

Spring 2007 USIE Seminars

Anthropology

Forget CSI: The Reality of Forensic Anthropology

Student Facilitator: Melinda Munroe | Faculty Mentor: Jeffrey Brantingham

Forensic anthropology is the application of the science of physical anthropology and the study of the human skeleton in a legal setting, most often in criminal cases where the victim's remains are more or less skeletonized. This class will study methods on determining the sex and age of a skeleton, and use those methods while examining real bones in class.

From Spain to UCLA: The Culture of Flamenco Music

Student Facilitator: Juben Rabbani | Faculty Mentor: Mariko Tamanoi

In our modern world, we are faced with intolerable violence and hate. Some argue it is money, race, or even culture that divides one group from another. In spite of our differences, all humans share a homogenous trait: music. It is this trait of music that can bring divergent cultures together to a shared musical experience. Though the world is filled with genres of music that are vastly diverse and originate from distinctive cultures, these cultures are related to one another through the common production of musical structures. Sometimes the musical features of such cultures- cultures that have been divided by war and prejudice- are joined in a single genre. This seminar explores one such genre- Flamenco from Spain.

Shamans, Spirits, and Soul Stealing: The Anthropology of Spiritual Medicine

Student Facilitator: Kristine Van Hamersveld | Faculty Mentor: Gail Kennedy

In the mainstream culture of the United States, most people use doctors and nurses to treat disease. They visit hospitals and rely on biological concepts to explain how and why they get sick. In 80% of the world, however, "medical care," in the sense that it is known, is either inaccessible or undesired, yet people manage to survive. Rather than using biomedicine, some cultures look at healing and ailments as spiritually-rooted, and in many situations, the infirm are taken to shamans who go into a trance, rather than to doctors who go into surgery. This course will introduce students to different ways of looking at health and medicine around the globe, including here in the United States.

Emergence from the Secret War: The Hmong-American Experience

Student Facilitator: Eric Yang | Faculty Mentor: Sharon Bays

Who are the Hmong? What is the Secret War? What is their past, their present, and their future? The answer to these questions will not be found in textbooks at elementary schools, junior high schools, or high schools across the country. Very few college-level classes teach or even touch upon the Hmong and the Hmong-American experience. This course focuses entirely on the Hmong-American experience. The Hmong have a unique history and culture. As an ethnic minority which spans across many countries, their experiences are very different from the mainstream cultures of the nation-states that they inhabit.

Art

Art and Feminisms: Theory and Studio

Student Facilitator: Mahyar Nili | Faculty Mentor: Hirsch Perlman

This class will explore the intersection of Art and Feminisms, with a focus on making art, and dialogue around intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality and religion, among others. Through the critical reading of texts, roundtable discussions, slide lectures, video screenings, exhibit viewings, artist lectures, and consciousness-raising, we will delve into a history of Art and make work that is informed by a plurality of feminisms.

Art History

Contemporary Chinese Photography

Student Facilitator: Julia Wai | Faculty Mentor: Hui-Shu Lee

Chinese contemporary art unquestionably deals with standards of beauty, modes of expression, and reflections of social, economic, and political conditions and climates. This seminar examines issues of contemporary art in China through the medium of photography. Since the Cultural Revolution, photography in China has taken a dramatic leap, reflecting and commenting on China's booming economic growth and increased global presence. By using photography, this course will identify and analyze the various tensions of contemporary art in China- its definitions, terms, and driving forces.

Chicano/a Studies

'Yo Soy El Army': Chicanas, Chicanos, and the U.S. Military

Student Facilitator: Elvira Rodriguez | Faculty Mentor: Alicia Gaspar de Alba

"Yo Soy El Army". The Spanish counterpart to the famous "Be All That You Can Be" seems to be on urban radio stations like Los Angeles' Power 105.9FM every hour. Appropriately accompanying the recent advertising campaign are a slew of bilingual recruiters visiting barrio high schools and community events. This course will focus specifically on the relationship between the Chicano/a population, education, and the United States military, and engage students in six core areas of Chicano/a and U.S. military intersection: education, socioeconomic status, immigration, family, gender, and the media.

Economics

Innovations Against Poverty

Student Facilitator: Nafis Atiqullah | Faculty Mentor: Peirre-Olivier Weill

This seminar will explore microfinance, a growing field that seeks to provide lending, banking, and insurance services to the poor. At its best, microfinance has been celebrated for fostering entrepreneurship, offering "a new perspective on business as a force for social good," and helping many out of poverty. At its worst, microfinance has been criticized as "the latest development fad" with "ridiculously ambitious" goals that actually divert resources away from social-benefit and traditional aid programs. This seminar will explore microfinance institutions and their varied impacts across Asia, South America, Africa, and the United States.

