

# AMERICAN STUDIES COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

*Spring 2011*

## Inside Courses

### **FIELDWORK AND AMERICAN DOCUMENTARY**

AMST 30113 / CRN: 29168

B. Giamo

TR 11:00-12:15

#### ***track: 1***

This course is fashioned more like a workshop. Students will be engaged in fieldwork either on campus or in the surrounding community. By investigating and documenting people, culture, place and setting, students will combine the imaginative work of the writer with the analytical work of the intellectual. Whether conducting journalistic inquiry, in-depth interviewing, oral history, participant observation, or ethnography, students will take the initiative in making contact and building rapport with their respective subjects. Group work based upon ongoing fieldwork (and supplemented by readings) will be the basis for classroom discussion. That is, in addition to considering exemplary readings in various genres on nonfiction, we will focus on students' fieldwork process and results in class. Along with a substantive written account of the fieldwork, an oral presentation is required. (Students wishing to pursue community-based research will be accommodated).

### **FREEDOM AND THE AMERICAN NOVEL**

AMST 30114 / CRN: 29097

C. Meissner – TR 12:30-1:45

#### ***track:1***

Freedom and the American novel looks at how the concept of “freedom” functions as an aesthetic, cultural, political, and social component in a selection of American novels and other forms of literature which helped create the larger landscape of American fiction from the 19<sup>th</sup> century until the present. Selected works will address issues of economic freedom, political freedom, religious freedom, freedom and gender, sexuality, race, identity, and death among others. Short papers, presentations, long papers and exams.

### **FEMINISM AND THE AMERICAN EMPIRE**

ASMT 30130 / CRN: 29356

P. Butler – MW 3:00-4:15

#### ***track: 2,3***

Since the earliest movements for women's rights in the US, American feminisms have been defined in relation to empire. And since the earliest days of westward expansion, American imperial projects have interacted with multiple feminisms around the world. This course investigates the connections between feminism and US empire, asking (1) how US Empire has been central to a wide range of feminist political and intellectual work -- both within and outside the US -- since the mid nineteenth century, and (2) how discourses of feminism and female empowerment have been mobilized in the service of American imperialism. Our study will take two overlapping paths. First, students will read primary and secondary materials that document and analyze American feminist movements in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries that have (a) utilized the tools of US empire and/or (b) sought to "civilize" or "save" non-white and non-American women, as part of their strategies for claiming political and citizenship rights. Examples will include nineteenth-century suffrage movements and missionary projects; twentieth century struggles over birth control and abortion rights; and contemporary feminist debates about such issues as hijab, genital cutting, reproductive justice, and war. At the same time, students will read a wide variety of feminist work, produced both within and outside the US, that

critiques or resists both US imperialism and imperial feminisms. This study will include historical and contemporary anti-racist, anti-imperial, and transnational feminisms based in the US (such as Black, Chicana, Asian American, and Native American feminist scholarship and activism), as well as feminist work taking place in regions directly impacted by US empire, such as Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and the Middle East. Evaluation will be based on a reading journal, 4 in-class quizzes, and a final research paper.

### **ADVANCED REPORTING**

AMST 30138 / CRN: 23776

J. Colwell

MW 1:30-2:45

#### ***track:3***

This is an advanced course in journalistic reporting and writing devoted to learning how to prepare, in a professional manner, in-depth articles on issues and events of community interest for Notre Dame and in this area. Emphasis will be on the techniques, ethics, and responsibilities of conducting interviews and research and crafting pieces for newspapers and other publications.

### **MULTIMEDIA JOURNALISM**

AMST 30140 / CRN: 25899

R. Schmuhl

MW 1:30-2:45

#### ***track:3***

The 21<sup>st</sup> century journalist needs to be comfortable with what is called “writing across the media” and can no longer be selective about which form of communication to build a career around. In many newsrooms, print journalists are now expected to perform on radio or in front of TV cameras, while the bylines of electronic journalists are turning up in newspapers and magazines. Such media “convergence” is already more the norm than the exception. On top of that, the Internet has become a major medium in its own right, encompassing different styles of communication. While the focus of this course will be on writing, it will expose students to a variety of media in an effort to prepare them for the reality of modern communication careers.

