

Special Topics Courses 2020-2021

2020 Fall Term

ARTS 1991- A (3 CR)

THINKING THROUGH THE ARTS: CRITICAL AND CREATIVE PRACTICE

This course explores questions such as: how do poetry, language, art, music, and other creative practices help us think and to understand the world around us; how creative and critical thinking help us build our intellectual capacity and form our learning skills. The course primarily engages literature and literary questions, connecting literary practices to other creative and critical practices in Arts disciplines. It builds competencies and skills that transfer to studies across disciplines and that support life beyond university. The readings combine literary texts in English with texts from other disciplines, as well as materials from other media such as music, fine art, digital media, and performance. Discussions engage a broad range of topics including: personal ethics and the scholarly community; social and cultural engagement; and the relationship between intellectual life and the material/natural world. This course also aims to instill good work habits, study skills, and work-life balance so that students can achieve their goals in university. It develops higher-order thinking skills such as active reading practice, oral and written self-expression, memorization and other information management skills, collaboration, creative engagement in a range of media, and critical thinking skills. [Note: This course is recommended for first year students] (Format: Lecture 3 Hours)

CLAS 3991 - A (3 CR)

ROMAN PORTRAITURE

Prereq: second-year standing; 3 credits from CLAS, HIST, LATI, GREK at the 1/2000 level; or permission of the Department

Portraiture is one of the most distinct forms of Roman art. In this course, students will engage with Roman portraiture from the Republic to Constantine. The course will involve portraits in many different media, from free-standing sculpture, relief, painting, coinage, etc. and students will learn the methods involved with the study of each. The stylistic evolution of the portraits as well as their social and political significance will be examined. By the end of the course, students will have learned techniques for identifying and analysing portraits of both known and unknown figures from the Roman world.

ENGL 1991 - A (3 CR)

CRISIS LITERATURE

The "crisis" in Crisis Lit refers to the context and content for the texts that we will study. Each week will be organized around one of the four horsemen of the Crisis Lit apocalypses: epidemiological, ecological, existential, and economic. How do storytellers represent crisis? What crisis represents, as we will discover, is a decisive historical moment, when our political grounding shifts towards the worse or the better-oppression or emancipation. As vital as they are, the poems, short stories, films, essays, and songs that we explore cannot resolve crises, but they can help us to better understand how we got there and what future crises we may be sowing. We will encounter a variety of inspiring figures working in genres such as horror, science fiction, dream pop, and creative non-fiction. The course will be structured with mini-lectures on a given crisis, artistic form, and cultural response, from Edgar Allan Poe, the short story, and the cholera epidemic to Parasite, film, and the global market collapse. Evaluation will be based on fun and critically engaging written assignments and interactive online discussion (Format: Lecture 3 Hours).

FINH 3991 - A (3 CR)

CANADIAN AND INDIGENOUS ART

Prereq: FINH 2101; FINH 2111; or permission of the Department

This course explores the various ways that Canadian and Indigenous art constructs and subverts popular ideas of national identity. By looking at the works of both mainstream and marginal artists, we will consider a variety of perspectives on what it really means to be Canadian. (Format: Lecture 3 Hours)

GERM 3991 - A (3 CR)

CULTURAL MEMORY IN POST - 1945 GERMANY

Prereq: Permission of the Department

This course explores the unique commemorative culture that became manifest in post-1945 German society. It investigates the literary production and cultural activities pursued in Germany after WWII, focusing in particular on the roles remembrance, responsibility and collective guilt play in a post-conflict society. A representative array of theoretical texts on topics pertaining to memory culture, commemoration and trauma studies will be included as an integral part of this course (Format: Lecture 3 Hours).

MATH 4991 - A (3 CR)

GROUP THEORY AND PHYSICS

Prereq: MATH 2111 and 2221. MATH/PHYS 3451 may be substituted for MATH 2221 with instructor permission

This course studies the application of the representation theory of Lie groups to problems in physics. In particular, we will deduce the structure of the energy levels of the hydrogen atom from mathematical considerations (Format: Lecture 3 Hours)

MUSC 3991 - B (3 CR)

MUSIC, SCHOOL, AND SOCIETY

Prereq: MUSC 2211; or permission of the Department

This course promotes awareness and critical examination of music education philosophies and learning theories in teaching practice while also considering the political nature of music in school and society. Using a seminar format, this course explores music education philosophies and practices in relation to educational, social, cultural, historical and political contexts. Students will demonstrate their understanding of course concepts through spoken and written word and may also use creative modes of expression (Format: Seminar 3 Hours).

MUSC 4991 - A (3 CR)

SONDHEIM

Prereq: MUSC 2211; or permission of the Department

This course explores the musicals of Stephen Sondheim, arguably the most important composer of musical theatre in the last half-century. Topics include Sondheim's precursors and influences, musical theatre in the Golden Age, mature Sondheim, and the function of musical theatre works in the 21st century (Format: Seminar 3 Hours).

