, and contemporary studies. Half the seminar entails communal exploration of the late antique Mediterranean. Student research presentations, including studies of comparable situations from other cultural and historical contexts, comprise the second half. Useful prior coursework includes: RELS 400, RELS 410, CLAS 600, CLAS 660, CLAS 1320. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

Why do we take pleasure in small-scale objects? What is their history and what purposes do they serve? How do the technology and the aesthetics of the small contribute to human cognition? To find answers to these and other questions, the seminar explores the cultural, literary and cognitive significance of miniatures. We will explore productive relationships between three areas of research: imaginative texts produced during the eighteenth century, the period's prolific but insufficiently studied production of small-scale versions of everyday objects, and recent developments in cognitive theory about the role of size-perception in the developing brain. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

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Modern aesthetics emerged in the eighteenth century at the intersection of different disciplines, discourses, cultures, and European nations. Contributions to the new field came not only from academic philosophy but also from the arts, literature, history, theology, and other fields. Aesthetics was thus and remains primary among interdisciplinary disciplines. Readings for this course will be drawn from British, German, and French authors such as Shaftesbury, Du Bos, Addison, Hutcheson, Hume, Burke, Kames, Diderot, Mendelssohn, Lessing, Kant, Schiller, and Herder. Enrollment limited to 25 juniors and seniors.

Doomsday predictions/apocalyptic themes have become commonplace. Between "End of History" theses/Mayan Calendar predictions/posthumanist theories/the Rapture, and environmental/financial collapse, it seems we are living in what many believe to be End Times. This course will examine some principal clusters of ideas around finality: posthumanism/singularity, environmental collapse, patriotism, survivalism, and post-politics. We will look at a number of cultural products: traditional fiction/non-fiction, blogs/podcasts/films. It will be less important to establish whether the Mayan calendar calculations are accurate than seeing the connections between those claims and the claims of survivalists/Rapture theorists. Taken together, what do all these claims say about this moment in history? Enrollment limited to 25.

HMAN 1970N. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in the Global Scene.

Dominant narratives of Israeli/Palestinian conflict obscure influential forces taking place outside the boundaries of Israel/Palestine, stories we believe are unique/historically peculiar. We will see how groups have been inspired by/have inspired both peoples' struggles for survival/self-determination. We examine case studies revealing connectivity/reciprocity: Zionism's inspiration for Garvey's-U.S.-back-to-Africa movement; adoption of Fanonian/Maoist/Guevarian thought in Middle East; Black Panther Party's support for Palestinians/their endorsement of an Israeli Black Panther Party in the 1970s; South Africa/Latin America's economic/military ties to Israel; Palestinian call for international Boycott Divestment Sanctions; and examine how struggles for self-determination negotiate between territoriality bounded independence/globally networked liberation, in the region/beyond. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.


Many of today's dissenting movements adopt leaderless/self-managed practices presenting us with radically different notions of what it means to self-determine. We will situate these movements within historical struggles for autonomy. By "autonomy" we understand the quality or state of being self-governing/self-determining. By "self," we understand not the self-originating/self-determining/rational individual constructed by Enlightenment liberal humanism, but rather, a diversity of self-defined collectivities made up of social individuals. We will consider runaway slave societies (Western Hemisphere), Operaismo (Italy), Zapatistas (Mexico), Tahrir Square's protesters (Egypt), Occupy Movement (US), Shackdwellers (South Africa), refugee/migrant movements. Readings include Marx/Cleaver/Linebaugh/Rediker/Negri/Tronti/Virno/Berardi/ Holloway/others, and documents from movements we engage. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.


Pragmatism is a distinctive American school of thought that sees the goal of philosophy not as the apprehension of timeless truths but as a practical project of bettering individual lives and society as a whole. Pragmatists, such as William James and John Dewey were devoted to deepening America's commitment to democracy. Both saw an important place for an unconventional sort of religion in democratic life. This course explores the pragmatist thought of James, Dewey, and others, looking especially at their views on religion and politics. We also will explore the influence of pragmatism on Barack Obama. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.


