Spring 2011

COURSE LISTINGS

SPRING COURSES BY DAY AND TIME

MONDAY
2:00 PM – 4:40 PM    WST 251/HIS 296W    Women in East Asia

WEDNESDAY
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM    WST 100    Intro to Women’s Studies: Gender, Identity & Social Protest in U.S. Sentimental Culture
2:00 PM – 4:40 PM    WST 296/WST 496    International Human Rights
4:50 PM – 7:30 PM    WST 205/PHL 171    Philosophical Foundations of Feminism

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY
11:00 PM – 12:15 PM    WST 284/DAN 284    African Dance: Women and Culture
12:30 PM – 1:45 PM    WST 250/FR 247    Black Paris
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM    WST 123/AH 100    Intro to Visual & Cultural Studies
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM    WST 213/DAN 220    Sacred Dance and Yoga
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM    WST 243/WST 443    Major Authors: Jane Austen
2:00 PM – 3:15 PM    WST 270/SP 261    Facing Facts: Non-Fiction Writing
3:25 PM – 4:40 PM    WST 243/WST 443    Major Authors: The Radical Narratives of Toni Morrison

TUESDAY
2:00 PM – 4:40 PM    WST 200W    Colloquium in Women’s Studies
2:00 PM – 4:40 PM    WST 350/HIS 340W    The Black Family in Slavery & Freedom

TUESDAY, THURSDAY
9:40 AM – 10:55 AM    WST 283/WST 483    Orality, Language & Literacy
11:05 AM – 12:20 PM    WST 278/ANT 278    Birth & Death II: Making Populations Healthy
12:30 PM – 1:45 PM    WST 265/WST 465    Issues in Film: Family Repression & Rage in Film & Society
4:50 PM – 6:05 PM    WST 190/DAN 190    Middle Eastern Dance: Folkloric/Bedouin
4:50 PM – 6:05 PM    WST 268/WST 468    Issues in Contemporary Japanese Culture
University of Rochester
Susan B. Anthony Institute for
Gender and Women's Studies

Course Descriptions

WST 100 Intro to Women's Studies: Gender, Identity & Social Protest in U.S. Sentimental Culture
2 Credit Course. Nineteenth-century American women’s sentimental fiction—tear-jerking tales like Fern’s *Ruth Hall* and Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* that aimed to provoke their readers’ sympathy for the downtrodden—has a complex reception history. Many critics have believed it lacks literary merit due to its ostensible reliance on manipulating emotion as opposed to engaging literary intellect. Recently, though, readers influenced by feminism have demonstrated the sexist character of anti-sentimentalist criticism. These scholars have called attention to the tradition’s artistry and perspective on the lived experience of the non-empowered, particularly women. Critics have also, though, revealed how such fiction also reinforces normative gender hierarchies. As we explore these and related issues while reading sentimental fiction, also considering how the genre has influenced our own artistic and cultural values, this course will introduce students to a number of historical, literary, and theoretical approaches to gender studies. J. Havard

WST 123/AH 100 Intro to Visual and Cultural Studies
The aim of this course is two-fold: First, to develop an understanding of the extraordinary variety of ways meaning is produced in visual culture; secondly, to enable students to analyze and describe the social, political, and cultural effects of these meanings. By studying examples drawn from contemporary art, film, television, digital culture, and advertising we will learn techniques of analysis developed in the context of our visual world. Grades are based on response papers, class attendance and participation, and a midterm and a final paper. Occasional film screenings will be scheduled as necessary in the course of the semester. S. Willis

WST 190/DAN 190 Middle Eastern Dance: Folkloric/Bedouin
This course will explore Traditional Folkloric roots of Middle Eastern Dance, focusing on specific Bedouin dance styles of North Africa (Raks Shaabi). These dance forms will consist of Moroccan, Tunisian, Algerian, and Egyptian Folkloric styles. Rhythms from within these regions will be identified through music and drumming. Traditional costuming will be addressed and shown in class and history, art, and culture from these countries will be explored and experienced. Discourse and research topics will address issues of gender and body image. Improving strength, flexibility and self-awareness of the body, the class work will include meditative movement, dance technique, choreography and improvisation. No prior dance experience necessary. K. Scott

WST 200W Colloquium in Women's Studies
The colloquium explores the diversity of feminist thought and practice in its importance in forming the intellectual grounding in Women's Studies, in its impact on a variety of disciplines, and in its articulation with lives and social practices. The course follows a three fold structure. First, we consider several major systems of feminist thought; second, through discussions and reading with guest faculty Associates of the Susan B. Anthony Institute, we consider the interdisciplinary methods that under gird these forms of feminist theory in a variety of academic disciplines. Third, in class discussions and writings we consider the experiences of women and men situated in diverse and changing cultural, economic, political, and psychological climates with an emphasis on student interest. The course will support and develop in students the ability to write intensively in Women’s Studies as an inherently interdisciplinary field; it meets the upper-level writing requirement in Women's Studies for the college. H. Meconi

