The faculty of the Department of Comparative Thought and Literature shares an ongoing commitment to questions at the intersection of literature, philosophy, and aesthetics. Central to these concerns is the analysis of literary and philosophical texts, ranging across a set of diverse traditions, genres, and languages, in juxtaposition to ethics, religion, history, art history, anthropology, media studies, political theory, and the natural sciences. Questions of literary theory, the history and value of literature, and the constitution and development of philosophical and literary forms in a global context are similarly at the forefront of the department's research and teaching.

The department's interdisciplinary nature is one of its main strengths and provides crucial common ground for scholars from humanities departments across the university. Faculty members work in a variety of fields but are unified by a common investment in intellectual curiosity, flexibility, open-mindedness, and careful reading and criticism. Graduate students are encouraged to undertake projects addressing authentic philosophical or theoretical problems without the restriction of disciplinary conventions. Students may also cultivate strong ties with faculty in other departments working in their areas of interest.

Every year, the department hosts at least two associates, who are faculty members from other institutions that stay for an extended period to present lectures, give seminars, and interact with faculty and students. Previous and current associates include many distinguished scholars, such as Anita LaFrance Allen, Susan James, Barbara Cassin, David Wellbery, Robert Pippin, Jean-Luc Marion, Eli Friedlander, Sari Nusseibeh, and Toril Moi.

**History**

In the mid-20th century, the department, which was then known as the Humanities Center, was established as a meeting ground for the various humanities departments. With Charles Singleton as its first director, the center aimed to strengthen the humanities at Johns Hopkins and provide a place where scholars could engage in theoretical reflections on the human sciences, including recent European movements such as structuralist thought and literary hermeneutics.

The department's first full academic year was 1966–67, and from the outset, its founders sought to establish a focal site for structuralism in the U.S., based on the model of the “sixième section” of the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris or the Institut für Sozialforschung at the University of Frankfurt. The conference held in the fall of its inaugural year, "The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man: The Structural Controversy" brought many of the leading figures of European thought together in the U.S. and continues to be cited as both the substantial introduction of structuralist thought into the American academy and an important moment of transition between structuralism and post-structuralism. This model of exchange and innovation continued into the 21st century with a robust program of visiting scholars, professors, and lecturers.

As of January 1, 2018, the name of the Humanities Center has been changed to Department of Comparative Thought and Literature. The new name recognizes the department’s ongoing commitment to serious interdisciplinary study, with a focus on questions at the intersection of literature, philosophy, and aesthetics. It also represents the various literatures, philosophies, religions, political systems, cultures, and methodologies that its faculty studies and applies. A search is currently underway to fill the Boone Chair in the newly named department.

The department offers several courses taught by its faculty. These courses provide a broad introduction to the documents and thought of Western culture for all students, from those interested in a general liberal arts preparation to those in one of the university's pre-professional programs.

For qualified juniors and seniors preparing for graduate school, the department also offers the opportunity to pursue an independent and often interdisciplinary research project through the Honors Program (http://compthoughtlit.jhu.edu/undergraduate/honors-program).

The Department of Comparative Thought and Literature does not offer a departmental major or minor. Students who wish to concentrate on the courses that it offers should consider a major in another humanities department.

**Honors Program in the Humanities**

Initiated in 1976, the Honors Program in the Humanities offers all qualified undergraduates the possibility to pursue an independent and often interdisciplinary research project, normally in their junior and senior years. Students can propose a topic in any humanistic discipline, including intellectual or cultural history, English and comparative literatures, women and gender studies, minority literatures and culture, film studies, anthropology, philosophy, etc. Past topics have also examined points of intersection between the arts and sciences, giving majors outside the humanities a chance to broaden and combine their studies through the program.

**Requirements**

- Students must have above average performance in humanities courses.
- The proposed project should show coherence, focus, and seriousness of purpose.
- Each project must be sponsored by two faculty members, one of whom will be the primary adviser. One adviser may be external to the university.
- Students must complete the research thesis and participate in the honors seminar for two years, the second of which must be the student's senior year.

**Application process**

Applications are accepted in the spring of the applicant's sophomore year. Second-semester freshmen who plan to study abroad in their junior year or who already possess the necessary qualifications are also encouraged to apply.

Applications may be submitted by email or in hardcopy to Prof. Yi-Ping Ong. All applications must include:

- A completed application form (http://compthoughtlit.jhu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/87/2017/11/ApplicationHonorsProgram2012.doc), including the name of at least one faculty adviser
- Brief statement of purpose outlining the proposed thesis topic, with initial bibliography
- Unofficial transcript of undergraduate course work
Required Course Work

Sophomore year (optional)

Sophomores who plan to study abroad in their junior year and those who are ready to begin their honors research should consider participating in the honors seminar during their sophomore year.

Junior year

1. Two courses chosen from relevant offerings in the Department of Comparative Thought and Literature curriculum.
2. A semester-long honors seminar for all students in the program, in which the general progress of the students’ writing and research will be discussed, and senior students will present work-in-progress reports.
3. Optional independent study course on thesis project with one or both advisers.

Junior agenda

- September-October: Students should identify and meet with prospective faculty advisers. Two faculty advisers are required for the final thesis; at least one of these advisers must be a Department of Comparative Thought and Literature faculty member or affiliate. Once students have received a commitment from two advisers to supervise the thesis, they should begin to compose a comprehensive reading list in consultation with their advisers.
- November-January: Using the reading list as a guide, students will conduct exploratory research in the field of their proposed project.
- February-March: Students will present a three- to five-page prospectus, which formulates the central questions of the thesis, in the honors seminar.

Senior year

1. Independent study course in the spring semester dedicated to completing the thesis.
2. Two courses taught by department faculty members or affiliates.
3. Continued participation in the two-semester honors seminar with periodic “work-in-progress” reports and an oral presentation of the thesis research in the spring semester.

Senior agenda

- All year: Students will complete their theses in consultation with their advisers and continue to attend the honors seminar.
- April-May: Students will present their final theses in the honors seminar.

The department offers a PhD in humanistic studies, which includes a program in comparative thought and literature. Priority is given to highly-qualified candidates whose proposed course of study is congruent with faculty interests and strengths.

Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree

Each PhD student works with a committee of faculty members who help to design a coherent, individual program of study. During the first two years, the candidate works closely with each of his or her advisers. The course of study, seminars, and tutorials lead to three area examinations administered by the department and committee. During the second year, qualified students are invited to teach under faculty supervision, and occasionally students may offer undergraduate seminars of their own design.

PhD students choosing a focus in comparative literature should be competent in three national literatures and have a general familiarity with critical theory. Students are encouraged to spend at least one year studying abroad, usually working in Paris, Florence, Hamburg, Geneva, or Madrid in programs sponsored by the department or the Department of German and Romance Languages and Literatures.

Students can become supervised teaching assistants in the German Program in the Department of German and Romance Languages and Literatures, and they can earn a master’s degree in German upon completion of the field examinations, before their doctoral degree is completed. Similar arrangements can generally be made with the Department of Classics and the programs in the romance languages and literatures.

Advisers

New PhD students will work with the department chair to select a faculty member to serve as a primary academic adviser. As a student’s interests become defined, he or she may change advisers or work with a faculty member in another department. Students who choose to work with a faculty member outside of the department should meet regularly with the Department of Comparative Thought and Literature’s director of graduate studies.

Third-Year Review

During their third year of residence, after completing all outstanding seminar papers, students will have their work reviewed by a faculty committee. The committee will comprise three faculty members from the department and the faculty members from the other departments with whom the student plans to conduct field exams. The review allows the faculty to assess the student’s progress, clarify his or her status in regards to remaining course work, and define future fields. Prior to the meeting, the student should circulate materials that he or she judges to be work that will best serve the purpose of the review.

Field Examinations

In their third and fourth years, students are expected to complete three field exams. The exams may serve to help students refine their dissertation topics, or they may be a means of extending and deepening students’ knowledge of an area in which they propose to teach and conduct research.

The examinations may take a variety of forms, and the form should be discussed at the student’s third-year review. Examples include:

- Work further on a project begun in a seminar and produce a longer paper that would become part of a dissertation
- Read into and across a particular field, writing a series of short papers on the reading or sitting for a written or oral examination on the material studied
- Design and teach an undergraduate course in an area of interest
- Complete the requirements for an MA degree in another department, as a way of strengthening claim to teach in that field

Undergraduate Teaching

Graduate students have many opportunities to develop their skills and confidence as a teacher. Beginning in the second year, students often serve as teaching assistants for courses taught by the department’s faculty or, if appropriate, for courses in other departments. In the past, PhD students have taught courses in French and German language programs, English composition and literature, history, philosophy, and political science. More experienced students are encouraged to teach courses of their own invention as a way of completing a field exam, in competition for one of the Dean’s Teaching Fellowships, or to add to the department’s array of offerings.
Dissertation Review
A second formal review of a student's work will take place after the completion of field exams, either in the student's fourth year or in the fall semester of the fifth year. This review will connect the student with the faculty member with whom he or she will write a dissertation.

The review will take place when the student has composed a substantial piece of work associated with the dissertation, e.g., the draft of a chapter. This work will be circulated before the review, along with a prospectus of 10-40 pages, to the faculty members the student wishes to have as dissertation advisers. (If all of these advisers are from outside the Department of Comparative Thought and Literature, one of the department's faculty members, selected by the student, will also sit in on the review.)

This discussion is not intended to replace the graduate board oral, which will take place after the dissertation has been completed. However, it will mark the transition from work on the field exams to the preparation and writing of a dissertation.

Departmental Presentations
In their fifth year or beginning of their sixth year, students will give a talk on material from their dissertation to the students and faculty of the department and invited guests. This presentation gives students experience formally presenting their work. It also allows for a wider range of response to that work than a dissertation committee can provide and allows all students in the department to become better acquainted with each other's projects.

Courses
AS.300.113. Freshmen Seminar: Drama and Gender in Shakespeare's England. 3.0 Credits.
In this seminar we will read male and female authored plays and discuss how they reflect contemporary social expectations in Tudor and Stuart England. Authors include William Shakespeare, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke, Christopher Marlowe, Elizabeth Cary, Ben Jonson, and Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth.
Instructor(s): E. Patton
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.115. Introduction to Romantic Poetry. 3.0 Credits.
This course offers an introduction to romantic poetry through a comparative approach to three of the movement's key authors: Friedrich Hölderlin, John Keats, and Giacomo Leopardi. We will work through their main writings in detail along with considerations of their cultural contexts and theoretical and critical approaches to romanticism more broadly.
Instructor(s): L. Lisi
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.133. Freshmen Seminar: Women of Epic Fame in Literature and Drama, 800 BCE-1650 CE. 3.0 Credits.
From Homer's Odyssey to Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra, powerful women who achieve their ends by working from within the system are often overlooked or not fully explored. Our readings and discussions will foreground these women of fiction, while we also consider the social conditions of their living contemporaries. Readings will include: Homer's Odyssey (Penelope); Virgil's Aenead (Dido); Dante's Inferno (Beatrice); Milton's Paradise Lost (Eve), and several accounts of Cleopatra in plays by Shakespeare and his contemporary women writers. Cross listed with Theater Arts, Writing Seminars, and WGS.
Instructor(s): T. Tower
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.143. Introduction to Comparative Literature. 3.0 Credits.
This course offers an introduction to the history, theory, and praxis of comparative literature. We will read texts from some of the founding figures of the discipline and look at the most recent debates in the field, including translation studies, literary theory, and world literature, among others. Particular attention will be given to the methodologies and problems of studying literatures in different linguistic traditions and the relation between literature and other areas of thought and culture, such as philosophy, art history, and psychoanalysis. Case studies in comparative approaches to literature will provide concrete examples to our discussions.
Instructor(s): L. Lisi
Area: Humanities.

