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 219 (F)  Women in National Politics  (WI)
Crosslistings: PSCI219 / INTR219 / WGSS219

Primary Crosslisting

This tutorial focuses on the writings and memoirs of black women who have shaped national politics through civil rights and human rights movements in the 21st century. Women studied include: Fannie Lou Hamer, Barbara Jordan, Shirley Chisholm, Angela Davis, Ella Baker, Kathleen Cleaver.

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: brief analytical papers and response papers for each week's readings
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis, not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: juniors and seniors, sophomores with permission of instructor
Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Fall 2018
TUT Section: T1    TBA     Joy A. James

INTR 223 (S)  Image, Imaging, and Imagining: The Brain and Visual Arts
Crosslistings: NSCI318 / INTR223 / PSYC318

Secondary Crosslisting

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. Students will conduct an empirical laboratory project that will explore their own experimental question in response to the course material. The class will include field trips to local museums.

Class Format: seminar and empirical lab course
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on a midterm, participation in class discussions, and a poster presentation of the empirical project
Extra Info: satisfies one semester of Division III requirement
Extra Info 2: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: PSYC 101, an ARTH or ARTS course, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 12
Enrollment Preferences: Studio Art majors; Psychology majors and Neuroscience concentrators
INTR 240 (F) The Autobiographical Philosophy of Education

Crosslistings: INTR240 / PHIL240

Secondary Crosslisting

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. This year's autobiographies are: John Stuart Mill, Autobiography, Charles Dew, The making of a Racist, Michael Chabon, The Recipe for Life, Philip Roth, The Facts: A Novelist's Autobiography, bell hooks, Wounds of Passion, Paul Kalanithis, When Breath Becomes Air, Frederick Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom, Zhuangze, Basic Writings. This course is part of the John Hyde Teaching Fellowship.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: frequent short responses, including our own educational autobiographies that we will share

Extra Info: not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: open only to first-year students; Interested students should e-mail Professor Gerrard a very brief description of their educational background and interests in order to enroll. I will be seeking a balance of educational backgrounds and interests

Fall 2018

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

INTR 322 (F) Race, Culture, Incarceration (WI)

Crosslistings: AMST322 / AFR322 / INTR322 / PSCI313

Primary Crosslisting

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

Enrollment Limit: 19

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora; AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives; AMST Space and Place Electives; JLST Interdepartmental Electives;

Fall 2018
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
Distributions: (D2)
Not offered current academic year

INTR 334 (S) Radical Theories of Political Struggle: Anti-Black Racism and the Obama Administration
Crosslistings: INTR334 / AFR334 / PSCI346
Primary Crosslisting
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.
Extra Info: 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
Distributions: (D2)

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01  W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm  Joy A. James

INTR 343 (F) Representations of Racial-Sexual Violence from Enslavement to Emancipation (WI)
Crosslistings: WGSS343 / AMST343 / AFR343 / INTR343
Primary Crosslisting
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
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: preference given to juniors and seniors

Expected Class Size: 8

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

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

Fall 2018
TUT Section: T1    TBA    Joy A. James

Spring 2019
TUT Section: T1    TBA    Joy A. James

INTR 361 (F)  Writing about Bodies (WI)
Crosslistings: ARTH361 / WGSS361 / THEA361 / INTR361

Secondary Crosslisting

The goal is to think about describing bodies from a variety of disciplinary approaches and genres of writing. Its focus is on living bodies, or bodies that were once alive, with an emphasis on bodies that move i.e., performing bodies--actors, dancers, singers--and what makes them unique. We will also consider objects associated with bodies, and the ways they are animated, including how they are animated when the person who had them dies. The course is meant for juniors, seniors, and graduate students who wish to analyze bodies from different disciplinary formations--art, theatre, literature, anthropology, philosophy--and who have a particular interest in writing. We will read scholarly writing, fiction, New Yorker profiles, as well as memoir/autobiography, and take each as a model through which to write about a person or an object redolent of a person. Among possible readings: Roland Barthes on cultural theory and representation; Claudia Rankine and Robin Coste Lewis on black bodies; Tamar Garb on portraiture; Elaine Scarry on the body in pain; Joan Acocella, Hilton Als, Judith Thurman and other writers on the arts; Judith Butler and Peggy Phelan on the performative body; Marvin Carlson and Terry Castle on haunting; and Bill Brown and Mark Doty on things. In addition to readings, assignments include performances at the '62 Center and works on view at WCMA, as well as selected tapes of live performances as well as films and selected tapes of live performances.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: alternating weekly essays (4-5 pages) and responses (2-4 pages) as well as discussion; one to two group meetings

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: ARTH 101-102, or permission of instructor; a writing sample that conveys the kind of subject you might be interested in pursuing

Enrollment Limit: 10

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH or THEA; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under INTR or WGSS

Attributes: AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives; PERF Interdepartmental Electives;

Fall 2018
TUT Section: T1    TBA    Carol Ockman