

A SAMPLER OF SPRING TERM COURSES 2010

12 February 2010

AFST/HIST 248 - POLITICS OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

This course offers an in-depth perspective on the study of Sub-Saharan African politics. It examines Africa's post independence democratic strides, security and the failure and successes of statism. It specifically exposes students to the challenges and conundrum of the postcolonial state and its efforts in dealing with such challenges in Africa. – J. Bangura, History & African Studies

AFST 290 - AFRICAN CULTURES IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

This course is designed to introduce students to the diversity of cultures on the continent of Africa and the ways that groups of people negotiate their identities and roles in the ever-shifting contexts of culture change and globalization. We will begin with a critical examination of the ways that Africa and African peoples have been and continue to be represented in the West and discussing what those representations mean for our own understandings and assumptions. We will then spend the bulk of the term working to understand the complexity of contemporary issues facing African peoples. Through lectures, readings, discussions and group projects and presentations, students will grapple with the historical, cultural and political-economic nature of specific contemporary issues. It is hoped that students will come away from this course with an appreciation for the richness and diversity of African cultures and a heightened ability to sort through the versions of African culture which we encounter here, in Africa, or via other people's accounts. – K. Cunningham, Anthropology & Sociology

AFST/HIST 292 - ISLAM IN AFRICA

Currently, Africa is home to the second largest population of Muslims in the world with Muslim communities found in every African country. In fact, there are more Muslims in Africa than there in the Middle East. Clearly, Africa holds a cardinal position in the world of Islam. This course explores the spread of Islam in Africa since 620 C.E. when Africa served as a safe haven for the first Muslim community. It examines the methods, tenets, and impact the religion has had on its African adherents and the influence of African traditions on the practice of the faith itself. – J. Bangura, History & African Studies

ANSO/SEM255 – YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

The goal of this course is to examine the social, symbolic, and political-economic roles of what and how we eat. While eating is essential to our survival, we rarely pay attention to what we eat and why. We will look at the significance of food and eating with particular attention to how people define themselves differently through their foodways. We will also study food's role in maintaining economic and social relations, cultural conceptions of health, and religion. Finally, the class examines the complex economic and political changes in food systems and the persistence of food's role as an expression of identity, social and ethnic markers. *Initially open to Sophomores.* – E. Baptiste, Anthropology & Sociology

ARTX/SEM204 - DRAWING TODAY introduces current themes in art and provides an innovative approach to basic skill development required to produce drawings in a contemporary context. This studio style course will involve hands on drawing experiences. Students will read and discuss issues related to contemporary art and visual culture from around the world and then apply theory to practice. Issues such as the nature of drawing, representation and

photographic truth, photo-based Imagery and copies, ownership and copyright are some of the themes that will be addressed in the course. *Initially open to Sophomores.* – T Rice, Art & Art History

ARTX 260 – BAROQUE ART

Before the 17th century begins, Baroque art appears in Counter-Reformation Rome when the radical painters Caravaggio and Carracci reform the worn-out Mannerist style by reviving some aspects of the High Renaissance. They, their followers, and the astonishing sculptor Bernini create works that are spectacular, sensual, and often sensational. Elsewhere, artists such as Rubens in Flanders, Velázquez in Spain, and Rembrandt and Vermeer in the Netherlands ring their changes on the Baroque, adding to its splendid array of religious and mythological works, portraits, and landscapes. – B. Fischer, Art & Art History

BIOL 195 – URBAN ECOLOGY

In Urban Ecology we will study how concentrating people and industry in cities affects the environment, biota, and humans. The course will use data to better understand how environmental injustice occurs. We will also examine ways to work towards sustainability in urban systems. *Intended for non-majors.* – C. McSwiney. Biology

