

Department of American Studies Spring 2019 - Inside Course Descriptions

AMST 30102 Integration in the US & Europe

Korey Garibaldi T/H 2:00pm-3:15pm

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

This class examines the social, spatial and intellectual history of “integration” in the United States and Europe, from the publication of Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *The Social Contract* (1762) up to the so-called “global revolutions” of 1968. Students will gain a comprehensive introduction to how peasants, (im) migrants, people of color, and other disempowered populations negotiated confraternity and inclusion — despite tenacious subjugation and exclusion — within and across Western nation-states and colonial possessions. Related topics range from “Indian removal” to religious persecution; from absolutist monarchies to gender discrimination; and from legalized slavery to histories of genocide.

Our seminar, eclectic in scope and method, will put particular emphasis on transnational histories of social movements and cultural transformations. In addition to four short writing assignments (4 – 5 pages, double-spaced) connecting two or more course readings, students will develop a final paper (7 – 8 pages, double-spaced) based on cumulative sources, including texts such as: Alexander Pushkin’s *The Moor of Peter the Great* (1837), Maya Jasanoff’s *The Dawn Watch: Joseph Conrad in a Global World* (2017), Todd Tucker’s *Notre Dame vs. the Klan: How the Fighting Irish Defeated the Ku Klux Klan* (2004), and Winston Churchill’s “United States of Europe” speech (1946). No prior background in American or European history is either required or assumed.

AMST 30106 Gender and Popular Culture

Perin Gurel M/W 11:00AM-12:15PM

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

This course will explore how popular culture, constructed through as well as against folk and high cultures, operates at the intersection of gender with race, class, sexuality, and nationality in the United States. Approaching gender and popular culture from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives, we will consider how culture in its commodified form has helped construct gendered identities, communities, and power structures in the United States. For example, we will examine how popular media texts may influence ideas about gender and how fans may transform and use mass culture texts for different purposes. Along the way, we will consider popular culture’s ideological potential in relation to gender justice. Do negative representations harm the cause of women’s and/or minority rights? What do the rise of the Internet and social media activism mean for the intersections of popular culture and social justice? Assignments include mini essays, a multimedia essay, and a final creative project accompanied by an analytical paper.

AMST 30108 History of American Capitalism

Korey Garibaldi T/R **11:00am-12:15pm**

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

This course offers a broad thematic overview of the history of capitalism from the early sixteenth century up to the late 1980s. As a discussion-based seminar, we will devote most of our conversations to **discovering, analyzing and reflecting** on the transformation of the U.S. from a newly-independent British colony, to the most influential economic power in the world. Topics and themes we will consider include: the rise of early modern transnational capitalism, European imperialism and trade, and indigenous dispossession after 1492; science and technological transformations; social and economic thought; slavery and servitude, broadly construed; and characteristics of prosperity, wealth, and economic flux.

Our readings and viewings will be a mix of scholarly and primary sources, including an abundance of canonical literary and artistic material, such as novels, visual art, and film excerpts (e.g. Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879), Aaron Douglas's *Building More Stately Mansions* (1944), and Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* (1920)). Over the course of the semester, students will draw upon this eclectic combination of sources to synthesize the dominant historical dimensions of capitalism in and beyond the U.S. via four short essays (4 - 5 pages, double-spaced—between 1,100 and 1,400 words), and a final paper (10 – 12 pages, double-spaced) based on cumulative texts.

AMST 30112 Witnessing the Sixties

Pete Cajka M/W **9:30am-10:45am**

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

The purpose of this interdisciplinary course is twofold: to examine the social context and cultural change of the sixties and to explore the various journalistic and aesthetic representations of events, movements, and transformations. We will focus on the manner in which each writer or artist witnessed the sixties and explore fresh styles of writing and cultural expression, such as the new journalism popularized by Tom Wolfe and the music/lyrics performed by Bob Dylan. Major topics for consideration include the counterculture and the movement--a combination of civil rights and anti-war protest.

AMST 30117 American Conspiracies

Perin Gurel M/W **2:00pm-3:15pm**

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

This course will explore modern conspiracy theories in and about the United States, discovering what they tell us about American culture and politics. The “truth” we will be seeking will not necessarily be whether secret forces have ever conspired or currently conspire to influence specific world events, but what conspiracy theorizing can tell us about modern American identities, communities, and social hierarchies including race, gender, class, religion, and national origin. In other words, we will take theories of conspiracy seriously as vernacular narratives that contribute to collective identity formation, produce powerful symbolic systems for ordering and inverting hierarchies, and help communities negotiate differences of identity and background. Beginning with the Cold War and moving on to the War on Terror, we will discuss why some theories gain preeminence in certain historical contexts and among different social groups. In addition, we will interrogate the role the label “conspiracy theory” plays within contemporary dynamics of knowledge/power. What types of knowledge are respected and acceptable and what types are stigmatized and mocked, and why? This is a writing-intensive course requiring over 20-pages of written work, including 3 small writing assignments, a series of graded and ungraded assignments leading to a major research paper, and an original research paper.