Assistant Professors
Anne Eakin Moss
Russian literature and cinema; women's studies, literary theory and film theory

Yi-Ping Ong
19th- and 20th-century literature and philosophy, the novel, modernism, existentialism, ethics, and justice in contemporary Anglophone literature

For current course information and registration go to https://sis.jhu.edu/classes/

Faculty

Acting Chair
Leonardo Lisi

Associate Professor
Leonardo Lisi
Director of Undergraduate Studies European literature of the long nineteenth century; European modernism; Kierkegaard and German idealism; tragedy and the tragic; philosophical aesthetics and literary forms

Professor
Paola Marrati
Director of Graduate Studies Modern and contemporary French Philosophy, American Pragmatism and Skepticism, Phenomenology, Philosophy and Cinema, Feminist and Queer Theory, (secondary appointment: Department of Philosophy)
**AS.300.202. Life and Form in Modern Thought. 3.0 Credits.**

This course is a theoretical treatment of the question of form in fragmented bourgeois society since the late eighteenth century. Essential to modernity is a political and philosophical conflict between established forms and individual and collective lives. We will treat the concepts of form, freedom, and subjectivity in four spheres: aesthetics, morality, political economy, history. We will read texts by Kant, Hegel, Marx, Lukacs, Weber, and Adorno, literary works by Goethe, Rilke, Kafka, Stevens, and discuss paintings by Manet, Malevich, Guglielmo.

Instructor(s): O. Mehrgan  
Area: Humanities.

**AS.300.228. Brain and Society. 3.0 Credits.**

On April 2, 2013, President Obama unveiled the Brain Activity Map Project, a 100 million dollar investment to map the single-celled neurons composing the human brain. Scientific in its aim, the project is culturally significant as well. Popular websites lumosity.com and neuronetlearning.com offer brain-exercises to boost intelligence, while the emergent academic fields neurophilosophy, neuroethics, and neurohistory borrow from the brain sciences. The interaction between the brain and society, however, is by no means new. In this course, we will investigate the origins of brain maps and trace their reception in nineteenth-century European and American literature, philosophy, and politics. Topics include phrenology, the nervous system, psychopathology, and brain localization, and these fields' resonance in German Idealism, Victorian literature, French anthropology, and American fiction. The course is reading intensive.

Instructor(s): L. McGrath  
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

**AS.300.231. Introduction to Comparative Literature. 3.0 Credits.**

This course offers an introduction to the history, theory, and praxis of comparative literature. We will read texts from some of the founding figures of the discipline and look at the most recent debates in the field, including translation studies, literary theory, and world literature, among others. Particular attention will be given to the methodologies and problems of studying literatures in different linguistic traditions and the relation between literature and other areas of thought and culture, such as philosophy, art history, and psychoanalysis. Case studies in comparative approaches to literature will provide concrete examples to our discussions.

Instructor(s): L. Lisi  
Area: Humanities  
Writing Intensive.

**AS.300.232. Existentialism. 3.0 Credits.**

What is existence and why do we care about it? What happens when we think about the nothing? What is the philosophical significance of issues such as commitment, marriage, death, and suicide, or of feelings such as anxiety, boredom, and nausea? We will consider these themes and read a selection of texts dealing with them by some of the most famous thinkers associated with the existentialist tradition, including Pascal, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, and Camus.

Instructor(s): O. Mehrgan  
Area: Humanities.

**AS.300.239. Philosophy and the Emotions. 2.0 Credits.**

We will read some of the most important texts in the history of the philosophy of the emotions, including works by Plato, Descartes, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Heidegger, and Freud. We will discuss themes such as love, shame, apathy, anxiety, the mind-body problem, the notion of spirit, the notion of mood, and the overall problem of the distinction between emotion and reason.

Instructor(s): A. Rot  
Area: Humanities.

**AS.300.241. The Literature of the Everday. 3.0 Credits.**

The ordinary, the common, the everyday; why does literary realism consider the experiences of the average individual to be worthy of serious contemplation? In this course, we will read closely a set of novels by Flaubert, Mann, Dickens, Zola, Tolstoy, and Woolf from the period between 1850 and 1950 in which the development of realism reaches its climax. These novels explore the nature of work, family, the body, consciousness, and the changing relation between individual and tradition in modernity. We will situate these novels in their social, historical, and literary contexts, and establish a set of terms for the formal study of the novel as a genre (plot, character, setting, narrative, etc.). (Students of all levels who are interested in literature are encouraged to take this course.)

Instructor(s): Y. Ong  
Area: Humanities.

**AS.300.283. Nineteenth-Century Science Fiction: Ecology, Utopia, and Catastrophe. 3.0 Credits.**

This course will introduce students to some of the key texts of science fiction as the genre emerged during the nineteenth century. We will consider the intellectual contexts for the form's development in Britain, France, and the United States, as well as its emerging narrative conventions. In particular, we will consider how early sci-fi writers used non-realistic modes to dramatize problems and discoveries were at once real and yet hard to fathom within the parameters of everyday cognition: deep geological time, alternative social arrangements, post-human landscapes. Texts may include H.G. Wells' The Time Machine, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Herland, Samuel Butler's Erewhon, Edward Bulwer Lytton's The Coming Race, William Morris' News from Nowhere, and Jules Verne's 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.

Instructor(s): S. Lecourt  
Area: Humanities  
Writing Intensive.
AS.300.300. Freshman Seminar: Shakespeare and his “Goddess”: real and imaginary lovers in the poetry and drama of early modern Europe. 3.0 Credits.

Shakespeare's description of his lover's eyes as 'nothing like the sun' is both an homage and a sendup of a 300-year-old poetic convention reaching back to the days of Petrarch and the early humanist poets. Incorporating music and drama, we will examine that sonnet tradition from the perspective of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, tracing both the historical roots of the Shakespearian sonnet form its influence on the music of the present day, and finishing the semester with Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew, a play that further illustrates and problematizes Shakespeare's 'goddess' reference. Readings will include poetic dialogues between male and female poets, such as those by the early Italian Petrarchans Vittoria Colonna, Michelangelo, Veronica Gambara, and Gaspara Stampa; their French counterparts, Maurice Scève, Louis Labé, Joachim du Bellay and Permette du Guillet; and later reflections on the sonnet by Shakespeare and his English contemporaries: Sir Philip Sidney; Sidney's niece, Mary Herbert, Lady Wroth; John Donne; Robert Southwell; and Katherine Phillips. All continental works will be read in translation.

Instructor(s): R. Macksey
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.291. Freshman Seminar: Home and Exile. 3.0 Credits.

This interdisciplinary seminar examines the concept of home and the condition of exile in 20th century Russian and Soviet culture from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives. Students will be introduced to classics of Soviet dissident, exilic, and official literature (Akhmatova, Brodsky, Nabokov, Bulgakov, Zamyatin), Soviet films (including Tarkovsky's Solaris), as well as key theoretical texts about what it means to be "at home." Open to freshmen and sophomores with approval of professor.