### **NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES**

AMST 30180 / CRN: 25924

B. Collier

MW 8:00-9:15

#### ***track: 2***

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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **AMERICAN POLITICAL LIFE**

AMST 30181 / CRN: 25989

R. Schmuhl – MW 3:00-4:15

#### ***track:3***

An introductory and interdisciplinary examination of American political culture, particularly contemporary political thought and behavior. Although we will trace the development of our political culture from the nation's beginning to the present, a principal concern of the class will be the involvement of the mass media in recent political history. In short, we will attempt to come to terms with questions about the role and influence of mass communications in modern politics.

### **CAPITAL CRIMES**

AMST 30182 / CRN: 25926

C. Meissner

TR 9:30-10:45

***track: 1***

"Capital Crimes" is about American culture's love affair with money. In looking over material drawn from literature, film, television, news media, politics, and academia we'll try to measure the personal and cultural benefits and consequences associated with American culture's embrace of money, its hagiographic celebration of the CEO, its adoration of celebrity culture, and its elevation of the market as an idol. Short papers, presentations, long papers and exams.

### **AMERICAN WEST**

AMST 30185 / CRN: 25923

A. Coleman

MW 1:30-2:45

***track: 2***

The American West is a region characterized at once by its physical setting, the historical processes that have occurred there, and the set of meanings American culture has ascribed to the region. It is home to a highly diverse set of peoples that have been interacting with one another for years, decades, even centuries. It is described by physical and political boundaries (the Mississippi River, the Pacific Ocean, and borders with Canada and Mexico), economic development (extractive industry, tourism), and by imaginative constructs (the "frontier," the "Wild West," and the mythic characters inhabiting such places). This semester we will use a variety of approaches to explore the American West from the mid-19th century through the late 20th century. We will focus on two specific themes: 1) the political, economic, social, and environmental relationships that have shaped the region; and 2) the cultural meanings and mythic representations people have attached to it. The Mythic West, far from separate and distinct, has always been intimately connected to "real" western people, places, resources, and politics. We will study how the American West and its images have developed together, often in tension with one another, and how they have created the West that we know today.

## **OUTSIDE COURSES**

### **CHICAGO /HARLEM/ RENAISSANCE**

AMST 30218 / CRN: 28942

C. Johnson-Roullier – TR 2:00-3:15

***track:1***

In answering the question, "What was American modernism?" most literary critical perspectives might commonly be expected to focus on a modernity represented by the authors of the "lost generation" in the U.S., such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, and Ernest Hemingway. While a conventional understanding of American modernism might serve to underscore the importance of the stylistic, cultural and artistic contributions of these and other canonical moderns, such a view might also give little consideration to the significance of those modern American voices not ordinarily heard in such a context. This course poses the question, "What was American modernism?" to answer it by exploring its roots in two less conspicuous early 20th-century American modernisms: the Chicago Renaissance of 1912-1925, and the Harlem Renaissance of 1920-1929. In "engendering renaissance," these two moments suggest a literary birth and rebirth of modern American identity that questions its seemingly stable boundaries and borders, reconfiguring

the idea of "American" within and opening the door to the larger and more varied cultural fabric that is modern America(s). By locating the rise of American modernism in the relation between these two literary moments, this course will broaden our understanding of the idea of "American" at this time by considering how it is created within a frame determined by the interplay of race, gender, class and nation. In this way, it seeks to deepen our understanding of U.S. American culture and the idea of "American" in the early 20th century, while suggesting new ways to engage the global social and cultural challenges facing the idea of "American" in the 21st. Course Requirements: two 5-7 page papers, group presentation, several short in-class writing assignments Course Texts: Required texts may include Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself"; Jose Martí, "Our America"; Henry Blake Fuller, The Cliff-Dwellers; Theodore Dreiser, Sister Carrie; Willa Cather, The Song of the Lark; Waldo Frank, Our America; Sherwood Anderson, Winesburg, Ohio; Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America"; Booker T. Washington, Up From Slavery; W.E.B. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk; Anna Julia Cooper, A Voice From the South; Jean Toomer, Cane; Jessie Fauset, Plum Bun; Nella Larsen, Quicksand & Passing.

