

2018 Spring - Connections and Discovery Seminar For Freshman & Transfer Advisors

Title: Writing and Speaking in Black and White: Making Race in American History

Instructor: Rolph

Connection Section: 01

MWF 8:00-9:05, AC 137

Description: In this course, we will use the history of race in the United States as a way for understanding current political divides. Students will explore primary and secondary sources that look at the evolution of racial identity over two centuries and develop their own research about related issues. Of particular interest in this class will be shifting definitions of white supremacy, black nationalism, liberation, enslavement, colorblind racism, and political identity.

Title: Robbers and Pirates in Roman Law and Literature

Instructor: Jones

Connection Section: 02

MWF 8:00-9:05, MH 111

Description: Bandits, real and imagined, are omnipresent in the ancient Roman world, from legal records to fairy tales. Even Julius Caesar himself was once captured by pirates. The ubiquity of this threat created an almost obsessive fear of robbers and pirates that spread throughout Roman society and literature. In this course, while strengthening our skills in Thinking and reasoning and Communication, we shall examine what banditry meant to the ancient Roman. How was the robber defined? Why did the robber choose such a path? How did society react to the robber? How did literature represent the robber?

Title: Drugs, Druggies, and Druggists: A History of Drugs from Opium to LSD to Weed to Adderall

Instructor: Forbes

Connection Section: 03

MWF 10:30-11:35, AC 223

Description: If you are like most Americans, you “do” drugs: drink tea, coffee, beer, or wine; smoke or chew tobacco; take Prozac, Xanax, or their herbal kin St. John’s Wort and Kava Kava; depend occasionally on NyQuil; or perhaps use illicit substances like marijuana or ecstasy. All are part of America’s long history of drinking and drug use. What is a drug? How have they been used as remedies? Why have some been promoted and others outlawed? How did one era’s “Good creation of God” become another era’s “demon rum” or controlled substance? Using historical methods and sources we will analyze how drugs and their use have evolved in the society, politics, and culture of the modern era.

Title: Eudora Welty’s Jackson

Instructor: Pickard

Connection Section: 04

MWF 10:30-11:35 AM, Library Engel rm.

Description: The Pulitzer Prize-winning author Eudora Welty lived just down the street from Millsaps and even taught at the College on occasion. In this class we will read and research four of Welty’s short stories, each of which envisions Jackson and its environs in a distinct historical context: from the “outlaw years” of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to the Civil Rights Movement. We’ll also explore some of Welty’s local haunts—including, of course, her house in Belhaven—and study her letters and manuscripts at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Title: Drugs, Druggies, and Druggists: A History of Drugs from Opium to LSD to Weed to Adderall

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MWF 11:45-12:50, AC 223

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Title: Shakespeare’s Renaissance

Instructor: Griffin

Connection Section: 06

MWF 11:45-12:50, MH202

Description: If you speak any English at all, you employ Shakespearean language every day. And whether they are aware of it or not, even those who grow up speaking languages other than English know Shakespeare: increasingly, his timeless art permeates culture on a global scale. But this “timeless” William Shakespeare (whose life spanned the years 1564-1616) was a working playwright, actor, and theater owner who wrote at a specific historical moment in a specific geographical setting. “Shakespeare’s Renaissance” will revel in this paradox: by setting a small sampling of Shakespeare’s plays in their Renaissance context, we will explore the similarity and the strangeness of this key historical epoch; by focusing on the Renaissance, we will discover how Shakespeare continues to be reborn in our own time.

Title: Happiness and the College Student

Instructor: Hopkins

Connection Section: 07

MW 12:55-2:25, AC 223

Description: Happiness. What is it? How important is it? How can we get it? Using classical philosophy (Aristotle, Epicurus, Stoics) and contemporary science, we will analyze happiness and how to achieve it. The special emphasis, however, is happiness for college students. What works and what doesn’t work specifically for you—your age, your time, your world? All the class research projects will focus on specific issues related to your life now—Work (majors, careers, money), Relationships (love, sex, friends, family), Health (exercise, drugs, food), Education (studying, learning, scheduling), and Self-Discipline (writing, partying, habits). While focusing on the topic of Happiness, the course will also be about developing a variety of important communications skills that can be used in many different areas of your life—small group dynamics, researching, writing, speaking, presenting, PowerPoints, and reporting.

Title: Sex, Lies, and Scandals: Political Corruption in America

Instructor: Shrader

Connection Section: 08

T/TH 9:55-11:30, SH 221

Description: This course will investigate the causes and consequences of various forms of political corruption in the United States. Students will be challenged to define the concept of corruption, explore both familiar and obscure cases of political corruption, and consider the long-term implications of these cases on the American political system. We will also address whether it is possible—or desirable—to entirely purge political corruption from public life.

Title: O Homer, Where Art Thou.

