

The following seminars will be offered during **Fall semester 2018**:

**ART 151-01 & ART 151-02     Roots of the Modern Age: ART**

This course examines paintings, sculptures, and buildings produced from the eleventh through the twentieth centuries in Europe and the U.S. Working within an interdisciplinary framework, students will investigate the form and social-historical context of these works of art – and hence their “meaning” – as well as how they serve as a foundation for our own contemporary visual culture. The course will explore these issues through reading-based group discussions and a variety of in-class and out-of-class writing assignments. Intended to sharpen students’ abilities to articulate their ideas in written form, these assignments include formal analyses, comparison/contrast essays, and a research paper. Through this integrated approach, students will also consider broader questions such as: What historical themes recur throughout the centuries that continue to affect the production of art? What outside factors impact the audience’s experience of a work of art? Why have the works that we study been incorporated into the canon? How do museums and galleries construct meaning? In addition to scheduled lectures, we will take advantage of the rich collections and museums in New York City with museum visits.

**ENGL 151-01                     Storytelling and War**

War is a product, process and practice of storytelling, Humans go to war because the stories they tell about their and their nation’s place in the world, if not also the cosmos, suggest that violence has become a necessity. To remain at war and to recover from it likewise require elaborate narrative to help justify the causes and consequences of war. War is not merely an event or set of events; it is (part of) a narrative that long outlasts whatever happens at the sites of violence that more conventionally and superficially define warfare. The stories we tell before, during and after war are, therefore, not only about war: they are about love and beauty, nationalism and power, trauma and recovery, family and community.

Arguably all of this has been true since humans began telling stories: Homer’s *Odyssey* offers one particularly famous example. But, the modern era and its unique technologies for disseminating stories multiplied the forms and implications of war narrative. We focus primarily on this modern era—from the rise of the modern nation state forward—to consider those wide-ranging forms and implications. We will read works by Charles Dickens, Virginia Wolf, Rebecca

West, war poets of the World Wars era, among others. We will pair these with modern philosophical and critical texts to enrich our thinking. We will write our own narratives—historical, reflective and analytical—to investigate the larger philosophical questions raised by the works we read and the events they depict.

This course will also have a community service component, taking our work into the world to help ourselves and others meaningfully respond to the outcomes of contemporary conflicts, not least of which is the world's ongoing refugee crisis.

### **ENGL 151- 02**

### **Making and Unmaking Monsters**

This First-Year Seminar in literature will focus on reading and writing about monsters, the monstrous and monstrosity. Humans have made and remade human identity and existence throughout history, often creating monsters in the process. As Judith Halberstam claims, “Monsters are meaning-making machines,” condensing a multitude of fears and desires. Because of their otherness, monsters ask us to ponder the relationship between self and other, between the dominant culture and its margins, between comfort and alienation, between the human and the non-human. Monsters challenge us to consider—personally and culturally—the exclusionary aspects of identity formation and to explore the limits of community and sympathy. They offer unique ways of being that can also be alternative ways of seeing and to consider what it might mean to be posthuman.

### **GOVT 153-01**

### **Power and Participation**

This course will explore politics as something that we as citizens can participate in, and politics as something that we as political scientists can observe, analyze, and understand. The particular focus of this class is on the ways that regular people participate in politics, through community activism, movement organizing, and electoral politics. Why do people participate? Why do so many people not participate? Is participation effective? If so, when and how is it most effective? In addition to learning how to think about politics, you will learn some basic skills of political action – researching an issue, writing persuasively, organizing a meeting and lobbying.

**HIST 152-01****Nationalism and Empire**

This course surveys the history of the West from the European encounter with the non-Western world to the present day. In many ways, it is these interactions that have shaped the modern world. We will explore major trends including the rise of modern states; new ideas about rights; the emergence of modern nationalism; the expansion of European imperialism; colonial resistance; and the shifting balance of power in the postcolonial world.

**LLRN 151-01****Love and War in Ancient Greece: Classical Origins, Modern Retellings**

Through close reading and intensive writing about literary texts from the Classical world, this course examines how cultural wars during the rise and fall of the Ancient Greek empire affected power relationships in the family and in society at large. By studying representations of gender and sexuality in literary, historical, philosophical, and political texts, we will examine the way in which cultural and political crises – such as the Trojan War, the Persian Wars, and the Peloponnesian Wars – are often explored through personal relationships between men and women. This course also investigates the way in which these power dynamics in the culture of Ancient Greece have been adapted and retold in the modern era. In addition to studying Classical pieces of literature that explore conceptions of gender, sexuality, heroism, and love—such as Homer’s *The Odyssey*, and Sophocles’s *Antigone*—we will explore how notions of patriarchy, orientalism, femininity, masculinity, and even “feminism,” have endured and evolved into the modern age. Classical texts will include works by Homer, Euripides, Aristotle, Plato, Sophocles, and Aristophanes, among others; Modern texts and films will include work by Charles Mee, Margaret Atwood, the Coen brothers, Ang Lee (Yann Martell), Frank Miller (Zach Snyder), Debra Granik, and Sarah Ruhl.