### **CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN LIT**

AMST 30240 / CRN: 28937

M. Benedict – TR 11:00-12:15

#### ***track: 1***

What does it mean to write fiction in the "Naughts" (2000-2010)? In the age of MySpace, RSS feeds, American Idol, and YouTube, is the term "fiction" even valid anymore? Or, for that matter, books? In this class, we will read several novels published since January 2001. In addition to covering the "usual" topics (plot, character relationships, themes, etc.), we'll also think about what it means to write "fictions," to write "novels," in a world, in an "America," that is increasingly being parsed into smaller and smaller pieces. A partial list of texts include (subject to change): Mark Danielewski, Only Revolutions: A Novel; Jennifer Egan, Look at Me; Joshua Ferris, Then We Came to the End; Dinaw Menegstu, The Beautiful Things This Heaven Bears; and Dana Spiotta, Eat the Document: A Novel. We'll also view excerpts of television shows, movies, and other media, as well as attend some campus literary events. Required work: two short essays, midterm, final, occasional quizzes.

### **19<sup>th</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN NOVEL**

AMST 30246 / CRN: 28939

J. Staud – MW 1:30-2:45

#### ***track : 1***

We will read, discuss, and study selected novels of significant importance within the American literary tradition. As we explore these novels within their historical and cultural context, we will consider the various reasons for their place within the canon of American literature. Indeed, we will scrutinize the very nature of this literary canon and self-consciously reflect on the inevitably arbitrary nature of this, or any reading list. Even so, we will see, I hope, that these authors share deep engagement with ideas and themes common to American literature and do so, through their art, in ways that both teach and delight. Required Texts: Moby-Dick, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Awakening, The Great Gatsby, Invisible Man, The Old Man and the Sea, The Bluest Eye.

### **REBEL YOUTH IN LATINO/A AMERICA**

AMST 30308 / CRN: 29049

J. Pensado – TR 3:30-4:45

#### ***track: 2***

This course will explore the history of youth and youth movements of Latino descent in the United States during the 20th century with particular emphasis on the historical evolution of two representative communities: Mexican Americans in the South West and Puerto Ricans in New York.

### **U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY**

AMST 30321 / CRN: 26055

J. Coleman – TR 2:00-3:15

**track: 2**

This course is an introduction to the new field of environmental history. While many people think "The Environment" suddenly became important with the first "Earth Day" in 1970 (or a few years earlier), environmental issues have in fact long been of central importance. In recent decades historians have begun actively to explore the past sensibilities of various groups toward their surroundings and fellow creatures. They have also increasingly paid attention to the ways environmental factors have affected history. This course will range widely, from world history to the story of a single river, from arguments about climate change to the significance of pink flamingos, and will survey a number of types of history including cultural, demographic, religious, and animal.

**U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TO 1945**

AMST 30325 / CRN: 29047

S. Brady – MWF 8:30-9:20

**track: 3**

This course covers the main developments in American foreign relations from the Spanish-American War in 1898 through World War II. It traces the emergence of the United States as a major world power and examines in some detail how the United States became involved in the two world wars. A recurring theme will be the major traditions in American foreign policy and the ways in which these traditions influenced policy makers in the early years of the "American Century."

**HISTORY OF AMERICAN SPORT**

AMST 30329 / CRN: 29045

J. Soares – MW 4:30-5:45

**track: 2**

Sport, a major part of American entertainment and culture today, has roots that extend back to the colonial period. This course will provide an introduction to the development of American sport, from the horse-racing and games of chance in the colonial period through to the rise of contemporary sport as a highly-commercialized entertainment spectacle. Using a variety of primary and secondary sources, we will explore the ways that American sport has influenced and been influenced by economics, politics, popular culture, and society, including issues of race, gender and class. Given Notre Dame's tradition in athletics, we will explore the university's involvement in this historical process.

