FALL 2015
Department of Comparative Literature
Course offerings
As of September 10, 2015 - subject to updates

Chair: Tracy McNulty
Director of Graduate Studies: Andrea Bachner
Director of Undergraduate Studies: Neil Saccamano

Freshman Seminars: See the J. S. Knight Institute for enrollment process [http://www.arts.cornell.edu/knight_institute/](http://www.arts.cornell.edu/knight_institute/)

**New COML 1109.101 Writing across Cultures: On the Waterfront – McEnaney, T. (tpm88)**

TR 10:10 – 11:25am

In this class we will examine representations of leaving, entering, and working at ports, harbors, and docks, those especially dense waterfront sites of cultural, financial, and epidemiological encounter and exchange. Artists have often taken the waterfront as their subject, and literary critics have recognized it as a privileged place in the history of storytelling. As we travel through our course considering work from Havana to Venice to Marseilles to San Francisco and beyond, we will pay particular attention to how artists represent the waterfront as a space to engage different forms of “otherworldliness” (cosmopolitanism, post-colonialism, supernaturalism). We will also reflect on the place where our own reading occurs, using Ithaca to think through the unique problems and advantages posed by life on the waterfront.

**COML 1109.102 Writing across Cultures: Writing the ‘I’ in Modern Poetry – Karmin, H. (hrk53)**

MWF 11:15 – 12:05pm

In Plato’s Republic, Socrates famously imagines the ideal city as one without literature. Socrates feared the power of literature to corrupt the citizenry because, when we read, we put ourselves into the minds of others—potentially opening ourselves to pernicious influence. When you read a poem written in the first-person perspective out loud, you pretend that you (or “I”) are someone else, potentially someone morally corrupt.

In this class, we will seek to reclaim poetry for society, examining the way Modernist poets have played with the idea of the “I” and the expression of a poet’s identity. The class will question writing’s ability to represent an individual’s persona while challenging students to adopt and develop their own authorial personae to build more effective arguments.

**COML 1109.103 Writing across Cultures: Reading Poetry – Pollak, N. (np27)**

MWF 1:25 – 2:15pm

Poems are puzzles, and in this class we’ll figure them out by writing about them. We’ll read short poems by Housman, Frost, Pushkin, Lermontov, and Tsvetaeva, among others (all reading is in English). We’ll learn how to answer the key question “What is this poem about?...,” and how to explain our conclusions to other readers. The language of poetry may be distinguished from everyday language, but the skills needed for understanding and writing about poetry are broadly useful, for academic and for more practical purposes.

**COML 1109.104 Writing across Cultures: Poetry’s Image – Monroe, J. (jbm3)**

TR 11:40 – 12:55pm

Where do we get our images of poetry, and poets? Along with the images we find in poems themselves, how do poetry and poets figure in fiction and film, in philosophy and popular culture? How do such figures inform the images in poems, poetry's image? In what senses is poetry a "liberal art"? What is its relation to "self," to language, history, and politics, to other disciplines and discourses? This course will explore such issues in a wide range of short texts in both verse and prose, in fiction, film, and other media. Authors include Plato, Aristotle, Blake, Wordsworth, Keats, Poe, Dickinson, Baudelaire, Whitman, Rimbaud, Stein, Neruda, and Bolaño, concluding with selections from contemporary poets.
**COML 1109.105 Writing across Cultures: Africa in the European Imaginary – Caserta, S. (sc2394)**

MWF 1:10 – 11:00am

How has Africa been approached, imagined, and described by travelers, writers and film directors coming from different European countries? This course will explore the idea of Africa that was invented in the West, widely circulated beyond the borders of its production, and is somehow still present and influential in our contemporary world. In doing so, students will work together with the instructor in order to develop the most effective writing strategies to convey opinions, evaluate literary and cinematic works, and express constructive criticism. Thus, writing assignments will aim at improving students’ writing skills, making them learn how to write in a cohesive, clear and persuasive way.

**COML 1126.101 Comparative Arts: Paying Attention: from cinema to video gaming – Fu, J. (jf696)**

MWF 2:30 – 3:20pm

Are we not paying more and more attention to screens, and at the same time, paying more and more (such as time, money, anxiety or attentiveness to each other) for our attention paid to screens? This course asks: are we enslaved to this screen economy represented by the business empire of cinema and video gaming, or are we equipped with new ways of attending and relating to the world through screens when watching a poetic cinema or playing an embodied video game?

We will read, watch or play texts including Plato, Marx, Foucault, Black Mirror and League of Legends. Students are expected to make arguments combining textual analysis and conceptual reasoning.

**COML 1126.102 Comparative Arts: Transformative Terrains: Coming of Age on the American Landscape – Hussein, K. (kbh68)**

TR 8:40 – 9:55am

The story of growing up –or, ‘coming of age’– is fundamental to the human experience of the world; but to what extent is the story of ‘coming of age’ also a story of coming to terms with the shape– or, landscape –of the world around us? In what ways do different landscapes interact with, and shape, stories of growing up– particularly in the American tradition? Considering such questions, we will examine the ways in which writers, poets, graphic novelists, lyricists, painters and filmmakers navigate the intersections between different American landscapes and ‘growing up’. In so doing, we will learn to structure sharp, coherent essay-responses, using different styles of writing: expository, evaluative, comparative and argumentative. We will potentially consider works by Craig Thompson, John Steinbeck and Bruce Springsteen, amongst others.

**COML 1126.103 Comparative Arts: Cinematic Worlds – Wijaya, E. (ew388)**

MW 2:55- 4:10pm

How does the world I inhabit collide with the world of a film? If the experience of the cinema presents a form of thinking and of world-formation, what could world cinema teach us about our place in the world in relation to others? As Siegfried Kracauer asks: "What is the good of film experience?" In this class, we will read literary and philosophical texts alongside a selection of classic and contemporary "foreign films", including the works of Jean-Luc Godard, Werner Herzog, Lynne Ramsay, Béla Tarr, Wong Kar-Wai and Edward Yang. Students will be encouraged to develop their writing styles through honing their visual and critical reading abilities.