English

From Anansi to Captain Jack Sparrow: Tales of the Trickster

Student Facilitator: Peter Aoun | Faculty Mentor: Joseph Nagy

What do Captain Jack Sparrow, Anansi the Spider, and a mischievous monkey have in common? They are all tricksters. The trickster is an archetypal character found in stories from numerous cultures and time periods. Although the trickster may be mischievous, rude, and malevolent, the trickster may also be witty, entertaining, and benevolent. This seminar will look at the trickster as presented in stories from diverse cultures. We will examine how each version of the trickster reflects its culture of origin and study the differing views of the trickster through stories and critical readings to find commonalities and develop an idea of the archetypal trickster.

History

Cultural History of Oakland

Student Facilitator: Joseph De Wolk | Faculty Mentor: Mary Corey

Oakland's early history of Gold Rush and squatter culture, to the shipbuilding yards of World War II that brought an influx of Black migrants, to the city and its contemporary cultural phenomenon and iconography, from Angela Davis' afro to the whistle tip. This course uses Oakland as a case study of broader national and statewide cultural histories, urban development and urban issues, race relations, minority and countercultures, popular sports, and music history. The course will also address modern issues plaguing a host of our nation's great cities today, including urban crime and community-police relations, racial tension, public education, and gentrification.

Neurobiology

Brain Fever: Bridging the Gap Between Neuroscience and Psychology

Student Facilitator: Anthony Eskander | Faculty Mentor: Arnold Scheibel

Students will be introduced to the fundamentals of the human brain, from embryology to the various disorders that might be inflicted upon this wonderful and complex structure. This course will “bridge the gap” between the two major schools of thought of how to approach the study of the brain. Rather than trying to cover many aspects of the brain, we will focus on a few structures and concepts. This course will be particularly valuable to those who are deciding whether they want to be a Neuroscience, Psychobiology, or Psychology major.

Political Science

Never Again, Again: Looking at the Rwanda and Darfur Genocide

Student Facilitator: Karina Garcia | Faculty Mentor: Edmond Keller

After the Holocaust, the international community clamored that “Never Again” would we let such a horrifying event occur without taking action. Then came Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and now we are in the midst of another failed “Never Again” in Sudan. This seminar focuses specifically on the 1994 Rwandan Genocide and its current effects, and the ongoing genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan. We will learn and discuss the politics of genocide, the international community's role, aftermath and reconciliation, and current state of both situations.

Ethnomusicology

Aid to Africa: Effects from the Outside

Student Facilitator: Dana Huber | Faculty Mentor: Michael Lofchie

Are George Clooney and Bono saving the world? Do the sale of flip phones and t-shirts actually help people? Is monetary aid to Africa effective? Are any changes being made? This course will examine the economic situation in Africa, specifically from the perspective of those contributing to the development on the continent. We will trace Africa's economic journey to understand how its present situation came to be. Students will apply this background to examine the effects of economic and humanitarian aid from outside influences, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, China, the United States, and NGOs. Through case studies, academic readings, and film, students will be able to understand the allocation of aid to Africa, and make the determination of what has brought about change.

Psychology

Psychology of Body Image

Student Facilitator: Lisa Connolly | Faculty Mentor: Traci Mann

It is nearly impossible for any undergraduate student attending UCLA, a campus located only a few miles west of Hollywood, in a city obsessed with image and built on celebrity worship, to not be aware of the importance, or seeming importance, of the 'perfect body'. Drawing from psychological studies, experimental findings, and written narratives, this course will explore the creation of norms in American society that place a high emphasis on appearance and body image, with attention paid to how these standards have evolved. We will examine how these norms are internalized in the individual. The degree to which body image contributes to personal construction of identity and self-concept, and how this varies dramatically between the sexes, and among different ethnicities and age groups.

Social Welfare

Student Voice, Student Action: UCLA Takes a Stand

Student Facilitator: Michael Soh | Faculty Mentor: Duncan Lindsey

What makes college so memorable for undergraduate students? Is it really the academics? Much of the development of the typical undergraduate comes from experiences outside of the classroom. From the shooting at Campbell Hall involving Black Panthers and US and the Chicano-Studies movement, to Unicamp and Dance Marathon @ UCLA, students at this university have ensured that their voices be heard. This course looks at the opportunities, risks, chances, victories, and defeats of students who took what they learned in the classroom and applied it to the global community. These students fought for change- a change for the betterment of not only students across the nation, but also for human beings around the world.

Sociology

Social Feast: An Introduction to Food and Society

Student Facilitator: Crystal Cheung | Faculty Mentor: Terri Anderson

This seminar uses food as a point of departure to explore the field of sociology. Food is often seen as a matter of personal preference, when, in fact, the choice of food is largely affected by family, school, media, and other agents of socialization. In this course, we will explore "food" as it relates to our personal identities and to society at large. The main questions are: What is food? How does it relate to you personally? How does it relate to the world around you?

