

Fall 2023 Liberal Studies Core Program Course Descriptions

Please note that course descriptions are for reference only and are subject to change

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Advanced Writing Studio and Creative Writing

Kaia Shivers

Advanced Writing Studio: Reporting Issues of Race, Gender, and Sexuality

Course Description TBA

Cammie Lin

Advanced Writing Studio: Food Writing

Course Description TBA

Amy Wilkinson

Creative Writing Studio

Course Description TBA

Jen Zoble

Creative Writing Experiments

Course Description TBA

Approaches to Global Studies

Afrodesia McCannon

“Global Studies” names the multi-disciplinary academic study of globalization. In its least contentious sense, “globalization” refers to the rapidly developing and ever-deepening network of interconnections and interdependencies that characterize contemporary life. What is hotly debated in Global Studies is less the reality of globalization than its drivers, outcomes, and historical origins. Is globalization essentially an economic process or set of processes that has political and cultural implications, or a multi-dimensional set of processes for which no single social domain holds causal priority? Is “globalization” simply another word for “Westernization,” “Americanization,” or capitalism and its attendant ideologies? Did globalization begin in the last quarter century or several centuries ago or even several millennia? And, closer to home, what is Global Liberal Studies?

This course will examine answers made to these questions by such thinkers as Immanuel Wallerstein, Anthony Giddens, Arjun Appaduria, Roland Roberston, Joseph Stiglitz, John Tomlinson, and Jan Nederveen Pieterse, and introduce such key-concepts as World-Systems Analysis, Neoliberalism, Cosmopolitanism, Postnationalism, Deterritorialization, Glocalization, and Hybridity.

Since we all live in New York City, a major hub of global networks and connections of, we will use the city and students' own experiences extensively to illuminate and consider the many facets of the ‘global’ and our present and future place in the network of relations we call globalization.

Arts and Cultures Across Antiquity

Brian Culver

Course Description TBA

Karen Karbiener

Course description TBA

Elizabeth Lee

Course description TBA

Heather Masri

This course examines the ways ancient peoples sought to understand their lives and their place in the world through literature and art. We begin at the beginning, by comparing creation stories from different cultures, then examine the archetypal hero's quest as Gilgamesh struggles to come to terms with his own mortality. This ancient epic raises questions about heroism and identity and the way human beings define themselves in relation to nature and the divine—questions that will be recurring themes throughout the course, which covers the period up until roughly the 6th century CE.

In particular we will examine the ways people have confronted death with counter-narratives of rebirth and immortality—literally in a religious context, or figuratively through identification with the cycles of nature or the establishment of a lasting legacy. We will examine depictions of the Underworld from the Egyptian Book of the Dead and Virgil's Aeneid; interactions between gods and mortals in the Ramayana, Bacchae, and the Bible; the cycles of nature and human life in the Shijing; and the role of art as a form of immortality in Sappho and Ovid.

Throughout the course, we will focus on the ways human beings create meaning through stories and visual art.

Afrodesia McCannon

Arts and Cultures concerns becoming conversant with some of the most significant and striking artistic works humanity has produced. In this first part of the three-course series, we will cover the modern geographic areas of Africa (Egypt), Europe (Greece and Rome), the Middle East (Mesopotamia), Asia (China), and Southeast Asia (India) as they existed from 2400 BCE to 400 CE. In order to understand and appreciate the literature, art, and music of the distant past, we will study the cultural history that forms the underpinning of the works. While covering a broad time span and diverse cultures, students will be encouraged to draw lines of connection between the cultures and their arts while considering the unique qualities of each. We will be tourists on an ancient world cruise, but I hope that we will be able to connect with the humanity of the artists we encounter as they try express and sculpt into art what concerned them most: love and hate and death, the divine, dilemma, the best ways to get through life, and pondering just what life is. What it means to be educated changes over time; a central objective of the course helping develop students into contemporary educated people, that is, those who have a knowledge, sensitivity, and understanding of cultures across the globe and how they are connected. An essential part of the course is looking at how the ancient cultures we study are still part of the contemporary world through using students' own investigations of New York City.

Chris Packard

What are the most significant and striking artistic works that humans produced in the ancient world, and why should people (you and your peers) consult them today? Let's keep this question in focus while reading literature, looking at art, and studying musicality within five regions and the ancient cultures that flourished in them: The Mediterranean (Greece, Rome, Egypt), the Middle East (Mesopotamia), Asia (China, India), and Central America (Mesoamerica). The texts we'll investigate were produced between 2400 B.C.E. and 500 C.E.

We study some of the oldest surviving cultural artifacts of humanity because they are durable in both a material sense and because messages endure today. How do these longlasting artistic works distinguish their cultures of origin from others? What similarities/differences in theme and genre can we recognize from our vantage point today? Why have certain cultural legacies been reinterpreted by artists and audiences centuries after they were first produced?

The objects we study have forms: literature (epic, drama, lyric, romance); art (sculpture, painting, icons); artifact (tools, pottery, jewelry); architecture (temples, houses, public plazas); and music (chants, musical instruments). You'll be expected to develop a specialized vocabulary in talking about forms of art/literature/music this semester, and continue that development in future A&C classes.

Nancy Reale

Art and Cultures Across Antiquity: Duty, Death, and Devotion

We will examine ancient literary, visual, and architectural texts that have exerted global cultural influences and provided aesthetic pleasure, investigating how and why these texts served such functions in the past and what their value is for the present. Through close critical analysis, we will consider the roles of the arts in the ancient world and what they have come to mean for modernity. We will concentrate on the epic as a literary vehicle for encoding social and religious traditions and values, interrogating how this form was developed and utilized and why its primacy was challenged by other literary forms. We will engage various ancient modes of apprehending the nature of the cosmos and divinity, and we will explore how the arts facilitated personal introspection and expression. We will examine different literary and visual texts by considering these topics: heroes and kings, community, individual voices, and gods incarnate. Among our readings: the *Ramayana*, *Gilgamesh*, the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*; selections from the Bible, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Ashvaghosha*, and the *Samyutta Nikaya*.

