Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Studies Program

Fall 2013 Courses

NOTE: course offerings change annually, so please consult the list of offerings each year to see whether a specific course will count toward the undergraduate minor. Students may petition the Director of LGBT Studies for courses not listed.

ANTHR 2421 Sex and Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective  
MW 12:20-1:10. K. March. 4 credits.  
An introduction to the anthropology of sex, sexuality and gender, this course uses case studies from around the world to explore how the worlds of the sexes become gendered. In ethnographic, ethnohistorical and contemporary globalizing contexts, we will look at: intersexuality & ‘supernumerary’ genders; physical & cultural reproduction; sexuality; and sex- & gender-based violence & power. We will use lectures, films, discussion sections and short field-based exercises. Friday discussions sections: 10:10-11:00 or 11:15-12:05.

ASIAN 3331 Gender & Sexuality in Southeast Asian Cinema  
TR 1:25-2:40. A. Fuhrmann. 4 credits.  
This course examines the new cinemas of Southeast Asia and their engagement with contemporary discourses of gender and sexuality. It pays special attention to the ways in which sexuality and gendered embodiment are at present linked to citizenship and to other forms of belonging. Focusing on globally circulating Southeast Asian films of the past 15 years, the course draws on current writings from feminism, Buddhist studies, affect theory, queer studies, postcolonial theory, and film studies to ask what new understandings of subjectivity might emerge from these cinemas and their political contexts. Films will be drawn from both mainstream and independent cinema and will include the work of directors such as Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Danny and Oxide Pang, Nguyen Tan Hoang, Yau Ching, Thunska Pansittivorakul, Garin Nugroho, and Jean-Jacques Annaud.

ENGL 2350 Literature and Medicine: The Science and Fiction of Disease  
MWF 12:20-1:10. E. Cohn. 4 credits.  
How does literary language depict the experience of physical suffering? Can a poem or a novel palliate pain, illness, even the possibility of death? From darkly comic narratives of black plague and accounts of early modern melancholy to nineteenth century discourses of sex to twentieth century critiques of mental institutions and depictions of the AIDS crisis, this course examines literature centered on medical practices from the early modern period through the twentieth century. How have medical practices changed, and when do these changes have political implications? Readings will include a broad range of genres, including poetry (Keats, Coleridge, Whitman), fiction (Stevenson, Shelley, Gilman, Kafka), theater (Kushner), nonfiction prose (Defoe, Woolf), and critical theory (Scarry, Lacqueur, Foucault, Derrida, Sontag).

FGSS 3591 Kids Rule! Children in Popular Culture  
MWF 2:30-3:20. J. Juffer. 4 credits.  
How is the figure of the child constructed in popular culture? When and to what degree do children participate in the construction of these representations? This course surveys a variety of contemporary media texts (television, film, and the internet) aimed at children ranging in age from pre-kindergarten to young adults. We explore how these texts seek to construct children as empowered consumers, contesting adult conformity. Our theoretical approach complicates definitions of childhood as a time of innocence and potential victimhood and challenges normative constructions of childhood as a time for establishing “proper” sexual and gender identities. Taking a cultural studies approach, we will consider the connections between the cultural texts and the realms of advertising, toys, and gaming.
ENGL 3702 Desire and Cinema
MW 7:30-8:45. E. Hanson. 4 credits.
“You didn't see anything,” a woman in a movie says to her dubious admirer. “No one never sees anything. Ever. They watch, but they don't understand.” What is desire in the cinema? How do we know it when we see it or when we feel it? How do the images, sounds, and narratives engage us erotically? We will examine classic theories of gender and sexuality in visual studies through a survey of recent cinema, including work by such auteurs as Stanley Kubrick, Pedro Almodóvar, David Lynch, Abbas Kiarostami, Claire Denis, Michael Haneke, Gaspar Noé, and Wong Kar-wai.

ENGL 6600 Erotics of Visuality
W 2:30-4:25. E. Hanson. 4 credits.
“The pleasure of the text,” Roland Barthes writes, “is that moment when my body pursues its own ideas – for my body does not have the same ideas I do.” What is this erotics of the text, and what has it been up to lately at the cinema? Are new movies giving our bodies new ideas? In the context of recent cinema, how might we read and revise classic works of psychoanalytic, feminist, and queer theory on sexuality and visual studies? Although we will read essays by Freud, Lacan, Barthes, and other theorists whose work on visuality has been influential for a long time, we will focus on cinema of the past decade or so, including the work of such auteurs as Pedro Almodóvar, Olivier Assayas, Michael Haneke, Abbas Kiarostami, David Lynch, Gaspar Noé, Gus Van Sant, and Wong Kar-wai.