**COML 1126.104 Comparative Arts: Poetic Cinema – Huang, J. (jh2358)**

MWF 10:10 – 11:00am

Film, a complicated and multi-layered art form, does not merely tell fascinating stories. Sometimes, we are also enticed by some "poetic fragments" in films. How could this happen? Are poems adaptable for screen? What is the poetic texture of cinema? In this seminar, we will explore the possible intersections between poetry and film. Students will learn to describe and analyze images and sounds in written words with increasing knowledge of poetics of cinema. Students are also encouraged to interpret and evaluate experimental works across art forms. We will read relevant literature by both literary and film scholars. The filmography may include works by Man Ray, Rene Claire, Maya Deren, Jean-Luc Godard, Yasujirō Ozu, and Andrei Tarkovsky.
COML 1333.101 Studies in Literary Theory: The World as Text – Ahmad, A. (aa898)
TR 2:55 – 4:10pm

When we meet people for the first time, it is common to be asked about our names and where we are from. This course will explore what it entails to identify ourselves and others with place. What does it mean to belong to a place? What is the relationship between place and our bodies, values, thoughts and worldviews? Does place construct who we are, or is it the other way around? How are place and identity represented in literature, film, and other genres? We will attempt to examine these questions in a variety of theoretical and literary texts, films and other media. Authors and films may include Cresswell, Silverman, Baudrillard, Borges, The Matrix. Writing assignments will encourage students to write with style and make complex arguments.

TR 11:40 – 12:55pm

What if terror could engender worlds, or reality was a waking nightmare? Questions like these animate the genre Argentine author Ricardo Piglia calls “paranoid fiction”. Whether through one man’s obsessive attention to detail, a dictator’s megalomania, the traumas of state terrorism, or a quest that unveils a reality-generating machine, the Latin American authors we will read explore paranoia through texts that fracture our knowledge of the real into so many conspiracy theories. Students will develop academic writing and close reading skills through critical engagement with a variety of texts. These include short fiction masterworks (Borges, Cortázar), metaphysical crime novels (Piglia, Tabo II), and takes on the dictator novel and testimonio (testimonial literature). Readings from literature will be complimented by filmic, critical, and philosophical texts.

COML 1333.103 Studies in Literary Theory: Extraordinary Matters: Politics, Literature, Philosophy - Vega, F. (fhv3)
MW 7:30 – 8:45pm

What do people mean when they use the word “extraordinary”? Writers and thinkers have used the term extraordinary to explain the abnormal, the miraculous, and even the ordinary life. But the act of naming the “extraordinary” paradoxically controls the way we think about our common life. This begs the question: is our common life only founded upon extraordinary moments? This course will explore political and aesthetic works sensitive to these moments. We will read texts woven with a rhetoric of the “extraordinary” in an attempt to grasp the import of the notion of common life. Writing assignments will develop students’ ability to think about various genres together from the domains of political philosophy, history, and literature. Readings may include Heidegger, Arendt, Borges, Celan, and Perec, among others.

2000
COML 2010 Great Books – Kennedy, W. J. (wjk3)
(HB) (LA-AS)
TR 10:10 – 11:25am

This course will focus on the question of originality in some of the “great books” of world literature and will ask whether and how originality might refer more to “re-writing” and “re-vision” than it does to newness or raw novelty. Readings will draw upon selections from Genesis, the Koran, Dante’s Inferno, Wu Ch’eng En’s Monkey, Cervantes’s Don Quixote, Flaubert’s Madame Bovary, Joyce’s Ulysses, Vargas Llosa’s Storyteller, and Devi’s Breast-Giver.

COML 2021 Humans and Climate Change (University Course) – Pinkus, K. (kep44) / Mahowald, N. (nmm63)
(CA-AS) (CA) (LA)
Cross-listed with EAS 2021
TR 11:40 – 12:55pm

This course explores the human dimension of climate change, arguably the most significant crisis ever to confront humanity. Of course, changes in the climate are natural, but it is almost universally acknowledged that humans have contributed to an unprecedented speeding up of the processes with potentially cataclysmic effects. Drawing on disciplines including cultural studies, history, economics, climate science, philosophy, literary criticism, anthropology, political/labor theory, and sociology, the first half of the course asks the question “What did humans do to cause climate change?” and the second half of the course asks “what can humans do to mitigate and adapt to climate change?” A course packet of readings
will include works on climate and industrial history, policy-making, biodiversity, ethics, technology, agriculture, design and environmental justice. Students will also be required to watch several films and read several literary texts. In addition to short essays and prelims, students will work together in small groups to produce an interdisciplinary project responding to climate change.

**COML 2030 Introduction to Comparative Literature - (Invitation course) – Melas, N. (nam5) and Castillo, D. (dac9)**

(LA-AS)
MWF 10:10 – 11:00am

Enrollment is limited to: 18 first-semester freshmen.

Students must apply in writing to Chair, Department of Comparative Literature, 240 Goldwin Smith Hall.

What is Comparative Literature? In this course, we will look at the various answers that this question has elicited. We will learn about the evolution of the discipline by looking at an assortment of literary texts across national, linguistic and historical boundaries along with a wide array of theoretical works. Comparative Literature, however, is not just an academic field of study but first and foremost a practice. We will develop analytical tools to interpret and compare literary texts and artistic media that engage with sounds and images (photography, cinema, digital art). Mapping a wide-ranging set of trajectories, we will explore the far-reaching implications of our new globalized world through the prism of its literatures. Students will emerge from the seminar with an enhanced awareness of the global literary scene and with the ability to read critically and write with clarity. The course will acquaint students with the breadth and depth of the field, with authors including Plato, Jonathan Swift, Heinrich von Kleist, Edgar Allan Poe, Ferdinand de Saussure, Franz Kafka, Gertrude Stein, Jorge Luis Borges, Lu Xun, Marguerite Yourcenar, Roland Barthes, Aimé Césaire, Toni Morrison, Kazuo Ishiguro, Arundhati Roy.