Concepts are usually thought of as cognitive tools, constituents of thought used for categorization/inference/memory/learning/decision-making. We shall think about them as effects of a language game whose rules change across genres, media, and discursive regimes. Looking for these rules and analyzing them comparatively, we shall ask how concepts are formed/displayed/formed, when do we need them/can we do without them. We shall read philosophers (Plato, Descartes, Kant, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Foucault, Derrida, and Deleuze), intellectual historians (Koselleck, Skinner), literary works (Kleist, Kafka, Musil), and look at some conceptual art. Advanced juniors, seniors and graduate students welcome. Enrollment limited to 20.


Cuba today is home to writers, musicians and artists who engage with new media and a global audience against the backdrop of a socialist revolution. This seminar will explore esthetic and political dimensions of contemporary Cuban culture with authors who will speak to us directly through a video link with Casa de las Américas in Havana. Knowledge of Spanish required.

HMAN 1970S. Ethics and the Humanities.

This seminar will engage with ethical issues in a broad range of humanities disciplines. We will survey historical and thematic perspectives on ethics, and will consider the ethical implications of authorship and possession of texts and objects; translation as an ethical problem; data and open access; the perspective of the human subject; public humanities, public intellectuals and community-based research; and ethical issues in popular culture. Enrollment limited to 20. Not open to first year students or sophomores.


We'll investigate how new media technologies shape musical practices (and vice versa). Topics will include DJ cultures, digital music distribution and related intellectual property issues, digital gameplay, music videos, popular music reception, online music lessons, and virtual communities. We'll give equal attention to production, circulation, and reception practices, as well as to their increasing convergence. Readings will include both contemporary and historical studies. The course will require critical engagement with a diverse range of media, genres, and cultural contexts, encouraging students to examine their own media production and consumption practices. Enrollment limited to 20. Not open to first year students or sophomores.

HMAN 1970V. Pragmatic Medical Humanities

The question, "What is medical humanities?" has flummoxed the very experts who ardently argue for its importance to medical education and the professional and personal growth of health care providers. The interdisciplinary nature of medical humanities, engaging in conversations with persons who possess different expertise, knowledge and approaches, provides opportunities for insight unavailable elsewhere. Students will investigate alternative meanings, interpretations and purposes embedded in the term "medical humanities." They will develop their own personal relationship to this term/field of study, and its utility as a tool for understanding and responding to the profound experiences of clinical medicine, illness and health. Enrollment limited to 20. Not open to first year students or sophomores. This is a half-credit course.


This seminar examines the role of disease, medicine, and health in the history of the Atlantic World. Our analysis will be centered on events that took place in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Sub-Saharan Africa, during the era of European colonial expansion (1490-1940). In these four and a half centuries, the West became the dominant force in global geopolitics and Western medicine emerged as the hegemonic form of healing worldwide. This seminar explores the complex relationship between these two historical developments. Enrollment limited to 20. Not open to first year students or sophomores.

HMAN 1970Y. Politics and Authority in Islamic Law and Society.

This seminar will engage with ethical issues in a broad range of humanities disciplines. We will survey historical and thematic perspectives on ethics, and will consider the ethical implications of authorship and possession of texts and objects; translation as an ethical problem; data and open access; the perspective of the human subject; public humanities, public intellectuals and community-based research; and ethical issues in popular culture. Enrollment limited to 20. Not open to first year students or sophomores.
This course is designed to introduce students to major topics in the developing historical literature on the relationships between intellectual and economic history, and their implications for European culture, mainly in the first two centuries after Columbus and Da Gama. Enrollment limited to 20 juniors and seniors.

We will take as our starting-point Walter Benjamin's notes for his unfinished masterwork "The Arcades Project." The Passagenwerke comprise a massive index of citations/observations on the nature/form of the city of Paris in every aspect of its cultural/political life in the 19th/20th centuries. We will read works from which he culled his aphorisms/ investigate the present status of each of his assertions/citations, with historical/contemporary readings. We will discuss the nature of historical/archival interpretation and try to bring together artifacts – textual/visual/sensorial - that might constitute a "Museum" of 19th Century Paris. Taught by Prof. Anthony Vidler. Graduate students encouraged to register. Enrollment limited to 20.