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Art History

Islamic Art and Architecture in Spain

Student Facilitator: Christine Lee | Faculty Mentor: Irene Biermann-McKinney

This seminar explores Spanish Islamic Art and its unique multicultural quality. Students enrolled will understand the meaning of art and its relationship to form, function, and social history, and examine the lasting legacy of Spanish Islamic art on our lives today.

Depicting Human Sacrifice in Pre-Columbian America

Student Facilitator: Sarah Stuck | Faculty Mentor: Cecelia Klein

This seminar examines the possible motives behind and nature of Pre-Columbian sacrifices through art history, in contrast to colonial explanations and modern representations, and how it impacted and shaped indigenous society. The cultures that students will look at are the Aztec, Teotihuacán, Inka, and Moche.

Education

Autism and Asperger Syndrome in the Media: Through the Eyes of Individuals with Autism

Student Facilitator: Ani Khachoyan | Faculty Mentor: Connie Kasari

Students will be looking at the social, communicative, sensory, and learning world of individuals with autism by using various media sources such as books, documentaries, movies, and websites. Also debated are the various issues on autism such as statistics on autism, campaigns aiming to cure autism, and special education.

English

Taking Bestsellers Seriously: Harry Potter, Ender, and Robert Langdon vs. Those Stuffed-Shirt Yale Professors

Student Facilitator: Roberta Wolfson | Faculty Mentor: Mark McGurl

Can popular bestselling novels be incorporated as legitimate contributions into the academic discourse? Is genre fiction trash or literature? This seminar answers these questions by looking at Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, The DaVinci Code, and Ender's Game and examining their social, political, cultural, and religious implications.

Geography

Refugee Studies: A Multimedia Exploration of the World's Refugees

Student Facilitator: Jamie Zimmerman | Faculty Mentor: Jared Diamond

The smartphone can be our friend and our enemy, for it is both a blessing and a curse. We will study reasons for why this is, looking at negative communicative effects such as anxiety, cognitive deficit, decreased attention span, mobile dependency, and addiction, just to name a few. On the flip-side, we will look at positive effects such as increased communication, quicker information access, stronger connections to the outside world, new communication styles, multifunctionality, and others. Ultimately, we will discuss the history of the smartphone and its impact on individuals and society. Students will leave this class knowing more about the frenemy in their pocket.

History

They're coming for you: Horror & Science Fiction Films during the Cold War

Student Facilitator: Julian Carmona | Faculty Mentor: Jan Reiff

Films often reflect historical criticisms of the times in which they were released. This is especially the case for horror and science fiction films that came out during the Cold War. Writers and directors, whether subtly or obviously, tried to reflect the nuclear paranoid, unhinged, wartime, suburban nature of the Cold War Culture. This seminar will analyze the impact of horror films in their historical context. It will also stress that film interpretation, especially for horror and science fiction films, is ambiguous. Students will be challenged to create their own interpretations based on viewing films, readings and class discussion.

Human Complex Systems

From Sand Piles to Students, Chaos to Emergence, Simplicity to Complexity

Student Facilitator: Jacqueline de Borja | Faculty Mentor: Dario Nardi

Have you ever thought that natural phenomena, such as ant colonies, jagged coastlines, or the assembly of people, are not just created at random? Do you wonder about what happens when $2 + 2$ doesn't equal 4, when events don't settle down into a stable equilibrium? Hopefully, you answered "I sure do!", because this is the seminar for you! We will explore the main themes of Complexity Science, and apply this new science to our own lives + surrounding world.

The Power of One: How Individuals Become Systemic Changemakers

Student Facilitator: Evan Shulman | Faculty Mentor: Dario Nardi

Ever thought about changing the world? This seminar will equip you with some tools from Human Complex Systems to help you do just that. Read interesting readings, watch thought-provoking videos, and discuss how to best change the world- all in an engaging and enjoyable 50 minutes a week.

Military Science

Simulating U.S. Crisis Decision-Making

Student Facilitator: Swati Srivastava | Faculty Mentor: Casey Miner

This seminar is designed to provide practical involvement with theories and histories of the years past to students interested in actively learning material through role-playing and discussion. You will cover major crises in U.S. diplomacy, instances where national security was put in jeopardy and a swift course of action was demanded from the American leadership. We will apply theories of decision-making during simulations of said crises to not only understand how diplomacy and leadership factor into crucial policy-making, but also how a few can alter the course of history for the many. Students will role-play as key U.S. leaders during international crises, emphasizing practical engagement with political theories and historical backgrounds.