**COML 2033 Crimes and Passions in The European Novel – Saccamano, N. (ncs5)**

(HB) (LA-AS)
TR 1:25 – 2:40pm

This course will introduce students to some of the most acclaimed works of European fiction by considering why these novels tend to focus on morally, socially, and legally transgressive acts and passions. Topics will include: desire and forms of identity; plots of seduction and adultery; the role of gender in defining the genre and, in particular, the concept of “character”; the intersection between novelistic form and European social and intellectual history; realism, romance, and the novel’s political unconscious; the representation of individual experience through first- and third-person narration. Authors may include: Laclos, Goethe, Brontë, Stendhal, Flaubert, Dostoevsy, Kafka, Woolf, and Proust.

**COML 2230 The Comic Theatre – Rusten, J (jsr5)**

(HB) (LA-AS)
Cross-listed with CLASS 2651, PMA 2635
MWF 12:20 – 1:10pm

Study and analysis of 2500 years of comedy (all in English), from Greece (Aristophanes, Menander), Rome (Plautus and Terence), Italy (Machiavelli, The commedia dell’ arte), Elizabethan (Shakespeare, Ben Jonson) and Restoration (Congreve, Wycherley) England, France (Molière), Hollywood (Keystone and Hal Roach studios, Screwball comedies of the 30’s, Sitcoms) and others besides.

Themes traced include Tricksters (from chaos to order), Farce (from order to chaos), Comic Flaws (exaggeration of character traits), Parody (imitation that is not flattering) and Misrule (rebellion for its own sake).

Comparison of plot and character types, performance styles, social impact, conservative vs. subversive potential; development of a checklist of techniques (e.g. stereotypes of gender, race and ethnicity, repetition, willful misinterpretation) and motives (e.g., sex, money, alcohol) to guide our observations; comedy’s claim to be a social benefit, and the case against it and in favor of censorship.


(LA-AS)
Cross-listed with FGSS 2290, LGBT 2290
MWF 11:15 – 12:05pm

This course offers an introduction to the questions, topics, approaches, and theories that characterize the field of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Studies. Using an interdisciplinary approach (literature, history, anthropology,
media, law, and science), we will explore categories such as sexual norms, human rights, power, feminism, queerness, gender/sex, censorship/ moral panic, and identity in Euro-American as well as in postcolonial and global terms. Through a variety of films, primary and secondary sources, you will formulate questions and provide answers to the relationship of these categories with organizing structures, including race, ethnicity, religion, family, marriage, reproduction, the economy, and the state. While we investigate how sexual identities in African, South American, and Asian contexts converge with or challenge Euro-American discourses, we will look at the tools LGBT studies offers for understanding power and culture. Course requirements include reading responses, blackboard discussions, and two short papers.

Outcome 1: Understand the social and political history of dissident, resistant, and transgressive sexualities from the 19th to the 21st centuries.

Outcome 2: Learn a sophisticated vocabulary and effective communication skills to include writing and presentation on these subjects.

Outcome 3: Be able to define key analytic concepts in the study of non-normative sexualities.

Outcome 4: Identify and discuss some of the best current films and scholarship in the field and from around the world.

Outcome 5: Differentiate between and model multiple disciplinary approaches and methods based on your major.

3000

COML 3021 Literary Theory on the Edge – Caruth, C. (cc694) / Culler, J. (jdc9)

(LA-AS)
Cross-listed with ENGL 3021
MW 2:55 – 4:10pm

This course introduces the most exciting and cutting-edge theoretical advances of the 20th and 21st centuries. Taught by two Cornell professors active in the field, along with occasional invited guests, lectures will cover such movements as structuralism, deconstruction, trauma theory, biopolitics, human-animal studies and post-human studies. The distinctiveness of literature and the power and complexity of language in all its forms will remain a central focus in the course. Course open to all levels; no previous knowledge of theory required.

COML 3280 Literature of the Old Testament – Carmichael, C. (cmc13)

(GHB) (LA-AS)
Cross-listed with RELST 3280
TR 8:40 – 9:55am

An intimate knowledge of the Bible is of fundamental importance in understanding the history of Western civilization: political philosophy, history of science, European and American literature, history of Judaism and Christianity, developments in legal and moral thinking, and so much more. We will evaluate ideas and institutions past and present by way of selected texts from the Hebrew Bible. Writing assignments will emphasize critical analysis and techniques of close reading and argumentation.

New COML 3330 America through Russian Eyes – Shapiro, G. (gs33)

Cross-listed with AMST 3331, RUSSL 3330
TR 2:55 – 4:10pm

Updated course description:
In this course, we shall look at Russia’s perception of America as reflected in the works of its writers for over a hundred-year period. What motivated these writers? Did they go to the United States with an open mind? Did they have a hidden agenda? How fair and balanced was their portrayal of America and of Americans? We shall attempt to answer these and other questions by examining the writings of such authors as Korolenko, Bunin, Gorky, Mayakovsky, Il’f and Petrov, and Nabokov as well as Aksyonov and Dovlatov. All texts are in English.