HMAN 1971C. History, Theory and Practice of Storytelling Using Stereoscopic ("3D") Motion Pictures.
This course will support/enhance Brown's tradition in the Humanities by sharpening the focus on interdisciplinary/comparative work across cultural/linguistic boundaries. Can science/technology/medicine foster the presentation of innovative work in humanities by bringing 3D to New Media? Why do some cultural values dictate genres typically produced in 3D? What were the origins of 3D motion pictures/how might new technologies affect the distribution/visualization of 3D projects? How can 3D enrich relations between humanities and studio/performing arts? We provide Brown students with an opportunity to establish a foundation for analyzing/telling stories using stereoscopic tools, and receive basic technical experience using 3D small-format video equipment.

HMAN 1971E. Cross-Cultural Approaches to Death and Dying.
Despite the universality of death, human responses are incredibly varied. This course situates biological, medical, and psychological conceptions of death and dying in conversation with the religious and ethical perspectives that have also informed human responses to death and dying in cultural contexts. This course—team-taught by a psychologist, a scholar of religion, and two end-of-life care physicians—facilitates a more informed understanding of death-related cultural practices and a more skilled response to death-related decisions arising in the practice of medicine and in life. Limited to 20 students in Medical Humanities and graduate Humanities fields. Honors undergraduates and PLMEs may enroll with permission.

HMAN 1971K. Varieties of Secularism (RELS 1746).
Interested students must register for RELS 1746.

Interested students must register for STS 1701C.

HMAN 1971S. Introduction to iPhone/iPad Moviemaking Using 3-D and 360 VR Comparisons.
Mobile Devices are democratizing movie-making by lowering barriers to entry, enabling students to become full-fledged members of the film industry virtually overnight. This pioneering course provides the tools and training necessary to create and distribute no- and low-budget live-action motion pictures with professional production values utilizing only their personal smartphones. Students will acquire the skills to plan, capture and edit short motion pictures through hands-on instruction and experimentation with low-cost accessories, including selfie-sticks, lens adapters, directional microphones and iPhone apps like Filmic Pro, Vizzywig and iMovie. Limited to junior, senior and graduate students.

HMAN 1971T. Law, Nationalism, and Colonialism.
This seminar explores the internationalism of the past century in terms of its relationship to separatist nationalism, anti-colonialism, and religious radicalism. It takes as its point of departure the dramatic political, cultural, and intellectual transformations that followed in the wake of World War I. A guiding hypothesis of the seminar is that internationalism cannot be understood apart from its complex relationship to "identity" broadly conceived — identity of local/transnational groups as well as the identity of internationalists themselves. Readings will be drawn from law/cultural studies/politics/postcolonial theory. Enrollment limited to 20.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, new ways of approaching Judaism sprung up in France and Spain that would come to be known as “kabbalah.” New approaches included aspirations for mystical illumination, elaborate mythological narratives, and human history. Kabbalists radically and self-consciously departed from conventional understandings of Judaism, particularly those of medieval Aristotelian philosophers like Maimonides. They claimed to find their mythological, mystical worldview in traditional texts, from the Bible through rabbinic writings. This course introduces students to kabbalah’s founding period, focuses on primary texts in translation, especially the Zohar, the magnum opus of classical kabbalah. No prior background necessary.

Interested students must register for EDUC 1035.

HMAN 1971X. The Southern Question and the Colonial Mediterranean (ITAL 1400P).
Interested students must register for ITAL 1400P.

Interested students must register for COLT 1610R.

HMAN 1971Z. Cannibalism, Inversion, and Hybridity: Creative Disobedience in the Americas (HIAA 1870).
Interested students must register for HIAA 1870.

HMAN 1972A. Landscape and Japanese Cinema (MCM 1504X).
Interested students must register for MCM 1504X.

Interested students must register for ANTH 1556.

Interested students must register for ITAL 1400P.

HMAN 1972D. Art of Criticism (ENGL 1901F).
Interested students must register for ENGL 1901F.