AMST 30128 Protest: American Cultures of Dissent

Erika Doss

T/TH 11:00am-12:15pm

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

What roles do protest and dissent play in the making of America? Focusing especially on cultures of dissent including activist art, civil disobedience, radical action, and various cultures of struggle, dissent, and refusal, this course examines the practices, politics, technologies, and theories guiding America's foundational history of protest. Class includes lectures, discussion, essay assignments, and field trips.

AMST 30138 Advanced Reporting

Jack Colwell

M/W 2:00-3:15PM

01 Majors Only

This is an advanced course in journalistic reporting and writing devoted to learning how to prepare, in a professional manner, in-depth articles for national and local publications and on-line. Emphasis will be on going out to get the news, through record searches, interviews and covering events. Stress also will be on the ethics and responsibilities of journalists in obtaining and presenting information.

AMST 30141 Native American Literature

Robert Walls

T/R 12:30-1:45PM

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

Native Americans have long been trapped in a betwixt and between state, caught by the forces of past and present, tradition and assimilation, romanticization and caricature. Yet through it all, Native voices have continued to speak of the Indian experience with great power and eloquence. This course will introduce Native American literature as a distinctive contribution to American and world literature. We will examine a wide range of expressive culture from the last century, including novels, poetry, graphic stories, children's literature, film, digital media, autobiographies, performances of oral literature, and music. Through the passion, creativity, and humor of Indian authors, we will learn something of the historical experience of Native men and women, and how they have reacted to massacres and mascots, racism and reservations, poverty and political oppression. Above all, we will try to understand how indigenous authors have used literature to engage crucial issues of race and culture in the United States that continue to influence their lives: identity, self-discovery, the centrality of place, cultural survival, and the healing power of language and spirituality. Class discussions will incorporate literary, historical, and ethnographic perspectives of Native expressive culture and the agency of authors as artists and activists' vis-à-vis the wider American literary tradition. Authors include Sherman Alexie, Nicholas Black Elk, Louise Erdrich, D'Arcy McNickle, N. Scott Momaday, Linda Hogan, Winona LaDuke, and Leonard Peltier.

AMST 30142 Latino Muralism

Jason Ruiz

T/TH 3:30pm-4:45pm

01 Majors Only 02 Open to All 03 First Year Only

This class investigates the murals in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, the city's neighborhood most closely identified with Latinos and Latinidad. Students will explore the cultural, historical, and social contexts that give rise to muralism and will examine the murals themselves over the course of several trips to the city. Our research will contribute to an exciting new digital humanities project that is building a mobile app and website devoted to the murals, so students' work will directly impact what the public knows about muralism in the city. Students will also gain training in digital humanities, including such skills as app development, geolocation, 3-D modeling, and data mining.

AMST 30143 Fashioning American Identities

Sophie White

M/W 11:00AM-12:15PM

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

Did Puritans really only wear black and white, or did they wear fashionable lace, silk ribbons and bright colors? Did early settlers wash their bodies to get clean? What role did fashion play in the making of the American Revolution? And how did slaves and Native Americans adorn their bodies? This course will address such questions by focusing on dress and material culture. We will consider the role of dress in the construction of colonial identities, and examine the ways that bodies operated as sites for negotiating class and ethnic encounters.

AMST 30166 Magazine Writing

Kerry Temple

T/TH 3:30pm-4:45pm

01 Majors Only

This course will examine various forms of magazine journalism, from the direct presentation of information to narrative journalism to the art of the first-person essay. The class, requiring students to complete a variety of written assignments while performing in a workshop setting, will emphasize those storytelling techniques essential to writing for publication.

AMST 30171 The Digital Newsroom

Richard Jones/Victoria St. Martin

M/W 12:30pm-1:45pm

01 Majors Only

Building on the skills acquired in Fundamentals of Journalism, this practicum course is centered around students preparing stories, photos and videos for The Observer, the university's independent, student-run newspaper. Students will acquire real-world experience in reporting, writing, and using their digital journalism skills by covering live news events on campus and in the surrounding community. Pre-requisite: Fundamentals of Journalism.