**CRIME, HEREDITY, AND INSANITY IN THE UNITED STATES**

AMST 30332 / CRN: 26095

L. Przybyszewski – TR 3:30-4:45

**track: 2**

The 19th century witnessed a transformation in the understanding of the origins of criminal behavior in the United States. For many, a religious emphasis on humankind as sinful gave way to a belief in its inherent goodness. But if humans were naturally good, how could their evil actions be explained? Drawing on studies done here and abroad, American doctors, preachers, and lawyers debated whether environment, heredity, or free will determined the actions of the criminal. By the early 20th century, lawyers and doctors had largely succeeded in medicalizing criminality. Psychiatrists treated criminals as patients; judges invoked hereditary eugenics in sentencing criminals. Science, not sin, had apparently become the preferred mode of explanation for the origins of crime. But was this a better explanation than what had come before? Discussion will be the primary form of instruction.

## **THE UNITED STATES SINCE WORLD WAR II**

AMST 30335 / CRN: 23005

T. Blantz – MWF: 9:35-10:25

### ***track: 2***

The purpose of this course is to study the political, diplomatic, economic, social, and cultural development of the United States from 1945 through the presidency of George H.W. Bush. Although the military and diplomatic history of World War II will be considered by way of background, the principal topics of investigation will be the Fair Deal Program of President Truman, the Cold War, the Korean Conflict, the Eisenhower Presidency, the New Frontier, Vietnam, President Johnson's Great Society, the Civil Rights Movement, the Nixon years, the social and intellectual climate of this post-war era, and the presidencies of Gerald Ford through George H.W. Bush. There will be a required reading list of approximately six books, two smaller writing assignments, and three examinations.

## **US FOREIGN POLICY IN COLD WAR**

AMST 30342 / CRN: 26066

W. Miscamble – TR 11:00-12:15

### ***track: 3***

This course offers an overview of US foreign policy since World War II, focusing on the major crises and conflicts that have occurred since then-US and Soviet Union, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War, and Kosovo.

## **SEX, SEXUALITY AND GENDER IN THE UNITED STATES TO 1880**

AMST 30343 / CRN: 29335

G. Bederman – TR 9:30-10:45

### ***track: 2***

Topics may include representations of sexuality in movies and advertising; new courtship practices among unmarried heterosexuals (from courting to dating to hooking up); changing concepts of same-sex love (from inversion to homosexuality to gay liberation to LGBTQ); the demographic shift to smaller families; the twentieth-century movements for and against birth control and legal abortion; and the late-twentieth-century politicization of sexual issues.

## **LABOR AND AMERICA SINCE 1945**

AMST 30362 / CRN: 25015

D. Graff – MW 1:30-2:45

### ***track: 2***

This course explores the relationship between workers and the labor movement to American politics and culture since 1945. The United States emerged from World War II as the strongest global power, and its citizens subsequently enjoyed a long postwar economic boom that created what we might call the first truly middle-class society in world history. At the heart of that new society was the American labor movement, those unions like the United Auto Workers and the United Steel Workers who ensured that at least some of the postwar profits made it into the wallets of workers and their families. Today, however, unions represent only 8% of workers in the private sector. What accounts for the decline of organized labor since the 1950s? What has the decline of the labor movement meant for workers specifically, and the American economy and politics more broadly? How and why have popular perceptions of unions changed over time? What has been the relationship of organized labor to the civil rights movement, feminism, and modern conservatism? What is "globalization" and what has been its impact upon American workers and their unions? Through an exploration of historical scholarship, memoirs, polemical writings, and Hollywood films, this course will try to answer these questions. Students interested in politics, economic development, international relations, social justice, human rights, peace studies or mass culture are particularly welcome.

## **US CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

AMST 30368 / CRN: 29068

R. Pierce – MW 10:40-11:30

**track: 2**

There may not be a term in American society as recognized, and yet as misunderstood, as "Civil Rights." Often civil rights are conflated with human rights, even though each are distinct of the other. During the semester, we will trace the African-American Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the 20th century, as well as its lasting impact on American society. We will do so using as many media as possible. Fortunately, we will have the opportunity to study an important part of American history in significant detail. The time span we cover will not be that great, but the issues we investigate challenge the founding principles of American society to its core.