WST 205/PHL 171 Philosophical Foundations of Feminism
The study of contemporary feminist theory. The course considers the conception of women expressed through our practices, laws, theories and literature. Is this conception of an inessential Other as one philosopher has argued? Other topics to be discussed include: equality and equal rights, sex roles and gender specific language, power relations and self-determination, marriage and maternity. D. Modrak

WST 213/DAN 220 Sacred Dance & Yoga
This class will explore what sacred dance is and how the sacred can be revealed from within through the study and practice of the following topics: a dance history overview, goddess worship and the feminine spirit, the women iconoclasts of American modern dance, spirituality and the body temple and various yoga practice techniques. Students will also learn traditional dance sequences from Namibia, India, Israel, Greece and the Middle East, creative community circle dancing and dances of Universal Peace. Class requirements include journaling, reading assignments from the text book and handouts, viewing videos and attendance at dance events. J. McCausland

WST 243/WST 443 Major Authors: Jane Austen
Blending clear-eyed social commentary with a faith in romantic love, festooning mordant satire with enchantedly happy endings, Jane Austen’s novels subsist on contradiction and enjoy more popularity than ever. This course will place Austen in the context of her times while also analyzing her continued appeal. Readings will include Pride and Prejudice, Mansfield Park, Emma, and Persuasion, as well as works by Alexander Pope, Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, and Mary Shelley. K. Mannheimer

WST 243/WST 443 Major Authors: The Radical Narratives of Toni Morrison
Toni Morrison has emerged as one of the most influential writers and critics in contemporary American culture. This course will approach her work from a broad range of critical perspectives including black feminist thought, psychoanalysis, trauma theory, Biblical exegesis, postcolonial analysis, and critical race theory. Although this class will emphasize rigorous study of her literary work, we will also pay close attention to her contributions to literary criticism, her role in public life as well
as her forays into political and national debates. In our study of
her novels, we will explore such issues as the importance of
history and myth in the creation of personal identity,
constructions of race and gender, the dynamic nature of love,
the role of the community in social life, and the pressures
related to the development of adolescent girls. S. Li

WST 250/FR 247 Black Paris
This course is a study of Black Paris, as imagined by three
generations of Black cultural producers from the United States,
the Caribbean and Africa. Paris is as a space of freedom and
artistic glory that African American writers, soldiers and artists
were denied back home. For colonized Africans, and
Caribbeans, Paris was the birthplace of the Negritude, the
ultimate cultural renaissance influenced by the Harlem
Renaissance. From Josephine Baker, Richard Wright, James
Baldwin to Shay Youngblood's Black girl in Paris, from Aime
Cesaire to Maryse Conde, from Bernard Dadie's An African in
Paris and to contemporary Franco-African writing, we will
investigate how the representation of Paris functions in the
construction of a black identities. Readings include: Black Girl
in Paris (Shay Youngblood), Desirada (Maryse Conde), The
Josephine Baker Story, Paris Noir: African Americans in the
City of Light (Tyler Stovall), An African in Paris (Bernard
Dadie). C. Kenedjio

WST 251/HIS 296W Women in East Asia
In seminar format, students will read and discuss books and
articles on women's history in Japan, China, and Korea.
Differences in their responses to the modern world and their
role in the history of modern East Asian society will be
emphasized. The study of women in modern East Asian history
will be used as a vehicle to improve student's critical reading,
speaking, and writing skills. W. Hauser

WST 265/WST 465 Issues in Film: Family Repression &
Rage in Film & Society
Understanding social psychology of modern & contemporary
Western/American family experience, & especially its means of
abetting the concealment, repression, & suppression of
people's emotional lives. Study of the films combines with the
readings seek to develop critical understanding of the nuclear
family & the conditions it may create for child-rape, racism,
homophobia, murder & self-destructive behavior such as
substance abuse, self- mutilation, & suicide. Sometimes the
violence is arbitrary, sometimes inevitable, sometimes
incomprehensible. Each case the course's attention is on the
personal & collective machineries of repression, resulting rage
in many individuals & frequent (now often familiar) violent
results. Readings inc: Nancy Chodorow, Alice Miller, Kristin
Kelly, & Stephanie Coontz. Films are taken from: A Price
Above Rubies, A Thousand Acres, All My Sons, American
Beauty, American History X, Bastard out of Carolina, Crimes &
Misdemeanors, Dolores Claiborne, Falling Down, Fargo, etc.
D. Bleich

