

WGS Fall 2021 Undergraduate Course Descriptions

WSGS 123/HIST 123 Greek and Roman Mythology

(S Miller) MWF 1-1:50

An exploration of Greek and Roman mythology through ancient texts and later representations in art and film. We will be reading texts written between the 8th century B.C. and the 1st century A.D. in order to consider how classical myths express the societal values, hopes, fears, and prejudices of the cultures that produced them. For each of the mythical texts we read, we will also examine how that myth has been transformed by later artists into various artistic media including paintings, sculptures, and film. Particular emphasis will be given to the representation of the heroic journey, the representation of sex and gender in journey narratives, and expressions of love and violence in both ancient and modern expressions of classical myth.

WSGS 203/Theo 202 Christianity, Embodiment and Violence

(E Vasko) Wed 6-8:40

Want to make a difference? Tired of just talking about social justice? Interested in psychology, sociology, public policy, education, or health, but need to take a theology course? In this class, we take an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach to Christian tradition. Students will examine how theology and ethics intersect with current social issues on Duquense's campus, including sexual violence, racism, hate crimes, and other forms of social-inequity. Student concerns and interests drive this class. The class is recommended for those who are interested in engaged forms of learning. The course is not lecture-based. Theme Areas: Social Justice and Faith and Reason.

WSGS 210 / SOCI 210 Soc of Sex & Gender

(S MacMillen) MWF 9-9:50

This course teaches students how to apply the sociological imagination to issues relating to gender and sexuality. It engages various theoretical traditions in this process--including critical and queer theories, feminism, symbolic interactionism and functionalism. Particular attention is given to aspects of culture, narratives, and interactional dynamics as they relate to gendered experience.

WSGS 211/CLSX 211 / HIST 212 History of Ancient Women

(S Miller) MWF 2-2:50

An investigation into the lives and representations of women and girls in historical and literary texts, art, and material culture in ancient Greece and Rome. The course examines representations of female bodies, work, familial roles, mythic roles, and religious roles through textual, artistic, material, archeological, legal, and medical sources.

WSGS 225 / SOCI 225 Family Systems

(Z Ahmed) T/Th 12:15-1:30

Family Systems examines the family as a social institution, its role in society and social interactions within the family unit. Major topics include; cultural factors that shape family structures; the interrelationship of the family with economic and demographic changes; patterns of relationships associated with the courtship, gender roles, parenting and socialization of children; changing family roles; and emerging family.

WSGS 305(01)/HIST 302 African American History

(J Taylor) MWF 2-2:50

The course emphasizes Black Americans' creation of a unique culture of struggle and resistance as they sought to give "freedom" meaning. It begins with emancipation and Reconstruction experiences and moves to a sustained consideration of migration processes, the development of Jim Crow and the "Nadir"; and the emergence of protest movements and leaders throughout the twentieth century. Key issues include the changing status of African American women, the emergence of Black Americans in the professions, the dynamic dimensions of Black popular culture, Black protest movements through Black Lives Matter, diverse Black ideologies such as Afrocentricity and Nationalism, and recent effects of urban renewal.

WSGS 305(61)/HIST 306 Sex and Sexuality in Modern History

(B Keown) Tue 6-8:40

How did sexuality come to be understood as a category of identity? What role did science and medicine play in the definition and stigmatization of sex and sexual practices? How did people in the past organize and advocate for themselves? How have these practices informed our modern understanding of sexuality and our activism today? This course will explore these questions by focusing on the history of sex and sexuality as identities and constructs that are shaped by historic, cultural, and socially

contingent circumstances. We will primarily focus on these concepts as they were practiced in Europe and North America since about 1800. However, we will also consider the role that sex, sexuality, and sexual practices influenced and were influenced by global events like imperialism, war, and the growth of global capitalism. This class will use students' own interests and research interests as jumping-off points for discussion and developing research questions for investigation.

