

USIE Seminars - Spring 2009

Art History 88S. A Tale Told by an Idiot: Dada Writing

Student Facilitator: Amy Sanchez – Faculty Mentor: George Baker

This seminar will explore the origins and legacy of Dada writings and how they function in response to World War I and the Industrial Revolution by examining texts of the movement, focusing on the work of the Dada poets and artists: Tristan Tzara, Andre Breton, Francis Picabia, Hugo Ball, Marcel Duchamp, Apollinaire, and Kurt Schwitters. Students will explore how the negation of communication and abstraction of language in conventional terms is a means of creating an art object that lives in the hope of creating a world of absurdity that liberates those taking part in it from the constraints of nationalism, and technology.

Communication Studies 88SA. We, the Digital People: A Communications Analysis of Campaign '08

Student Facilitator: Robert Schraff – Faculty Mentor: Tim Groeling

This seminar will include analyses of marketing and branding strategies of the Obama, McCain and national Democratic and Republican efforts, as well as new communications strategies and technologies. Traditional communications analyses of design, commercials, rhetoric, theater, reporting, and messages will be briefly covered, as will the impact of the fragmentation of media and audiences and the shortening of news cycles.

Communication Studies 88SB. Lights, Camera, Politics! The Role of Celebrities in Contemporary American Politics

Student Facilitator: Devna Shukla – Faculty Mentor: Tim Groeling

In this course, students will examine the role of celebrities in American political campaigns. They will evaluate the 2008 election and identify specific examples of how political celebrities and celebrity politicians affected the campaign. Students will also consider the historical role of mass media in elections, the rise of celebrity activism, the intersection of imagery between both celebrities and politicians, and the public demand for such celebrity news (and how it varies systematically for different figures). They will conclude by forecasting the likely future development of the relationship between celebrity and politics.

Communication Studies 88SC. Graffiti: The Art of Civil Disobedience

Student Facilitator: Scott Ishihara – Faculty Mentor: Paul Von Blum

Students will look at different forms of “graffiti” art (murals, stencil art, posters, stickers etc) and how they are a form of social and political resistance for conscious street artists. Because of its broad and sometimes “illegal” nature, graffiti has long been a controversial, overlooked and/or misunderstood form of art. The course will cover a wide range of works from all over the world -- including UCLA’s campus -- collected from books, the internet and personal photographs.

Education 88S. Making Inequality: The Hidden Curriculum of Schools

Student Facilitator: Alma Flores – Faculty Mentor: Kris Gutierrez

This course will examine the hidden curriculum that functions at the K-12 level. The hidden curriculum refers to the way schools “produce race, class, and gender hierarchies, and reproduce conservative ideology” through factors such as tracking, lack of teacher diversity, and a Eurocentric curriculum to name only a few. The course will work with the acknowledgement that the hidden curriculum presents underrepresented students with barriers to higher education.

English 88S. Telling Truth with a Slant: Reading and Writing Contemporary Creative Non-Fiction

Student Facilitator: Jenae Cohn – Faculty Mentor: Reed Wilson

Creative non-fiction combines descriptive prose, distinctive narrative voices, and subjective insights. In this course, students will explore contemporary creative nonfiction’s different styles and forms: memoir, travel literature, humor writing, and literary journalism. Great creative non-fiction not only explores and examines places and ideas, but also provides insight into the writer and allows the writer creative freedom to explore inward and outward experience.

Ethnomusicology 88S. The Future of the Music Industry

Student Facilitator: Nick Wilson – Faculty Mentor: Anthony Seeger

The music industry is going through a period of great change. Record sales are falling, piracy is rampant, and labels are struggling to break new bands with radio and MTV in decline. Traditional assumptions about the music industry are being challenged daily and insiders and observers alike are unsure of where the music industry is heading. This seminar will discuss the current state of the music industry and the obstacles facing labels and bands. Students will engage critically about new business models that have been proposed to either complement or replace the traditional label system that has defined the music industry.