Martin Reichert

Violence in Ancient Narrative, Art and Architecture

The course has a thematic slant: we will look at ancient representations of violence. From the slaying of Humbaba by Gilgamesh to the murder of Abel by Cain, from the collapse of the tower of Babel to the dynastic succession struggle between two groups of cousins in the Mahabharata, acts of violence permeate ancient literature and art. Readings will be supplemented by a discussion of important theoretical concepts (e.g., Durkheim's effervescence, Freud's Oedipal complex, Girard's sacred violence and scapegoating mechanism). How is violence depicted in antiquity? What is considered violent? What are the cultural and historic conditions of such representations?

The content and discussion in this course will necessarily engage with many forms of violence: military, subjective, sacrificial, sexual, psychological, structural, etc. Be warned that some of it may be emotionally challenging and triggering. Also, be warned that the reading load is heavy and that I tend to call on taciturn students in class. If you have an aversion to reading (there's a reading assignment due on the first day of classes), public speaking, and presentations, not to mention writing and research, this course is probably not for you.

Jared Simard

This course seeks to understand the meaning of the Gods in Antiquity. How did ancient cultures write about their gods? How did they interact with their gods? How did they depict their gods in artistic media? Through close examination of primary sources in translation and analysis of visual artifacts, students will investigate the role that myth played in the everyday lives of ancient peoples and the ways ancient writers and artists used myth as a vehicle to convey a complex metaphor for life. Utilizing a comparative approach, we will connect the myths of the Greeks and Romans with the earlier traditions of the civilizations in Mesopotamia, Judea, and Egypt. In addition, connects are made to parallel myths and archetypes found in early Indian, Chinese, and Japanese mythology. Through weekly journal entries and reflective essays, students will interpret the symbolism and meaning associated with myths, their impact and meaning in antiquity, and their lasting influence in the Twenty-First Century.

Arts and Cultures of Modernity

Brian Culver

Course Description TBA

Jessamyn Hatcher

"Enlightenment thinkers... had the extravagant expectation that the arts and sciences would promote not only the control of natural forces but also understanding of the world and of the self, moral progress, the justice of institutions, and even the happiness of human beings," writes the philosopher Jürgen Habermas. "The 20th century shattered this optimism," he continues. "But the problem won't go away." In this course, we will study novels, films, theory, poems, art, fashion, and popular culture drawn from the early 19th century to the present. In the process we will examine the "extravagant expectations"

Habermas speaks of and how--and who--they came shatter, or depended on shattering in the first place. We will also explore the “problem that won’t go away”--that is the undiminished need to increase and equalize human beings’ life chances, make institutions more just, and understand the world and ourselves. We will pursue the possibility that art can offer a non-trivial tool for this work, and can function as “equipment for living.”

Linnea Hussein

History, Criticism, and Resistance

Designed as a journey through a historical period that set the foundation for today’s perspectives on globalization and its discontents, this course uses modernity’s developments in arts and culture as a lens to study the different ways history is written, critiqued, and resisted. Situating ourselves as modern subjects, we start with the question, what does it mean to be modern? What influences, inventions and innovations in arts and culture form our understanding of modernity that distinguishes it from Antiquity and the Middle Ages? What stylistic shifts can we notice in older art forms such as painting or the novel that shaped and were shaped by modernity? How can we study art practices new to this age such as photography, film, and online media both as inventions coming out of modern thinking and as tools for shaping the way we think about the modern world?

The course is structured in five parts. In Part I, “Critical History,” students learn about different approaches to studying history via arts and culture and vice versa. Part II, “Dominant Histories,” uses examples from travel literature, opera and poetry to introduce fundamental historiographic questions regarding power, access, and authorship within the Americas and Europe at the beginning of modernity. Part III, “Histories of the Everyday,” invites students to take three different local perspectives towards the turn from the 19th to the 20th century. From the provincial boredom of a professor in the Russian country side, to the smirky commentary of a cat living in Meiji Japan to a feminist sci-fi dream set in Bengal, how do similarities and differences in sentiment towards transnational movements in imperialism and industrialization manifest themselves through different local art practices? Part IV takes a critical lens towards the use of art as a means to document history. By studying the photographers of Roosevelt’s Farm Security Administration, writing and painting during the Harlem Renaissance, and Leni Riefenstahl’s NAZI films, we will discuss larger questions about socialism, racial (in)equality and antisemitism, to study how modern art can be employed to explore, generate, and propagate ideological convictions. The final part of this course, “Histories of Resistance,” takes a look at post-colonial literature from the Antilles, Third Cinema from Latin America, and online media activism coming out of the Middle East to inspect rebellious currents that challenge monolithic foundations of history and inspire us to look at art’s potential for rewriting the past.

Eduardo Matos-Martin

Modernity and its Outcasts

What is the dark side of modernity? How do literary and artistic expressions of modernity engage with the outcasts, such as the condition of the colonized? How can we rethink the implications of modernity for the contemporary world context through literature and the arts? This course examines cultural representations of political and economic violence over the last three hundred years. We will begin our exploration with the historical processes of colonization and slavery in the 18th and the 19th centuries, and then focus on the 20th century experiences of fascism, dictatorship, oppression, war, colonialism and decolonization. Within this framework, we will attend to the cultural representations of the Armenian Genocide, the Spanish Civil War, fascism in Germany and Italy, the Apartheid in South Africa, the Dirty Wars in Latin America, the Central American Civil Wars, the Algerian decolonization, as well as the Lebanese Civil War. We will use the course materials to raise questions about violence in the contemporary world associated with globalization, and address experiences of exclusion and marginalization due to race, gender, class and ideological oppression. In that light, we will study a selection of literary and artistic genres, including novels, graphic novellas, short stories, film, drama, poetry, painting, photography, and propaganda murals.

Roberta Newman

Adaptations and Appropriations

This course will explore the literature, visual, and performing arts of from the late 18th century through the early 21st by means of examining the arts and practices of adaptation and appropriation. Specifically, it will focus on the different ways in which themes, concepts, and specific imagery in a series of given texts have been translated, interpreted, and transformed across a variety of genres and media, both temporally and culturally. To do so, it will pay particular attention to the development of new technologies, such as inexpensive mass printing, photography, audio recording, film, radio, and video, and the ways in which these “new media” influenced the creation of new works from old, both directly and indirectly. The course will also consider some of the ways in which theory is translated into practice in the visual arts.