Microbiology, Immunology & Molecular Genetics

Diseases that Changed the World: How Diseases Affected the History of Civilization

Student Facilitator: Erika Villaruel | Faculty Mentor: Larry Simpson

This seminar will study epidemics that impacted the world. Diseases affected civilization, not only in decimating the population, but also in changing the structure and foundation of society. Through the eyes of both a scientist and historian, this seminar will study epidemics that impacted the world, from bubonic plague and smallpox to malaria and AIDS.

Pediatrics

The Heart of Understanding: Empowered to Make a Difference

Student Facilitator: Julianne Ahdout | Faculty Mentor: Juan Alejos

This course will serve as an interactive way of learning about the heart and cardiovascular disease- the #1 killer in the United States. Students will have the opportunity to think like doctors, health advocates, and individuals affected by cardiovascular disease in order to become empowered to spread awareness of the disease in their communities.

Political Science

Play Ball! A Look at Baseball and Its Political Meanings

Student Facilitator: Anthony Stier | Faculty Mentor: Michael Lofchie

Baseball has become an American staple and constant for people and families across the country. The game and corporation, however, have many political interactions. This seminar will analyze these interactions, as well as study how current Major League Baseball came to be. We'll talk about controversial issues, look at the sport's importance, examine its social ramifications, and have a good time doing so.

Psychology

The Mysterious Mind: Bridging the Gap between Mental Phenomena and Neuroscience

Student Facilitator: Sandhya Ravikumar | Faculty Mentor: Steve Lee

This seminar will investigate mental phenomena such as phantom limb pain, the placebo effect, and the control of unconscious processes. While not typically emphasized in psychology or neuroscience classes, these fascinating anomalies can potentially provide tremendous insight into the profound capacity of the mind and its relationship to the brain.

Women's Studies

Friends, Sisters, and Lovers: A Perspective on Breast Cancer

Student Facilitator: Darlene Edgley | Faculty Mentor: Sharon Bays

This seminar examines the historical, political, and cultural context of breast cancer in women. We will explore the social implications for women diagnosed with breast cancer, including the underpinnings of life with cancer. This course touches on the socioeconomic status (SES) stratification of access to resources for survivorship and explores the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, SES, sexuality, sexual orientation and health care.

World Arts & Cultures

Message of Resistance: Hip-Hop on the Streets Makes History for Nations

Student Facilitator: Dilyara Agisheva | Faculty Mentor: La'Tonya Rease Miles

This seminar's purpose is to understand how hip-hop shapes political resistance. As hip-hop spread with the spread of American Culture to all parts of the world, it shaped the identities of youth all over the globe, especially from those communities that are marginalized from the dominant society. As a class, we will also analyze through readings, videos, music-clips, etc., whether hip-hop can contribute to conflict resolution, with such controversial issues as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Spring 2009 USIE Seminars

Art History

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

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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

Brain Basics: From Alzheimer's to Zoloft

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.

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.

Happiness

Student Facilitator: Emily van Sonnenberg | 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

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.

Spring 2010 USIE Seminars

Anthropology

Brain, Mind, and Human Experience

Student Facilitator: Raymond Beyda | Faculty Mentor: Dario Nardi

In this seminar we will explore the history of our understanding of the brain and mind, its basic structure and physiology, and the way these structures have evolved over time. Along the way we will discover how our understanding of this organ has changed as new technologies have allowed us to see deeper into our thoughts and actions. In addition to learning what the brain is made of, we will explore the concepts of mind and behavior. What makes us human? Where do self awareness and consciousness reside? The majority of our discussions will be largely devoted to case studies which will illustrate how mysterious and how amazing the human brain and mind are. From alien hands to romantic love, we will explore how human experience is, at least in part, sculpted by the circuitry of our brains.

Communication Studies

The Spin Zone: Cable News in Contemporary America

Student Facilitator: Gon Carpel | Faculty Mentor: Tim Groeling

In a few short years, cable news has gone from nonexistence to what is arguably the most influential medium on our national conversation on politics and society as a whole. To better understand these influences, we will begin by establishing a strong foundation of media theory, economic analysis, and major modern media criticisms. Building on that foundation, we will then conduct an in- depth examination of Fox News, MSNBC and CNN. We will look at each of these three outlets' background information, examining their history, ownership, current lineup, nature of their coverage, key on-air personalities, as well as the top off-air personalities. Finally, students will apply what they have learned by conducting a content analysis of the news presented on a specific outlet.

Business Strategies for Journalism in the Internet Age

Student Facilitator: Corinne Crockett | Faculty Mentor: Tim Groeling

This seminar will inspire structured discussion of the future of the journalism industry in the Internet age, focusing on the “selling” of news. You will examine the newest models of the industry and their corresponding critiques. You will critically analyze these models and evaluate their viability in real-world application.

