

FALL 2015

AMERICAN STUDIES COURSE OFFERINGS

AM 103 001 The American City

Professor Amber Wiley

Tu Th, 2:10-3:30 Credits: 4

Introduction to the interdisciplinary study of American culture, past and present. Emphasizes reading critically, thinking historically, practicing interdisciplinarity, and acknowledging diversity. Students will analyze and synthesize multiple kinds of primary sources (such as fiction, film, music, art) and disciplinary perspectives (sociology, economics, media criticism) to appreciate better the complexity of American life and culture.

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

AM 103 002 Intro to the Wizard of Oz

Professor Megan Williams

MW 4:00-5:20

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).

AM 103W 001 A Humorous (Dis)Course

Professor Beck Krefting

Tu Th, 12:40-2:00 Credits: 4

In this course we will use comedic cultural forms to think critically about American culture and to explore key moments and transitions in American history. As burgeoning Americanists, we will examine the history of comedy as the history of the United States—that comedy reflects the institutions and ideologies shaping cultural production; the same institutions and ideologies that prompt us to warfare, that determine who has rights and who does not and that influence our consumptive practices. This course will examine the history of cultural production in America, specifically through the cultural forms of minstrelsy, vaudeville, improv, and stand-up comedy and how it has been influenced and shaped by shifts in social consciousness, changing economy, industrial and technological innovations, political events, public/popular discourses and global conflict and relations.

AM 103W 002 American Cultural Geographies

Professor Jacquelyn Micieli-Voutsinas

Tu, Th 6:30-7:50

Credits: 4

Introduction to the interdisciplinary study of American culture, past and present. Emphasizes reading critically, thinking historically, practicing interdisciplinarity, and acknowledging diversity. Students will analyze and synthesize multiple kinds of primary sources (such as fiction, film, music, art) and disciplinary perspectives (sociology, economics, media criticism) to appreciate better the complexity of American life and culture. **Note(s):** (Fulfills social science requirement.)

AM 233 001 American Past in Films

Professor Daniel Nathan

Tu Th, 11:10-12:30

Credits: 4

An examination of how Hollywood filmmakers have represented the American past, with special attention to the implications of movies for the construction of American cultural identity. Students will analyze films as historical documents that reflect (and sometimes reproduce) the ethos or cultural politics of the period in which they were made and first viewed. Through the use of popular culture theories, students will consider the ways in which films inform (and sometimes obfuscate and subvert) historical understanding.

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

D. Nathan

AM 260C 001 African Experience

Professor Amber Wiley

MW, 2:30-3:50

Credits: 3

A study of the African-American experience, 1860s–1980s. Using both primary and secondary source material, the course examines the critical issues and period relevant to the African-American struggle toward freedom and equality. Topics include slavery, emancipation, and Reconstruction; the woman's era; the age of Jim Crow and the new Negro; the civil rights movement; and the post-reform period. Sources include narratives, documents, photographs, and films.

Note(s): (Designated a Cultural Diversity course; fulfills social sciences requirement.)

AM 260I 001 POPULAR CULTURE

Professor Jacquelyn Micieli-Voutsinas

Tu, Th 3:40-5:00

Credits: 4

A topical examination of the cultural-historical process of the creation, dissemination, and consumption of mass or popular culture and analysis of popular culture as a defining characteristic of Americans. Specific focus will be upon the evolution of modern electronic forms of communication in the twentieth century, and the interrelationships between the popular and elite and folk culture will be explored. Illustrative topics include: popular genre literature, mass movements, celebrities and heroes, and film, radio, and television. **Note(s):** (Fulfills social science requirement.)

AM 332 001 Global Perspectives of United States

Professor Daniel Nathan

WF, 8:40-10:00

Credits: 4

U.S., its citizens and culture. Employing an interdisciplinary methodology, student will consider how the U.S. appeared to Europeans in the eighteenth century and how others since then have made sense of this country, with an emphasis on the twentieth century and the post-9/11 cultural moment. Students will examine themes including the preferred national narrative of the U.S. as a place of freedom, opportunity, democracy, and multicultural pluralism; and different forms of anti-Americanism.

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

AM 345H 001 Disorderly Women

Professor Beck Krefting

Tu/Th 9:10-11:00

Credits: 3

What defines women as “disorderly” in specific time and place; in what ways do some women deviate from the roles and behavior expected of all women; what motivates disorderly women, from their perspectives, to act as they do; what successes/non-successes have disorderly women experienced, and at what psychic cost? Disorderly women focuses on some of the women who have been characterized by the larger society as unruly, disruptive, radical, militant, unfeminine—just generally “disorderly.” Why certain women have been perceived as disorderly is reflective of the society in which they lived. We will examine types of women considered disorderly as well as the experiences of specific so-called disorderly women in the nineteenth and twentieth-century United States.

AM 374 001 Senior Seminar

Professor Gregory Pfitzer

MW, 4:00-5:50

Credits: 4

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.

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