Instructor: Lewton-Yates

Connection Section: 09

T/TH 9:55-11:30, MH 207

Description: Homer's *Odyssey* is one of the most important and influential works of world literature. The story of Odysseus' travels and homecoming shaped perceptions of war, heroism, family, and reconciliation throughout Ancient Greece and Rome. Much of the class will be spent reading the *Odyssey* and situating it within its original economic, social, and political context. But we are also interested in drawing connections, and so once we have concluded our study of the *Odyssey*, we will turn to the reception of this epic in modern America through five cinematic re-interpretations: *The Natural* (1984), *O Brother, Where Art Thou* (2000), *Big Fish* (2003), *Cold Mountain* (2003), and *Sponge Bob Square Pants: the Movie* (2004).

Title: Love in the Western World

Instructor: Wood

Connection Section: 10

T/Th 9:55-11:30, MH 304

Description: This course takes its name from the classic work written in 1939 by French writer and cultural theorist Denis de Rougemont. From pop artists to the most sophisticated philosophers, scientists and academics, love has occupied the Western imagination for a millenia. While true that love can really only be understood when personally felt or experienced, we can learn from the arguments, disappointments, ecstasies and artistic expressions of others. Letters, poems, songs, essays, and art have attempted to tackle this big word. English has only one word for such a range of emotions, actions, and expressions. Romance languages offer only two. We will begin our examination with the origins of the word in Western culture. Next, we'll read, analyze and discuss a wide variety of genres including poems, songs, films, essays, letters, art that exemplify love's all-consuming complexity and breadth. We will begin to examine love as a passionate spark to love as a path or course for life. Learning about love and to love may be one of life's greatest challenges so it might be worth taking some time to think about it.

Title: The American Folk Revival

Instructor: Svec

Connection Section: 11

T/Th 9:55-11:30, AC 334

Description: In this seminar we will study the folk revival of the mid-twentieth century, when young people across the United States developed a seemingly sudden interest in American vernacular music. Why did this socio-cultural phenomenon occur when it did, and what does it mean? Where, today, can we find it sounding out still? We will chart the genre's roots and reverberations: from the first song-collecting expeditions in the late nineteenth century, to the politicization of American folksong in the 1930s and 1940s, to the mass mediatization of "the folk" in the 1950s and 1960s, to the singer-songwriters of the 1970s and beyond.

Title: Vocation in Today's World

Instructor: Poe

Connection Section: 12

T/Th 12:55-2:25, AC 325

Description: What do you want to do with your life? Parents, friends, and teachers have all been asking you this difficult question. Maybe you have it all figured out, or maybe you have no idea. In this course, you'll have a chance to reflect on your own life and career, while learning indispensable skills: thinking well, engaging speaking, and professional writing. We'll explore five different religious and secular perspectives that will help you gain some insight into your own unique understanding of life and work. Along the way, you'll develop skills in reasoning and communicating that will help you for the rest of your life, no matter where you find yourself after college.

Title: Separation of Church and State: A Modern Global Debate

Instructor: Preston

Connection Section: 13

T/TH 2:30-4:00, AC 325

Description: Religion and politics, the two things so many of us are told not to discuss in public, are precisely the topic of discussion in this Connections class. It is particularly their modern historical connections, and attempts at their separation, that we will be analyzing and debating in the classroom.

Title: Art and Revolution: Visual Propaganda during the French Age of Revolutions

Instructor: E. Smith

Connection with Fine Arts Section: 01

MWF 10:30-11:35, AC 335

Description: We'll focus in this course on the period of 1750-1850 in France, with particular attention to the Revolution of 1789 and the Napoleonic era. Within this historical framework we'll explore the developments of Rococo, Neoclassical, and Romantic art, considering how they both reflect and influence key events and attitudes. While we'll be centered in France, we'll also move outward during the last part of the course as we think about French perceptions and representations of black Africans and the slave trade.

Title: Art & Politics: Twentieth-Century Latin America

Instructor: McCutcheon

Connection with Fine Arts Section: 02

MW 2:30-4:00, AC 335

Description: This course introduces students to some of the most pivotal artworks of the twentieth-century in Latin America via the intersection of art and politics. Under this lens, students will learn to analyze works of art not only for their formal qualities, but also their interconnected relationships to social, political, and cultural contexts. Although beginning in 1920 with Mexican muralism, the course primarily focuses on works created after 1960, and engages with contemporary issues critical to the study of Latin American cultural production globally.

Title: What's the Story?

Instructor: Egan

Discovery Section: 01

MWF 11:45-12:50, SH 267

Th 12:55-2:25, SH 267

Description: Students will explore the course question, What's the story? And how is the story told? When you have something to say, how do you say it—and to whom? In seeking answers to these and other questions about narrative, genre, audience, and storytelling, students will examine narrative structures across a range of genres, including newspaper and magazine journalism, podcasts, and academic essays designed for a range of audiences. Through a clearer understanding of how stories are told, students become storytellers themselves.