PHIL 4111 - A (3 CR) Philosophy of Hope and Anger

Prereq: Permission of the Department

This course explores the meaning, use, and importance of hope and anger in our personal lives as well as in social and political movements. Using contemporary texts and texts from the history of philosophy, we will examine distinctions that can help us to reason more carefully about the role of hope and anger. How do we know when our hope or anger are justified? How do they help us respond to injustice? Can hope or anger risk leading us into false assumptions or conclusions? The course will also provide an

exploration of the concept of non-ideal theory: what should our ethics require of us given existing inequities and histories of oppression? (Format: Seminar 3 Hours)

POLS 3991 – A (3 CR)

CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND SECURITIZATION

This course provides students with a survey of the most pressing security challenges and threats states like Canada and we as humanity face at present and looking to the near future, ranging from the rise of far right populism and the erosion of our democratic systems to cyber-attacks, terrorism, global pandemics, and the biggest threat of all, the effects of climate change. The focus of this course is primarily on so-called non-traditional threats and we will explore securitization as a theoretical concept and its role in shaping our understanding of these threats and security issues as social constructs. Ample time will be given to the analysis of how various countries have coped with the Covid-19 pandemic and what lessons Canada can learn for dealing with a potential second wave. Recognizing the role of women as agents of societal change, a special assignment is dedicated to Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy.

PSYC 4991 - A (3 CR)

STRESS, BURNOUT AND RESILIENCE

Prereq: Third-year standing; 6 credits from PSYC at the 3000 level; or permission of the Department

This course is an advanced seminar that will focus on physiological, psychological, and feminist approaches to understanding stress, burnout, and resilience (Format: Seminar 3 hours).

SPAN 3991 - A (3 CR)

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FILM

In this course, through films from the Hispanic world, we will analyze and discuss what Human Rights means from different perspectives. The origin of our perceptions or our cultural logic will be examined in a global context, examining other ways of knowing and seeing the world. This course is taught in English (Format: Lecture 3 Hours).

VMCS 2991 - A (3 CR)

AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF EVERYDAY MODERN LIFE

This course will examine the material culture of everyday life from the mid-18th century to the present, with a focus on how our interaction with objects has changed and evolved through time. It begins with the predominately local and small-scale production and use of objects just before the Industrial Revolution and expansion of European empires, then examines the profound impact those events had on the material culture used by indigenous and colonizing societies and across class lines. Moving to the 20th century it will explore how everyday material culture changed in times of both increased affluence and crises, such as during the First World War and Great Depression. Finally, the course will critically assess our "entanglements" with material things in the 21st century as there is increasing concern with globalization, consumption, and waste in a time of climate change, social inequality, and global pandemics (Format: Lecture 3 Hours).

VMCS 2991 - B (3 CR)

BRIDGING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: INTRODUCTION TO INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Prereq: VMCS 1201 or 1301; or permission of the Department

This course adopts an approach grounded in cultural studies to introduce students to key theories, concepts, and issues in intercultural communication, which is defined as the transmission and reception of verbal and non-verbal messages across languages and cultures. It sheds light on how cultural differences and variables impact communication, reveals the common barriers to intercultural exchange, and reflects on identity and otherness, cultural filters and templates, and the relationship

between culture, media, and language. Examples are drawn from textual, visual, and material cultures of the past, as well as contemporary mass media contexts (Format: Lecture/Tutorial 3 hours).

2021 Winter Term

ARTS 2991 (3CR)

ART & ATHLETICS

This course explores the intersections of art and athletics, considering how the two realms contribute to personal identity, community development, ethical engagement, and political discourse. Discussion topics will include physicality and intellectual life, ethical and aesthetic issues, and political and social contexts at the intersection of the arts and athletics. Artistic media will include literature, painting, photography, music, film and television, as well as some depictions in media from ancient cultures. Several sports will be included, with specific texts focusing on gridiron football, running, swimming, soccer, weightlifting, and possibly more. We will pay special attention to the way art and athletics engage in activism and social justice: how both can serve - and serve together - as agents for societal change.

BIOL 3991 - A (3 CR)

ECOTOXICOLOGY

Prereq: BIOL 2101 and permission of the instructor (jliefer@mta.ca)

This course examines how natural toxins and toxic pollutants like industrial waste or microplastics affect ecosystems. Major topics that will be covered include the sources and environmental transportation of toxins as well their effects on both individual organisms and ecosystem ecology. Much of the course is dedicated to in-depth case studies and practical application of course topics to help students understand how to assess the risks posed by emerging environmental toxins.