COML 3541 Introduction to Critical Theory – Fleming, P. (pf239)

(LA-AS)
Cross-listed with ENGL 3920, GERST 3620, GOVT 3636
TR 11:40 – 12:55pm
This course introduces students to Critical Theory, beginning with its roots in the 19th century (i.e., Kant, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche) and then focusing on its most prominent manifestation in the 20th century, the Frankfurt School (e.g., Kracauer, Adorno, Benjamin, Horkheimer, Marcuse), particularly in its engagement with society and literature (e.g. Brecht, Kafka, and Beckett). Established in 1920s at the Institute for Social Research, the assorted circle of scholars comprising the Frankfurt School played a pivotal role in the intellectual developments of post-war American and European political and aesthetic theory. Often known simply as “Critical Theory,” their key works cover a vast array of intellectual, political, economic, and artistic concerns, from the dialectic of enlightenment to commentaries on popular culture, high art, commodity fetishism, and mass society. This introduction to the programmatic statements and eclectic reflections of various scholars will highlight the diverse historical influences, collaborative efforts, and internecine debates that shaped the intellectual tradition across continents and generations.

**COML 3730 Literature of the Outlaw – Maxwell, B. (bhm4)**

(GHB) (LA-AS)

Cross-listed with AMST 3710, ENGL 3710

TR 11:40 – 12:55pm

The course draws on the world's storehouse of writing, song, and film about bandits, pirates, malingerers, revolutionary appropriators, and other defectors from the sacral order of property. Loyalty and betrayal will concern us, as will the melancholy relationship of outlawry and the passing of historical eras. Aesthetics, ethics, and political economy will guide our enquiries. We'll study several tellings of the legend of Robin Hood, as well as Kleist, Michael Kohlhaas; Kemal, Memed, My Hawk; Genet, The Thief’s Journal; Akutagawa, "Rashomon" and "In a Grove"; Kurosawa, Seven Samurai; America Paredes, With His Pistol in His Hand; narcocorridos; the Jamaican film The Harder They Come; and Jim Jarmusch's film Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai. Students will have the opportunity to develop one essay around an outlaw figure of their choice. All readings in English.

**New COML 3731 The Refusal of Work – Maxwell, B. (bhm4)**

Cross-listed AMST 3731, ENGL 3931

TR 1:25 – 2:40pm

And after this, let no one speak to me of work--I mean the moral value of work. I am forced to accept the notion of work as a material necessity, and in this regard I strongly favor its better, that is, its fairer, division. I admit that life's grim obligations make it a necessity, but never that I should believe in its value, revere my own or that of other men [sic]. . . . There is no use being alive if one must work. The event from which each of us is entitled to expect the revelation of his own life's meaning . . . is not earned by work.

- André Breton, Nadja

Critical reflection on the refusal of work, including but not limited to: non-cooperation with routines of production and/or reproduction (among which, strikes, sexual and otherwise), the right to laziness, malingering, shirking, doggin' it, "not understanding," sabotage, pilferage, "calling in well," desertion (a.k.a. quitting) and other attempts to remain human within modernity's regime of coerced labor. We will also attempt to understand how this regime was installed, and its necessary entanglement with private property. We'll take up literature, film, historiography, and theory.

**COML 3781 Psychoanalysis, the Unconscious, and Mental Life (University Course) – McNulty, T. (tkm9)**

(KCM)

Cross-listed with FGSS 3651, FREN 3560, GERST 3561, ROMS 3560, STS 3651

MWF 10:10 – 11:00am

Psychoanalysis considers the human being not as an object of treatment, but as a subject who is called upon to elaborate an unconscious knowledge about what is disrupting her life, through analysis of dreams, symptoms, bungled actions, slips of the tongue, and repetitive behaviors. Freud finds that these apparently irrational acts and behaviors are ordered by the logic of the fantasy, which provides a mental representation of a traumatic childhood experience and the effects it unleashes in the mind and body—effects he called drives. As “unbound” energies, the drives give rise to symptoms, repetitive acts, and fantasmatic stagings that menace our health and sometimes threaten social coexistence, but that also give rise to the desires, creative acts, and social projects we identify as the essence of human life. Readings will include fundamental texts on the unconscious, repression, fantasy, and the death drive, as well as case studies and speculative
essays on mythology, art, religion, and group psychology. Students will be asked to keep a dream journal and to work on their unconscious formations, and will have the chance to produce creative projects as well as analytic essays.

**COML 3815 Reading Nabokov – Shapiro, G. (gs33)**

(LA-AS)
Cross-listed with ENGL 3790, RUSSL 3385
TR 1:25 – 2:40pm

In Translation

This course offers an exciting trip to the intricate world of Nabokov’s fiction. After establishing himself in Europe as a distinguished Russian writer, Nabokov, at the outbreak of World War II, came to the United States where he reestablished himself, this time as an American writer of world renown. In our analysis of Nabokov’s fictional universe, we shall focus on his Russian corpus of works, from *Mary* (1926) to *The Enchanter* (writ. 1939), all in English translation, and then examine the two widely read novels which he wrote in English in Ithaca while teaching literature at Cornell: *Lolita* (1955) and *Pnin* (1957).

**COML 3891 Occupied France Through Film – Greenberg, M. (mdg17)**

(LA-AS)
Cross-listed with FREN 3840
TR 1:25 – 2:40pm

The Second World War and the Occupation of France by German forces had a traumatic impact on the nation's identity. We will examine the way France has tried to deal with this conflicted period through a series of films that each deal, directly or indirectly with the major questions posed by history to French "memory" of the Occupation. What was the role of collaboration, resistance, anti-Semitism, of writers and intellectuals during this traumatic period? How has film helped to define and re-shape the ways in which France has come to terms with its conflicted past?

**4000**

**COML 4190 Independent Study**

1-4 credits, variable
Permission of instructor required.