Instructor(s): A. Eakin Moss
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.303. Multum in Parvo: Forms of Short Fiction. 3.0 Credits.

The theory and practice of reading brief narratives, from the parable to the post-modern short story. We will be attending to the rhetorical and ethical issues that are raised within the compass of such fictions, with consideration of some specific forms that have shaped the development of recent literary tales: the case history, portraits of the artist, fictions of detection, and certain enduring philosophic myths. Time permitting, we'll also examine how a few of our narratives have been translated into another medium such as film.

Instructor(s): R. Macksey
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.305. Islamic Philosophy. 3.0 Credits.

This course is an introduction to key concepts and seminal texts of Islamic Philosophy in the classical period, running from the 7th to the 13th century. Although instrumental to the transmission of Greek philosophy and to the rise of modern philosophy in the western world, Islamic philosophy is not merely a conduit of transmission. Philosophers on Islamic lands, offered original philosophical solution to both old problems, and new problems that arose with monotheism. We will begin our examination of the specificity of Islamic Philosophy by situating it in its historical and political context. We will have to tackle fundamental questions: How did philosophers who wrote in Arabic translate and transmit Greek philosophical texts? What does it mean to do philosophy within an Islamic context? Is it not an oxymoron to talk about philosophy within a religious context? The course is divided into three sections that treat of three general fields: politics, metaphysics and psychology and discusses the major Philosophers of the classical period, with particular attention paid to the work of Alfarabi, Avicenna and Averroes.

Instructor(s): L. Ferhat
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.307. Dostoevsky and Critical Theory. 3.0 Credits.

The troubled, obsessive and sadistic characters of Dostoevsky's novels posed a challenge to positivism and reason too scandalous and compelling to be ignored. The novels inspired some of the most brilliant and influential thinkers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the fields of religion, philosophy, psychology and literary theory. We will read three of Dostoevsky's philosophically challenging novels alongside works by these critics and philosophers. While exploring their ideas about faith and unbelief, madness and reason, violence and torture, society and history, we will also inquire into the relationships among literature, philosophy and biography and examine the processes of influence and adaptation.

Instructor(s): A. Eakin Moss
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.310. Introduction to Psychoanalysis. 3.0 Credits.

One of the most controversial intellectual endeavors of the 20th century, psychoanalysis is a theory about human nature, motivation, behavior, development and experience, as well as a clinical method of treatment for psychological disorders. We will read texts by Freud, Jung, Ferenczi, Rank, Horney, Klein, Anna Freud, Lacan, and others.

Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.316. Philosophy and Revolution: Four Case Studies. 3.0 Credits.

This course offers a historical and systematic inquiry into the modern idea, most clearly expressed by the young Karl Marx, that revolution should be the realization of philosophy. We will take up four revolutionary moments or four crucial years in four places and study them together with their philosophical influences and / or consequences: the French Revolution of 1789/1792 with Hegel, the Russian/October Revolution of 1917 with Lenin and Georg Lukács, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 with Michél Foucault, the Egyptian Revolution of 2011 with Alain Badiou. Some of the concept with which we will be engaging include freedom, alienation, historical necessity, reification, political spirituality, infinity.