WST 268/WST 468 Issues in Contemporary Japanese
Culture
This seminar course is based on research on and discussion of
a variety of issues of contemporary concern in Japan, including
national, ethnic and racial identity; changing gender and sex
roles; the family and generational conflict; immigration and
work; the emperor system, war, and memory; cultural
authenticity; and Japan's changing roles in Asia and in the
world. Readings on issues begin with articles in the online
English-language editions of Japan's main news media, extend
outward to reports in the US news media, and eventually to
popular and scholarly English-language studies of the issues
involved. Grading is based on participation in informed
discussion of issues raised in class (20%), and on four papers
on issues to be chosen by each student with the intructor's
permission (20% each). D. Pollack

WST 270/SP 261 Facing Facts: Non-Fiction Writing
This century's major periods of social and political upheaval in
Spanish America are well documented by a variety of texts that
claim to tell the truth about historical events. Many of these
texts acquire the status of "literature" and not mere "reporting."
This course will ask the following questions: How have Spanish
American writers constructed factual, truth-telling texts? What
impact has photography had on the writing of nonfiction? What
expectations do we as readers bring to documentary literature?
How are the lines drawn -- and blurred -- between factual and
fictional discourses? Readings will be chosen to represent
revolutionary Mexico, labor struggles of the 1920s, revolutionary
Cuba, the repression in the Southern Cone, the
Central American insurgencies, and the survival of indigenous
cultures. Short essays; research term paper. Class taught in
English. B. Jorgensen

WST 278/ANT 278 Birth & Death II: Making Populations
Healthy
This course examines programs carried out by governments,
multilateral organizations, and non governmental organizations
to deal with "public problems" connected to population:
communicable diseases such as TB, malaria and HIV/AIDS;
famine prevention and relief; child survival, especially
malnutrition and infant diarrheal disease; safe motherhood;
teen pregnancy; contraception, and abortion. A. Carter

WST 283/WST 483 Orality, Language & Literacy
We consider issues raised in Walter Ong's '82 study, "Orality &
Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word." His account related
the growth of writing & print to the development of science &
modern rational thought, exploring possible changes in
collective consciousness as a result of the shift of media
emphasis. We'll examine classical sources, incl Plato's
suspicions of the power of oral poetry, & consider levels of
literacy achieved in ancient society; we'll look at European
medieval traditions. Discussions on the roles language &
literature played in the lives of non-literate people as
contrasted with literate. Study of the modern & contemporary
periods focuses on practices as conversation, becoming
literate, collection of oral accounts & their uses, uses of
ethnographic writing, & different approaches to speech, writing,
& language in African American & white communities. Key aim
of the course is to show the politics, mutual dependency, &
reciprocity of oral/literate uses of language in
literary/nonliterary. D. Bleich

WST 284/DAN 284 African Dance: Women and Culture
This course will focus on dances that pertain to the life-cycle of
women. Students will experience dances that celebrate rites of
passage such as coming of age, circumcision, marriage, and
childbirth. Discussion will center around gender roles in the
performance ensemble and the correlation of performance
representations with the traditional lifestyle. Students will
examine the cultural factors that contribute to the articulation of
gender roles in post-colonial West Africa and the relationship
of those roles to the performance ensemble. This course will
be cross-listed with Frederick Douglass Institute for African
and African-American Studies and Women's Studies for the Spring
2011 semester. K. Martino

Revised 01/06/11
sba/curriculum/2010-2011 courses/course listing documents/fall 2010
WST 296/WST 496  International Human Rights
This course will examine the historical development of theories of human rights and their relationship to gender issues. We will consider arguments over women's rights and human rights from the eighteenth century democratic revolutions in the United States and France to the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing. Specific case studies will include reproductive rights and women's economic rights in a world context as well as alliances and rifts between "First World" and "Third World" feminisms. J. Pedersen

WST 350/HIS 340W The Black Family in Slavery & Freedom
After a discussion of the Moynihan Report controversy and an assessment of the literature on the black family, the readings will investigate why and how stable black families were encouraged, and how they developed under slavery. The impact of factors such as economics, politics, religion, gender, medicine, and the proximity of free families, on the structure of the black family will be given special attention. In this way, the structure of the slave family on the eve of Emancipation, and its preparedness for freedom, will be tested and assessed. Students will be encouraged to identify persistent links between the "history" of slavery and the black family, and the development of social policy. L. Hudson