The title of this course alludes to Friedrich Nietzsche's "eternal return of the same," which he famously called "the highest formula of affirmation," and which later philosophers and thinkers, such as Pierre Klossowski and Martin Heidegger, would repeatedly return to. Yet Nietzsche's discovery is not new, for it inflects, too, the thinking of the professional revolutionary, Louis-Auguste Blanc, the returns of commodity production in high capitalism, and the poetic figurations of the big city found in nineteenth-century writers such as Charles Baudelaire. In this course, we will examine the problem of returns—temporal, political, economic, and poetic—in modernity.
Interested students must register for HIST 1979D.

HMAN 1973A. Race, Sexuality, and Mental Disability History (AFRI 1060Z).
Interested students must register for AFRI 1060Z.

Interested students must register for POLS 1824N.

Interested students must register for MCM 1203U.

HMAN 1973D. Sports and Culture in Latin America (HISP 1371B).
Interested students must register for HISP 1371B.

Interested students must register for CLAS 1120V.

Interested students must register for HIST 1979D.

HMAN 1973G. Writing Animals in the Iberian Atlantic (HISP 1331A).
Interested students must register for HISP 1331A.

HMAN 1973H. Water is Life/New Currents in the Study of Land, Water and Indigeneity (ETHN 1750H).
Interested students must register for ETHN 1750H.

Interested students must register for MCM 1505J.

Interested students must register for MCM 1204D.

HMAN 1973K. Art for an Undivided Earth: Transnational Approaches to Indigenous Activism and Art (ENGL 1711J).
Interested students must register for ENGL 1711J.

HMAN 1973L. Indigenous Politics in Hawai‘i: Resurgence and Decolonization (POLS 1820I).
Interested students must register for POLS 1820I.

Interested students must register for ARCH 1494.

Interested students must register for AMST 1902S.

HMAN 1974A. Cinema and Imperialism (MCM 1505S).
Interested students must register for MCM 1505S.

Interested students must register for ARCH 1494.

Interested students must register for AMST 1902S.

Interested students must register for AMST 1902S.

Interested students must register for PHIL 1002.

HMAN 1974E. Political Theology for the Anthropocene.
The Seminar develops a discourse in political theology for gaining insight into the catastrophes of the modern world and those associated with the Anthropocene. The political imagination embedded in a cluster of texts from the Hebrew Bible and the political theology they imply will enrich discussions in political theory about sovereignty, government, law, and violence. The seminar gives special attention to the way the modern state and other modern and contemporary institutions have come to substitute for God as authors of large scale, globalized, and planetary catastrophes. Our theoretical companions include Buber, Assman, Agamben, Arendt, Foucault, Boltanski, and Žižek.

HMAN 1974F. Anthropology in/of the Museum (ANTH 1901).
Interested students must register for ANTH 1901.

Interested students must register for HIAA 1631.

HMAN 1974H. The Human Skeleton (ANTH 1720).
Interested students must register for ANTH 1720.

Interested students must register for HIST 1978D.

HMAN 1974J. Rap as Storytelling (MUSC 1240R).
Interested students must register for MUSC 1240R.
HMAN 1974K. Governing Culture: Music and the Arts in Political Life. The social function and governmental regulation of aesthetic life play a key role in the constitution of political regimes. This course examines debates on the arts as instruments of power, distinction, resistance, contestation, and revolution, from the early modern period to the present. The government of music, sound, noise, and silence will offer a point of comparison among absolutist monarchies, modern republics, totalitarian regimes, liberal democracies, and colonial empires. In addition to music, the course draws from political sources, theoretical works, literature, and the visual arts.

HMAN 1974L. The Coming Apocalypse: Between the Earth and the World. A cascading catastrophe threatens to turn the earth uninhabitable and bring our world to its end. How to think, in this context, the relation between our world, the world, and the earth? Are they known, experienced, shared with others, or being destroyed in the same way? How do we depict and convergence been affected by globalization, and how do we make sense of "the Anthropocene"? Following environmental news, the seminar addresses these and related questions through literary, theoretical, and philosophical texts, including works by Nietzsche, Heidegger, Arendt, Derrida, Nancy, Latour, Haraway, Povinelli, Coates, and Mbembe.