WSGS 309W/Engl 309W Horror Film

(J Fried) Thurs 5-9

Horror is one of the most popular and resilient genres in the history of film. But what exactly defines a movie as a horror film? And what is it about the horror film that keeps us coming back for more? It's certainly more than the experience of being scared. In this course, we will watch and discuss a variety of classic and contemporary horror films with the purpose of a) understanding and recognizing the cinematic codes of the genre b) considering how the horror film – through its varied subgenres – often functions as a barometer of social anxieties surrounding issues of gender, sexuality, and race. In addition to weekly screenings, students will read, discuss, and write about a variety of theoretical essays and texts on horror film. In addition, students will be expected to master the language of film analysis.

WSGS 316W/Engl 316W Healthcare and Lit

(R Maatta) MWF 11-11:50 and MWF 12-12:50

This course explores representations of healthcare and medical knowledge in the West since about 1800 with an emphasis on cultural constructions of the medical practitioner and his engagement with the body. We will discuss representations of medical practice in word and image. We interpret illustrations from 19th century anatomical textbooks and paintings of surgeries by Thomas Eakins alongside episodes of *The Knick*; we will study the history of human dissection and learn how this vital medical privilege was not always valorized as a legitimate medical practice; we will read non-fiction and fiction about physical and mental illness, disability, medical mismanagement, and medical heroics. We will discuss how gender and socioeconomic status influence a patient's experiences of illness and how they are treated by caregivers. We will also consider how institutionalized medicine in the West has roots in traditionally masculine values, and how these values have adapted and changed since 1800. We are interested in the nature of humanity, the ethics of experimentation, the profession as locus of power and generator of discourse, patient-provider communication challenges, spectacles of disability, stigmas surrounding illness, and the inevitability of death.

WSGS 353 /PSYC 353 Psychology of Gender

(S Barnard) T/Th 10:50-12:05 (5 seats for WSGS)

In Psychology of Gender, we elaborate critical theoretical perspectives on gender toward understanding how gendered conditions affect psychological life, forms of embodiment and sociocultural experiences. We read psychological, philosophical, and literary texts, as well as screening and interpreting film and video. Our focus includes understanding gender in contexts of contemporary popular culture, including music, films, news reporting, television and web culture. Goals for the course include deeply engaged conversation about the rich complexities of our gendered world and increasingly nuanced development of our individual perspectives on what it means to be a gendered subjectivity.

WSGS 421/MEDIA 421 Sex, Myth and Media

(M Patterson) T/Th 4:30-5:45

This course will examine the role of media in reinforcing or challenging common cultural definitions of masculinity and femininity and power relationships between the sexes. In analyzing various mass media--including print, television, Internet publishing, social media, electronic games, and film--we will apply gender theory and connect these artifacts to their historical moment. Students' own experiences, insights, questions, and ideas are a key part of this course. Throughout the term, we will consider not only what is in terms of gender roles, but also what might be.

WSGS 434W/ENGL 434W Feminist Theory

(F Barrett) MW 4:30-5:45

This course will introduce students to feminist methodologies, exploring how these methodologies might be useful to the analysis of literary texts and other forms of representation. We will consider developments in feminist theory from the 1960's through the contemporary moment, beginning with foundational texts from Second Wave US feminism and French feminist theory. While mapping the relationship between different currents in feminist thought, we will also consider the ways that feminist theory has been shaped by the methods of Marxism, Freud, post-structuralism, cultural criticism, and radical feminisms. We will study the ways that feminist theory has served as a foundation for queer and trans theory, and we will also consider how feminist theory has worked to shape post-colonial theory. Readings for the class will be drawn from the work of Simone DeBeauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, Monique Wittig, bell hooks, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, Donna Haraway, Chandra Mohanty, Gloria Anzaldúa, Lauren Berlant and Sara Ahmed among others. Class meetings will be spent

discussing critical/theoretical essays and will require active intellectual engagement and exchange among all participants. Students will be given the opportunity to write a final paper that is informed by feminist theories within the context of their particular field of interest.