**COML 4250 Marx, Freud, Nietzsche – Waite, G (gcw1)**

(HB) (CA-AS)
Cross-listed with GERST 4150, GOVT 4735
MW 2:55 – 4:10pm

This is an introduction to the three 'master thinkers' who have helped determine the discourses of modernity and post-modernity. We consider basic aspects of their work: (a) specific critical and historical analyses; (b) theoretical and methodological writings; (c) programs and manifestos; and (d) styles of argumentation, documentation, and persuasion. This also entails an introduction, for non-specialists, to essential problems of political economy, continental philosophy, psychology, and literary and cultural criticism. Second, we compare the underlying assumptions and the interpretive yields of the various disciplines and practices founded by Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud: historical materialism and communism, existentialism and power-knowledge analysis, and psychoanalysis, respectively. We also consider how these three writers have been fused into a single constellation, 'Marx-Nietzsche-Freud,' and how they have been interpreted by others, including L. Althusser, A. Badiou, A. Camus, H. Cixous, G. Deleuze, J. Derrida, M. Foucault, H.-G. Gadamer, M. Heidegger, L. Irigaray, K. Karatan, J. Lacan, P. Ricoeur, L. Strauss, S. Zizek.

**COML 4280 Biblical Seminar I – Carmichael, C. M. (cmc13)**

(GHB) (HA-AS)
Cross-listed with RELST 4280
Enrollment limited to: 15 students.
W 2:30 – 4:25pm
Topic: Biblical Law and Ethics
A study of how biblical ethical and legal rules (in Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy) judge incidents in biblical narratives (those in Genesis through 2 Kings). The links between the laws and the narratives enable us to observe in detail how ancient thinkers evaluate problems of perennial interest.

**New COML 4367 Aimé Césaire: Poetics of Politics of Decolonization – Melas, N. (nam5)**

Cross-listed with ASRC 4367, FREN 4367  
Co-meets with ASRC 6367/ COML 6367/ FREN 6367  
Enrollment limited to: 15 students.  
W 2:30 – 4:25pm

A detailed exploration of the poetic, dramatic and political writings of the great Martinican poet and statesman in their multifarious contexts, influences and dialogues, including: "Black Paris" of the 1920s and 1930s, Négritude, surrealism, French and American avant-garde poetry (Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Lautréamont, Hughes, Mackay, et al.), philosophy (especially Nietzsche, Frobenius, Hegel, Marx and Sartre), communism, struggles for decolonization in the post WW II era. We will attend specifically to how the history of racial oppression can be met in language and to the conflicts and intersections between public and private speech or between the decolonization of peoples and minds. Reading ability in French helpful, but not required. All primary texts available in English translation.

**COML 4520 Renaissance Humanism – Kennedy, W. J. (wjk3)**

(HB) (LA-AS)  
Cross-listed with ENGL 4200, ROMS 4520  
Co-meets with COML 6520/ ENGL 6240/ ROMS 6520  
Enrollment limited to: 15 students.  
T 2:30 – 4:25pm

A reading and discussion of key texts by Renaissance humanists in Italian, French, English, and other European literature from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

**COML 4550 Cervantes: Don Quixote – Garcés, M. (mg43)**

(HB) (LA-AS)  
Cross-listed with JWST 4950, NES 4950, SPAN 4550  
T 2:30 – 4:25pm

In 1615, Cervantes published the Second Part of his already famous Don Quixote. Four hundred years later, Spanish anthropologists have been excavating the crypt of a Madrid church in order to recover Miguel de Cervantes’ remains. This search is not fortuitous. In 2015, the literary world celebrates the tetracentenary of Don Quixote II, a sequel to Don Quixote I (1605). Constituted by two different works, connected magisterially by its author, Cervantes' masterpiece was hailed by philosopher Michel Foucault as "the first modern work of literature." In fact, Foucault claimed that Cervantes' discovery of the arbitrary relation of words and things ushered in the modern age. Don Quixote begins with an erosion of the belief in the authority of the written word, an approach that anticipates postmodern thought. A revolutionary document in its own age, Cervantes' novel confronts us with the complex history of Spain-the vexed relations among its Moorish, Jewish, and Christian cultures. Our seminar will undertake an interdisciplinary reading of Don Quixote, using various theoretical approaches. Cervantes' fascination with Islam, his cultural tolerance, and his display of humor make him a modern author. In addition, his exploration of fantasy versus "reality," and madness in relation to meaning, turn him into a forerunner of Freud.

**COML 4639 Ordering Knowledge: Pliny’s Encyclopedia and its Successors – Platt, V. (vjp33) and Roby, C. (car295)**

Cross-listed with CLASS 4639, STS 4631  
Co-meets with CLASS 7639/ COML 6639/ STS 7631  
T 1:25 – 4:25pm

This course explores the organization of cultural and scientific knowledge in the form of so-called “encyclopedias”, beginning with Pliny the Elder’s Natural History and tracing its development in later western culture, including Diderot’s Encyclopédie. In particular, we will focus on the combination of natural science and art history that informs Pliny’s text, and the notions of enkyklios paedia (or “general education”) with which it has been problematically associated. The course will include sessions in the library’s Special Collections, focusing on Cornell’s prized collection of early printed editions of the
Natural History. All works will be taught in translation; students may acquire an additional credit by attending sessions in which we will read Pliny in the original Latin.

**COML 4831 Reading Joyce’s Ulysses – Schwarz, D. (drs6)**

(LA-AS)
Cross-listed with ENGL 4700
R 12:20 – 2:15pm
A thorough episode-by-episode study of the art and meaning of Joyce’s masterwork *Ulysses*, the most influential book of the twentieth century. We shall place *Ulysses* in the context of Joyce’s canon, Irish culture, and literary modernism. We shall explore the relationship between *Ulysses* and other experiments in modernism—especially painting and sculpture—and show how *Ulysses* redefines the concepts of epic, hero, and reader. We shall examine *Ulysses* as a political novel—specifically, Joyce’s response to Yeats and the Celtic Renaissance; Joyce’s role in the debate about the direction of Irish politics after Parnell; and Joyce’s response to British colonial occupation of Ireland. We shall also consider *Ulysses* as an urban novel in which Bloom, the marginalized Jew and outsider, is symptomatic of the kind of alienation created by urban culture. No previous experience with Joyce is required.