Instructor(s): O. Mehrghan
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.
AS.300.317. The Russian Novel. 3.0 Credits.
Russian authors began writing novels in the shadow of counterparts in Western Europe, and thus had the chance to experiment with the form and scope of genres and themes they found in European literature: Alexander Pushkin’s novel in verse Eugene Onegin pays homage to Byron’s Don Juan and satirizes Richardson's Pamela; Mikhail Lernetov’s nested stories A Hero of Our Time owes a debt to Romantic and gothic fiction, and Nikolai Gogol’s Dead Souls brings Dante’s Inferno to the Russian provinces. From these literary forefathers emerged the likes of Feodor Dostoevsky and Leo Tolstoy, who made a lasting impact on world literature with their psychological and philosophical novels. This course examines the Russian novel in its historical and cultural context alongside contributions of Russian literary criticism in defining novel form and genre.
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.324. Cinema of the 1930s: Communist and Capitalist Fantasies. 3.0 Credits.
Comedy and musical comedy film flourished in the USA during the Great Depression as well as in the USSR during the Stalinist Great Terror. This course will compare films of the era in a variety of genres (musical, epic, Western, drama), examining the intersections between politics and aesthetics as well as the lasting implications of the films themselves in light of theoretical works on film as a medium, ethics and gender.
Instructor(s): A. Eakin Moss
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.325. American Madness – History of the Treatment of the Mentally Ill. 3.0 Credits.
As mental illnesses became a social issue during the 18th century, community institutions were created in order to handle the needs of individuals with such illnesses collectively. This course will investigate the history of these institutions in the USA from the seemingly quiet, secluded, and peaceful private asylums in country settings, at the beginning of the 19th century, through the notorious crowded public, so-called “psychopathic hospitals” in mid-20th century, to the crisis-services, short-term acute psychiatric units, and out-patient services that followed the “death of the asylum” at the end of the 20th century. The history of the institutional care of the mentally ill in America is also the story of American psychiatry changing attitudes towards these individuals. Reading will include selections from 200 years of writings of asylum superintendents, psychiatrists, patients, and historians of psychiatry such as Foucault, Goffman, Grob, Scull, Lunbeck, Micale, and Mora.
Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.327. Introduction to Comparative American Cultures: Obama and Philosophy. 3.0 Credits.
This course will investigate the philosophical as well as theological, juridical and political, and rhetorical and literary backgrounds that have informed and shaped Barack Obama’s writings, speeches, and policy strategies leading up to and during his presidency. While paying minute attention to a few selected controversial debates in domestic and international governance and relations, and while discussing the question of Obama’s legacy in and after the upcoming elections, our primary focus will be on understanding the curious blend of Christian realism, influenced by the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, the tradition of American civic republicanism and pragmatism, and Obama’s specific brand of post-Civil Rights, if not necessarily post-racial, politics. All these tenets coalesce in a vision and politics that may well be described as one of “deep” pragmatism. Attention will be paid to Obama’s early appeal to “simple ideas” and “small miracles,” each of them yielding the Biblical and sobered injunction of a “hope against hope.” But extensive consideration of his thought and impact in the assessment of biographers and intellectual historians, legal scholars and political theorists, cultural critics and pundits will add to our attempt to understand and take stock of the Obama phenomenon as well.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.333. Melancholy in Science, Literature, and Film. 3.0 Credits.
This course explores the manifold nature of melancholy from an interdisciplinary perspective that combines sciences, history of medicine, and the arts. Defined by Greek medicine as the excess of black bile, melancholy, in its long history, has been seen as disease of the soul, state of intellectual grace, or psychological condition. The course will examine chronologically the development and variety of the meanings of melancholy between medical texts, visual representations, poetry, psychoanalytic theory, and films. The works analyzed will include, among others, those by Galen, Robert Burton, Albrecht Dürer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Baudelaire, Freud, Lars von Trier.
Instructor(s): E. Fabietti
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.335. Victorian Literature as World Literature. 3.0 Credits.
What does it mean to read literature in a global context? How are literary texts that we think of as products of distinct national cultures plugged into larger global systems – even if they seem unaware of it? In this course we’ll consider these questions through sustained readings of major Victorian literary texts such as Bram Stoker’s Dracula (1897) and Charles Dickens’s Great Expectations (1861). We will retrace how these books exercised cultural influence beyond the borders of Great Britain; how networks of trade, tourism, and imperial power brought authors from different cultures into contact with one another; and how Victorian texts have become a part of our culture in unexpected ways. Other primary texts may include Arthur Conan Doyle’s The Sign of Four (1890), the poetry of Romesh Chunder Dutt, and first-hand accounts of Oscar Wilde’s 1882 American lecture tour; critical readings will cover postcolonial theory, media theory, and histories of colonialism and urbanization.
Instructor(s): S. Lecourt
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.
AS.300.338. Comic Evolution: Stages in Development of Comedy. 3.0 Credits.
An eclectic tour of comic forms and theories from classical antiquity to contemporary practice. Although the textual focus will be on stage comedy, we will also consider the comic in other forms and media—film [Keaton], comic strip [Herriman], and contemporary satire. Some of the familiar questions on the agenda: topical vs. ‘perennial’ material, the social functions of comedy, the ‘shelf life’ of humor, butts & scapegoats, symmetries & asymmetries between comedy and tragedy, verbal and non-verbal comic devices, the general rhetoric of comedy, and the possibility of a Grand Unified Theory. (Final paper.)
Instructor(s): R. Macksey
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.345. Madness Interpreted – A Case Study in Medical Humanities. 3.0 Credits.
Too often conventional medical education teaches the student to translate a rich and complex narrative of illness into a minimalistic account, stripped of its ambiguities. Case presentations, too, are highly formalized reports lacking the historical, cultural, and social context. Although medicine since antiquity relies on the interpretation of observations, “evidence-based medicine,” when reductively used, tends to ignore the basic fact that we are “self-interpreting animals.” Patients and doctors alike try to make sense of their experiences as they recount them and, hence, case narratives teach us not only about disease and medical practice but also what it means to be human. This course will concentrate on the “case” of what is arguably the most famous psychiatric patient in the world, Daniel Paul Schreber, the German fin-de-siècle Senatspräsident of the Saxon Supreme Court. Beginning with Freud, the first doctor who turned Schreber’s rich psychotic delusional world, as expressed in his bizarre, at times comic and then again painful, Memoir, into a “case of paranoia,” we will follow the many interpretations that this narrative of illness with its unique cosmology, private theology, extraordinary creatures, transgressed sexuality, and cataclysmic vision of the universe, inspired in generations of psychoanalysts, historians, philosophers, theologians, literary critics, essayists, and scholars in political science as well as queer studies. Whether he was a paranoid schizophrenic, victim of traumatic abuse, a sophistric philosopher, proto-fascist, or cultural hero, Schreber’s memoir offers a paradigmatic case in the study of the field of medical humanities. Readings will include: Schreber, Freud, Benjamin, Canetti, Klein, Lacan, Deleuze and Guattari, de Certeau, Lingis, Lyotard, and Santner. Cross-listed with GRLL and History.
Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.346. Forms of Moral Community: The Contemporary World Novel. 3.0 Credits.
