INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (No Div)

This program is designed to facilitate and promote innovations in curricular offerings in relation both to interdisciplinary conceptual focus and experimental pedagogical form. It provides support for faculty efforts to develop a curriculum that creatively responds to intellectual needs and modes of teaching/learning that currently fall outside the conventional pattern. Faculty members interested in offering courses that fall outside the aegis of departmental or existing interdisciplinary programs submit such courses directly to the Committee on Educational Affairs by the Registrar's deadline for course submission in early spring. Courses that fit within the curricula of departments and interdisciplinary programs, even if interdisciplinary or experimental in nature, are found listed within those departments and programs.

INTR 223  (S)  Image, Imaging, and Imagining: The Brain and Visual Arts

Cross-listings: INTR 223  PSYC 318

Secondary Cross-listing

This course will study the intersections of neuroscience and art. The brain interprets the visual world and generates cognitive and emotional responses to what the eyes see. It is also responsible for creating mental images and then directing the artist’s motor output. We will first examine the neural mechanisms of how we perceive what we see. We will investigate how visual artists have used or challenged perceptual cues in their work.

Understanding how the brain perceives faces will be used to analyze portraiture. We will consider the influence of neurological and psychological disorders on artistic work. We will examine neuroimaging studies questioning whether the brains of visual artists are specialized differently from non-artists. Finally, we will explore how contemporary artists are using brain images in their artwork, and how “outsider” artists have portrayed brain syndromes and mental states. The class will include field trips to local museums.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: a midterm, in class writing assignments, participation in class discussions, and a final project

Prerequisites: PSYC 101, an ARTH or ARTS course, or permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: Studio Art majors; Psychology majors

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: no pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D3)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

INTR 223 (D3) PSYC 318 (D3)

Attributes: PSYC Area 1 - Behavioral Neuroscience

Spring 2020

SEM Section: 01  TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm  Betty Zimmerberg

INTR 240  (F)  Philosophy of Education

Cross-listings: PHL 240  INTR 240

Secondary Cross-listing

Why are you here? What do you expect to learn? How do you expect to learn? The College Mission Statement says that "Williams seeks to provide the finest possible liberal arts education by nurturing in students the academic and civic virtues, and their related traits of character.” How have you already been taught the academic and civic virtues? Where have you been taught them? In school? On the sports field? At home? How did you develop your character? This first-year seminar will examine the philosophy of education through educational autobiographies: works that tell the story of a moral and intellectual education. Each book was chosen by and will be introduced by a professor from a different department, and then Professor of Philosophy Steve Gerrard will continue the discussion.

Requirements/Evaluation: several short papers
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 12
Enrollment Preferences: only first-year students
Expected Class Size: 12
Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
PHIL 240 (D2) INTR 240 (D2)

Fall 2019
SEM Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Steven B. Gerrard

INTR 322 (S) Race, Culture, Incarceration
Cross-listings: AFR 322 INTR 322 AMST 322 PSCI 313

Primary Cross-listing
This course explores racially-fashioned policing and incarceration from the Reconstruction era convict prison lease system to contemporary mass incarceration and "stop and frisk" policies of urban areas in the United States. Also explored will be political imprisonment in the United States.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: brief analytical papers and group presentations.
Prerequisites: none
Expected Class Size: 19
Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
AFR 322 (D2) INTR 322 (D2) AMST 322 (D2) PSCI 313 (D2)
Attributes: AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives AMST Space and Place Electives JLST Interdepartmental Electives

Spring 2020
SEM Section: 01 Cancelled

INTR 330 (S) Femininity, Captivity, and Cultural Politics
This tutorial examines female, pro-feminist leadership for human rights that shapes cultural norms and perceptions of social justice. The tutorial will examine contributions to: activism, literature, art, film, music, theory focused on advocacy democracy.