ENGL 6811 James Baldwin
M 12:20 2:15. D. Woubshet. 4 credits.
James Baldwin is one of the most incisive interpreters of the English language and of American life. In this course, we will pay careful attention to Baldwin’s essays and novels, and how his style in each form changes over the course of his illustrious career. We will consider Baldwin’s work against a variegated historical context and how his work pries open America’s literary, cultural, and political imagination. Also, we will supplement primary texts with shorter pieces by his contemporaries and new critical essays in black queer studies that re-conceptualize Baldwin’s enterprise. The themes of the course will include: the intersection of race and sexuality; the forms of intimacy and kinship; the politics of love; and, the role of the artist/intellectual.

FGSS 2010 Introduction to Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
TR 1:25-2:40. S. Hodžić. 4 credits.
Feminist, Gender, & Sexuality Studies is an interdisciplinary program focused on understanding the impact of gender and sexuality on the world around us and on the power hierarchies that structure it. In this class we focus mainly on the experiences, historical conditions, and concerns of women as they are shaped by gender, sexuality, and race in the present and the past. We will read a variety of texts, including personal narratives, historical documents, and cultural criticism, across a range of discipline, and in doing so will consider how larger structural systems of both privilege and oppression affect individuals’ identities, experiences, and options, and simultaneously we will examine forms of agency and action taken by women in the face of these larger systems.

FGSS 2290 Introduction to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Studies
TR 2:55-4:10. L. Ramberg. 4 credits.
This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender studies. We will study lgbt identities, embodiments and theories in order to situate the production of sexuality, and its politics, within historically and culturally specific processes. We will consider sexuality as it intersects with gender, race, class, and nation as well as how these forms of difference are mobilized to naturalize social, political and economic hierarchies. We will engage a range of texts that destabilize the idea of sexuality as a transhistorical and transcultural essence as well as consider the transformative and transforming possibilities of sexual identity politics. Readings will include classic texts by thinkers such as Gayle Rubin, Michel Foucault, and Judith Butler; Michael Warner films such as “But I am a Cheerleader” and "Paris is Burning," and new work by Susan Stryker, Marlon Bailey, Jaspur Puar and Petrus Liu.
FGSS 4000 Senior Seminar in Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
W 10:10-12:05. J. Juffer. 4 credits.
This senior seminar is only open to, and is required by, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies majors. In this seminar, we will focus on the intersection of gender, sexuality, and human rights. Although issues of gender and sexuality have always been integral to human rights, in the last 40 years, they have become an increasingly articulated component of human rights activism, law, and policy making. This gendering of the international human rights agenda has run parallel to the growing institutionalization of feminist, gender, and sexuality studies in the academy. We explore this convergence between human rights theory and its practice in order to think about how feminist scholarship both emerges from and informs everyday lives around the world, especially those of women and sexual minorities. Within this rather broad rubric, we will consider various case studies and use these as examples for student research papers; these case studies will focus on central figures in human rights discourse—children, sex workers, garment workers, migrant agricultural labor, and transnational athletes. Throughout the semester, we will also consider how this course and others in FGSS prepare one to pursue jobs in human rights organizations and other advocacy fields.

SHUM 4873 Human/Animal/Machine
M 2:30-4:25. J. Puar. 4 credits.
In this seminar we will be exploring the borders and boundaries of the construction of “the human” and its triangulated attendants, “the animal” and “the machine.” We will take as our orientation Gayatri Spivak’s groundbreaking query, “Can the subaltern speak?” The 1988 publication of the article with this title has generated prolific feminist, postcolonial, Marxist, and critical race theoretical work examining the politics of poststructuralist knowledge claims and production. However, as has been recently articulated by a range of thinkers, the limits of a poststructuralist epistemological corrective—in certain historical and geopolitical locations—have perhaps been broached. In the context of current global conditions of increasing economic stratification and distress, the dissimulation of politically coherent positions, and the growing disillusionment with liberal democratic ideals, the realms of the social and the political seem haphazardly, arbitrarily, and yet systematically “working” through an anthropomorphic vision of politics that takes agency and voice to be its central determinants.