## **THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

AMST 30373 / CRN: 29044

P. Griffin – TR 9:30-10:45

**track: 2**

When speaking of the American Revolution, many writers reach for a comment made by John Adams in 1818 that, "[T]he Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people. . ." Whether this assertion is true historically or not, it still does not adequately describe what that revolution was. The American Revolution obviously had its political elements, primarily the formation of the United States. To reach its political goals, military means were necessary. Without a successful War for Independence, there would have been no revolution. To leave matters there, however, would be insufficient. A fuller understanding of the revolution would need to address how it affected the whole spectrum of American life. It would consider the revolution as a social movement that challenged the political and social hierarchies of the day. It would also ask how the revolution affected those who were not white males, especially women, slaves, and Native Americans. Without considering the possible negative implications of the revolution, any telling would be incomplete. This class will take up these challenges and attempt to make a full-orbed presentation of the events surrounding the American Revolution. It will introduce students both to elites and to those whom the popular narrative glosses over. It will attempt to count the losses, as well as the gains, which flowed from the move to independence from Britain. Finally, it will attempt to describe the many changes through this period, which resulted, not only in a new political nation, but in a new society and culture--changes that in varying degrees are still with us today and of which contemporary Americans are the inheritors.

## **AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY I**

AMST 30393 / CRN: 29271

TBD – TR 9:30-10:45

**track: 2**

This course is a survey of the history of African Americans, beginning with an examination of their West African origins and ending with the Civil War era. We will discuss the 14th and 15th centuries, West African kingdoms and cultures, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, early slave societies in the Caribbean, slavery in colonial America, the beginnings of African-American cultures in the North and South, slave resistance and rebellions, the political economy of slavery and resulting sectional disputes, and the Civil War.

## **PRESIDENTIAL LEADERSHIP**

AMST 30400 / CRN: 26187

P. Arnold – TR 3:30-4:45

**track: 3**

This course examines the role of the presidency in the American regime and its change over time. Particular attention will be given to expectations about presidential leadership through the course of American political history. Beginning with questions about the original design and role of the presidency, the course turns to consideration of the role of leadership styles for change and continuity in American politics. Finally, cases of presidential leadership are studied to comprehend the way leadership and political context interact.

## **AMERICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT**

AMST 30410 / CRN: 26215

V. Munoz – MW 3:00-4:15

### ***track: 3***

This course surveys the development of American Political thought from the Colonial period to the early 20th century. We will specifically look at different theories of what constitutes America and what this means for what may be considered appropriate political behavior. This course emphasizes a careful reading of texts to discern different articulations of what may be considered the proper purview of politics in America and why. Requirements include active class participation, several short papers, and a final paper. This course assumes a basic familiarity with American government and history.

## **HEALTH AND THE LATINO PARADOX**

AMST 30415 / CRN: 29240

C. Duarte -- MW 11:45-1:00

### ***track: 3***

The objective of this course is to enhance your awareness of major theories, concepts, issues and research studies related to the physical and mental health of Latinos in the United States. Particular attention will be drawn to the diversity of the Latino experience in the U.S. and the health care system in terms of country of origin, race, class, gender, and generation. This course attempts to be an introduction to the historical, political, economic and social structures that determine how a subpopulation in the United States is defined within and navigates thru a primary institution, like health care, and the ramifications of this for the society at large.

## **BALLADS TO HIP HOP**

AMST 30416 / CRN: 29241

A. Chavez – TR 9:30-10:45

### ***track: 1***

This course is designed to introduce students to important historical and stylistic musical developments as part of the cultural experience of ethnic Mexicans in the United States. To this end, we examine both music-making and performance as aesthetic dialects of the social texture of "everyday life". We will cover various styles and genres, including corridos (the Mexican ballad form), Chicano rock 'n- roll and hip-hop, jazz, and contemporary folk-derived styles (i.e. Banda, Pasito Duranguense, Norteño) with attention to their historical, political, and musical significance. In order we achieve our aims, the course is organized along two axes: one chronological, the other conceptual - neither complete. The chronological portion will allow us to survey the various genres, styles, and ensembles of ethnic Mexican musical production. We dovetail this effort with a focus on important themes and concepts, identity, race, gender, migration, hybridity, that pertain to the present and historical social conditions of this community. Our approach, such that we are dealing with music-cultures, is at once anthropological and ethnomusicological, yet we are guided more broadly, by the paradigm of cultural studies, as we interrogate the expressive terrain where history, language, performance, and social bodies intersect.