WSGS 452W(01)/PHL 424W Medieval Women Philosophers

(M Harrington) T/Th 1:40-2:55 (2 seats for WSGS)

The fiery paradoxes of medieval philosophy produce works that sometimes hold these great tensions in balance, and sometimes forcefully release them. We will explore the work of women who did both: holding the world together and breaking it apart. How do you speak without speaking? Herrad, abbess of the monastic fortress known as the Hohenburg, answers this question by composing a text of visual images and quotations: the Garden of Delights. Her work will introduce us to a style we will see more fully developed in Hildegard of Bingen's *Scivias*. Hildegard outdoes Aquinas by composing a systematic work whose influence extends well beyond the university. How do you know the unknowable? The letters of Hadewijch, leader of a Beguine community of female mystics, explore a radical and threatening "unfaith" as a path to the unknown. Her work will introduce us to the blistering wit of Marguerite of Porete. Marguerite's dramatic narrative, the *Mirror of Simple Souls*, thumbs its nose at the academics of her day in favor of an extraordinary self-annihilation—one that led her to the stake.

WSGS 452W(61)/HIST 420W History of Human Rights

(R Chapdelaine) Wed 6-8:40

World War I spurred a new era of humanitarianism, which ultimately led to the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. However, earlier notions of Human Rights existed. This course will examine the history of Human Rights as it developed from early 19TH CENTURY ideas about charity to that of TODAY'S inalienable rights. The assigned readings will explore how the consequences of war, famine, disease, gendered inequities, and historical legacies of slavery and colonialism pushed humanitarians to consider others who lived within and outside of their respective nation states. Contemporary Human Rights efforts will be examined from a historical perspective, taking into consideration various legal, political, religious and philosophical applications.

The writing element of the course is geared toward 1) motivating students to view writing as an ongoing process of critical analysis and intellectual growth, 2) developing and honing the specific skills necessary to write clearly, concisely, and effectively in the

humanities, and 3) demonstrating how these skills can be utilized in future courses across the curriculum and in a wide variety of career fields.

WSGS 452W(62)/ENGL 452W 20th C Poetry and Visual Culture

(L Kinnahan) Tues 6-8:40

What do we mean by “visual culture” and its particular forms of emergence in the early twentieth century? In this era, new visual technologies in film, photography, advertising, and print culture accompanied revolutionary ideas about art, commerce, fashion, entertainment, and a whole range of modern activities. In a century suddenly “awash with images,” how does modern American poetry – with its insistence on the importance of the image – engage the growing dominance and range of visual cultures in the modern era? This course focuses upon the conceptual, sociological, and formal relationships between modernist poetry, modern art, and visual culture of the period known as “modernism” (roughly the first half of the twentieth century). We will be exploring how poets theorized relationships between art and poetry and society, how issues of language coincided with visual concepts and operations, and how such ideas came to include considerations of visual culture attending socio-historical contexts. We will pay attention to visual movements like Cubism, Futurism, Vorticism, Precisionism, Dada, Surrealism, documentary photography, and the Harlem Renaissance; moreover, we will consider the impact of modern developments like advertising, cinema, the department store, fashion, and house wares.

Throughout the course, our readings and discussions will center on how poetic forms and content appropriate visual culture to signify a new “modern” expression. Of particular focus, the course will explore poetry’s equation of the modern with changing configurations of gender and race. Modernist poetry attends a popular visual culture populated that both challenges and sustains traditional ideas of gender and race, as do a range of fine arts movements. How does a distinctively modern assertion of visual means of expression and communication retain but also challenge traditional ideas about gender and race? How are race and gender represented through various forms of visual culture, and what concepts attending these identity categories shape a claim to “modern” ideas about art, or entertainment, or consumerism? How is the gendered and/or racialized body configured by artists to justify a “modern” territory of visual expression? How does a consumerist culture distinctive to the early twentieth century build upon gendered and racial associations through visual means of entertainment, fashion, advertising, etc? How do women and African American poets engage with visual culture to challenge or revise gendered and racialized associations and hierarchies?