CHEM 105 - THE PHYSICAL EARTH

On January 12, 2010, a massive earthquake struck the island nation of Haiti. This event was a dramatic reminder of the power of the Earth to shape the lives of humans. *The Physical Earth* is an introduction to the study of the Earth as an integrated system and to the impact of human activities on the Earth's physical processes. The class stresses the interplay between the solar heat engine or hydrologic cycle and the internal heat engine (plate tectonics in the planet's mantle and crust and the geodynamo in the core) as well as Earth evolution. It is designed for students who do not intend to pursue careers in the natural sciences and for those in the sciences who are pursuing Environmental Studies concentration or who are interested in the course content. There is no regularly scheduled laboratory component, but a field exercise is a required aspect of the course, one that constitutes 40% of the total grade. *Intended for non-majors.* – T. Smith, Chemistry

CHIN 245 – CHINESE FILMS

This course will examine the film traditions of China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong in light of such topics as: film's relationship to literary and pop cultural discourse; aesthetic responses to historical crisis points (e.g., the February 28th Incident, the Cultural Revolution); visualized sexualities; "spectacular" violence, and the martial-arts genre. The overarching question we explore is: How do Chinese films create the spectacle of "China," narrate its history, and represent its increasingly diversified cultural landscapes both at home and abroad? – Yue Hong, East Asian Studies

COMP 107 – PICTURES AND SOUNDS

In Pictures and Sounds, students learn and practice basic programming techniques by working with pictures and sounds. Some of the picture manipulations include color-changing, cropping, blurring, and blending. We then apply these same types of manipulations a second time, but in the context of sound. We discuss some of the underlying CS concepts that allow us to do these manipulations through programming. In some previous quarters, we have visited the TV studio to learn about the green-screen effect and have made our own green-screen images. The course usually culminates with students in groups using programming to make a short (several minute)

movie. The class is very hands-on, and has a creative element to it, in that students have freedom to use their own images and sounds, and can often choose how to apply the techniques to obtain a particular effect. *The class is designed for students with little to no programming experience, but a desire to try something new and fun.* – P. Cutter, Computer Science

COMP/PSYC 415 - COMPUTATIONAL NEUROSCIENCE:

Experimental neurobiologists generated a huge amount of data about the structure, function and dynamics of the brain. These data, however, can be interpreted by using theoretical and computational concepts and methods only. You will learn the basic concepts and methods of computational neuroscience. Both normal and pathological behaviors will be analyzed by using neural models. – P. Erdi, Physics & Psychology

ECON 277 – NEGOTIATION & PERSUASIAN

This course gives you a competitive advantage in situations that require you to influence others. Using case studies and exercises, you will learn important skills that enhance your ability to influence, negotiate, and manage conflict. A senior majoring in economics and business recently pointed out that in all his internships, he had noticed that the senior management spent most of their time negotiating internally or externally. Another student commented on a recent political speech given by President Obama. The student correctly pointed out that the President seemed intent on persuading the entire nation to agree with his policy proposals. The student noted that it will not be enough to give a persuasive speech; the President will need to negotiate with both Democrats and Republicans. Recently a student looked a bit down in one of her classes. After a few questions, she revealed that she had just bought a used car. Although she liked the car, she was upset because the salesman had really pressured her. She felt that she had paid too much and, for some reason, she had been persuaded to buy several optional accessories. This is an important and fun course. – P. Hultberg, Economics

ECON 295-01– INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

Explores fundamental international marketing concepts and strategies, with an emphasis upon applying these to case-based plus current business scenarios. Students examine major marketing environment factors and develop and present an international marketing plan. The plan outline serves as a framework for students to complete a marketing strategy project. Students will develop effective project/teamwork skills and strategies. I would say that this course is a great fit for students that are seniors, and perhaps juniors. It tends to be focused on strategy. *Although there is no official prerequisite, students will want to have had their core Finance or Accounting class first.* – M. Ricco, Economics

ECON 295-02 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT

A good course for students who want to learn how to lead projects. For example, last year it was really useful for students involved in the Business Guild. It goes beyond just “business” applications, covering any project (last year one of the students worked on her wedding “project”). A comprehensive introduction to the field of project management and its application to a broad range of fields and industries. Topics include goals and objectives, planning, scheduling, resource management, communication, finance, monitoring, evaluation, and project closure. Students will gain firsthand experience managing a project. – I. Ballard, Economics