HMAN 1974M. Solidarities: Sharing Freedom, Inventing Futures. Solidarity between people—between species—has never been more needed. But our culture is saturated by personality politics and ubiquitous narcissism. How can we think and organize ourselves out of this impasse? Is it shared interests or shared identities that unite us? What does freedom mean in an interconnected age? These are some of the questions that any attempt to think through the question of solidarity in the twenty-first century must encounter. Writers to consider include Marx, Arendt, Foucault, Simondon, Negri, Stuart Hall, Maurizio Lazzarato, Donna Haraway, Couze Venn, and Ruth Ozeki, among others.

HMAN 1974N. Narrating the Borderlands: Literature, Legality, and Solidarity (HISP 1371F). Interested students must register for HISP 1371F.

HMAN 1974O. Print and Power in Modern Southeast Asia (HIST 1962E). Interested students must register for HIST 1962E.

HMAN 1974Q. Revolutionary England, 1642-1660: Civil War, Regicide, and Republican. This course examines England's mid-seventeenth century revolution, looking at high and low politics, the rise of popular radicalism, and the conflict in the empire. Themes explored include: the trial of Charles I; the commonwealth, 1649-53; the Ranters and the sexual revolution; the Differ commune at St. George's Hill; Oliver Cromwell's war crimes in Ireland; Cromwell as Lord protector, 1653-58; the social and gender egalitarianism of the Baptists, Quakers, and Fifth Monarchists; the revolutions in the Caribbean and Atlantic; and the Western Design and capture of Jamaica. Fall HMAN1974S S01 15852 M 3:00-5:30(05) (T. Harris)

HMAN 1974S. The Costs of Climate Change. This seminar examines debates over the costs - economic, environmental, and social - of climate change. We will explore how economists attempt to solve seemingly impossible problems of valuation like: how much should we value the wellbeing of current versus future generations? How much value does the ecosystem as a whole provide? We will then survey how these numbers (sometimes) enter into environmental regulatory debates. Finally, we will study how movements fighting for environmental justice adopt - or reject - the language of economics to make claims about the morality and economics of fossil fuel producers. Spr HMAN1974S S01 24516 T 10:00-12:30 (D. Hirschman)

HMAN 1974T. Anthropology of Infrastructure: Comparative Ethnographic Perspectives. Basic infrastructure - e.g., electricity grids, water supply systems, roads, railroads, and the Internet - is commonly seen as a foundational requirement for and visible manifestation of modern human life. Yet inequalities in infrastructure are both causes and consequences of the profound disparities that characterize the contemporary world. This course aims at deciphering the complex interaction between infrastructure, society, politics, and human experience. Taking a comparative ethnographic approach, students will ask whether technology has produced a better world, and for whom. From economics and governance to ethics and sociality, students will explore humans' relationship to infrastructure. Spr HMAN1974T S01 24657 M 10:00-12:30 (D. Smith)

HMAN 1974U. The Cultures of Roman Imperialism. "The Cultures of Roman Imperialism" explores the cultural feedback loops between capital and provinces in the ancient Roman world, studying the literature (and some material culture) not only of expansionist Rome, but of the populations subject to Rome (including Greek, Egyptian, and Judaic). How did Rome appropriate local cultural forms to legitimize its own power? How did local cultures push back with their own appropriations? We will find new ways to study an ancient empire that has subsequently been a model not only for governance, whether enlightened or oppressive, but also for dialogue and intercultural, however fraught. Fall HMAN1974U S01 15815 Th 4:00-6:30(04) (J. Reed)

HMAN 1974V. God of the Greek Philosophers. This seminar will focus on the views of Plato and Aristotle on god's thought and human thought. Plato treats god as a craftsman who looks to unchanging forms and attempts to replicate them in recalculating materials. By contrast, Aristotle regards the cosmos as eternal. His god maintains the world as the relatively stable place it is and does so as an object of desire and thought. God's own activity—thinking of thinking—is extremely simple, whereas ours is necessarily more complex and involves recognizing our place and contribution to the order of things. Spr HMAN1974V S01 24551 W 3:00-5:30(10) (M. Gill)


HMAN 2400Q. War and the Politics of Cultural Memory (ENGL 2901D). Interested students must register for ENGL 2901D.