Geography 88S. Anthony Bourdain vs. Rachel Ray: Modern Cultural Geography of Food

Student Facilitator: Pallavi Reddy – Faculty Mentor: Michael Shin

Food has a complex history but even more complex future. With food trends, diets, blogs, trade, environmental changes, the future of food is something unknown. Each class topic can be applied to decisions that each individual makes. With shows like “Top Chef” and “Iron Chef” exposing many to new ingredients and preparations, the face of food known to most people in the world is changing. Now celeb-chefs like Anthony Bourdain travel the world, exposing viewers to different cultures and food systems ranging from the Bushmen of the Kalahari to the street food carts of Vancouver.

History 88SA. Religions in Contact: Contemporary Topics in Religious Dialogue

Student Facilitator: Catherine Nguyen – Faculty Mentor: Scott Bartchy

This course is an interdisciplinary seminar covering key topics in inter-religious dialogue. In this seminar, we will address the issue of religions in contact with one another as well as religions in relation to other areas of life. The goal of the course is for students to integrate these various topics into a more comprehensive understanding of how religions come into contact with the modern world.

History 88SB. Hail to the Southland: The History of UCLA

Student Facilitator: Rene Tiongquico, Jr. – Faculty Mentor: La’Tonya Rease-Miles

This course looks at the cultural history of UCLA and the campus’ contributions to 20th century US history. Students will engage with a variety of sources to put the experiences of past persons with the historical context of the time. We will go through a series of cultural events in thematic order (and to a certain extent, in chronological order) and will investigate a local history through the standpoints of students, faculty, staff of UCLA, as well the Los Angeles, California, national, and global communities.

Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology 88S. Molecular Superheroes: How Plant Growth Promoting Bacteria can Save the World

Student Facilitator: Allison Schwartz – Faculty Mentor: Ann Hirsch

This course will focus on the methods by which plants and bacteria can work together to enhance agricultural plant growth, and how we can use this valuable natural partnership in various ways to create sustainable agricultural systems essential to the long-term solution of some of today’s toughest food-stock, energy production and environmental issues. Students will explore the various methods by which soil bacteria can improve plant growth, enhance food’s nutritional value, increase natural plant resistance to drought, disease and insect attack, clean existing pollutants from the soil and help to establish more arable farmland in poor-quality soils in an ecologically responsible manner.

Neurobiology 88S. Brain Basics: From Alzheimer’s to Zolof

Student Facilitator: Shadi Lalezari – Faculty Mentor: Arnold Scheibel

This seminar is an introduction to the broad and exciting field of Neuroscience. Students will begin the course with an overview of fundamental topics such as anatomy and electrophysiology. They will then move on to more specific topics such as the neurotransmitters, psychological disorders, disease, and drugs and alcohol.

Psychology 88SA. The Psychology of Arts and Crafts

Student Facilitator: Maxie Gluckman – Faculty Mentor: Scott Johnson

This seminar will promote a greater understanding of the educational psychological development of preschool and grade school children through the mode of arts and crafts. Each week will delve into a

different psychological phenomenon, linking a specific arts and crafts project to said phenomenon and back to the overall theme of a person coming to know themselves and the world around them.

Psychology 88SB. Happiness

Student Facilitator: Emily vanSonnenberg – Faculty Mentor: Benjamin Karney

Students will explore research and theories in the field of Positive Psychology, as well as the application of empirical methods shown to increase happiness both for the individual and society. “Happiness” will encourage proactive thinking, discussions with other students, and employ applicable interventions for the student to expand upon.

Surgery 88S. The Art of Surgery: Past, Present, and Future

Student Facilitator: Kevin Ro – Faculty Mentor: Michael Yeh

For centuries, both practitioners and laymen have been fascinated by the practice of surgery. Surgery has the tremendous ability to cure what medicine alone cannot. Yet at every moment in the operating room, the surgeon knows that the art of surgery is fundamentally a human endeavor, one built upon years of advancement. For this reason, it is crucial to study the history of medicine alongside the current modes of surgical thought, while always thinking about surgery’s progression for the future. This course will give students the chance to understand, discuss, and appreciate the vital interplay between surgery’s past, present, and future.