EDUC 270 - INTRO TO AMERICAN EDUCATION

The purpose of this course is to introduce a broad audience of students to the history, philosophy, sociology of education. The course also aims to address some basic principles of curriculum and some of the more prominent issues of the field. This survey course is meant to help students understand the complex nature of American education from the perspective of the multiple stakeholders who impact education on issues related to school organization, curriculum, purpose, financial support, and the role of professional teachers. You will also discover how American culture is transmitted to the next generation through schooling. – O. Bonfiglio, Education

ENGL 140 - READING THE NOVEL: NEW YORK

Geographical place in fiction can be almost another character in the story. And no place in literary fiction is as big a character as New York. We'll read works including *Invisible Man*, by Ralph Ellison; *Seize the Day*, by Saul Bellow; *The Good People of New York*, by Thisbe Nissen; *The Fortress of Solitude*, by Jonathan Lethem; *Pafko at the Wall* and *Falling Man*, by Don DeLillo; *Sag Harbor*, by Colson Whitehead; and *Let the Great World Spin*, by Colum McCann. – G. Deutsch, English

HIST 102 – MODERN EUROPE

An understanding of modern European history is critical for an understanding of the entire globe in the 21st century. For a variety of complex reasons that we'll explore in this course, after about 1500 -- and culminating in the 1800s -- Europe disrupted the balance of the globe's civilizations and came to dominate the earth technologically, economically, and, for a while, politically and militarily. But, in the twentieth century, Europe almost destroyed itself in two world wars, with consequences that the world is still living with today. As a result of Europe's short-lived but important and historically unprecedented global dominance, many of the concepts, structures, and categories with which we understand the world in our own time have their roots in the modern European historical experience. These include such varying and often antagonistic modern "-isms" as liberalism, conservatism, socialism, feminism, fascism, nationalism, communism, and many others. –D. Barclay, History

HIST/RELG 218 - AMERICAN JEWISH EXPERIENCE

This course explores the religious, social, political, cultural, and economic history of the Jewish people in America from the first settlement in 1654 until the present. Topics will include migration issues, religious and social and cultural adaptation, and identity formation. – J. Haus, History & Religion

HIST/RELG 264 - MODERN JEWRY

Out of the eruption of anti-Semitic violence in Eastern Europe in 1881 sprung new Jewish intellectual, political, and social movements. This course will explore these changes, the forces that produced them, and Jewish responses to them. We will also examine the changing conceptions and definitions of Jewishness and Judaism during this period, as Jews all over the world adjusted to drastically altered conditions. – J. Haus, History & Religion

HIST 289 – FAMILY, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY IN JAPAN AND CHINA:

In this course, we will look at the history of China and Japan with special attention to family, gender, and sexuality. Let's find out how crucial these issues are when we think about our politics and economy. – T. Sasaki, History

HIST/SEM 295 - JAPAN IN THE WORLD, THE WORLD IN JAPAN:

This course explores a history of travel and migration between Japan and the world. Those interested in Japan as well as those interested in the US, Europe, Asia, and Latin America are welcome. – T. Sasaki, History

IAST/SEM 290 – BORDER KNOWLEDGE

In this course students will read texts by and about people who live on the border. It may be a border between nations, between cultures, between languages, or between ethnic or racial identities. Rather than viewing these subjects as people who only incompletely embody one identity or another, we will take the attitude that these writers may actually occupy a privileged knowledge position and have a lot to teach us as we negotiate between two worlds in the classroom, on study abroad, and in our work on international and regional issues. The course is specifically designed for students who will be studying abroad and have or will achieve advanced proficiency in a language. Sophomore standing and instructor permission required. *Requirements are IAS major or instructor's permission.* – K. MacLean, Romance Languages