**COML 4860 Contemporary Poetry and Poetics – Monroe, J. (jbm3)**

(LA-AS)
Cross-listed with AMST 4880, ENGL 4980, SPAN 4880
Enrollment limited to: 15 students.
T 2:30 – 4:25pm
**Core course for COML Majors**

What gives contemporary poetry and poetics its resonance and value? What are its dominant features, audiences, and purposes? What does 21st-century poetry’s textual environment look like, and how does it situate itself among other genres, discourses, disciplines, media? How would we describe its ambient noise and how does that noise shape, inform, inflect its particular concerns and motivated forms? How does contemporary poetry resist, engage, respond to, sound out that noise? How are we to understand its relation to the pivotal cultural, economic, historical, philosophical, political developments of our time? This seminar will explore these and related questions in a wide range of works that open onto the rich interplay of contemporary poetry and poetics with questions of personal and collective identity and language in contexts at once local and global. Poets include Armantrout, Bernstein, Collins, Espada, Gander, Fitterman, Goldsmith, Hong, Osman, Place, Rich, Smith, and Waldrop.

**COML 4930 Senior Essay – Staff**

Fall, spring.

Times TBA individually in consultation with director of Senior Essay Colloquium. Approximately 50 pages to be written over the course of two semesters in the student’s senior year under the direction of the student’s advisor. An R grade is assigned on the basis of research and a preliminary draft completed in the first semester. A letter grade is awarded on completion of the second semester.

**COML 4940 Senior Essay – Staff**

Fall, spring.

Times TBA individually in consultation with director of Senior Essay Colloquium. Approximately 50 pages to be written over the course of two semesters in the student’s senior year under the direction of the student’s advisor. An R grade is assigned on the basis of research and a preliminary draft completed in the first semester. A letter grade is awarded on completion of the second semester.

**COML 4945 Body Politics in African Literature and Cinema – Diabate (nd326)**

(CA-AS)
Cross-listed with ASRC 4995, ENGL 4995, FGSS 4945, LGBT 4945, VISST 4945
Co-meets with ASRC 6945/ COML 6945/ FGSS 6945/ LGBT 6945/ VISST 6945
Enrollment limited to: 15 students.
W 12:20 – 2:15pm
Correct description:
The course examines how postcolonial African writers and filmmakers engage with and revise controversial images of bodies and sexuality-genital cursing, same-sex desire, HIV/AIDS, genital surgeries, etc. Our inquiry also surveys African theorists’ troubling of problematic tropes and practices such as the conception in 19th-century racist writings of the colonized as embodiment, the pathologization and hypersexualization of colonized bodies, and the precarious and yet empowering nature of the body and sexuality in the postcolonial African experience. As we focus on African artists and theorists, we also read American and European theorists, including but not certainly limited to Giorgio Agamben, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and Joseph Slaughter, detecting the ways in which discourses around bodies in the African context may shape contemporary theories and vice versa.

6000
New COML 6071 Introduction to Media Theory – McEnaney, T. (tpm88)
Cross-listed with PMA 6471
Enrollment limited to: 15 students.
R 2:30 – 4:25pm
This course will consider media as the integration of technological hardware and sets of cultural practices. We will work to recognize how “old” media help us historicize our present moment, and how “new” media continue to reorganize our understanding of apparatuses including cinema, gramophones, radio, photography, smart phones, and the printed book. Recognizing media theory as an independent field of study and a contributor to major developments in critical theory, we will discuss the importance of media archaeology, disability studies, haptic, tactical and bio media, network theory, sound studies, information theory, and digital and computational humanities. Authors might include Barthes, Benjamin, Chun, Doane, Galloway, Gitelman, Hansen, Hayles, Kirschbaum, Kittler, A. Liu, L. Liu, McLuhan, M. Mills, Moretti, Nakamura, Price, Sterne, Thacker, Underwood and Williams.

COML 6185 Introduction to Systems Theory – Gilgen, P (pg33)
Cross-listed with GERST 6190
R 2:30 – 4:25pm
Niklas Luhmann’s systems theory is one of the great theoretical edifices of the last few decades. Ostensibly a sociological theory, Luhmann’s work arguably has had its most disruptive, and most enduring, influence in the humanities. On the basis of his Introduction to Systems Theory, this course will provide a thorough examination of Luhmann’s theoretical edifice and its theoretical building blocks, such as Talcott Parsons’s systems theory, Heinz von Foerster’s second-order cybernetics, George Spencer Brown’s “calculus of decision,” Gregory Bateson’s theory of information, and Humberto Maturana’s concept of autopoiesis. In addition, we will trace the development of Luhmann’s own theory and analyze closely several of Luhmann’s other texts, such as Observations of Modernity, Ecological Communication, Love as Passion, and The Reality of the Mass Media.

COML 6190 Independent Study
1-4 credits, variable
Permission of instructor required.

New COML 6367 Aimé Césaire: Poetics of Politics of Decolonization – Melas, N. (nam5)
Cross-listed with ASRC 6367, FREN 6367
Co-meets with ASRC 4367/ COML 4367/ FREN 4367
Enrollment limited to: 15 students.
W 2:30 – 4:25pm
A detailed exploration of the poetic, dramatic and political writings of the great Martinican poet and statesman in their multifarious contexts, influences and dialogues, including: "Black Paris" of the 1920s and 1930s, Négritude, surrealism, French and American avant-garde poetry (Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Lautréamont, Hughes, Mackay, et al.), philosophy (especially Nietzsche, Frobenius, Hegel, Marx and Sartre), communism, struggles for decolonization in the post WW II era. We will attend specifically to how the history of racial oppression can be met in language and to the conflicts and intersections between public and private speech or between the decolonization of peoples and minds. Reading ability in French helpful, but not required. All primary texts available in English translation.
An introduction (in English) to literary, theatrical and intellectual works on the Tokugawa period (1600-1868). The course will examine the grammatological transformation of Tokugawa literary and theatrical works in the 18th century, and the developments of critical thought in ethics and social philosophy. This year we will focus on the problems of colloquialism and phonocentrism and read the philosophical and historical works of the twentieth century in order to understand the ways in which cultural activities and literature during the Tokugawa period are comprehended historically, in reference to language studies in Confucian scholarship and the National Studies (kokugaku). The problem of comparison is discussed with a view to the schematism of co-figuration, a new regime of translation, which made for the comparative studies of languages and habits possible.