Literary and philosophical imaginations of moral community in the post-WWII period (1950-2001). Texts include: Coetzee, Disgrace; McEwan, Atonement;Achebe, Things Fall Apart; Ishiguro, An Artist of the Floating World; Roy, The God of Small Things; Lessing, The Grass is Singing; Mistry, A Fine Balance;Morrison, Beloved; and essays by Levi, Strawson, Adorno, Murdoch, Beauvoir and Barthes on the deep uncertainty over moral community after the crisis of World War II. Close attention to novelistic style and narrative will inform our study of the philosophical questions that animate these works. What does it means to acknowledge another person’s humanity? Who are the members of a moral community? Why do we hold one another responsible for our actions? How do fundamental moral emotions such as contempt, humiliation, compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, and regret reveal the limits of a moral community? Cross listed with English.
Instructor(s): Y. Ong
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.351. The Phenomenon of Boredom from an Interdisciplinary Perspective. 3.0 Credits.
We will examine the history, philosophy, sociology, and psychology of boredom and consider the characteristics, concerns, and methods of the different fields and disciplinary frameworks in which this phenomenon has been studied.
Instructor(s): A. Rot
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.357. Forms of Modern Fiction. 3.0 Credits.
A comparative tour of modern narrative forms from 3 continents. The emphasis is on the development of shorter fictional models, though some of the founders and innovators are better known for their novels. The emphasis will be on the emergence new structural, rhetorical, and thematic concerns, including adaptation to other media. There will be an optional hour for queries and discussion TBA.
Instructor(s): R. Macksey
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.363. Reading Judith Shakespeare: poetry and drama by women writers in Elizabethan England (ca 1558-1650). 3.0 Credits.
Virginia Woolf's account of the thwarted career of Shakespeare's hypothetical sister, Judith (in A Room of One's Own) frames our reading of plays and poetry by Shakespeare and contemporary women writers, including Isabella Whitney, Elizabeth Cary, Mary Sidney, Amelia Lanyer, Mary Wroth, and others. Students will create fictional biographies of “Judith Shakespeare” and her literary accomplishments. Cross listed with English, Theater Arts, Writing Seminars, and WGS.
Instructor(s): E. Patton
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.365. Desire in the Fin de siècle. 3.0 Credits.
This course examines the obsession with desire at the turn of the 20th century in literature, drama, philosophy and social thought and its implications for notions of self and community in modernity. We will read comparatively across European, Russian and American cultures, including Stoker’s Dracula, Hamsun’s Hunger, plays by Chekhov, Strindberg, Ibsen, Wilde, and stories by Tolstoy, Gorky, Chopin and Larsen.
Instructor(s): A. Eakin Moss
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.
AS.300.369. The Bible and Philosophy (Introduction to Intellectual History). 3.0 Credits.
This course will examine several attempts by ancient, modern, and contemporary thinkers to come to terms with the Biblical concept of creation and provience, revelation and prophecy, law and election, apocalypse and eschatology, with a special emphasis on the first articulation of the idea of Christian universalism, faith and justification, time and eternity, sacrifice and the body. Readings will include the entire corpus of St. Paul’s authentic letters, the major Scriptural passages on which he draws, but also selections from Philo of Alexandria, St. Augustine, Spinoza, Nietzsche, Karl Barth, Jakob Taubes, Alain Badiou, Giorgio Agamben, and others.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.371. The Modernist Novel: James, Woolf, and Joyce. 3.0 Credits.
The purpose of this course is to survey works by three of the greatest, most relentless innovators of the twentieth century – Henry James, Virginia Woolf, and James Joyce – who explored and exploded narrative techniques for depicting what Woolf called the “luminous halo” of life. Selected works include: "The Beast in the Jungle," The Portrait of a Lady, Jacob’s Room, Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, and Ulysses.
Instructor(s): Y. Ong
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.383. History of Madness from the Bible to DSM-V. 3.0 Credits.
Madmen, lunatics or the insane, have seen an extraordinary variety of responses and attitudes across the centuries. Whether seen as a “true” phenomenon or as socially constructed “madness” was defined and treated, examined and controlled, diagnosed and “cured” according to the spirit of the time. This course will follow the varied social imageries of “madness” throughout Western history, from the Bible to the contemporary and controversial Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) in its most recent 5th edition. Alongside primary texts by Hippocrates, Avicenna, Pinel, and Freud and secondary texts by Michel Foucault, Ian Hacking, Edward Shorter, and Elaine Showalter, among others, we will acquaint ourselves with first-person accounts of “madness” and its different forms of treatment, ranging from lunatic asylum, through electric-shock treatments and lobotomies to psychoanalysis. The course will explore the interaction between the historical and social, scientific and political as well as economical factors that have shaped the views of “madness” and its treatment.
Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.389. Freud’s Cases - Source of Psychoanalytic Knowledge. 3.0 Credits.
Even though major scientific discoveries have been made from the intensive study of singular cases, modern science is mostly quantitative in its approach. In this course we will follow psychoanalysis’ use of clinical practice as the primary context for the generation of knowledge. We will use two notions from the philosophy of science: “exemplars” (Kuhn) and “personal knowledge” (Polanyi), as we read Freud’s cases in which he combines theoretical consideration and detailed investment in the singularity of the person. In his accounts of the “hysteria” of Dora, the “phobia” of Little Hans, the “obsession” of the Rat Man, the “infantile neurosis” of the Wolf Man and Schreber’s “paranoia,” Freud not only generated theoretical and technical knowledge but also constituted the “single case study” genre of investigation, as the primary source of psychoanalytic knowledge. Readings will include: Freud, Foucault, Polanyi, Kuhn, Hacking, and Forrester. Cross-listed with Film and Media Studies.
Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.417. Women in Psychoanalysis - The Second Generation of Psychoanalysis. 3.0 Credits.
With its forced dissemination after the Anschluss of Austria with Germany in 1938, psychoanalysis shifted its center of gravity not only from Vienna to London, creating “a new kind of diaspora,” but also from a patriarchal and phallocentric focus towards a mother-child centered theory and practice. After Freud’s death, psychoanalysis, notably in Britain, was led by two women psychoanalysts, Melanie Klein and Anna Freud, each with a very different view on the nature of childhood, sexuality and aggression, intellectual development, the development of responsibility, motherhood, pathology, and the life of the mind as such. This course will introduce the important intellectual psychoanalytic concepts and theories, which were developed not only through the clinical work of these two exceptional women with children, but also through what came to be known in the history of psychoanalysis as “The Controversial Discussions”: a set of intense debates between two thought collectives organized around these female pioneers. Readings will include: Sigmund Freud, Klein, Anna Freud, Winnicott, Heimann, Jones, and Isaccs. Cross-listed with History, Psychology, WGS.
Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.419. 1966 before and after: French theory. 3.0 Credits.
The “Languages of Criticism” conference held at Hopkins marked a watershed moment in the history of literary studies and redefined, for many scholars and intellectuals, the nature of humanistic inquiries. This course involves the close study of key texts that, from the postwar years into 1970s (from Bachelard, Poulet, and Starobinski to Lacan, Barthes, and Derrida), are landmarks in this changing critical and philosophical landscape. Knowledge of French is desirable but not required.
Instructor(s): E. Ender
Area: Humanities.
AS.300.420. The Violence from Within and the Migration of Knowledge - The Marginalization of Melanie Klein in American Psychoanalysis. 3.0 Credits.