Anthony Reynolds

Global Arts at the End of Representation

The Cultural Foundations sequence traces the global history of mimesis. Having examined its birth and global consolidation in previous semesters, we now come to the final chapters in its history: 1. the collapse of representation over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Rousseau, Goethe, Keats, Delacroix) culminating in twentieth-century modernism (Woolf, Blanchot, Resnais, Duras); and 2. the return of representation in postmodernism (Borges, Rushdie) and postcolonialism (Said, Rushdie).

Tilottama (Minu) Tharoor

Cultural Forms from/in Political Struggles

Cultural Foundations III introduces us to major developments in literature and the arts (including cinema) produced between 1700 and the present. We will study the impact of important movements both cultural and political, such as the European Enlightenment, Realism, Modernism, Colonialism, Postcolonialism and Globalisation. The works of literature, art, cinema and music are related to major events of the past 200 years in different parts of the world. We will discuss how the events are represented and how they shape and are rendered through different cultural forms.

Yearous-Algozin, Joseph

Course Description TBA

Dean's Circle Research Seminar

Julie Mostov

Course Description TBA

Economics

B. Güney Işıkkara

Principles of Microeconomics

This is an introductory course to microeconomic theory, covering its core concepts and tools such as supply and demand, elasticity, consumer and producer surplus, and so on. We will also discuss the application of these concepts to consumer and firm behaviour, and explore problems like monopoly, monopolistic competition, and oligopoly from microeconomic perspective. We will first take a brief look at the emergence of the current socio-economic system and understand its distinctive properties such as the guiding role of profits, division of labor and specialization, productivity increase and accumulation. Then, the method and vocabulary of microeconomic analysis will be gradually introduced from a pluralistic perspective, demonstrating to the students the fact that there are substantially different ways of approaching the same question. In every possible occasion, we will apply the emerging conceptual knowledge to real world examples in a critical manner so that students develop the skill of interpreting the world around them. By the end of the semester, students will not only be familiarized with core microeconomic concepts, but at the same time relate these analytical tools to the complex of social relations and systemic tendencies, upon which everyday economic interactions and problems arise.

Johann Jaeckel

Principles of Microeconomics

The course aims to provide students with a basic degree of economic literacy to better understand our current social system. The focus of this introduction lies with the analysis of supply and demand as a basis for microeconomic reasoning about production, consumption, the case for and against government intervention, and the relation between different factors of production and income distribution. Economics is a technical discipline with its own specialized vocabulary and methodology; it is also a discourse where informed positions widely diverge. A major theme of the course is thus that economics is not simply a compendium of dry facts or bits of knowledge about the economy, but a set of tools and different perspectives that enable us to comprehend, interpret, and debate a range of social and historical questions. By the end of the semester, students will be able to better grasp as well as to analyze complex social problems from different perspectives. The first part of the course familiarizes students with the scope and methods of economic reasoning, the role of the division of labor in productivity growth, and the interplay of supply and demand in markets. The second part focuses on the formulation and application of microeconomic tools of analysis, i.e., market equilibrium, externalities, and production costs. The third part of the course investigates different market structures in terms of the level of competition, and the role of factor markets (labor, land, capital) with particular regard to their implications for the distribution of income (wages, rents, profits).

Roxana Julia

Principles of Macroeconomics

This course will introduce the field of macroeconomic theory and analysis. It will cover the behavior of aggregate economies – national economies for the most part – and the core, mainstream topics of macroeconomic theory such as national income, inflation, unemployment, economic growth and economic fluctuations. It will also analyze related macroeconomic policies (such as fiscal and monetary policies) and examine how they might contribute to, or detract from, human well-being. Critical concerns of the 21st century – such as distributional equity, sustainability, and the quality of employment – will be discussed within their political, social and environmental context. The concepts will relate to current events to encourage students' engagement in the subject matter

Ascension Mejorado

Principles of Macroeconomics

This course offers an analytical foundation to the most relevant principles of macroeconomics and their application to contemporary issues in the global economy. After a brief introduction to the production possibilities frontier and supply and demand analysis, major topics in macroeconomics will be examined including the difference between the Classical and the Keynesian schools regarding the causes of economic fluctuations and the role of the government in the economy. Economic growth, as well as the basic debates around inflation and unemployment will be extensively analyzed. The course will also explore the role of monetary and fiscal policies in preventing recessions and their effects on the macro economy.

Electives

Cammie Kim Lin

Service Learning Seminar I

Service Learning Seminar I is the first course in a two-semester sequence for students selected to participate in the year-long Liberal Studies Service Ambassadors program. The seminar integrates intensive weekly service practice with academic coursework and critical reflection. Students who have applied and been selected to serve as a Liberal Studies Service Ambassador partner with organizations across New York City to address social issues in the areas of education, health, and the environment. In

this mandatory seminar, Service Ambassadors engage in rigorous coursework meant to ensure that the service learning experience fosters transformative growth for the student—academic, intellectual, experiential, and personal—and meaningful outcomes for the partnering organization. This course is open only to LS Core and GLS students accepted into the Service Ambassadors program. Departmental approval is required in order to register. Please Contact LS.service@nyu.edu for details.

Ida Chavosan and Erin S Morrison

The Fantasy and Reality of Bridgerton

Dearest gentle reader, this course provides a space for a critical exploration into the world of Regency England portrayed in the current hit Netflix TV show Bridgerton. Stories like Bridgerton have romanticized a period of time defined by global colonization, cultural and environmental exploitation, and significant economic disparity by creating worlds for their protagonists steeped in extravagance and chivalry. Using Bridgerton as a case study, each week is split into two parts. On the first day, students examine how choices made for Bridgerton (about characters, story structure, etc.) contribute to a common theme of escapist romanticism. On the second day of the week, students dissect the reality of the same theme based on historically accurate accounts, guest lectures from experts, and field trips. Through this shift from fantasy to reality, we seek to answer questions like: What was the reality and global impact of Regency England? Does it matter that this reality existed? Why is this era romanticized and reimagined in books, TV shows, and films? Do we keep coming back to works like Bridgerton to lose ourselves in the fantasy? Is an alternate universe problematic?