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: students write primary papers and review papers each week
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 10
Expected Class Size: 4
Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)
Not offered current academic year

INTR 334 (S) Radical Theories of Political Struggle: Anti-Black Racism and the Obama Administration
Cross-listings: AFR 334  PSCI 346  INTR 334

Primary Cross-listing

This seminar reviews contemporary theories of “anti-black racism”; their articulation or assimilation within current political movements and mobilizations; and the influence and impact such theories-expressed in and/or as activism-on social justice and civil rights. Critical race theory, Afro-pessimism, feminist/queer theory and the works of the incarcerated are studied. Theorists studied include: Frank Wilderson; Angela Davis; Derrick Bell; Cheryl Harris. Students write weekly mini-reflection papers on assigned readings and collectively make analytical presentations.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: 1 research paper (50%); 2 presentations with summaries (40%); active engagement in class discussions (10%); weekly student presentations consist of 15 minutes of analysis with written summaries and Q/A; 1st quarter of semester: thesis and outline; 2nd and 3rd quarters: 2-page summaries integrating assigned texts into research analysis; 4th quarter: edit final paper

Prerequisites: familiarity with one of the following: critical race theory; Africana/Black studies; feminist anti-racist political movements

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: if over enrolled students will be asked to submit a paragraph on their research interest relevant to the seminar.

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

AFR 334 (D2) PSCI 346 (D2) INTR 334 (D2)

Not offered current academic year

INTR 343 (S) Representations of Racial-Sexual Violence from Enslavement to Emancipation

Cross-listings: AFR 343  INTR 343  WGSS 343  AMST 343

Primary Cross-listing

This tutorial examines representations of and resistance to racial-sexual violence in American society, from colonial America to contemporary US culture. Interdisciplinary texts cover history, politics, literature, film, feminist studies, American studies, lgbtq and ethnic/black studies. Books include Southern Horrors; Intimate Matters; Scenes of Subjection; Trauma and Recovery; The Delectable Negro; At the Dark End of the Street; films include Birth of a Nation; Bush Mama; To Kill a Mockingbird. The primary focus is on racial and sexual vulnerability to violence and mobilization for freedom from the 18th-21st centuries.

Class Format: tutorial; students provide primary and response papers and discuss their analyses and theories of social and interpersonal violence.

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly primary and response papers

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: preference given to juniors and seniors

Expected Class Size: 8

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

AFR 343 (D2) INTR 343 (D2) WGSS 343 (D2) AMST 343 (D2)

Attributes: AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives  JLST Interdepartmental Electives  WGSS Racial Sexual + Cultural Diversity Courses

Spring 2020

TUT Section: T1  Cancelled

Winter Study  ************************************************************
INTR 19 (W) The Restless, Living, Incomplete, Agitated, Incredible, Conjectural Collection

Cross-listings: INTR 19 LEAD 19 ARTS 19 ARTH 19

Secondary Cross-listing

This course takes a behind-the-scenes look at the WCMA art collection--its origins, contents, accessibility, and future--as a singular resource for the Williams College community and beyond. With an eye toward the coming Presidential election and ideas of resistance, protest, power, agitation, and rebellion, students will conduct both a broad survey of the collection and in depth case studies of several artworks. Fundamental questions include: How is an art collection assembled, let alone maintained and mediated? How is a collection evidence of a certain philosophy or proof of a particular position? Should collecting habits change in times of significant political disquiet? Through reading, dialogue, and hands-on learning, we develop strategies for how to dust off, contextualize, and re-contextualize complex collection artworks in public art galleries. The course further offers the chance to collaborate with WMCA staff, including representatives from various departments, including archives, curatorial, collections, and more. The course's final project includes generating a speculative exhibition proposal for the museum in the fall of 2020. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Jordan Stein is an independent curator and collaborator with an interest in expanded models and methods of exhibition making, history as medium, and the practice of research.

Requirements/Evaluation: exhibition proposal

Prerequisites: keen interest in museums, art collections and culture

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: random selection

Grading: pass/fail only

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:
INTR 19 LEAD 19 ARTS 19 ARTH 19

Winter 2020

LEC Section: 01 MTR 10:00 am - 12:50 pm Jordan Stein

INTR 99 (W) Indep Study: Interdisciplinary

Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

Class Format: independent study

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2020

IND Section: 01