Freud's idea of an inborn death instinct and its link to war and violence was greatly developed by the Austrian-born British psychoanalyst Melanie Klein. Yet these ideas were largely rejected by mainstream American psychoanalysis as they were judged to be "un-American." In this seminar, we will read primary psychoanalytic texts on violence, aggression, sadism and war by Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Wilfred Bion, among others and will follow their reception, reshaping and reconstruction among American analysts such as Otto Kernberg, Heinz Kohut, Roy Schafer, and others. Secondary resources will include historical studies on the migration of psychoanalysis by George Makari, Nathan Hale, and Edith Kurzweil among others. Co-listed with 300.610
Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.427. Reading Freud. 3.0 Credits.

Sigmund Freud was one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century. Psychoanalysis, which was his theory of mind, a research method, and a therapeutic technique, offered concepts that pervade Western culture and the humanities. In this seminar which is designed for students from all fields of knowledge, we will closely and chronologically read Freud's major works, follow his developing theories, and become familiar with psychoanalytic concepts such as the unconscious, the uncanny, instincts, sexuality and aggression, which illuminated mysteries in other fields, from literature to anthropology, from political science to religious studies, and from philosophy to the arts.
Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.431. Russian Literary Modernisms. 3.0 Credits.

Play with form and genre, self-reflexivity, fragmentation, linguistic creativity, and destabilizing humor all characterize classic works in Russian literature written before and after what would in literary historical terms be considered the Modernist period. This seminar will test a number of recent formal and philosophical definitions of Modernism against a wide range of Russian literary classics that can be seen to fall loosely into the genre including works by Gogol, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Bely, Olesha, Shklovsky, Bulgakov, and Tertz. We will also look at Russian literary critical texts that define and constitute Modernism in the Russian context. Texts in translation. Co-listed with AS.300.641
Instructor(s): A. Eakin Moss
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.433. Cavell: Skepticism and the Ordinary. 3.0 Credits.

This seminar studies the main works and concepts of Stanley Cavell, one of the most original and influential philosophers of the 20th century. It will address in particular his analyses of skepticism, the ordinary, and moral perfectionism as they are expressed in philosophy, but also in literature and films.
Instructor(s): P. Marrati
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.435. Emmanuel Levinas: Essential Works, Guiding Concepts, Lasting Influence. 3.0 Credits.

This seminar will address the major writings and guiding concepts of Emmanuel Levinas and investigate his increasing critical role as a touchstone and dividing line in the formation of twentieth century and contemporary schools of thought (phenomenology, pragmatism, post-analytic philosophy, literary, feminist, and political theory, anthropology). Additional readings will include Stanley Cavell, Jacques Derrida, Vasily Grossman, Jean-François Lyotard, and Hilary Putnam.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.599. Independent Study. 3.0 Credits.
Instructor(s): L. Lisi; R. Macksey.

AS.300.610. The Violence from Within and the Migration of Knowledge - The Marginalization of Melanie Klein in American Psychoanalysis.

Freud's idea of an inborn death instinct and its link to war and violence was greatly developed by the Austrian-born British psychoanalyst Melanie Klein. Yet these ideas were largely rejected by mainstream American psychoanalysis as they were judged to be "un-American." In this seminar, we will read primary psychoanalytic texts on violence, aggression, sadism and war by Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Wilfred Bion, among others and will follow their reception, reshaping and reconstruction among American analysts such as Otto Kernberg, Heinz Kohut, Roy Schafer, and others. Secondary resources will include historical studies on the migration of psychoanalysis by George Makari, Nathan Hale, and Edith Kurzweil among others. Co-listed with 300.420
Instructor(s): O. Ophir
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.617. Philosophy and Literature in Either/Or.

Celebrated and reviled alike, Kierkegaard's 1843 Either/Or has been viewed as both the culmination of the Enlightenment project and the birth of existentialism, a playfull work of romantic literature and a piece of late-Hegelian philosophy, a vindication of the secular everyday and the articulation of a modern faith in a transcendent God. In this course we read the work closely and in its entirety and pay particular attention to the relation between its philosophical arguments and literary forms of presentation.
Instructor(s): L. Lisi.

AS.300.625. Russian Literary and Critical Theory.

Close reading of major authors from the Russian literary theoretical and critical tradition including Bakhtin, Eikhenbaum, Jakobson, Lotman, Shklovsky and Tyutinov. Student will present primary sources or case studies from their own fields and research.
Instructor(s): A. Eakin Moss.
AS.300.626. Philosophy of and the Novel.
The novel is unique among literary genres in its capacity to represent the inner life of characters portrayed in the third person. Neither poetry nor drama is equipped to convey the innermost thoughts of characters who do not speak for themselves but are instead narrated. This course will examine the implications of “third-person subjectivity” for the novel’s claim to construct (or reconstruct) a world governed by ethical norms that are all but impossible to fulfill. In fact, the very impetus for the novel is the irresolvable tension between the ideals that a work posits and the choices its characters face in a world defined by compromise and limitation. What criteria for judgment does the novel provide? How does it establish a world it simultaneously critiques as devoid of meaning save the meaning posited by the subject? We will also investigate the use of novels and novelistic form in philosophy. Is it possible for novels to be treated not only as vehicles, but also as equivalents to philosophical views? How do novelistic forms provide new ways of thinking or philosophizing? Readings to include works by Lukács, Bakhtin, Hamburger, Sartr, Beauvoir, Ricoeur, Murdoch, Nussbaum, Diamond and novels by Coetzee and Flaubert.
Instructor(s): R. Tobias; Y. Ong.

Instructor(s): A. Eakin Moss
Area: Humanities.

This seminar examines what in Bergson’s philosophy remains, or becomes, challenging for contemporary debates. Particular emphasis is given to his concepts of life and time, but also to his philosophical anthropology and his reflections on the ambiguous interplay between war, technology, and religion.
Instructor(s): P. Marrati.

AS.300.631. Russian Literary Modernisms.
Play with form and genre, self-reflexivity, fragmentation, linguistic creativity, and destabilizing humor all characterize classic works in Russian literature written before and after what is considered the Modernist period. This seminar will test a number of recent formal and philosophical definitions of Modernism against a wide range of Russian literary classics that can be seen to fall loosely into the genre including works by Gogol, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Bely, Olesha, Shklovsky, Bulgakov, and Tertz. We will also look at Russian literary critical texts that define and constitute Modernism in the Russian context. Texts in translation. Co-listed with AS.300.431
Instructor(s): A. Eakin Moss
Area: Humanities.

Readings in Balzac, Stendhal, Hugo, Musset and Nerval, plus viewings of Géricault, Delacroix, Daumier. Theories of Romanticism, from Baudelaire to present will be examined and commented on. Course taught in French. Recommended Course Background: AS.212.333 and 212.334
Instructor(s): J. Neefs; M. Fried
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.649. The Fate of Nothing from Goethe to Heidegger.
Nothing and negativity play a central role in the literature and philosophy of the long nineteenth-century. In this course, we look closely at a number of approaches to these problematic concepts in Goethe, Hölderlin, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Leopardi, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger.
Instructor(s): L. Lisi.

AS.300.651. What Remains of the Human?.
This seminar discusses modern and contemporary philosophical and anthropological conceptions of the human and its uncertain boundaries: between the cultural and natural, the human and the inhuman, the animal and the spiritual, the living and the dead and so forth. Particular attention will be devoted to the ethical and political implications any definition of the human inevitably invites.
Instructor(s): P. Marrati.