The course is based around active participation in discussions on assigned readings, videos, lectures, and field trips. Students write weekly discussion posts and lead the discussion on course material once during the semester. During the course of the semester, students are guided through the steps of a research project in which they compare the fantasy vs reality aspects of a theme of their choice in Bridgerton. The goal of the course is to challenge students to consider the impact of erasing critical historical context in escapist romantic narratives and propose solutions to make these stories more inclusive while also retaining the escapist elements that viewers love.

Disclaimer: The content and discussion in this course may be emotionally and intellectually challenging and includes—but by no means exhaustively—classism, death, nudity, racism, self-harm, sex, sexism, and sexual violence. We will do our best to make the classroom a space where we can engage empathetically and thoughtfully with difficult content.

Environmental Studies

Leo Douglas

This course is an introduction to the enormous diversity of life on Earth, the environmental impacts of humans at multiple scales, and a range of important contemporary global issues with respect to the natural world. We will examine ecological systems, biogeochemical cycles, and human-social experiences in order to explore the biological history of earth, how natural systems function, and to discuss the socio-political dimensions of environmental science. As part of an appraisal of the realities of modern human lifestyles, we will critically analyze key themes in environmental science, including: agriculture, climate change, energy resources and pollution. We end with a review of the dominant environmental conservation strategies practiced, and an analysis of key tools/approaches used in the study and management of environmental concerns

Robin Nagle

This course uses an interdisciplinary framework to explore environmentalism as a worldview, a movement, and as a way to connect academic endeavors with real-world problems. We consider a broad range of themes, including the overlapping influences of politics, economics, cultural assumptions, and history in determining the shape of contemporary environmental debates. How and why have

environmental issues become global concerns? What is the place of environmentalism in daily life? What might be your role in shaping the planet's immediate and long-term ecological health?

We will study the beginnings of modern environmentalism (some sources claim it started with hunters; others say with philosophers), investigate the consequences of conflicting definitions (what is nature?), and examine several contemporary controversies (can curbside recycling really make a difference?). We'll look at a trend called greenwashing, consider structural sources of environmental injustice, learn why the most vexing environmental issues are called wicked problems, and delve into debates about the Anthropocene.

Jerome Whittington

Through the application of fundamental physical and chemical processes, humans attempt to harness the environment for their particular needs. In examining this most significant dimension of modern life, this course emphasizes both its harmful and beneficial aspects and deals with such topics as air and water pollution, transportation, energy resources, and waste control. The political context in which these problems occur is also examined. This course satisfies the requirement in Life Science. This semester we examine major ecological dimensions of settler colonialism, tropical deforestation and biodiversity loss, toxicity and climate change. Topical environmental issues are framed against scientific literature and a discussion of major ecological concepts such as hydrogeological and nutrient cycles, competition and symbiosis, and trophic levels. We read classic texts including *Silent Spring* (Rachel Carson, 1962) as well as contemporary works such as *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (Elizabeth Kolbert, 2015).

Global Cultures

AFRICAN CULTURES

Adedamola Osinulu

The African continent is characterized by its large geographic mass and diverse populations and therefore provides an infinite tableau for study. Nevertheless, this course focuses on the cultural production of Africans in response to the forces that have impacted their societies over time. Among the themes we will cover are indigenous epistemologies, art and aesthetics, autochthonous political structures, the transatlantic slave trade, independence movements, nationalism and Pan-Africanism, revolution, migration and immigration, science and technology, youth movements, and afro-futurism. Such a broad agenda requires adopting an interdisciplinary approach, one that embraces history, literature, anthropology, cinema studies and so on. Students will be asked to read books and essays, watch films, make field trips, and attend events. Above all, students are asked to bring their own interests about and passion for African societies and culture into the classroom and be active participants in our collective quest for knowledge.

EAST ASIAN CULTURES

Jeannine Chandler

Change and Continuity in Chinese History

This course introduces East Asian cultures, focusing to a greater or lesser extent on China, Japan, and/or Korea. This semester we will focus on studying the dynamics of change and/in continuity in Chinese history, including the role of the West in this process in the modern era. We will explore trends in Chinese thought and culture from the beginnings of Chinese civilization, and examine how these trends are transformed (or not) through time. While in the beginning the focus will be on early Chinese philosophies and religious traditions (Confucianism, Daoism, Legalism, Buddhism), the later part of the course will involve an analysis of modern Chinese political and economic policies (Mao's China, Deng's Reform Era). Emphasis will be on integrating the textual analyses of primary and secondary sources with the larger historical narrative.

Yurika Tamura

Course Description TBA

LATIN AMERICAN CULTURES

Luis Ramos

Literature and the Political Imagination in Latin America

It is often said that literature and politics are inextricably linked in Latin America. But how has literature helped shape political discourse in the region and how has politics, in turn, informed its literature and art? Drawing from a wide range of disciplines (literary criticism, history and political theory) and genres (poetry, fiction and the visual arts), in this course we will closely examine works that probe the boundary between politics and art under shifting historical conditions. We will begin by considering the origins of Latin American literature's intimate relation to politics through works that recall the pre-colonial past or record indigenous rebellions against Spanish authorities. We will then turn to artists and writers who were instrumental in redefining the role of literature and art as revolutionary weapons or as instruments of nationbuilding in the independence era. Finally, we will examine works that probe the boundaries of the national body by casting a critical light on state violence in the twentieth-century. Among the leading questions that will inform class discussion: How has the political and aesthetic function of literature in Latin America changed over time? How has the intellectual historically assumed the role of agent or critic of the state? What do literature and art suggest about the relation between the state and its margins, between history and memory, and between elite and subaltern subjects?

Patricio Navia

This course provides students with a general view of Latin American and the Caribbean. We study the region's history, culture, arts, society, economy and recent political developments. Prior knowledge of Latin America is not required. In fact, because of the diversity within the region, some students familiar with one country will learn plenty about other countries. Latin America and the Caribbean is a diverse region with a wealth of different cultures, societies, economies and political systems. By providing a historical overview of the region during the first weeks, the class will build on that foundation to quickly reach 20th-century and 21st-century Latin America. We will also discuss Latinos in the U.S. The focus is generally historical, sociological, political and economic, but culture and the arts are also widely discussed.

