

W.G.S.S. GRAD SEMINARS

FALL 2018

[Core Courses]

Mary Jo Bona

WST 601: Feminist Theories

Mondays 1:00 – 3:50 p.m.

This course is designed to introduce graduate students to a wide range of readings in feminist theories and the impact of gender and sexuality studies criticism on literary studies and feminist narratology. Taking an intersectional approach to argue that multiple aspects of identity—gender, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, ability, geographical location—create social positions and representations structured by inequalities, we will examine and critique a variety of literary/critical texts that anticipate, intervene in, and embody feminist and queer representations in literature. Graduate student participation and collaborative praxis are expected in this class as such work comprises education as a “practice of freedom,” as bell hooks has written.

Nancy Hiemstra

WST 680: Interdisciplinary Research Design

Tuesdays 1:00 – 3:50 p.m.

This seminar is designed as a workshop to apply knowledge of methods and methodologies in the interdisciplinary area of Women's and Gender Studies to students' own research. Course topics will include formulating and refining research questions; developing appropriate theoretical frameworks; articulating scholarly value; and thinking critically about the methods used in feminist interdisciplinary research, across the Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences. Students are expected to work collaboratively, presenting their individual works-in-progress to the class for constructive critique. Over the semester, students will develop either a research proposal for funding agencies and/or their dissertation proposal (prospectus).

[Departmental Electives]

Melissa Forbis

Adv. Topics in Women's Studies – “Theory, Method, and Politics of Ethnography” (WST 610)

Wednesdays 4:00 – 6:50 p.m.

What is good social science research? And what is social science research good for? These will be central questions of our inquiry in this seminar. We will examine ethnography as a qualitative research methodology within in the social sciences, drawing from feminist and gender studies, anthropology, and sociology in particular. Participants in the course will take part in ongoing theoretical debates around the questions of interdisciplinarity, the ethics of field research, the politics of ethnographic representation, and the practice of community engaged research. We will read and discuss a wide range of recent ethnographies, as well as critical contemporary assessments of scholarship and methods. The course will also briefly consider the relationship of other genres of writing to ethnography, asking “what counts as evidence”? In addition to learning and practicing traditional and alternative research methods, seminar participants will be expected to design their own ethnographic pilot project.

E. Ann Kaplan

Adv. Topics in Women's Studies – "Global Women's Cinema: Sexuality, Politics, Genre and Transnational Intersections" (WST 610)

Thursdays 4:00 – 6:50 p.m.

In this course, we will explore the role of women in global cinema as this role has changed over time, and as it takes varied forms in select nations and regions. At the same time, we will track broad changes in international feminist film theories from the 1970s to the Millennium, arguing that knowledge of founding positions is crucial for understanding where we are today. We will interrogate the notion of women's cinema, extending its reach beyond an exclusive focus on female directors to consider other claims to authorship and agency by producers, screenwriters, performers and even spectator/critics whose readings assert their role in the production and reception of meaning. We will raise a number of questions to do with themes women's cinema addresses and how these have shifted, including the varied conceptions of female sexuality as shaped by culture and religion; changes in sexual identification and Queer positionalities depending on social context; the political issues (individual and collective) women's films raise; the choice and uses of film genres, and the increasing transnationalism women's films both address and participate in.

[Current List of Electives Outside of WGSS]

AFS 533: Race, Gender, and Globalization

Georges Fouron

Mondays 2:30-5:30 p.m.

This seminar explores current issues and debates relating to the racialized and gendered effects of globalization. Topics include an overview of the sociology of globalization and theories of globalism/the global system, transnational classes and a transnational state, global culture and ideology, transnational migrations and the new global labor market, globalization and race/ethnicity, women and globalization, local-global linkages, and resistance to globalization.

ARS 580: Visual Arts Seminar - "The Unrepresentable"

Ian Alan Paul

Tuesdays 1:00 - 3:50 p.m.

This interdisciplinary graduate seminar will examine the spaces, practices, events, and bodies that exist beyond, and at times in opposition to, representation. Over the course of the semester in weekly meetings, participants will approach the work of contemporary artists, theorists, filmmakers, and activists in order to investigate what has been excluded from what Jacques Rancière has described as the "partition of the sensible" [*le partage du sensible*]. A collection of concepts related to the "outside" of politics of aesthetics will be covered, including but not limited to opacity, imperceptibility, excess, affect, refusal, abjection, and escape. Graduate students from all disciplines are invited to enroll, and will be required to lead one seminar discussion as well as submit a seminar paper or creative work in response to course materials at the end of the term.