CENL 3991 - A (3 CR)

COMMUNITY CONNECT

Prereq: Second-year standing; or permission of the instructor (mfox@mta.ca)

Since the onset of COVID-19, there have been urgent calls to restore established social and economic systems, and to find our way back to 'normal'. Community Connect is an innovative approach to the pandemic and the long-standing vulnerabilities and deficiencies across social, political, and environmental sectors, particularly for vulnerable populations in rural communities. Students will explore the ways in which the pandemic has prompted a shift in research priorities for many community-based organizations exploring strategies for mitigating social isolation, advocating for evidence-based information, emergent health policy research, and understanding the differential impacts of COVID-19 on marginalized groups.

COMM 4991 - A (3 CR)

MARKETING ANALYTICS

Prereq: COMM 2211

This course focuses on practical approaches toward 3 key areas of marketing analytics: obtaining and analyzing marketing intelligence (customer, market, and competitor); determining market potential for products and services; and basic financial analyses to evaluate product performance based on Key Performance Indicators. Teaching methods include lectures, discussion, cases and guest speakers.

Students have the opportunity to develop related skills in analysis, report writing, and presentations.
(Format: Lecture/Discussion 3 Hours)

FINH 4091 - A (3 CR)

INDIGENOUS GOTHIC ART & FILM

Prereqs: FINH 2101; FINH 2111; 3 credits from FINH at the 3000 level; or permission of the Department

This course explores representations of haunting in Indigenous art and film and considers the problems, limitations, and benefits of using the term gothic in relation to Indigenous art. Some of the works we will look at include Alooook Ipellie's Arctic Dreams and Nightmares, Rosalie Favell's Cultural Mediations, Lisa Jackson's VR work, and Jeff Barnaby's Mi'kmaq zombie film *Rhymes for Young Ghouls* (Format: Seminar 3 Hours).

FREN 3991 - A (3 CR)

DARK TRIADS IN FRENCH LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Prereqs: FREN 2401; FREN 2501; FREN 2601; or permission of the Department

This course explores the figure of the deliberate antagonist in French and Francophone literature and culture. It probes good and evil in cultural representation, exploring repositories of experience with narcissism, machiavellianism and psychopathy. Using Peter K. Jonason's "Dirty Dozen" checklist as a working tool, it tackles issues such as neurotribes and power, leadership and bystanding, as well as (epi)genetic determinism. Activities include rhetorical analyses of discourses of manipulation, obfuscation and enabling, applied to materials including canonical works, contemporary graphic novels, political essays and film. A final module provides students with the opportunity to research vocabulary in their respective fields to describe the potential impact of Dark Triad behaviours on their disciplines (Format: Lecture 3 Hours).

GENS 3991 - A (3 CR)

ENVIRONMENTAL APPLICATIONS OF REMOTE SENSING

For more information and permission to register, please contact Dr. Lieske (dlieske@mta.ca)
Department Head - Geography and Environment

GERM 3401 - A (3 CR)

GERMAN FAIRY TALES

Prereq: GERM 2011; or permission of the Department

This course explores the fascinating tradition of German Fairy Tale. It will examine the *Märchen* in its various forms - as a popular narrative and as a crafted literary tale - highlighting the innovative potential of the genre and its emergence as a literary convention. By the end of this course, students will have a focused understanding of the literary, historical and cultural significance of fairy tales for German reading culture and will be able to analyse the genre accordingly. Readings will include original texts as well as critical commentaries and other literary analyses. Throughout the course, special attention will be given to the development and improvement of critical written expression. The main language of instruction for this course is German with essential class discussions taking place in both English and German. (Format: Lecture 3 Hours).

MUSC 3991 (3 CR)

MUSIC TEACHING & LEARNING THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Prereq: MUSC 2211; or permission of the Department This course explores some possibilities for music

teaching and learning afforded by digital technologies, apps and online musical experiences. Students will learn through direct experience and experimentation with a range of representative technologies, and through reading current literature on music and technology. This course foregrounds the importance of creation/creativity in music learning. Our discussions will consider possible pedagogical and social issues related to technology-based music instruction, and will centre on student interaction/experience of and with technologies. Course activities will include readings, projects, music creation, class discussion and individual/group work. (Format: Seminar).

POLS 3991 - A (3 CR)

MARITIME PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Prereq: POLS 1001; 6 credits from POLS at the 2000 level; or permission of the Department

This course provides an intermediate introduction to the politics of the three Maritime provinces; New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. It focuses on the internal politics of the three provinces rather than their relationship to the federal government or federal activities in these provinces. The structure of the course provides students with the skills and knowledge to answer key questions that continue to preoccupy people in the Maritime provinces. (Format: Lecture 3 Hours)

POLS 3991 - B (3 CR)

SCANDINAVIAN POLITICS

The Scandinavian countries are generally admired throughout the world for a number of reasons including inclusive welfare states and high levels of gender equality. Is there more to Scandinavia than meets the eye in international media reports? This course provides an introduction to the study of Scandinavian politics. Students will gain a general understanding of the intricacies of Scandinavian politics upon successful completion of the course. The first and shortest part of the course focuses on polity. The second part introduces students to politics and issues prevalent in Scandinavia politics including how the Scandinavian countries have approached the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. The third and final part of the course introduces students to a number of policy areas. This course examines a number of topics including the welfare state, climate policies, elections and parties, public opinion, social capital, immigration policies, and diplomacy. There is a particular focus on Sweden throughout the course. This is a writing intensive course.