Lina Meruane

Course Description TBA

MIDDLE EASTERN GLOBAL CULTURES

Mona El-Ghobashy

Dynamics of Transformation

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is a region of 583 million people living in 22 countries straddling two continents, with diverse political systems, economies, and ethnic, racial, religious, linguistic, and class groups. Our course will focus on this diversity through time, examining how the term "Middle East" came about, the kinds of political structures that emerged from the nineteenth century to the present, and the changing cultures of societies as they interacted with one another and with broader global trends. It is impossible to comprehensively cover every aspect of such a sprawling geography, so will focus on the crucial themes that everyone needs to know to be able to make sense of contemporary developments. These include the nature of the Ottoman Empire that governed much of the Middle East for 500 years; European colonial incursions into the region in the 19th and 20th centuries; the anticolonial freedom movements that created independent states in the 1950s and 1960s; and the series of uprisings that began in 2010 and have come to be known as the "Arab Spring." The course begins and ends with these pro-democracy rebellions, explaining how they began in a small town in Tunisia and turned into a region-wide upheaval that continues to transform the Middle East, North Africa, and the wider world.

Peter Valenti

This course is designed to expose students to the modern Middle East. We will survey select major historical, political, and sociocultural developments in the region from roughly 1700 to the present.

The course is divided into two sections. The first section will cover broad historical themes such as the emergence and sociocultural legacies of the Ottoman Empire, and the impact of European imperialism in the region. Significant attention will be given to the Ottoman Empire—as both an introduction for students to this important historical entity as well as understanding its influence in various social, cultural, and political developments in the region. The crucial watershed of WWI and its impact on the region, heralding the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of a new imperial order, is a very important part of this section. We will then turn to Palestine and study the emergence of the Zionist movement and creation of Israel and related political and social issues that affected the region, such as the Cold War, new ideologies, and intra-state rivalries.

After the midterm we will finish studying the Arab-Israeli conflict, with particular attention on the peace process and its various agreements/proposals. With these previously discussed issues serving as a backdrop, we will then analyze important issues and historical developments in the region in the 20th and 21st centuries.

This course not only requires memorization of facts (names, events, policies) but also a critical assessment of the claims and proposals of the various parties, individuals, and ideologies of the region. To this end, and as a goal in and of itself, the students will be handling a wide array of primary documents in order to have a deeper grasp of the issues as well as better assess processes and ideologies. In order to do all of the above, a good deal of reading and in-class participation is expected of students.

History of the Universe

Gerceida Jones**The New Universe**

Students in History of the Universe examine science as a way of looking at the world. They learn about the nature of the universe and about changes in the universe over time, including the origin and development of stars, galaxies, planetary systems, and the universe itself, as well as study of the earth and the development of life on earth and in the universe. The course traces the development of western scientific thought from the work of Aristotle, Ptolemy, Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo to the discoveries of Newton, Einstein and Hubble, among others. The course seeks to give students an understanding not only of modern science, but also of its development and of the methods, strengths and limitations of science.

"The history of our universe may be the key to our future." (Abrams & Primack)

Life Science

Nikolay Kukushkin

What makes our species, Homo sapiens, special among others that inhabit planet Earth? To put this question into perspective, we will go as far back in time as biology can take us. The first half of this class will begin at life's origins 4 billion years ago. We will trace the evolutionary path from simple molecules to replicating cells, from microorganisms to plants and animals, and finally from the earliest animals to human ancestors, always asking the same question: how does our own lineage stand out among the infinite ways to be alive? By understanding other species, past and present, we will learn more about our own. In the second half of the course, we will examine the origins of human mental function. Beginning with the basic organisation of a nervous system, in this part of the class will aim to unify the biological understanding of the brain with theories of language, consciousness and cultural evolution. In addition to

the lecture series, the class features activities and group projects designed to accompany the ongoing topics. These projects will require a combination of analytical thinking and creativity, and will help us learn more about the natural world and the modern scientific process.

Erin Morrison

Unraveling the past, present and future of biology

In this course, we will evaluate the impact of scientific inquiry on culture, politics, the economy, medicine and technology through the lens of fundamental principles of biology. We will learn how to apply the scientific method and distinguish between evidence-based research and pseudo-science. The course will cover topics on molecular and cellular biology, genetics, evolution and diversification, bioethics, and bioengineering. Focus will be placed on how major scientific discoveries in biology have shaped our understanding of the origins of life and also provided us with the tools to manipulate elements of life history ranging in scale from a single gene to an entire ecosystem. The course will incorporate in-class lectures, interactive labs, group discussions, primary and popular science literature, and a research project on science literacy and communication. Excursions to local parks and museums will also provide opportunities to discover the diversity of life that exists within New York City.

Global Works and Society: Antiquity

Nalei Chen

Course Description TBA

Tal Correm

In this course we will explore questions regarding the human condition, focusing on enduring issues such as the purpose of life, happiness, freedom, and virtue, moral responsibility in light of conflicting duties, obligations to the natural environment, and the relation between the individual and society, between justice and power, and between humanity and the divine. We will examine different answers to these questions through close reading and discussion of central works from the ancient Mesopotamian, Hebrew, Chinese, Hindu, Buddhist, Greek, and early Christian traditions. These works represent some of the major religious, philosophical, and social movements in the ancient world. Texts include The Epic of Gilgamesh, Daodejing, The Bhagavad-Gita, Plato's Republic, and St. Augustine's Confessions, among others. You will take an active role in your learning by critically engaging with these works in class discussions, exams, and informal writings. By employing global and cross-cultural approaches and understanding these works in their historical contexts we will draw connections to contemporary ethical and political problems in order to identify their relevance to the present globalized world and our place within it

Peter Diamond

This course examines and compares the ways in which several ancient societies constructed and maintained their ways of life. We will explore and analyze texts taken from the Hebrew, Chinese, Hindu, Greco-Roman and early Christian traditions, focusing in particular on such enduring topics as the relation between humanity and the divine, between justice and power, and between the individual and the group. Our perspective will be global insofar as we will concentrate on the attempts by ancient thinkers to bring order to the worlds they imagined. From this standpoint, "global" is not so much a geographical designation or a synonym for "non-Western" but instead refers to the perceptual scope of the arguments or other acts of imagination we will study. Our approach will also be interdisciplinary: in addition to situating texts in their historical contexts, we will analyze and compare their relation to the world today.