AMST 30175 Tale of Two Depressions

Ben Giamo/David Ruccio

T/TH 2:00pm-3:15pm

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year only

This interdisciplinary course is team-taught by professors of American Studies and Economics. Perspectives, materials, and methods from these respective fields will be presented to enrich our understanding of the causes, conditions, and consequences of two economic depressions: 1929-1941, and 2007 to the present. Throughout, we will be concerned with the similarities and differences between the two depressions, the crises that precipitated and sustained them and the consequences for economics, politics, and culture. What was going on then, and what is going on now that has proved so decisive? How do we come to terms with the two turbulent periods in question and their connections with respect to the wider society? What is the impact of these crises on the nation and its direction? How do our understandings of what happened then help us make sense of what is happening today, and what questions today assist us in analyzing a now-distant but crucial set of historical events.

In order to analyze the respective depressions, we will examine historical contexts, economic factors, developments in the financial system, public policy, documentary accounts, literary and theatrical representations, popular culture, and social dissent.

AMST 30180 Native American Studies

Brian Collier

M/W 9:30-10:45AM

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

America is Indian Country! Our identity is tied to both real American Indian people and romanticized ideas about them. Anglo Americans liked to play Indian but they also claimed a right to places, land, and water. All of this presented a variety of problems for Native Americans over time. This course examines Native Americans and their constant adaptation and survival from European contact through the 20th century, as well as Anglo America's cooption of Native resources, traditions, and images. It explores themes of Native American creation, treaties, education, sovereignty, culture, literature, humor, art, and activism. We will address national issues but also recognize there are over 500 distinct cultural and linguistic groups who are the indigenous people of the modern United States. Questions we will explore include why Native people are sovereign but also U.S. Citizens, why Indian mascots are such a hot issue, and how Native people have come to run so many Casinos. This course is the history and culture course that brings the first Americans together with the rest of America.

AMST 30192 Sports and American Culture

Annie Coleman

T/R 12:30pm-1:45pm

01 Majors Only 02 A&L Juniors only

03 A&L Sophs Only

04 First Year Only

Sports play a big role in American culture. From pick up soccer and the Baraka Bouts to fantasy football and the Olympics, sports articulate American identities, priorities, aspirations, and concerns. They reflect our dominant values but also highlight our divisions and serve as a means to question those values. Athletes, organizers, spectators, fans, and the media all have a stake. This course will examine sport's role in American society and culture thematically, covering the late 19th century to present and paying special attention to sport as a physical performance (including issues of danger, drugs, disability, spectatorship, and fandom), sport as an expression of identity (the construction of race, gender, class, community, and nation), sport as a form of labor (with issues of power and control, safety, and amateurism), and sport as a cultural narrative (how do writers, historians, and the media attach meaning to it?). We will examine history, journalism, documentary film, and television coverage; topics will range from Victorian bicyclists and early college football to Muhammad Ali and Olympic snowboarding. Requirements include reading and regular discussion, a variety of short analytical papers, and a culminating project in which students will choose one course theme to analyze through a topic of their own choice.

AMST 30198 20th/21st Century American Art

Erika Doss

T/TH 9:30am-10:45am

01 Majors Only 02 Open to all 03 First Year Only

This course traces the history of 20th/21st Century American art: art made in the United States from the Gilded Age of the 1890s to today. A historically based survey of the evolution and development of American modern and contemporary art, it explores a variety of media from paintings and sculpture to photography, graphic arts, performance art, installation, street art, video, digital, New Media, and Social Practice within cultural, economic, political, social, and theoretical contexts. Especially attentive to the themes of modernism, migration, and mobility, it considers the roles that American art has played in the formation of and contestation over ideas about modern national identity and understandings of class, race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual difference.

AMST 30220 Covering America

Victoria St. Martin

M/W 9:30-10:45am

Majors Only

Permission Required of Instructor

The course is a practical and conceptual exploration of the journalistic issues involved in reporting on topics of national interest. This is an advanced reporting course in which students will build on their digital and multi-platform journalism skills and learn to produce stories for audiences nationwide. The capstone assignment requires traveling to the site of an ongoing national story during Spring Break; the resulting stories, photos and videos will be published on a student-produced website. Please note: There are no additional costs for students in this course; all travel costs will be covered for any student who is admitted to the course. Admission to the course by permission only.

AMST 43155 Notre Dame and America

Kathleen Cummings

Senior Seminar

M/W 12:30pm-1:45pm

Senior AMST Majors Only

This main requirement of this seminar is a primary-source-based research paper that examines a point of intersection between Notre Dame's campus and the broader social and cultural history of the United States. Themes and topics include but are not limited to: Catholicism, sports, coeducation, and science.