Economics

Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is: An Economic Look at Food Systems in America

Student Facilitator: Neha Bazaj | Faculty Mentor: Matthew Kahn

Food production and consumption patterns in the U.S. have changed more rapidly in the past 100 years than at any other point in history. Farms that once produced a variety of crops are now dedicated to a single crop, and home-made food is no longer the only option. The advent of industrial agriculture, changing lifestyles and growing incomes are just a few of the factors commonly cited for these changes. The next 50 years are likely to be just as tumultuous as the “food movement” encourages Americans to find their way back to the land. This course aims to examine America’s food system through an economic lens; how changing constraints, changing incentives and the desire for efficiency have shaped the current food system.

English

A Rose by Any Other Name: Representing the Wars of the Roses through Literature

Student Facilitator: Anna Wylie | Faculty Mentor: A.R. Braunmuller

In this seminar, students will look at retellings of famous battles as well as character assessments of the main players in the Wars of the Roses, and how these accounts change depending on who is in power when they are written. Students will also discuss the power of literature as state propaganda, and how it affected the perceptions of these events when they were written as well as their current influence on modern understanding of this time period. Furthermore, students will consider how to determine which writings are accurate and which are not, or even if this task is possible.

Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales and Folk Tales Across Cultures

Student Facilitator: Nancy Giang | Faculty Mentor: Christopher Mott

Why do we read fairy tales and folk tales as children? Why have they been able to withstand the transience of oral and literary tradition? Why do we still cherish these stories as part of our heritage? This course studies these fanciful stories in order to reveal the literary and cultural reasons for their permanence despite iterations and translations. We will read selected works from various cultural traditions which will be translated into an English version that still maintains the lexical integrity of the original pieces, in order to facilitate discussion and comparison of them. The seminar is, however, not focused solely on analyzing stories of previous eras, but is also designed to trace the implications of plot, style, and other literary techniques of the tales through subsequent periods.

Human Complex Systems

Artificial Intelligence: Here, Now, and All Around Us

Student Facilitator: Amy Huang | Faculty Mentor: Dario Nardi

The seminar will begin by examining how our perceptions of intelligence have shifted over the last century, how it has traditionally been implemented in machines, and how it might be newly represented today. Then, we will explore instances of intelligence in a variety of locations not typically associated with the science-fiction robots of the future. We will see where algorithms originating in AI have produced solutions, or raised questions, in other, seemingly disparate fields. After examining our current reality, we'll look ahead to future and alternate realities, to the end of judging exactly where we stand among them. Finally, we'll question whether the Internet, as a collection of millions of individual minds, might ever begin to "think" in human fashion.

Environment

Environmental Nonprofits: Opportunity in a Changing World

Student Facilitator: Isis Krause | Faculty Mentor: Carl Maida

This class seeks to begin the learning process of how nonprofits function and the role they play in society. Nonprofits with an environmental focus are a particular subset of nonprofits and will be the focus of this class. Whether considering local water pollution, citywide environmental justice or national climate change policy, nonprofits play a large role in shaping the future of our environment. By gaining a deeper understanding of the history, managerial/leadership practices, key concerns, and future direction of nonprofits, specifically through the lens of environmental nonprofits, students will have the background knowledge to help them seek future jobs in the environmental nonprofit field.

Molecular, Cell, & Developmental Biology

Science and Society: Bridging the Gap

Student Facilitator: Rameen Moridzadeh | Faculty Mentor: Karen Lyons

Both the advances and shortcomings of science continually morph our society. As such, it is imperative for aspiring public policy advisors, government officials, and other non-science students to understand how science directly impacts our futures. Entrenched in these debates, however, are strong misconceptions about scientific topics such as evolution, genetics, and regenerative medicine. The purpose of this course is not only to identify these misconceptions, but more importantly to provide a deeper understanding of the scientific culture and its bearing on seemingly unrelated fields. Through a combination of debate, guest lecturers, and presentations, students will delve into topics and questions at the forefront of science. For instance, should insurance agencies and potential employers screen applicants using genetic profiling, and what is the validity of such profiling? Is immortality attainable in our lifetime?

Political Science

Videogaming World War II: Experiencing Power Politics and Theory of Tripolarity

Student Facilitator: Einar Engvig | Faculty Mentor: Michael Lofchie

Short reading introducing lecture and discussions of in-game experiences and corresponding readings, followed by active simulation. Discussions revolve around relating new gaming experiences and knowledge, as well as aspects of game itself to theory of tripolarity, political realism in general, and any related aspects therein. Students engage in problem-based simulation learning by playing Hearts of Iron 2 (HOI2) as specific great power nation-states from 1936 to 1948, where understanding of geopolitics of era are not only relevant for winning, but essential. Game is designed to follow general historical lineage that can be altered depending on strategies students simultaneously study and use.