Farzad Mahootian

Global Works and Society: Antiquity spans the period from pre-history to around 700 CE and examines relationships between patterns of action, belief and thought in ancient societies as compared with those of

current cultures. Our section of GWA emphasizes philosophy, religion and science as key formative socio-cultural factors. We study the historical development of religion, science and philosophy in Greece, India and China, as well as reflecting philosophically on the basis and rationale of their concepts and cosmologies. Key texts include Apology, Meno, Phaedrus and Timaeus (Plato), On Christian Doctrine (Augustine), Dao de Jing (Lao Tzu), the Upanishads, the Bible, and The Man in the High Castle (P.K. Dick). The latter is a work of speculative history that casts an interesting light on intersections of “western” and “eastern” ways in the semi-fictional world of 1960s San Francisco.

James McBride

This course provides students with an introduction to the philosophies, religions, politics, and economies of the ancient world. Students will read foundational texts in the Greek, Hebrew, Roman, Chinese and Hindu cultures with particular attention to Athens, Rome, Jerusalem, and Qin. The course will introduce students to the rise of Western consciousness and the split between East and West that has become so important in the development of the modern world. Among the many topics to be explored are social hierarchies, political models, imperial ideologies, slavery, gender roles, moral virtue, the sacred and the profane, and human liberation or salvation. Among the historical characters to be encountered are Cyrus the Great, Xerxes, Darius, Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, Alexander the Great, Augustus Caesar, Tiberius, Qin Shi Huangdi, Moses, Paul and Jesus. This course will emphasize placing ancient texts into their historical and geographical contexts. Students are expected to read the texts carefully and analyze historical worldviews as a looking glass into the lived experience of human beings who were both very different and yet very similar to ourselves. The course will be a success for any student who uses these texts to gain insight into the presuppositions, prejudices, hopes and dreams of our own contemporary cultures.

Albert Piacente

The Logical Structure of Desire

This course has as its focus what has come to be known as the “Axial Age,” a period from roughly the 7th to the 3rd centuries B.C.E. where many of the seminal texts, at the foundations of a number of philosophical and religious belief systems still with us today, were compiled and/or written. Recognizing many of these texts for their unique voice and diversity of viewpoint, we will nonetheless see that they, and the Axial Age, share a singular, common theme: structuring desire. From what to want and not want, from what should be pursued to make a life good to what when pursued makes a life bad, it is this that nearly every text we will encounter in this course takes as its central subject. But, and here is the question that will hang in the background throughout the entire course, to what end? Is it possible or even desirable (pun intended) to break desires into categories with some lauded and others sanctioned? We will proceed via the close reading of texts prior to class (see course schedule) which is then brought to bear in lecture, question and answer and open-format discussion. You are expected to do all assignments as well as both to attend classes and participate. At times participation will be voluntary, but at other times not (you may get called on), depending upon the level of engagement of individuals and the class as a whole. The point of participation is to bring multiple perspectives to bear in order to achieve a more full experience of the material but also to allow students to appreciate more fully the views of others when focusing on their own, individual, written work.

Joseph Portanova

Histories and Societies, Citizens and the Disenfranchised, Cultural Contacts and Conflicts

Among the ancient civilizations studied will be Egypt, Greece, Rome, and China. Themes will include the ideal state, the relationship between the individual and society, the disenfranchised (in particular women and slaves), and contacts and conflicts between cultures.

Although there will be works of philosophy included, this is not primarily a philosophy course. The approach will be historical, though also interdisciplinary--drawing upon analysis of art and literature produced by the civilizations studied, as well as philosophical models of ideal societies. Instructor will guide students through galleries at the Metropolitan Museum outside of class time. Readings may include the following texts (a sample list): Thucydides' The Peloponnesian War; Confucius' The Analects, Plato's The Republic, Tacitus' The Annals of Imperial Rome, St. Augustine's City of God, and selected shorter

readings from ancient Egyptian texts as well as selections from the Biblical books of Exodus, Maccabees, and the Gospel of Matthew.

There may be some assignments involving interpretation of art works in relation to the issues studied. The instructor is a historian with interest in art and literature; the course will reflect these interests--especially the historical.

Laura Samponaro

The Ancient World and Its Influence Today

"Equality is most unequal," Cicero asserted in the first century B.C.E. What do concepts like equality, freedom, and justice mean to the ancients and to us today? How do the socio-political views of the ancient Greeks and Romans continue to influence us? In this course, we shall examine how the political, social, and ethical ideas of the ancients have impacted our own respective, current points of view. The goal of this course is not only to introduce you to texts that have shaped the way we think but also for you to study them as a means for constructing your own arguments, both in speech and in writing. While adopting an attitude of critical engagement towards texts and ideas, you will examine not only what a particular argument is but also how that argument is presented. In turn you will learn how to develop your own arguments and present them in a clear and persuasive fashion.

Michael Shenefelt

The Ancient World

This course uses classic texts to survey the moral and political thought of ancient times. We seek to discover a common humanity as expressed through four different literary traditions—those of ancient Greece, the Bible, classical China, and ancient Rome. Historical topics include the rise and fall of the Greek city-states, the development of classical Greek philosophy, the intellectual ferment of China before its unification, the imperial expansion of Rome, the rise of Christianity, and the dissolution of Roman authority during the early Middle Ages. We also consider philosophical issues that arise during the period, such as the proper exercise of political power, the authority of the state over the individual, the relation of religion to morality, the good life, rationality and knowledge, free will, the relation of mind and body, fundamental ethical principles, and the effects of political freedom. The course asks students to examine these issues critically. Class discussion will be crucial.

Heidi E White

Course Description TBA

Global Works and Society: Modernity

Cristina-Ioana Dragomir

The Concept of Social Justice and Its Challenges

This course examines selected major intellectual, philosophical, and political understandings in the modern world - from the opening of the 18th century down to the present. In doing so the course focuses on the development of the idea of social justice, and presents topics such as equality, race/racism, gender/sexism, castism, anti/post colonialism. Proceeding chronologically, the course has three connected units; unit one presents the outline of idea of social justice, unit two early critical engagements of the concept, and unit three explores its contemporary critical views, focusing on environmental justice. Some of the questions to be addressed are the following: What is social justice? How did it change across the years? Who are the groups privileged and who are excluded from specific concepts of social justice? Looking to our own lives, and the contemporary context, we will consider how we are living, and how just is our world, and consider the life we hope to lead.