IDSY 210 - PREDICTION OF FINANCIAL CRISES: ECONOMIC GROWTH, BUSINESS CYCLES, BLACK SWANS AND DRAGON KINGS

The explanation of the world-wide crisis of financial markets and economies needs new explanations. Misleading concepts of the traditional economics (unbounded rationality, equilibrium theory, linear thinking, mild randomness) must be overcome by notions of complexity, such as bounded rationality, dynamic models, nonlinear thinking, and wild randomness. Elements of this new approach will be taught. – P. Erdi, Physics & Psychology

MATH 105 - QUANTITATIVE REASONING & STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Imagine yourself in the boardroom, trying to look intelligent while someone explains a series of complicated graphs, directly related to your project. Or finding yourself staring at some data that needs to be interpreted in a report due Monday. Or assessing your chances of winning the lottery, called by some a “tax on mathematical ignorance.” If you want to be an informed citizen, if you’ve suffered math abuse, if you would simply like your brain to expand, or if you’d like to understand some of the statistical ideas used to shape public policy and human sciences, consider taking Math 105: Quantitative Reasoning and Statistical Analysis. *Not open to students with credit for higher-numbered math courses such as MATH 112.* – E. Barth, Mathematics

MUSC 148 - MUSIC OF WORLD CULTURES

Music is much more than entertainment. Music is tradition. Music is politics. Music is religion. Music is nationality. Music is culture. This course explores the many sounds, uses, and functions of music in selected cultures from around the world as well as in our own culture. Journey with us from townships of South Africa to villages in the Andes mountains to an Indonesian shadow-puppet play to the vast Australian outback as we explore the significance of music as sound, object, and meaningful sign of identity. – J. Duchan, Music

MUSC 161/162 – INSTRUMENTAL METHODS: BRASS AND WOODWINDS

Instrumental Methods class for Woodwinds, Brass, and Percussion has evolved into a beginning band experience. By the end of the term, the “band” will perform a 35-45 minute concert at the level of a *quality* Middle School Band, which is an amazing accomplishment given the fact that no one in the band knew how to play their instrument a few weeks prior. The class has been so popular that last year the enrollment topped out at 95 players. So, if you’ve ever wanted to learn

how to play a woodwind, brass, or percussion instrument, this is the class for you! It's a great way to end the academic year. And you would make your mama so proud too! *The course is designed for students with NO music training as well as for music students who wish to learn a new instrument.* – T. Evans, Music

MUSC 163 – INSTRUMENTAL METHODS: STRINGS

This is a practical course in the basic playing techniques of the orchestral string instruments: violin, viola, cello, and bass. Every class member -- who is expected to be able to read music, but by no means to have had any previous string experience -- will perform on two instruments over the course of the quarter (one high, i.e. violin and viola, and one low, i.e. cello and bass). While careful individual practice will be stressed, our classroom meetings will mostly revolve around learning to play together in a mixed string ensemble, and preparing simple pieces for a public concert at the end of the term. – A. Koehler, Music

MUSC 330 – WESTERN MUSIC IN THE CLASSIC AND ROMANTIC ERAS

This course addresses the question of why music from 1750 - 1900 continues to speak to our culture and times, and continues to attract new audiences, most dramatically in the age 20 - 45 demographic. We will explore what is expressed in this music and the musical techniques giving it such powerful expression. In class live performances, historic instrument demonstrations, and a field trip with tour and complete performance at the Michigan Opera Theatre in Detroit. - L. Tung, Music