**COML 6409 Postcolonial Remix: Museal Urbanism & Artistic Networks – Murray, T. (tcm1)**

Cross-listed with ARCH 6409, ARTH 6409, SHUM 6409  
M 7:00 – 9:30pm

**Please see application process below.**

How has museal culture responded to the postcolonial challenges of urbanism? The course will consider the impact of postcolonial conditions of urbanism on artistic networks and museum architectonics. Of concern will be the paradox of the architectural return of the monumental museum within the context of the appropriation and contestation of colonial legacies of collecting and designing, as well as the influence of “the network” of digital and medial design on global artistic flow and push back. From recycled art and architecture to networked hubs and urban pop-ups, the context of a postcolonial remix demands attentiveness to networks of artistic practice, architectural adaptability, and conceptual response.

We will capitalize on recent architectural and artistic happenings in New York, Beijing, Seoul, Tokyo, and Taipei to establish a dialogue between East/West articulations of the global art market and its postcolonial remix. In addition to labs on digital design and new media art, we will begin by profiting from materials in the Johnson Museum and Cornell Library on three prominent architects of Cornell cultural buildings to reflect on the paradigms of their recent monuments of museum design in Asia: I. M. Pei (Johnson Museum), James Sterling (Schwartz Center), Rem Koolhaas (Milstein Hall). This will provide a cultural context for remixing these models within the museal explosion of urban artistic networks, from recycled colonial spaces, gallery pop-ups, and online archives to performative and networked collaborations with the artistic residue of transnational flow, from economy and ecology to migration and occupation. Theoretical readings will range from Walter Benjamin, Jacques Derrida, Michel de Certeau, Douglas Crimp, Rosalind Krauss and Andreas Huyssen to Rey Chow, Manuel Castells, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Paul Miller (DJ Spooky), and Naoki Sakai.

**Mellon Urban Representation Seminar and Fellowships**

The Society for the Humanities and The College of Architecture, Art, and Planning are pleased to announce the return of an innovative graduate seminar aimed at students across the humanities and design disciplines. The Fall 2015 Seminar, “Postcolonial Remix: Museal Urbanism & Artistic Networks,” (SHUM 6409, ARCH 6409, ARTH 6409, COML 6409) is offered under the auspices of Cornell University’s Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Collaborative Studies in Architecture, Urbanism and the Humanities grant.

**Mellon Fellows in Urbanism: Call for Applications**

We invite applications for the 2015 Mellon Fellows in Urbanism who wish to participate in the cross-disciplinary seminar, “Postcolonial Remix: Museal Urbanism & Artistic Networks.” The seminar is open to selected graduate students in a range of humanities and design-based disciplines. The course will provide students with exposure to new media environments and new digital tools appropriate for the study of urbanism. Final projects for the course will be collaborative; therefore we encourage students with different backgrounds and skill sets to apply.

Selected graduate students will be awarded a $1,000 stipend to support a final project. Since these will be collaborative, students with diverse backgrounds and skill sets (i.e. ethnography, film and video, critical theory, digital mapping, etc.) are encouraged to apply. Applicants should be in their first three years of graduate training. Advanced undergraduate students may apply, but preference will be given to graduate students.

**Course Instructor:** Professor Timothy Murray (Director, Society for the Humanities; English and Comparative Literature, Cornell)

**Materials to be submitted:**

1. C.V.
2. A 500-750 word description of your interest in and qualifications for the seminar including: your state of graduate study; your background interests in this field; your background with relevant experiences such as curating, architecture, etc.; your experience with digital skills such as GIS, web design, internet art, photography, video, sound recording or any other relevant information.

No letters of recommendation are required.


**COML 6520 Renaissance Humanism – Kennedy, W. J. (wjk3)**

Cross-listed with ENGL 6240, ROMS 6520  
Co-meets with COML 4520/ ENGL 4200/ ROMS 4520  
Enrollment limited to: 15 students.  
T 2:30 – 4:25pm

A reading and discussion of key texts by Renaissance humanists in Italian, French, English, and other European literature from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

**COML 6639 Ordering Knowledge: Pliny’s Encyclopedia and its Successors – Platt, V. (vjp33) and Roby, C. (car295)**

Cross-listed with CLASS 7639, STS 7631  
Co-meets with CLASS 4639/ COML 4639/ STS 4631  
T 1:25 – 4:25pm

This course explores the organization of cultural and scientific knowledge in the form of so-called "encyclopedias", beginning with Pliny the Elder’s Natural History and tracing its development in later western culture, including Diderot’s Encyclopédie. In particular, we will focus on the combination of natural science and art history that informs Pliny’s text, and the notions of enkyklios paedia (or “general education”) with which it has been problematically associated. The course will include sessions in the library’s Special Collections, focusing on Cornell's prized collection of early printed editions of the Natural History. All works will be taught in translation; students may acquire an additional credit by attending sessions in which we will read Pliny in the original Latin.