We will explore diverse and interconnected philosophical, political, and religious/spiritual aspects, situating each work in its historical context and encouraging a critical assessment of representations of race, gender, and caste/class. Particular attention is given to developing students' critical thinking, textual analysis, presentation and writing skills, and to fostering class discussion.

The class is primarily discussion-based, supplemented by lectures. Students are encouraged to take an active role in their own learning.

Brendan Hogan

This is the third part of a three-part survey that focuses on key primary texts in history that have responded to fundamental human questions in philosophy, political science, and enlightenment and modernity. By exploring the works of thinkers such as Rousseau, Kant, Marx, Nietzsche, Wollstonecraft, Freud, Fanon, and others we are invited to join a critical and necessary conversation if our existence under conditions of modern society is to have more than a merely superficial meaning. The line of questioning we are engaging in follows a historical and geographical arc. These authors are located in their own specific tradition and contexts; their geographical, political, and historical locations diverge greatly. The core issues of this inquiry include, but are not limited to: matters concerning the relation of reason and politics, the nature of reality and justice in political theory, the relation of power to reason, human nature, and the question of international expansion and empire with respect to thinking through these questions. This course has two objectives: To provide a deeper understanding of several of the main sources of our own contemporary social and political world and to develop our critical capacities with regard to interpreting, analyzing and expressing our judgments in writing and speaking on these fundamental questions of human existence for ourselves, in our own time. Thus, this course will take a somewhat experimental tack. Past texts will be interwoven with more recent texts, so that themes can emerge and become analytically clarified in terms of our political present. This course requires critical reading and thinking of a small collection of the greatest minds' responses to fundamental questions from enlightenment up until the current cosmopolitical arrangement of global powers. Though a variety of themes will necessarily come up in this course, the threads of critique and politics, human nature and power, and global political history in light of our contemporary normative landscape will be developed and emphasized. Thinkers' location with respect to various study abroad sites will also be highlighted.

Farzad Mahootian

Course Description TBA

Al Piacente

Course Description TBA

Joseph Portanova

Histories and Societies, Slavery, Imperialism, Nationalism, Encounters and Conflicts, the Disenfranchised

The course will focus on certain themes from the 18th to the 20th century, often in a global context. Among these will be slavery, imperialism, nationalism and challenges to colonialism (especially in China, Japan, and India) and encounters between cultures and societies. Among the questions examined will be the effects of slavery and oppression, both on the colonizers and the colonized. There will also be a focus on the disenfranchised (women, for example) in society.

Although there will be works of philosophy included, this is not primarily a philosophy course but one that focuses on history and society. If you are looking for a philosophy-only course, this is not it. This course will involve a historical and interdisciplinary approach, drawing upon analysis of art and literature, as well as some works of history and philosophy. Readings may include the following texts (a sample list):

Rousseau's *The Social Contract*; Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, the slave narratives of Frederick Douglass and Mary Prince, Marx and Engels' *The Communist Manifesto*, Mill's *On Liberty*, Fukuzawa's *Autobiography*, Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents*, and selections from Gandhi's political works.

There will be some assignments involving interpretation of art works in relation to the issues studied. The instructor is a historian with interest in art and literature; the course will reflect these interests--especially the historical.

Mitra Rastegar

Revolutionary Times

A defining feature of our time is that we expect our world and way of life to change dramatically from generation to generation and even year to year, hopefully as progress, but also often causing greater insecurity. This course explores revolutions in thought and in the structures of life that shape our current condition beginning with two great revolutions: the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. We engage the works of thinkers grappling with the rise of modern industrial capitalism and the transformation of class structures (Marx and Smith), the emergence of new concepts of political and individual freedom (Rousseau, Mill and Freud), and struggles within global colonial empires (Gandhi and Fanon). These works emerge from or inspire various liberation movements, such as the Indian and Algerian Independence movements, and the US Women's Liberation and Civil Rights movements (de Beauvoir and bell hooks). While these works emerge from specific historical contexts, their insights about the central problematic of human freedom—including the nature of humanity, the sources of inequalities, and the means by which a just society can be achieved—continue to resonate.

Through our analysis we will trace the connections and divergences between European thinkers and thinkers engaging other geopolitical, cultural and socioeconomic context. We will also analyze the broad influence of these texts and relate the debates between them to our social and political context today. Our approach will include close reading, comparative analysis and extrapolation to other contexts and cases, including through an independent research project each student will develop over the course of the semester.

Marian Thorpe

Course Description TBA

Shenefelt

Revolutions and Counter-Revolutions

This course examines major intellectual and political movements of the modern world—from the opening of the 18th century down to the present. Vast new international markets emerge during this period, and so do new political systems. Overall, the period is one of accelerating change. Topics include the Enlightenment, the expansion and disintegration of global colonial empires, the rise of representative democracy, the nature of American slavery, the dangers to personal privacy and individual freedom represented by mass opinion, the new, 19th-century idea of the unconscious mind, and new forms of social strife generated by industrialization. Class discussions are crucial.

Mahootian

Course Description TBA

Writing As Exploration

Jacqueline Bishop

Course Description TBA

Sara Cordon Hornillos

Course Description TBA

Michael Datcher

Writing as Exploration has two main objectives. The first is to develop self-confidence and fluency through the use of writing to express, explore, and develop ideas. The second objective is to practice critical and analytical skills. This class will interrogate the intersection of knowledge, power and the body.

Specifically, we will collectively explore the notion that, as Erica Edwards argues, writing is a repository for imagining new possibilities: writing is a storehouse for new epistemologies. Throughout the course, we will place narrative texts in conversation with Michel Foucault's power/knowledge construct to make analyses, to create a new epistemologies, about how people come to know what they know. For example,

how do people come to “know” that certain human subjects are more or less “valuable” than other human subjects? What is the process by which those in power make less powerful people “The Other.” In our writing, we will also explore how our individual bodies, our specific phenotypes, influence how we accrue knowledge about ourselves and the world around us.