**PHIL 152-01****Philosophy of Resistance**

This seminar will explore the world of Western philosophy while engaging the question, *what is philosophy for?* We will engage with philosophy as a practical tool in the struggle for justice, as a mode of political, social, and spiritual resistance. We will think about various forms of oppression and ask, when do I have not only the *right*, but the *duty* to resist? What form should resistance take? What is the relationship between resistance and the duty to follow the law? To explore these questions, we will engage with both the Western canon of philosophical thought as

well as feminist and critical race challenges to that canon. Our readings and discussions will take us from ancient Greece to the present day, and will incorporate classic philosophical texts as well as contemporary critiques of philosophy dealing with race, gender, class, and globalization.

### **PHIL 152-02                      Philosophy through Film**

Few of us have the time in our daily lives to ponder deep philosophical questions such as: “What makes me who I am?” “Is there such a thing as Free will?” “What if my life is all a dream?” “Could a robot ever be conscious?” “How can I be a good person?” “What is the meaning of life?” However, without realizing it most of us encounter profound philosophical questions such as these on the moment we sign into Netflix. For good reason, some of the most compelling films and television series are driven by philosophical questions and concerns. In this course we will use both film and television both as a starting point for philosophical discussion and as material for philosophical analysis. In this course you will be introduced not only to important classic and contemporary philosophical theories, but you will learn how to do philosophy. You will learn how to recognize philosophical issues as they arise in film, in text, and in life. You will also learn how to extract an argument from a text or a film, and to critically evaluate it in a rigorous way. Additionally, you will learn how to clearly and effectively communicate philosophical ideas in writing.

### **PSYC 153-01 Not All Wounds are Visible: The Psychological Effects of War Trauma**

The goal of a Roots: Psychology course is to provide you with an explanation and critical examination of the field of psychology, which concerns itself with the scientific study of the brain, mind and behavior. Students in this class will examine the logic and methods of psychological research and engage in analysis of contemporary social issues from the perspective of the discipline of psychology. Our specific course theme is war trauma, a phenomenon that has received greater attention in the aftermath of American military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. We will examine the many reactions to trauma – which include resilience, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) & posttraumatic growth – as well as psychological theories and empirical research that attempts to make sense of these reactions. The course uses psychology research articles, memoirs (David Morris’ *The Evil Hours*), journalistic non-fiction (David Finkel’s *Thank*

*You for Your Service*), films (Joshua Oppenheimer's *The Look of Silence*), news magazines, and newspapers.

### **PSYC 153-02                      The Evolution of Empathy**

Frans de Waal, in his book *The Age of Empathy*, argues that “Greed is out, empathy is in.” Although evolutionary principles are often used to explain the selfish nature of society, group collaboration and empathy also have evolutionary origins and are in fact important for survival. In this First Year Seminar, we will read *The Age of Empathy* as well as empirical research articles in order to examine how the capacity for empathy and other related cognitive abilities evolved in humans and other species. We will also learn about research methods used in the field of psychology to study such behavior. Be prepared to see humans and animals in a new light, and be challenged to think about reasons why we act the way we do.

### **RELS 152-01 & 02    Sacred Storytelling: Narrative, Tradition, and the Holy**

Religion is everywhere—our culture reflects a wide variety of religious influences in the way people live, speak, dress, eat, and even vote. But religion is not a static, unchanging entity that can easily be identified. Instead, religions can be described as processes that transmit and attempt to preserve sacred stories.

In this course, students will examine a variety of religious stories as well as methods of storytelling including myth, history, biography, poetry, and memoir, in an effort to understand the basic contours of religiosity. They will also produce sacred stories of their own.

### **SOC 153-01                      Capitalism**

Capitalism is much more than just economics - it organizing entire societies and influences human behavior in countless ways. This course will examine the development and emergence of capitalism, how it influences other important social conditions such as gender and race, and how it has changed over time. We will also examine how capitalism has more than one form and how various societies have developed alternatives to capitalism in one form or another.

**SOC 153-02****Unmasking the Structures of Power**

*This First Year Seminar is dedicated to understanding barriers that come from sex and gender, namely the social construction of masculinity and femininity.* Here, exploring sex and gender is a means of enriching knowledge and thinking critically while discouraging marginalization and oppression. As engaged students of sociology, you will focus on broadening your intellectual horizons, fostering lifelong learning skills, developing as leaders of tomorrow, promoting community involvement, and instilling an appreciation of world cultures. We will do so by discussing, reading, and examining cultural artifacts, social movements, and theorizations around categories of power – sex and gender - and hopefully lead to a re-thinking of these categories through their grounding in particular localities, practices, truths, and histories. This course nurtures cultural competence by celebrating the rich diversity of our communities and welcoming the participation of all.