HMAN 2400V. God of the Greek Philosophers. This course examines England's mid-seventeenth century revolution, looking at high and low politics, the rise of popular radicalism, and the conflict in the empire. Themes explored include: the trial of Charles I; the commonwealth, 1649-53; the Ranters and the sexual revolution; the Differ commune at St. George's Hill; Oliver Cromwell's war crimes in Ireland; Cromwell as Lord protector, 1653-58; the social and gender egalitarianism of the Baptists, Quakers, and Fifth Monarchists; the revolutions in the Caribbean and Atlantic; and the Western Design and capture of Jamaica. Fall HMAN 1974K S01 15852 M 3:00-5:30(05) (T. Harris)

HMAN 2401. Memory/Matter/Time: Literature and the Changing Earth (ENGL 2761R). Interested students must register for ENGL 2761R.

HMAN 2401A. Bakhtin and the Political Present: Literature, Anthropology, Dialogue (ENGL 2901M). Interested students must register for ENGL 2901M.

HMAN 2401B. Thinking Breath: An Inquiry Across Philosophy, Literature, and Performance. This collaborative seminar proposes an interdisciplinary and inter-cultural inquiry into breath as the shared fragment of philosophical, spiritual, therapeutic, athletic, musical, and environmental practices, among others. How does breath travel across disparate traditions, bodies, and technologies? Is it vital or metaphysical? Is it restricted to particular genres? Does it have a history? Topics include punctuation and phrasing; climate change and the crisis of oxygen; circular breathing and "breathy" vocalization in musical traditions; the notion of "ruh" in Sufism, pneuma in ancient Greek thought, "qi" in ancient Chinese thought, and "breath" as a synonym for "self" in ancient Indian philosophy. Spr HMAN2401B S01 24550 T 1:00-3:30 (L. Gandhi)
HMAM 2401C: Inscribing the Event: Poetics and Politics of the Date.
What is a date? How does it relate to our understanding of historical time? How can the idea of a date be represented in words and images? What does it mean to commemorate the anniversary of a date? When it comes to a date, what is the relation between repeatability and singularity? This seminar will devote itself to the vexing question of the date in literature, the arts, critical thought, and cultural theory. Texts to include Marx, Benjamin, Faulkner, Adorno, Derrida, Celan, among others. Graduate students from diverse fields welcome. Final collaborative seminar project required.
Spr HMAM2401C(S01) 24561 M 3:00-5:30(13) (M. Redfield)

HMAM 2401D: The Fugitivity of Slowness, Stillness, and Stasis.
Slowness, stillness, stasis – these terms signal diminished velocity, extended duration, delayed development or reduced exertion. But what if we understand them as an intensification, rather than a reduction, of forces? How do slowness, stillness, and stasis animate fugitive in various bodies of thought? What if slowness, stillness, and stasis instantiate modes of anti-colonial practice and thought, or imagine/realize a world nonsensical to much of dominant western thought? This collaborative humanities seminar will explore practices of slowness, stillness, and stasis in literature, theory, performance and art, and the ways in which they unsettle our understanding of futile social practices of refusal.
Spr HMAM2401DS01 24665 W 12:00-2:30 (T. Campt)

HMAM 2500: Project Development Workshop.
In this capstone course, students completing the Graduate Certificate in Collaborative Humanities pursue individual or collaborative projects, such as a dissertation prospectus, a dissertation chapter, or a methodological/theoretical exercise relating to their field of interest. Weekly sessions are devoted to work-in-progress and discussion of key texts addressing method and theory in and beyond the humanities. At the end of the semester, participants present in a Collaborative Public Workshop. Admission to the seminar requires a formal application process and the completion of two HMAM 2400 seminars.
Spr HMAM2500S01 24515 W 3:00-5:30(10) (A. Anderson)

HMAM 2970C: Concepts of Space and Time in Media Discourses.
No description available. Enrollment limited to 20 graduate students.

