

FALL 2014

AMERICAN STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS

AM 103 001 Intro: Wizard of Oz

An interdisciplinary analysis of *The Wizard of Oz*, this course will examine the numerous adaptations of L. Frank Baum's classic tale to introduce students to the study of American culture, past and present. Students will read critically, think historically, practice interdisciplinarity, and acknowledge the intersections of race, class, and gender in order to analyze the ways that *The Wizard of Oz*, in its many versions, has reflected and shaped American culture. Students will consider primary and secondary sources that explore Oz through a range of media (fiction, film, theater, television, and music) and from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. In addition to reading Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900), students will consider MGM's *The Wizard of Oz* (1939); the "super soul" Broadway musical, *The Wiz* (1975), and its 1978 film adaptation; Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973); Gregory Maguire's *Wicked* (1996); Stephen Schwartz's 2003 Broadway musical version of the Maguire novel; ABC television's *The Muppets' Wizard of Oz* (2005); and the television mini-series *Tin Man* (2007). **Megan Williams, 4 credits**

AM 103W 001 Intro. to American Studies

This class will introduce the field of American Studies, using an interdisciplinary analysis of the concepts of Culture, (Sub)culture and material culture in America. This class will explore the complexity and diversity of American life through the use of various case studies such as: toys (Barbies), sonic devices (walkman/iPods), body modification (tattoos, hair styles), fashion, car culture (hot-rods/lowriders), and the process of collecting. The final project for this class will analyze American youth culture as it applies to the study of college student realities (e.g. Skaters, Punks, Emos, Fraternities/Sororities, hipster etc.). (Fulfills social science requirement.) **William Calvo-Quiros 4 credits**

AM 201L 001 American Identities: Pre 1870s with workshop

A study of the changing ways Americans have defined themselves, from colonization to the mid-nineteenth century. Relying heavily on primary sources, the course examines critical issues and periods including race, ethnicity, gender, class, culture contact, revolution, reform, and war, as well as men and women whose lives and work reveal the cultural temper of their time.

Taken in conjunction with AM201, the workshop complements AM201 class sessions. Classic texts and documents in American culture from 1620 to 1877 are examined in depth. The workshop includes additional reading, journal writing, oral presentations, a field trip, and assignments in the American Studies-History Lab.

Note(s): (Fulfills social sciences requirement; designated as a Cultural Diversity course.)

G. Pfitzer 4 credits

AM 234 001 American Sports/American Culture

A historical examination of 300 years of sport in America as an important expression of culture, conflict, and meaning. Special attention is devoted to the ways in which contemporary sports provide a window into politics, economics, racial and ethnic relations, class formation, and gender identity. Students analyze the ways in which Americans have played, watched, and understood sports and will focus on some of the recurrent cultural values, trends, and symbolism associated with American athletes and public life. **Note(s):** (Fulfills social sciences requirement.)

D. Nathan 4 Credits

AM 241 001 Mark Twain's America

A study of American culture from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century through the life and works of Mark Twain. Using Twain's essays, letters, short stories, and novels as points of reference for discussions of major themes for the period of Twain's life (1834–1910), the course focuses on issues of regionalism, class, race relations, technology, humor, and imperialism.

G. Pfitzer 4 Credits

AM 260A 001 Civil Rights in the Twentieth-Century United States

An examination of the interactions of individuals, groups, institutions, and agencies seeking to achieve, enforce, or dismiss those civil rights guarantees contained primarily in the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution of the United States and in subsequent twentieth-century legislation. Although a major focus of the course is on the attempts of women and African-Americans to secure full civil rights protections, students are encouraged to investigate civil rights issues that range beyond these two groups. The course uses a variety of materials including legislative histories, autobiographies, executive orders, judicial decisions, biographies, histories of specific aspects of the civil rights struggle, journalistic accounts, documentary films, works of fiction, and oral histories.

Note(s): (Fulfills social sciences requirement.)

M. Williams 3 Credits

AM 360D 001 American Cultural Periods: World War II

The Second World War is often remembered by Americans with nostalgia as “The Good War,” a moral war, with a clear enemy – the Axis powers – and a clear cause – the victory of democracy over fascism. During this period, the United States government sought to rally public support behind the war effort by representing the country as the leader of “the free world.” Through tightly monitored and heavily censored popular culture, the wartime government constructed an image of the United States as the champion of equality. **M. Williams 4 Credits**

AM 374 001 Senior Seminar

Exploration of primary and secondary sources in the interdisciplinary examination of a particular topic in American culture. Students will pursue a major research project or prepare an honors thesis proposal. Required of all senior majors. Open to majors only; normally taken in fall semester of senior year.

Gregory Pfitzer, 4 credits

AM 376B 001 City in American Culture

An examination of the growth and impact of urban life on American culture. Using fiction, film, histories, sociological studies and material culture, the course examines the relation between the perceptions of urban life and the actualities of that experience. By focusing on how varying reactions to the urban experience result from economic, ethnic, or gender differences, the course explores such topics as: the effect of industrialization, the waves of rural migration and overseas immigration, the concentrations of wealth and poverty, the impact of architecture, and the parks and planning movements.

Note(s): 300-level courses in American Studies are not ordinarily open to first-year students except by permission of the instructor.

W. Calvo-Quiros, 3 Credits