## **20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY BLACK POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

AMST 30421 / CRN: 29275

TBD – TR 3:30-4:45

### ***track 3***

This course will explore African American political philosophy, primarily focusing on 20th century philosophers. The work of Martin Luther King and Cornel West will be focal points for the course.

## **THE AMERICAN SOUTH**

AMST 30422 / CRN: 29274



A. Carico – TR 2:00-3:15

***track: 2***

This course will trace a long historical arc in considering depictions of the United States South and of the peoples who have lived there. Though we'll dip into the eighteenth century, the course will be roughly divided between the nineteenth and twentieth century. And while we'll spend most of our time analyzing the relations of blacks and whites, during slavery and after, we'll also consider the experiences of Native Americans, Asians, and Latinos. What role has "the South," as a place both real and imagined, played in the cultural history of the United States? And--as a region almost entirely set apart--how has "the South" figured in the creation of national identity? To what extent has it been used to contain, and even quarantine, the nation's racial problems? We'll dwell on these questions, and others, as we engage with novels, slave narratives, paintings, and films.

**PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR**

AMST 30434 / CRN: 28975

D. Davis – TR 11:00-12:15

***track:3***

A principle tenet underlying democratic governance is the belief that public opinion or the "will of the people" should dictate governmental behavior. To the extent this belief is a realistic consideration, difficult questions remain concerning the capacity for citizens to develop reasoned opinions and how to conceptualize and measure opinion. This course explores the foundations of political and social attitudes and the methodology used to observe what people think about politics.

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE POLICY**

AMST 30447 / CRN: 28979

M. Doppke – TR 3:30-4:45

***track: 3***

This course examines political and economic origins of, and consumer consequences of, four main areas: the farm bill and commodity programs, the regulation of age biotechnology, food safety, and global trade in foodstuffs. This is a discussion-centered course with a significant portion of the grade coming from a group project presentation.

**RELIGION IN AMERICAN POLITICS**

AMST 30454 / CRN: 28977

D. Campbell – TR 9:30-10:45

***track: 3***

This course begins by examining the unique religious "economy" within the United States, and the extent to which it is a function of the First Amendment and/or other factors. We will then explore the imprint religion has made on the American political landscape, drawing on both historical and contemporary examples. From abolitionism to school vouchers, from William Jennings Bryan to George W. Bush, the course will address how religion and politics have converged to affect public policy in the courts, Congress, and the executive branch.

**RELIGION AND SOCIAL LIFE**

AMST 30507 / CRN: 23124

K. Christiano –TR 12:30-1:45

***track: 2***

How does social life influence religion? How does religion influence society? What is religion's social significance in a complex society like ours? Is religion's significance declining? This course will consider these and other questions by exploring the great variety in social expressions of religion. The course examines the social bases of churches, sects, and cults, and it focuses on contemporary religion in the United States.

**HISTORY OF TELEVISION**

AMST 30703 / CRN: 25043

K. Pike – TR 3:30-4:45

**track: 1**

Television has been widely available in the United States for only half a century, yet already it has become a key means through which we understand our culture. Our course examines this vital medium from three perspectives. First, we will look at the industrial, economic and technological forces that have shaped U.S. television since its inception. These factors help explain how U.S. television adopted the format of advertiser-supported broadcast networks and why this format is changing today. Second, we will explore television's role in American social and political life: how TV has represented cultural changes in the areas of gender, class, race and ethnicity. Third, we will discuss specific narrative and visual strategies that characterize program formats. Throughout the semester we will demonstrate how television and U.S. culture mutually influence one another, as television both constructs our view of the world and is affected by social and cultural forces within the U.S.