Course readings will include texts from Judith Butler, Gilles Deleuze, Edouard Glissant, Alfredo Jaar, Fred Moten, Elizabeth Povinelli, Jacques Rancière, and others.

EGL 606: Period and Tradition - "Postcolonial Environmentalisms: Ecocriticism & World Literature"

Jeffrey Santa Ana

Thursdays 1:00 - 3:50 p.m.

This course explores the literary and cultural representations of what Elizabeth DeLoughrey has called “the postcolonial turn in the dominant fields of American and British ecocriticism” and what the environmental historians Alfred Crosby and Richard Grove have termed “ecological imperialism”— the historical embedment of ecology and the natural world in the Western imperial enterprise. By examining world literature from regions and countries of North America and the global south (Anglophone Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Pacific Islands, including Hawaii), we will explore how contemporary writers and artists from these regions represent environmental experience and depict place (home and origins) as fundamentally linked to the natural world in the contexts of colonialism and imperialism, postcolonialism (the aftermath of colonization), and diaspora (the global movement and refugeeism of people from the global south who are called “environmental migrants”). We will examine how these writers and artists critique current environmental crises, and their models of postcolonial environmentalisms and sustainability. We will investigate these concerns in relation to questions at the intersections of gender, sexuality, and race as they apply to discourses in eco-politics, environmental activism, and the social remembering of violence and human and nonhuman casualties that have occurred under colonialism, empire, and the aftermath of imperial enterprises. Some topics to be explored include epistemologies of nature, land and identity in the wake of forced relocation and displacement, theorizing human/nonhuman relations, the militarized environment, plantation monoculture, and the Anthropocene (our current epoch when human activities started to have a significant global impact on Earth’s geology and ecosystems). The course will address these and other topics through six world regions: India (South Asia), Africa, Caribbean, Hawaii, Asia, and North America.

HAX 664: Conceptual Foundations of Disability Studies 1890's - 1990's

Pamela Block

ONLINE

Present conceptual foundations of disability studies beginning with the 19th and early 20th century theories and scholarships. Theorists from the 1960s and 1970s who influenced the theoretical development of the new field of disability studies will be discussed. The course will explore foundational disability studies scholarship of the 1980s and 1990s as the field established itself first in the social sciences and then the humanities.

HAX 669: Disability and Health in Local and Global Contexts

Cassandra Evans

ONLINE

Critically examines the experiences of people with disabilities in a local and global context and examines the connections between the two contexts. Utilizes policy documents, ethnographies, memoirs, program evaluations, and multi-media and provides the tools to critically evaluate local and global disability experiences as well as programs and interventions.

MUS 541: Topics in the Cross-Cultural Study of Music

Benjamin Tausig

Thursdays 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Examination of a topic of current interest in the cross-cultural study of music. Readings from various intellectual traditions in the humanities and social sciences provide a context within which to appraise recent research in ethnomusicology, historical musicology, and popular music studies, and to formulate possible directions for future research. Representative topics include music and gender, music and the media, music and power, and performance and performers.

POL 562: Passionate Politics: Mobilization, Interest Groups, and Social Movements

Leonie Huddy

Wednesdays 2:30 - 5:30 p.m.

This course discusses political mobilization: the factors that motivate political involvement and the consequences that high levels of public engagement have on elections and the development of public policy. The course begins with several high profile examples of citizen engagement that have had noticeable impact on American politics. This first section also includes a discussion of the various ways in which Americans can be mobilized from involvement in election campaigns to the distribution of political information via social networks. The course then shifts focus to cover the psychology of political mobilization in detail, including the importance of group memberships and identities, emotions, and values. An entire unit of the course is devoted to psychology of group membership in which the mobilizing power of identities and the role of politically motivating emotions are discussed at length. Finally the last section of the course is devoted to specific examples of political mobilization in the U.S. including the environment/green movement, issue groups such as the right-to-life movement, racial politics, and highly polarized partisan politics. Overall, the course is designed to illuminate the psychology of political mobilization and apply these principles to contemporary American politics.