Sean Eve

This semester we will be focusing on New York as a context and stimulus for exploratory writing and thinking. We are operating under extraordinary circumstances, as is the City itself, the economic and social consequences of COVID-19 and long-term issues around social justice and economic fairness coming together to make for a volatile moment in our society. This moment is also brought on by changes in the places and in the ways we communicate. Never has digital community been a more powerful instrument, whether to further authoritarian impulses or as a context for potentially revolutionary political reorganizing. This semester we will explore how we can speak to the moment and engage the potential within this emerging communicative and cultural patois, a mix of the visual and verbal elements, sampled, manipulated and invented, that is fast displacing existing systems of discursive authority. New voices, new ideas, new ways of doing things- the promise of so much change presents us with great opportunities but also tremendous risks. We are losing many of our elders, losing institutions and businesses that have defined our communities for generations. And existing institutions, including NYU, are struggling to manage the conceptual and logistical demands brought on by accelerating social change and the devastating consequences of the pandemic. Rather than stepping back from all that is going on, this semester, in this class at least, we will jump into fray head on. An appropriate commitment to personal safety need not preclude being brave or engaged. In attending NYU this Fall, you are already attempting to strike this balance. In personal, political, economic, and expressive terms, the dance you are already engaged in is what we will learn to use this semester, drawing on emerging dynamics within ourselves and in environments around us for inspirations and as context that can amplify and externalize what we picture in our heads. The future you have watched unfold in the movies is happening right now. And you are in New York, a city invented as much by movies and stories, by fantasies and dreams, as it is by harsh economic realities. What part will you play here? Who will you use the city to become? And what sort of place do you want to emerge from all this ferment?

Devereux Fortuna

Course Description TBA

Janet Hendrickson

Course Description TBA

Matt Longabucco

Welcome to Writing I: Writing as Exploration, the first semester of a year-long writing class. In this course, we will engage in college-level writing by reading and writing essays that exhibit intellectual rigor as well as compelling creativity. Our work will take a global focus in its attention, not just to place and narrative, but also to questions of how we can approach stories we gather and sites we visit with mindfulness and a broad sense of context and perspective. Through a process of observation, research, composition, and revision, students will arrive at complex ideas and consider their own agency as alert and artful writers in the world.

Carley Moore

Course Description TBA

James Polchin

Course Description TBA

Stephen Policoff

Course Description TBA

Montana Ray
Course Description TBA

Tamaira Reid

"We have to continually be jumping off cliffs and developing our wings on the way down." – Kurt Vonnegut
This course is designed to make you a "better" writer. By better I mean riskier, smarter, clearer and more persuasive. The aim of good writing is to seduce your audience, regardless of genre. Seduction: something that attracts or charms. What elements of writing do we find attractive? What moves us to be moved? What inspires? What motivates? What solicits a particular response? We will be aiming to answer some of these questions (and more) through the careful study of our own writing and that of others, both inside and outside of the classroom.

You will read a lot. More than ever. More than seems possible. This is good. To truly become an accomplished writer you must read, read, and read some more. The best writers are the best readers. Learning to read like a writer -- distinguishing between different types of tone and style and voice, of "character" nuance, of sequence -- separates the 'smart' writers from the everyday writers. Being informed, being well-rounded and astute, building your own literary aesthetic comes from studying and deciphering the works of the "masters" and of your peers.

Learning the fundamentals of the craft, like structure for instance (we will define this word in both the academic and creative sense) is the basis of any writing course. However, it's what happens after the structure is in place that determines how powerful and persuasive your work will be. Learning to use words that count, picking and choosing words instead of settling -- making a conscious decision to use the words we do -- this is the key to good writing. Pretty prose is just pretty prose. Responsibly building sentences versus going for "fluff" breeds authenticity. Writing is a process and Writing as Exploration is an opportunity for you to investigate your ideas on a deeper, more thorough level.

The readings and subsequent assignments will attempt to use literature as a means of bridging the cultural and political gaps between our global communities. A particular emphasis will be placed on examining the immigrant experience as a way of looking at our old homes and new homes, from the Outside-In//Inside-Out. What is it like to move here from somewhere else? What can we learn from the duality of the immigrant experience in relation to the shaping of a collective identity? Is there such a thing?

We will discuss the works of several contemporary authors -- from North America, India, Latin America, South-East Asia, and Europe -- and will aim to move toward an understanding that writing itself is inherently global, as is the art (and luxury) of reading. How is it that literature has the implicit power to act as a mediator between groups of individuals on a universal level? What is the value in reading and writing the human experience?

In addition to several forms of non-fiction writing (personal essay/literary journalism/travel writing/analysis), we will view several films. Please have access to some sort of online streaming site (Netflix, Hulu, Amazon, etc.).

Kaia Shivers

The Writer and the City

This course engages you, the writer, with the city as your backdrop. Your first muse is New York City, but will branch out to other cities of the world. The purpose for the city as the focal point is to capture how you write about the nuances of shifting metropolises as you develop your voice through writing.

Be prepared to employ different writing modalities and techniques as you explore various aspects of the city such as transportation, aesthetics and recreational spaces.

This course has two main objectives. The first is to develop self-confidence and fluency using writing to express, explore, and develop ideas through a variety of modes. The second objective is to practice the critical and analytical skills that you will use throughout your undergraduate career.

There are four parts in this course: (1) identifying your voice, (2) defining your voice, (3) cultivating your voice, (4) reflecting on how your voice evolved throughout the semester and presenting your.

In whole, this course challenges you to learn, articulate and strengthen your perspective as it evolves.

Elayne Tobin

Course Description TBA

Timothy Tomlinson

Course Description TBA

Deborah Williams

This “Writing as Exploration” course will consider how—in the increasingly cluttered sphere of public discourse and with increasingly niche audiences—we can make our voices heard. Is “having an opinion” all that’s needed to build an argument or create a conversation? We will read essays by writers like Amitav Ghosh, Cathy Park Hong, Alexander Chee, Ross Gay, Virginia Woolf, and others, which draw on personal experiences and observations as a way of contributing to public conversations about such key issues as identity, climate crisis, gender, and power. Through an ongoing process of writing and revision, we will also engage with questions of craft, particularly in terms of what it means to write an “academic essay.”

Jason Williamson

Course Description TBA

Jennifer Zoble

Course Description TBA