AS.300.653. Martin Heidegger, Being and Time: Integral Reading and Current Perspectives.
Starting with a detailed discussion of its Introduction and Division One, this jointly taught seminar will bring phenomenological, hermeneutic, and deconstructive as well as analytic, epistemological, and pragmatist methods and viewpoints to bear upon this modern classic.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries; M. Williams.

AS.300.657. Martin Heidegger, Being and Time: Integral Reading and Current Perspectives, II.
Starting with a brief overview and recapitulation of themes discussed in its Introduction and Division One, this jointly will focus on Division Two of Being and Time and bring phenomenological, hermeneutic, and deconstructive as well as analytic, epistemological, and pragmatist methods and viewpoints to bear upon this modern classic.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries; M. Williams.

AS.300.658. Must We Mean What We Say?.
Starting out from Stanley Cavell’s programmatic book and title, this seminar will revisit his discussion of J.L. Austin, John Searle, Jacques Derrida, and Shoshana Felman, with special emphasis on these authors’ theories of intentionality, seriousness, and sincerity, and with reference to the ancient and modern concepts of tragedy on which they partly rely. In addition to the aforementioned thinkers’ relevant works, reading will include selections from Euripides, Henrik Ibsen, Isaiah Berlin, Emmanuel Levinas, and Jean-Luc Marion.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries.

AS.300.684. Marcel Proust, Literature and Art.
Proust’s great sequence of novels À la recherche du temps perdu is also a theory of the Novel and indeed of Art. A close reading of Du côté de chez Swann, À l’ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs, La Prisonnière and Le Temps retrouvé, will put this to the test. Required editions: Proust’s Du côté de chez Swann, Gallimard, Folio, À l’ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs, Gallimard, Folio, La Prisonnière, Gallimard Folio, Le Temps retrouvé, Gallimard, Folio, Contre Sainte-Beuve, Gallimard, Folio. The seminar is open to advanced undergrads, with authorization of the instructor. Undergraduate seniors are permitted to take this course. Recommended course background: At least 2 212.3xx courses
Instructor(s): J. Neefs; M. Fried.

AS.300.810. Thesis Seminar.
Thesis Seminar.
Instructor(s): P. Marrati.

Cross Listed Courses

History of Art
AS.010.400. Looking at Language: Vision and Textuality from Surrealism to the Present. 3.0 Credits.
Considers the emergence of the “written painting” and other uses of language in the visual arts. Among our case studies: Magritte, Twombly, Ruscha, Indiana, Holzer, Wool, Ligon, Darboven.
Instructor(s): M. Warnock
Area: Humanities.
AS.010.654. Topics in Postwar Abstraction.
Emphasis on European and American case studies from Pollock to the present; figures may include: Newman, Still, Frankenthaler, Louis, Noland, Olitski, Stella, Ryman, Marden, Hantai, Bishop, Jorn, Uecker, and Klein.
Instructor(s): M. Fried; M. Warnock.

Classics
AS.040.148. Ancient Israel and Ancient Greece in Opera and on Film. 3.0 Credits.
Some of the most breathtaking (early and later) operas and films have been in intense dialogue with ancient societies, narratives, and cultural concepts. Contemporary hit movies center on diverse aspects of ancient narratives: the beginning of the world, violent wars, politics, erotic themes, and intricate existential questions. The course will introduce students to a comparative examination of the variety of approaches to ancient Israel and ancient Greece in the spectacular worlds of opera and cinema. The course will focus on major texts and archaeological material related to antiquity; works of world cinema will be analyzed.
Instructor(s): D. Yatromanolakis
Area: Humanities.

AS.040.693. The Pre-Socratics and Early Plato.
This seminar will focus on the earliest phases of European philosophy. Topics that will be examined include: scholarly approaches to the fragments of major thinkers such as Herakleitos and Empedokles; the concept of "fragment," the transition from the pre-Socratics to early Plato; the later reception of Herakleitos and Pythagoras in European thought.
Instructor(s): D. Yatromanolakis
Area: Humanities.

German Romance Languages Literatures
AS.211.472. Barbers and countesses: conflict and change in the Figaro trilogy from the age of Mozart to the 20th century. 3.0 Credits.
2016 marks the bicentennial of Rossini's irreverent masterwork The Barber of Seville, which premiered in Rome in February 1816. Thirty years earlier, in 1786, Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro had opened in Vienna. The two operas, based on the first two plays of Beaumarchais' controversial "Figaro trilogy," stage conflicts of class and gender, challenging the assumptions of the aristocracy as well as the ludicrous pretentions of the raising bourgeoisie. The same themes inform the post-modern portrayal of the past in John Corigliano's The Ghosts of Versailles (1991), which ideally completes the musical afterlife of the trilogy. By studying how the plays were adapted to the opera stage within their different cultural and historical contexts, the course will explore the representation of the ideological, social, and political turmoil that, eventually, culminated in the French Revolution. The course will also include field trips and screenings of movies such as Stanley Kubrick's Barry Lyndon (1975) and Milos Forman's Amadeus (1984). This course may be used to satisfy major requirements in both the French and Italian majors.
Instructor(s): E. Refini
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

Interdepartmental
AS.360.134. Great Books at Hopkins II: The Sciences. 3.0 Credits.
Great Books at Hopkins II: The Sciences will combine readings from philosophy and literature with foundational texts from several scientific disciplines. Readings for this spring will explore links between traditional theories of economics and genetics in the context of literary developments, and will include: Xenophon's Oeconimicus, Mendel's "Experiments on Plant Hybridization," Marx's Communist Manifesto, Darwin's Voyage of the Beagle, Swift's A Modest Proposal, Wharton's House of Mirth, and Joyce's Finnegans Wake.
Instructor(s): E. Patton; M. Roller
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

Art
AS.371.304. Photo Seminar: Wet Darkroom. 3.0 Credits.
In this film based course, students develop a project of their choice over the semester working independently in the darkroom and meeting for weekly critiques and discussions. Using the zone system (a method of pre-visualization developed by Ansel Adams) students will experiment with different film, paper and developer combinations specific to their projects. Writing in the form of a journal as well as critical analysis of images are integral parts of the seminar experience.
Prerequisites: AS.371.146 or Permission Required
Instructor(s): Staff
Area: Humanities.