POLS 4991 - A (3 CR)

NATIONALISM vs COSMOPOLITANISM

All across the world, from the US to Brazil, to Europe, Turkey and China, an aggressive nationalism is returning with a vengeance, often paired with far right populism and a tide of xenophobia and racism, pushing democratic systems to the brink and threatening a descent into majoritarianism and authoritarianism. Secessionism is on the rise, culture wars are raging, and white supremacists are scapegoating immigrants and racial minorities for perceived deprivations. Canada, it seems, is less affected by these trends than other states, yet it would be an illusion to consider itself isolated from them. This course will provide students with an in-depth introduction to theories of nationalism together with a detailed discussion of its manifestations in contemporary global politics, in order to then examine cosmopolitanism and plurinationalism as alternatives.

PSYC 2991 - A (3 CR)

SOCIETY AND THE BRAIN

Prereq: Second-year standing; PSYC 1001; PSYC 1011.

This course discusses how neuroimaging and knowledge of brain function are applied in various aspects

of society. Topics include the use of neuroimaging to detect lying or false memories, neuromarketing, brain training games, the medical model of diseases, and legal responsibility (Format: Lecture 3 hours).

PSYC 3991 - A (3 CR)

PERINATAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

Prereq: Third-year standing; PSYC 1001; PSYC 1011; 6 credits from PSYC at the 2000 level; or permission of the Department

This course provides information about the biopsychosocial factors and experiences of women and men during the transition to parenthood, from preconception to three years postpartum. This specialized course integrates knowledge from health and behavioural sciences, namely psychoneuroendocrinology, obstetrics and gynecology, maternal-fetal medicine, psychiatry, nursing, midwifery, developmental and clinical health psychology. Topics covered include: access to prenatal care, infertility, complicated grief after pregnancy or perinatal loss, perinatal mood disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety, psychosis) and infant brain development, fetal growth, preterm birth, developmental origins of health and disease or DOHaD (e.g., fetal programming by epigenetic processes after environmental exposures such as parental lifestyle, nutrition, smoking, alcohol, obesity, and/or endocrine disruptor chemicals/toxins), attachment theory and early parenting (Format: Lecture 3 hours).

PSYC 3991 - B (3 CR)

INDUSTRIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Prereq: Third-year standing, PSYC 1001, PSYC 1011 and 6 credits from PSYC at the 2000 level; or third-year standing and COMM 2311; or permission of the Department

This course provides information about Industrial and Organizational Psychology (I/O psychology) which studies human behavior in the workplace. In this course, we will explore the application of psychological theories and principles to the workplace by using the scientist-practitioner model. The course will have two major divisions. In the first division, which is Industrial psychology, the appropriate use of people or human resources will be covered with topics including job analysis, performance appraisal, selection, and placement. In the second division, which is Organizational psychology, understanding employee behavior and enhancing the well-being of the employees will be discussed with the topics including job attitudes, counterproductive work behavior, health and stress (Format: Lecture 3 hours).

RELG 3991 - A (3 CR)

RELIGION, COMMUNITY, IDENTITY

Prereq: Permission of the department (fblack@mta.ca)

This course draws on the wealth of religious thought and tradition to consider the complex connections between contemporary identity, relationship and community. Central questions for consideration will include what makes a healthy community? How does individual identity relate to community identity? What freedoms, expectations and obligations does living in community bring? And ultimately, to what extent can religion continue to provide guidance in a secular society?

VMCS 3991 - A (3 CR)

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF BUILDINGS AND LANDSCAPES OF NORTHEASTERN NORTH AMERICA

Prereq: VMCS 1201 or 1301 or permission of the department

This course takes an archaeological and material culture approach to the study of buildings and landscapes in northeastern North America, from Indigenous architecture and land-use before European

colonization to the present day. It explores the engineering, social, and cultural factors involved with building structures and modifying the natural world, as well the role of individual skill and preferences in design choices. Central to the course is experiential learning, which will include labs on topics such as interpreting maps and aerial images, geographic information systems (GIS), traditional masonry, sketching, and field documentation methods of local heritage sites. The course will also cover the issues and challenges with conserving significant places for future study and public interpretation (Format: Integrated Lecture/Fieldwork 3 Hours).