Private Parts: Privatization, the Public Sector and You

Student Facilitator: Justin Lam | Faculty Mentor: Brian Walker

Through the lenses of political theory, public policy and management, you will receive a national and international perspective on the private and public sectors. This outlook, rarely provided in undergraduate courses, will help situate your understanding in a 21st century and global context. This seminar will begin with a review of the motivations guiding the private and public sectors, and a historical survey of the factors that have resulted in the privatization of certain public goods today. Through case studies, this course will expose you to several ways in which decisions about whether they receive public goods from private or public entities can affect them. These studies will take place in a mostly American but also comparative government contexts, with relevant examples brought in from other countries. Finally, you will be challenged to think about these relationships in the context of your role as a citizen and about how you might be able to influence those around you with this knowledge.

Psychology

L.A. Schools: An Inside Look

Student Facilitator: Lauren Camarillo | Faculty Mentor: Jim Stigler

In this seminar, we will take an inside look into two middle school classrooms in Los Angeles and Compton Unified School Districts, analyzing lessons, student-teacher interaction, learning optimization, and the instructional dynamic of a classroom. Using our observational experiences from these two videotaped lessons, we will compare schools in the suburban-urban context, discussing factors of the academic achievement gap. Broadening the scope from Los Angeles schools to K-12 education in the United States, this seminar will address the socioeconomic and psychological implications of underachievement in our public education system. Is the so-called academic achievement gap truly an achievement gap? Or is it merely a gap in opportunity? Through discussion, we will discover which factors of a school's structure – both externally and internally – perpetuate the negative cycles in our history from which we are trying to progress.

The Psychology of Investing

Student Facilitator: Alexandra Davis | Faculty Mentor: Adriana Galvan

In this seminar, we will examine human rationality (or irrationality), and the psychology behind decision-making. The course will explore the shortcuts people use when presented with too many choices, and the biases that steer people towards one decision over another. We will compare the differences in the outcomes of options when they are presented in various ways, and consider the impact social factors may have on the decision-making process. Subsequently, we will discuss how these factors may apply to investment decision-making, additionally evaluating the roles of emotion and mood, as well as risk tolerance in investment choices. Then, we will attempt to discern whether or not economic theory is still applicable, given what we have learned. Finally, the course will conclude with a discussion of the real-world value of the concepts covered, and how this knowledge about decision-making can be used to make more fitting choices in the future.

The Psychology of Child Play

Student Facilitator: Nancy Young | Faculty Mentor: Scott Johnson

Child games are important activities that enhance many aspects of child development (e.g., social, physical, and mental developments) and promote intrinsic interests in learning. This seminar poses some important questions to keep in mind throughout the course. How do games reinforce gender stereotypes and gender division? Do children naturally gravitate toward certain games, and if so, why? How do children become socialized through their participations in the games? This seminar will cover different topics ranging from Jean Piaget's theory of children as active learners to motor development to sex differences. Students will come to understand how various games played in childhood strongly influence child development and affect the way children perceive themselves and the world.

Sociology

Sociology of Facebook and Online Social Networks

Student Facilitator: Eric Kim | Faculty Mentor: Terri Anderson

Online social networking websites such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter have dramatically altered the ways in which individuals in society interact with one another. No longer do we give each other phone calls, but instead we simply write on each other's "Facebook walls." No longer are our diaries private and kept to ourselves, but instead they are now public and available for all to see on blogs. Although the Internet is overcoming the distance gap in terms of communication, how authentic are these cyber-relationships? Can relationships now be defined by quantity instead of quality? Is the Internet ultimately bringing us closer together, or further apart?

Spring 2011 USIE Seminars

Anthropology

Female Automobility: Women, Cars, and Culture

Student Facilitator: Alexandra Athens | Faculty Mentor: Jessica Cattelino

From the way we interact with the environment to our conceptions of ourselves and others, transportation shapes our lives daily. Because the United States remains an automotive-centric society, it is important to consider the relationship between individuals and automobiles. A gendered approach to studying this relationship is particularly informative, as automobiles have historically been associated with males and masculinity. In this course we will utilize anthropological, women's, transportation, and media studies in order to better understand the relationship between women and the automobile. Conceptions of the relationship between women and cars have changed and continue to change, and these transformations reflect and reveal larger socio-historical-political factors. The study of these historical and modern developments, depictions, and relationships will be approached through various topics. Selected topics include notable technological advancements, the law, the "road trip", media analyses, and niche automotive occupations/pursuits.