HMAM 2970D: Biological Issues in Cultural Theory.
Contemporary culture is increasingly preoccupied by biological themes and issues—genomes, brain images, biotechnology, the natural environment, etc.—and, not unilaterally, by a wave of new biological determinisms: “gay genes,” “God genes,” “mental hardwiring,” etc. At the same time, ongoing work in fields such as developmental biology, ethology, neuroscience and science studies increasingly challenges classic dualisms of nature/culture and mind/body along with traditional assumptions about the nature of biological entities and the operations of scientific knowledge. The seminar will focus on a selection of these issues and developments especially relevant to the interests of humanities scholars and students of culture and cultural theory. Enrollment limited to 20 graduate students.

HMAM 2970E: Pain, Medicine and Society.
We take on the big question of pain as an interdisciplinary enterprise, drawing on the rich and varied faculty of Brown University and Alpert Medical School. We will examine acute/chronic/physical/psychic pain, the nature of suffering, and why some might find value/solace in pain and suffering. We will examine representations of pain in literature, art and music; look at the shifting conceptions of pain and suffering across cultural/ethnic/religious communities, and the actual/perceived barriers to effective treatment of pain. Most importantly, we will foster sensitivity and impart tools that will improve our understanding and treatment of individuals suffering from pain. Enrollment limited to 20 students in Medical Humanities and graduate Humanities fields. Honors undergraduates and PLMEs may enroll with instructor permission.

HMAM 2970G: Space and Capital.
This course examines various ways Western/non-Western societies have conceptualized space, with a specific focus on the tension between capitalist/common space. We adopt the map as a lens into this question, focusing on the cadastral survey’s rise in the Modern era and on its role in parceling space into strictly bounded, individual property. Throughout the semester, we undergo an enquiry into the map’s uncritical reception in the contemporary era, understanding this development as linked to the Scientific Revolution; the role of linear perspective; the Age of Discovery’s world-as-picture; as well as to the processes of primitive accumulation, colonialism, and the nation-state. Enrollment limited to 20.

HMAM 2970L: History and Theory of Catastrophes.
This seminar proposes a philosophical history of catastrophes (large-scale disasters) and uses it as a vantage point for questioning contemporary critiques of modernity/secularization. Starting from Biblical narratives of God-made disasters, we will follow God’s role in the way north-western societies interpret/cope with catastrophes. Reading/viewing documentation of catastrophes from Defoe’s Journal of the Plague Year to Cooper’s/Block’s/Spike Lee’s reports on Hurricane Katrina, we will examine the emergence of the state as a major actor responsible for preparing for catastrophes/mitigating their effects, but often also for their generation, and discuss the globalization of catastrophes and with catastrophes as special sites of globalization. Enrollment limited to 20.

HMAM 2970M: Race, Space, and Struggle.
This seminar will examine the stark realities of spatial racialization: ghettos, slave plantations, prisons, refugee camps, and border walls, situating the creation of these spaces as violent responses to broader social/economic crises. At the same time, this course will highlight the always already existing practices of resistance by exploring how inhabitants these spaces responded to their marginalization. Because these spaces are also lived, our understanding of anti-racist struggle will encompass a broad array of everyday practices, the appropriation of space, artistic expressions of resistance, and everyday forms of cooperation/creativity, alongside more traditional forms of organized interventions. (Course prerequisites: none) Enrollment limited to 20.

HMAM 2970Q: Latin in America (LATN 2080F).
Interested students must register for LATN 2080F.

HMAM 2970R: Political Foucault.
Michel Foucault was one of greatest political thinkers of the 20th century. He was not always recognized as such, but his work has shaped the field within which critical political theory is pursued today. The seminar will follow Foucault’s thinking on power and its subjects, the state, sovereignty, government, and the political, as these concepts were developed, articulated, and experimented with during one decade of intensive research and revisions -- the nineteen seventies. Our main primary texts will be the three series of lectures Foucault delivered at the Collège de France between 1975 and 1979.