**COML 6676 Deconstructing Death and Discipline – Rubenstein, D. (dsr27)**

Cross-listed with FREN 6676, GOVT 6676  
T 4:30 – 6:30pm

This semester we will focus upon the right to life, techniques of life management and the disposition of (one’s own) death. The co-imbrication of the politico-theological with the death penalty, the way society classifies and treats its dead, its « living dead » or excluded members (« the public enemy »), and the political economy of death will figure among questions and philosophical concepts to be addressed in the seminar. We will concentrate on three authors-Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard-and their three principal texts (respectively)- The Seminar on the Death Penalty, volume one; Punitive Society (1972-3 Course at the Collège de France), and Symbolic Exchange and Death. The work of other twentieth century French thinkers on temporality and the economy of death such as Bataille and Blanchot will supplement our critical engagement with these thinkers. At the same time, we will attend to the tension within these texts within a larger context of recent developments in public law and other purported associated rights and philosophemes (the rights of/to literature; free speech and tolerance.)

**COML 6850 Gramsci and Cultural Politics – Waite, G. (gcw1)**

Cross-listed with GERST 6850, GOVT 6750  
T 2:30 – 4:25PM

The modern or postmodern, and increasingly global, capitalist system rules not only by overt violence and coercion but also in tandem with what Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) called the "non-coercive coercion" of "cultural hegemony." This seminar has two basic aims: (1) to introduce the basic political, theoretical, historical, and cultural writings of Gramsci himself (which also requires attention to his main sources, e.g., Croce, Dante, Lenin, Marx, Machiavelli); and then (2) to trace main directions of the Gramsci legacy in philosophy, political theory and practice, and cultural theory and practice (notably filmmaking). This legacy obviously includes the works of Aijaz Ahmad, Louis Althusser, Christine Buci-Glucksmann, Norberto Bobbio, Ernesto Laclau, Ariel Dorfman & Armand Mattelart, Chantal Mouffe, and Pier-Paolo Pasolini, among others. But it also includes less famous and no less important, individuals and groups: e.g., feminist activists in Italy, the subaltern study movement in India, and other forms of anti-capitalist theory and practice around the world. We must also note that the first English translation of The Prison Notebooks was made by the U.S. Pentagon, and that "the ashes of
Gramsci” is a code name in Italy for cocaine. Our main texts will be Gramsci’s Pre-Prison Writings and his Prison Notebooks and Letters, which we will read alongside symptomatic examples of his ongoing legacy.

**COML 6945 Body Politics in African Literature and Cinema – Diabate (nd326)**

Cross-listed with ASRC 4995, COML 4945, ENGL 4995, FGSS 4945, LGBT 4945, VISST 4945

Co-meets with ASRC 6945/FGSS 6945/LGBT 6945/VISST 6945

Enrollment limited to: 15 students.

W 12:20 – 2:15pm

**Correct description:**

The course examines how postcolonial African writers and filmmakers engage with and revise controversial images of bodies and sexuality-genital cursing, same-sex desire, HIV/AIDS, genital surgeries, etc. Our inquiry also surveys African theorists’ troubling of problematic tropes and practices such as the conception in 19th-century racist writings of the colonized as embodiment, the pathologization and hypersexualization of colonized bodies, and the precarious and yet empowering nature of the body and sexuality in the postcolonial African experience. As we focus on African artists and theorists, we also read American and European theorists, including but not certainly limited to Giorgio Agamben, Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and Joseph Slaughter, detecting the ways in which discourses around bodies in the African context may shape contemporary theories and vice versa.

**FA 2015 RUSSL**

**New RUSSL 3330 America through Russian Eyes – Shapiro, G. (gs33)**

Cross-listed AMST 3331, COML 3330

TR 2:55 – 4:10pm

**Updated course description:**

In this course, we shall look at Russia’s perception of America as reflected in the works of its writers for over a hundred-year period. What motivated these writers? Did they go to the United States with an open mind? Did they have a hidden agenda? How fair and balanced was their portrayal of America and of Americans? We shall attempt to answer these and other questions by examining the writings of such authors as Korolenko, Bunin, Gorky, Mayakovsky, Il’f and Petrov, and Nabokov as well as Aksyonov and Dovlatov. All texts are in English.

**Cancelled RUSSL 3331 Introduction to Russian Poetry – Pollak, N. (np27)**

Prerequisite: proficiency in Russian or permission of instructor. Reading in Russian; discussion in English.

MW 2:55 – 4:10pm

The nineteenth century was the first great age of Russian poetry – beginning with Pushkin’s predecessors, continuing through Lermontov, and ending with Tютчев and Fet and anticipations of modernism. In this course you’ll learn how to read short poems carefully, you’ll expand and deepen your understanding of the Russian language, and you’ll gain insight into one of the world’s major literary traditions. Satisfies the Russian Minor requirement for Russian literature with reading in the original.

**Perhaps you might want to consider:**

**ENGL 2045 Major Poets being taught by Professor Jonathan Culler (jdc9) and Nancy Pollak (np27)**

Readings from the work of nine poets chosen to help us think about the nature and possibilities of poetry and different ways of engaging with it: Shakespeare (the sonnets), Alexander Pope, John Keats, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Robert Frost, W. H. Auden, and A. R. Ammons. One assumption of the course is that there are other things to do with poems besides interpret them: reading aloud, writing imitations or parodies, memorizing, identifying poetic techniques, and creating anthologies of favorite poems. No previous study of poetry is presumed.

**RUSSL 3385 Reading Nabokov – Shapiro, G. (gs33)**

Cross-listed with **COML 3815, ENGL 3790**

TR 1:25 – 2:40pm

This course offers an exciting trip to the intricate world of Nabokov's fiction. After establishing himself in Europe as a distinguished Russian writer, Nabokov, at the outbreak of World War II, came to the United States where he reestablished himself, this time as an American writer of world renown. In our analysis of Nabokov's fictional universe, we shall focus on his Russian corpus of works, from *Mary* (1926) to *The Enchanter* (writ. 1939), all in English translation, and then shall
examine the two widely read novels which he wrote in English in Ithaca while teaching literature at Cornell: *Lolita* (1955) and *Pnin* (1957).

Please go to: [http://russian.cornell.edu/](http://russian.cornell.edu/) for Russian Language Courses

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