Some Like It Hot: Evolution and the Psychology of Food Preferences

Student Facilitator: Leonid Tiokhin | Faculty Mentor: Daniel Fessler

This course will examine human food preferences through the lens of evolutionary theory. Like all other organisms on earth, humans have been shaped by evolutionary forces operating over large time scales. As such, we can gain substantial insight into human food preferences and food choice psychology by thinking about the *function* of food preferences and asking "why do we like the foods that we do?" We will discuss a wide range of issues, including people's consumption of "distasteful" foods such as spices, the evolution of disgust, learned taste aversions, changes in eating behaviors across the menstrual cycle, food moralization, and cross-cultural variation in food preferences and proscriptions. Students are encouraged to bring up topics of personal interest for discussion.

Tweeted on My Facebook Friend's Blog: The Dialogue and Practice of Social Media

Student Facilitator: Alyssa Bricklin | Faculty Mentor: Christopher Mott

This class recognizes Social Media as a behavior more significant than just following your favorite band on Twitter. In the second half of the past decade, Social Media has rapidly grown into an undeniably powerful force in the marketplace. Companies and organizations are using Social Media not only as a way to communicate information to their consumers, but also to foster relationships with them. Through class discussion we will begin to think critically about our role as consumers of this medium and explore the possibilities of someday being producers of it ourselves. The course starts with a theoretical evaluation of Social Media as a dialogue, and then we move to learning about the practical application of Social Media – identifying the various tools and examining case studies of large businesses, small businesses, and nonprofits. The class is designed so that we will be interacting with Social Media along the way.

Tralfamadorians, Jabberwockies, Whatchamacallits, and The Onion: When Nonsense Makes Sense

Student Facilitator: Michelle Mikolajczyk | Faculty Mentor: Reed Wilson

In this seminar we will read selected works of Lewis Carroll, Roald Dahl, Shel Silverstein, Kurt Vonnegut, and contributors to The Onion. The course is designed to show how these authors connect to one another by how they emphasize the limits of mankind's physical abilities and understanding. We will explore how they critique aspects of Human Services such as those relating to medical and pedagogical (e.g. doctor, teachers, etc.) fields through vague statements, fabricated vocabulary, and satirical rhetoric (hyperbole, puns, and wit). By the end of the seminar, we will untangle the authors' language to reveal a string of interpretable linear thoughts, and use the idea of time (both time passing and time as construct) to explain the nonsensical (time as the healer of wounds and time as the discoverer of the unknown) that pervades the entire selection of readings.

“Not Gay – Just a Fairy”: The Evolution of Queer Representations in American Comic Books

Student Facilitator: Kelsey Sharpe | Faculty Mentor: Christine Chism

Batman and Robin jokes aside, there is a considerable overlap in the comic book and queer communities; this course will trace the evolution of queerness in comics, largely in terms of the mainstream American comic book industry. We'll start with *The Temptation of the Innocent* and the Comics Code Authority, and move to queer coding in mainstream comics, incorporation of homosexual (or obliquely homosexual) characters into the mainstream, and eventually the development and success of explicitly LGBT titles. The class will largely move chronologically, but occasional class seminars will be set aside for special themes or topics.

Ethnomusicology

Music of Protest and Struggle in the Post-Colonial World

Student Facilitator: Andrew Harkness-Newton | Faculty Mentor: Anthony Seeger

This course will serve as an introduction to a chronologically and geographically diverse array of music movements that sought to confront conditions of poverty, corruption, rampant inequality, racism, tribalism, loss of cultural identity, violations to basic human rights, economic imperialism and neoliberalism. We will analyze the content of the songs themselves as well as the lives of the musicians that created them. Many of the artists covered in this course suffered censorship, imprisonment, torture, and even assassination at the hands of the state to get their message across. Though not all of them were able to see the change they envisioned in society, they all managed to capture the imagination of the public and keep hope alive during the most grievous of times.

Love, Drugs, Politics, and History: The Mexican Corrido

Student Facilitator: Marcos Ruedas | Faculty Mentor: Anthony Seeger

This class will examine the Mexican corrido, or traditional ballad, as an oral and musical tradition from Mexico and the American Southwest. As a song form that is often written by the community, the corrido offers unique first-hand accounts of significant historical events and provides insight in to the social and political conditions of the time period from which it was written. The bicentennial celebration of Mexican Independence this year marks an important time in history to reflect on the rich cultural history that is kept in this song form and assess how current music trends document

our own history. This class will examine how the corrido documents Mexican and Mexican-American history from the perspective of the people. The corrido will be examined from its early beginnings just before the Mexican Revolution through its most popular contemporary form as the narcocorridos that document the current drug cartel phenomenon. Students will gain an understanding of music as a medium of preservation for social, economic, and political circumstances and sentiments in history.