PHIL/SEM 295– RETHINKING THE MIND

In your lifetime, there will be an explosion in discoveries and insights into the nature of *minds* – human and otherwise. Just in the last few years, research has advanced our thinking about minds from a variety of perspectives. In this interdisciplinary seminar, the work we'll study is cutting-edge - mostly from within the last five years. The findings in disciplines like neuroscience, cognitive science, evolutionary biology, psychology, neuroeconomics, and “experimental philosophy” don't just give us factual knowledge. They motivate a changing philosophy of minds – including implications for ethical problems, free will, “the self,” and limitations on our knowledge of our own and others' minds. Through philosophical investigation, we can rethink controversial issues like theism and atheism, artificial intelligence, punishment and justice, transformations in communication (as through texting, Twitter, and Facebook), animal rights, and “posthumanism” (profound technological changes in bodies and brains). Philosophy can also help us reconsider cultural attitudes about minds, such as issues in identity, race, gender, sexuality, violence, intercultural difference, and tolerance. Your continuing voyage into a complex world calls for understanding of your own and others' self-awareness, identity, religious beliefs, character and personality, prejudice and antagonism, empathy and compassion. That complex world, along with our understanding of it, is changing at lightning speed, which makes rethinking the mind *in advance* imperative. *Initially open to Sophomores.* – A. McDowell, Philosophy

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 205 - NUTRITION

This course is an in-depth discussion of the science behind sport nutrition, including general principles, background, and rationale for current nutritional guidelines. An emphasis will be placed on the principles of nutrition as they relate specifically to performance in sport and an active lifestyle. Students will learn how to distinguish between fact and fallacy in the confusing world of sport nutrition and supplements. – M. Hass, Physical Education

POLS 228 - THE AMERICAN JURY TRIAL

A course designed to teach the skills necessary to successfully try a case including jury selection, witness examination and closing argument. While most of the students who take the course intend to go to law school, others simply wish to learn the art of effective persuasive speaking. Each student is expected to put the lessons into practice by presenting short arguments which are sensitively/positively reviewed by the class, the T.A.s and the professor. Students with little public speaking experience, or who are uncomfortable or afraid are offered one-on-one private sessions. In the evaluations, many students have noted that their self-confidence improved markedly and that the class was "fun." – R. Halpert, Political Science

PSYC/SEM 235 - THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CROSSING BORDERS

This is a course for Sophomores in preparation for study abroad. We will be using the books *Maximizing Study Abroad* and *The Art of Crossing Cultures* to help students prepare for their trip abroad. Work will be done on preparing students to take good notes for reflective essays and intercultural projects. *Initially open to Sophomores.* - R. Grossman, Psychology

RELG 106 - INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT

This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to the foundational early Christian writings, focused primarily on Jesus and St. Paul. – A. Kotso, Religion

RELG 222 – U. S. BLACK RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

When enslaved people were forced over the Atlantic from West Africa to the Americas, they did not arrive as "blank slates." The Middle Passage was horrific and tragic, but humans are resilient, and during the darkest of times, divinity, rituals, practices and beliefs are not only questioned but also embraced. This course looks at which religious traditions were rejected and which were embraced among the enslaved people of the United States. In order to do this, we follow the journeys of enslaved people, from West Africa to the Caribbean and to the plantations of the American South. We also examine the religious changes that Black Americans experienced after the Civil War and during the era of Jim Crow. Finally we examine the role of religions in the Civil Rights movement, as well as the religious lives of new immigrants from various parts of Africa and the Caribbean. – S. Gandhi, Religion

RELG 295 - IMAGES OF THE DEVIL

A kind of research seminar centered on one of the most fascinating figures in Christian theology: the devil. The main arc of the course will follow the professor's own ongoing research, attempting to trace the origins in the earlier Christian tradition of the "heroic" devil figure who appears in modern literature. Alongside that, each student will choose his or her own smaller research project focused on the devil -- within any discipline or time period the student chooses - and share the results with the class. – A. Kotso, Religion

SEM 415 - CREATING SUSTAINABLE CITIES (SENIOR SEMINAR)

This course focuses on understanding America's present land use policies and practices and exploring new ways cities—and suburbs—can become thriving communities today and in the future. The course will also investigate options available to students as citizens and/or professionals in order to affect change through urban revitalization, attention to social and economic development, energy resources, and local food. – O. Bonfiglio, Education

SPAN 205 - CULTURE OF HEALTH AND DISEASE IN THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY

This course enables students to connect with Spanish-speaking clients and healthcare providers by teaching appropriate vocabulary and presenting different cultural attitudes and practices. A service-learning component is included in this course. . – M. Romero, Romance Languages