**AMERICAN FILM**

AMST 40205 / CRN: 26126

W. Krier – TR: 3:30-4:45

**track: 1**

A look at what makes a film American. The course will be structured by pairing films from the “classic” period with the films from the more recent past in order to highlight essential features, particularly genre characteristics, the work of directors and the performance of “stars.” Possible films: *It Happened One Night*, *French Kiss*, *The Lady Eve*, *Double Indemnity*, *Body Heat*, *Basic Instinct*, *Zero Effect*, *Shane*, *Unforgiven*, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, *Die Hard*, *The Godfather*, *Bound*, *Silence of the Lambs*, *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, *Don Juan de Marco*, *Moulin Rouge*, *Crash*, *The Hours*, *The Maltese Falcon* and others.

**CIVIL LIBERTIES**

AMST 40419 / CRN: 26226

S. Barber – TR 11:00-12:15

**track: 3**

Most courses in constitutional law narrate the Supreme Court's evolving positions on constitutional rights and institutions. This course starts not with the Supreme Court but with the Federalist Papers, from which it develops a general theory of the social and economic goals or ends of constitutional government in America. It then uses this theory as a framework for assessing the Supreme Court's position on property rights, race relations, personal privacy, and the place of religion in American life. This exercise can yield results that make for lively class discussion, not only about the Court, but about the adequacy of the Constitution itself. Grades will be based on a midterm and a final exam, with a paper option in lieu of the final.

**AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES**

AMST 40421 / CRN: 24569

C. Wolbrecht – MW 1:30-2:45

**track: 3**

Political parties play many vital roles in American politics: They educate potential voters about political processes, policy issues, and civic duties. They mobilize citizens into political activity and involvement. They provide vital information about public debates. They control the choices--candidates and platforms that voters face at the ballot box. They influence and organize the activities of government officials. Most importantly, by providing a link between government and the governed, they are a central mechanism of representation. These roles--how well they are performed, what bias exists, how they shape outcomes, how they have changed over time--have consequences for the working of the American political system.

## **AESTHETICS OF LATINO CULTURE**

AMST 40511 / CRN: 23123

G. Cardenas – T 3:30-6:00

### ***track: 1***

This course will analyze the philosophy and principles underlying the social and political aspects of Latino art. We will approach this by examining a range of topics, including Chicano and Puerto Rican poster art, muralism, Latina aesthetics, and border art. The readings will enable us to survey a number of important exhibitions of Latino art and to explore new possibilities for exhibition and representation. We will examine descriptive material and critical writings concerning issues pertaining to the representation and interpretation of Latino culture and art as well as how these questions surface in a national museum context.

## **SENIOR SEMINARS**

### **KEROUAC, THE BEATS, AND DYLAN**

AMST 43123 / CRN: 25938

B. Giamo – TR 3:30-4:45

This seminar will re-examine Kerouac and his prose in relation to Beat subculture and the larger context of post-World War II American society. Although the work of other Beat writers, such as William S. Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, and Gary Snyder will be considered, the primary focus will be on Kerouac. Moreover, the seminar will question the cultural codification of Kerouac as "King of the Beats" and advance the notion that he was a prose artist on a spiritual quest. Or, as Ginsberg aptly put it, an "American lonely Prose Trumpeter of drunken Buddha Sacred Heart."

### **AMERICAN "CHICKS"**

AMST 43147 / CRN: 29357

P. Butler – MW 11:45-1:00

Since the mid 1990s, a new wave of American popular culture has featured (and been marketed toward) the figure of the "chick": a single woman in her twenties or thirties who finds individual empowerment, sexual agency, and self esteem as she navigates the muddy waters of careers, relationships, and shopping. Most academic readings of this cultural explosion have understood it as a symptom of \*post feminism\*: the myth that the political goals of American feminism have been accomplished, and that women in the US can now seize freedom by making empowered choices at work, at home, and at the mall. Our study of "chick" culture will use this academic literature on post feminism as a starting place. We will then expand existing critiques of post feminist culture by putting them in conversation with critical race and transnational feminist scholarship, in order to critically read various examples of post feminist popular culture. We will assess how these examples -- including film (chick flicks), literature (chick lit), video games (action chicks), and music (rock chicks), as well as television, video, and internet texts -- define "Americanness" in relation to social and political formations such as gender, generation, race, sexuality, globalization, and political economy. Throughout the semester, students will keep a reading journal and be responsible for occasional presentations of course readings. The seminar work will culminate with a final research paper, or a creative project accompanied by a critical essay.