Geography

Hippies and Tree Huggers: The U.S. Environmental Movement in the 1960s and 70s

Student Facilitator: Hayley Moller | Faculty Mentor: David Rigby

Together, we will delve into this alluring world to explore the U.S. environmental movement of the 1960s and 70s in the context of the sustainability movement today. By analyzing the development and important historical moments of the movement, this course will address the linkages to and departures from “hippie” methodology in environmental approaches today. The course will emphasize the methodologies of both personal action and policy development, and in doing so will provide students with effective tools with which to approach environmental issues throughout their lifetimes. In sum, we hope to determine if, in fact, the hippies had it “all right.”

Health Services

Game of Life: The Social Determinants of Health

Student Facilitator: Roman Roque | Faculty Mentor: Alice Kuo

This seminar explores the social underpinnings of health, with particular emphasis on race as a negative factor for discrimination and a positive factor for resiliency. We will examine historical and contemporary measures of health, and the importance of the healthcare workforce, reform, and public policy in promoting optimum health for all.

Human Complex Systems

Complexity: What If?

Student Facilitator: Jovo Vijanderan | Faculty Mentor: Dario Nardi

Complexity Science is a fast emerging field combining multiple academic disciplines. In an age where change is inevitable and ubiquitous, this course seeks to answer the question “How can we model change and use it to our benefit?” This course will utilize tools found throughout modeling in the complex systems and apply them to scenarios found in multiple facets of our everyday lives. Students will also explore the field of complex systems through many different real-world applications such as Biology, Artificial Intelligence, and policy making. The practical aim of this seminar is to encourage Students to stop and explore the thought “What

International Development Studies

Nio Far: Working Together Towards a Sustainable Future

Student Facilitator: Antoinette Brou & Anne Flaherty | Faculty Mentor: Michael Lofchie

Development is not just black and white, with a simple right or wrong answer; rather, development is a field known for its shades of grey. In this course, we will explore various perspectives and attitudes towards international development, specifically the field’s past failures and successes and their current path towards progress. From the personal accounts of the mayor of an African Commune to the analytical viewpoint of a UCLA professor, this seminar will present a holistic view of development and teach students to think critically about current development trends.

Medicine

AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Modern Plague

Student Facilitator: Garret Ma | Faculty Mentor: Thomas Coates

During this seminar, we will explore AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa and by the end of the seminar series you will have a greater understanding of the implications of AIDS on its society; not only on its people but its economy, politics and international level. We will examine how “globalization” has led to greater activism for AIDS humanitarian work from Western countries. More importantly, we will discover how has and how will Sub-Saharan Africa overcome such a disease burden. This seminar will focus on the development of AIDS/HIV in the 1990s, the biochemistry around the virus and its current threat to the political and economic stability of this impoverished area of the world. More closely we will look beyond the individual concerns that AIDS brings but at the aggregate and how it afflicts the country as a whole. At the end of the class we will address the most fundamental question: “Why should we care?”

Public Policy

What is Cyberwar?

Student Facilitator: Millie Tran | Faculty Mentor: Alexandra Lieben

This seminar’s objectives are twofold: to define cyberwar and to discuss the future of the internet given this nebulous concept. This course is designed to provide you with a brief introduction to cyberwar as a still evolving and contentious topic, the nature of cyber threats and what all of this means for the internet. To understand and critically engage in this debate on whether the perceived threat is real, we must first define the concept — “What is cyberwar?” We will utilize an interdisciplinary approach, looking at the issue through various lenses and stakeholders.

Scandinavian

Comics: Not Art, Not Literature

Student Facilitator: Matt Seneca | Faculty Mentor: Patrick Wen

This course will provide an in-depth survey of a unique, vastly underappreciated art form: the comic book. It will chronicle one of modern art history's most fascinating narratives while broadening students' background in and understanding of both literature and visual art. Of special interest will be comics' awakening to literary themes and complexity, and its artists' shaping the medium into a distinct visual/cognitive language. The course will focus on formal innovation, and how it has elevated the medium to the level of craft and expression it is capable of today.

Women's Studies

Rethinking Citizenship: Immigrant Youth, Gender, and Civic Identity

Student Facilitator: Amalia Castaneda | Faculty Mentor: Sharon Bays

This seminar seeks to challenge traditional ways of viewing the concepts of citizenship, civic identity and immigration by exploring them through the experiences of Latina immigrant Female Adolescents in South Los Angeles. As South Los Angeles urban communities experience an influx of immigration and consequent demographic transformation, the conventional definitions of citizenship and civic identity become more blurred as they encounter different sets of national, bi-national and sub cultural identities. The predominant definition of citizenship centers on ascribed rights and privileges granted to an individual upon birth or naturalization. Civic identity is a concept used to identify being part of or attached to a given community and/or nationality.