HMAM 2970T: And What About the Human? Black/Anti-Colonial Thought, Human Freedom and Emancipation?
This course will examine the figure of the human posed in radical anti-colonial thought as a distinctive mode of thinking. Reviewing some major 20th century thinkers, Foucault, Derrida, Arendt alongside Fanon, Ceasire and Wynter, the course will also examine the complex relationships between the figure of the human, freedom and emancipation. Graduate or undergraduate senior students only. Enrollment limited to 20.

HMAM 2970U: Antiquity and Innovation in the Hispanic Renaissance (HISP 2160N).
Interested students must register for HISP 2160N.
The seminar is dedicated to the political philosophy/theory of Étienne Balibar, a contemporary post-Marxist and post-structuralist French philosopher. The seminar will focus on the conceptual dimension of Balibar’s work through a study a small cluster of concepts with which he has been especially engaged: ideology, city, citizen and citizenship, equa-liberty, violence, politics and the political. By explicating the meaning of these concepts in Balibar’s work and their role as theoretical-political interventions, we will open the question of the political and experiment with the intellectual and creative power of conceptual analysis and its possible contribution to political theory.

HMAN 2970Y. Race and Nation in the Spanish Caribbean (AFRI 2502).
Interested students must register for AFRI 2502.

HMAN 2970Z. Logos, tekhn#, philosophia.
Today, Western thinking forms the technoscientific apparatus of societies of hyper-control, built on the foundation of ubiquitous and reticular computing. This amounts to what Martin Heidegger called Gestell, which imposes itself as the digitalized merging of science and technology. We find ourselves confronted forcefully (as what the Greeks called ubris) with the question of the status of technics with respect to knowledge in all its forms. It has become crucial to understand how and why from its birth, with Plato, philosophy has made technics unthinkable thereby establishing the unthought that then comes to constitute the threat of the Anthropocene.

HMAN 2971C. Decolonial Methodology: Pedagogy for a New Era of Dissent and Resistance.
The seminar will focus on the ways to develop and nurture a decolonial methodology that is intersectional, anti-racist, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist. The aim is to produce a space of trust that allows debating hard questions and challenging our own assumptions, and encouraging collective thinking and cooperative learning.

HMAN 2971E. Kinds of Others.
Multiple "Others," from the ancient barbaria to the contemporary and queer, from the abnormal to the colonial subject, from the Jew to the black have been widely studied in the humanities and social sciences. The seminar addresses this proliferation of others and explores the role of the Other in the economy of the self, the religious community, or the nation. We will experiment with different principles for classifying this variety of kinds of others and modes of othering. The typological approach will guide a double survey: of philosophical conceptions of otherness, and of modes of constructing kinds of others.

HMAN 2971F. Radical Borders (HISP 2520R).
Interested students must register for HISP 2520R.

HMAN 2971G. The Coming Apocalypse: Between the Earth and the World.
A cascading catastrophe threatens to turn the earth uninhabitable and bring our world to its end. How to think, in this context, the relation between our world, the world, and the earth? Are they known, experienced, shared with others, or being destroyed in the same way? How have their difference and convergence been affected by globalization, and affect our understanding of “the Anthropocene”? Following environmental news, the seminar addresses these and related questions through literary, theoretical, and philosophical texts, including works by Nietzsche, Heidegger, Arendt, Derrida, Nancy, Latour, Haraway, Povinelli, Coates, and Mbembe. Open to juniors and seniors with instructor permission.

HMAN 2971H. Solidarities: Sharing Freedom, Inventing Futures.
Solidarity between people—even between species—has never been more needed. But our culture is saturated by personality politics and ubiquitous narcissism. How can we think and organize ourselves out of this impasse? Is it shared interests or shared identities that unite us? What does freedom mean in an interconnected age? These are some of the questions that any attempt to think through the question of solidarity in the twenty-first century must encounter. Writers to consider include Marx, Arendt, Foucault, Simondon, Negri, Stuart Hall, Maurizio Lazzarato, Donna Haraway, Couze Venn, and Ruth Ozeki, among others. Open to juniors and seniors with instructor permission.
Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Helvetica was used instead of Arial.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.