

Spring 2022 USIE Seminars

Ancient Near East

Ages of Enchantment: The Witch and Her Origins Through Modern Pop Culture

Student Facilitator: Minh-Thu Nguyen | Faculty Mentor: Gina Konstantopoulos

In this seminar, we will explore the figure known as the “Witch”. Who is she? Where did she come from, and what does she represent? Starting with early mentions of her in Ancient Near Eastern sources, we will examine the developments of her characterization through Ancient Greek, Medieval, Early Modern, and 19th/20th century fantasy Golden Age depictions. Halfway through the course, we will switch gears and apply this analysis to modern representations and reimaginings. This includes the discussion of themes such as spirituality and sexuality; sisterhood and spinsterhood; healing and hexes; and the examination of these dualities. Additionally, we will discuss which aspects of the archetype are emphasized depending on the identity of the writer and the time period of creation. What do these traits reveal about societal values and the aim of the work?

Asian American Studies

“Log Kya Kahenge” : Understanding South Asian Mental Health Stressors, Challenges, and Stigma

Student Facilitator: Mahika Nayak | Faculty Mentor: Cindy Sangalang

Mental health is a pervasive yet deeply stigmatized issue amongst South Asians. This course is meant to equip students with an understanding of the nature and origin of stigma around mental health, issues that serve as stressors for the South Asian community, barriers to seeking help, and strategies for combating stigma and providing culturally-specific care. This course uses an intersectional lens to explore themes around immigration, the “model minority” myth, relationship violence, LGBTQ+ mental health, familial relationships, intergenerational trauma and culturally specific trauma-informed care.

Bioengineering

Tissue Engineering: Our Future of Medicine

Student Facilitator: Nicolas Pedroncelli | Faculty Mentor: Song Li

This course is an introduction to the widely interdisciplinary and fast-advancing field of tissue engineering that encompasses cell and developmental biology, materials science and chemistry, and engineering in order to replace, regenerate, or restore damaged or diseased tissues and organs. We will first learn the fundamental knowledge of this field and then explore its vast applications, such as disease modeling, drug discovery, cell therapies, artificial organs, and 3D-Bioprinting. Weekly seminars will be composed of both lectures and group discussions on the ethical implications of tissue engineering. Toward the end of the quarter, a speaker series will take place to provide you all with the opportunity to learn about the exciting advancements in tissue engineering directly from leaders in the field. Overall, this course aims to give students an introduction to the academic and industry perspectives of tissue engineering that will continue to drastically change the field of medicine in the coming decades. I hope that by the end of this quarter you all are as passionate about this exciting field as I am!

Chemical Engineering

Everything on Energy: Solutions of Today and Tomorrow

Student Co-Facilitators: Brandon Taking and Elizabeth Zhang | Faculty Mentor: Yuzhang Li

Energy encompasses all functions and aspects of modern society. From the television screen that keeps us entertained at night to the pacemaker that keeps thousands of patients alive, energy is virtually used in some sort of shape and form by every human being. However, fossil fuel-based sources of energy, the more “traditional” sources, while very dependable, have contributed to an increase in greenhouse gases leading to climate change, which has drastically negative impacts on our environment and the global economy. In addition, more traditional sources of energy are also “non-renewable”—once depleted, society must find other sources of energy. This drives the need to transition to more sustainable, renewable forms of energy.

During this transition, it is critical that we consider not only the advancements in energy generation and storage devices, but also the distribution of energy and the corresponding bodies developing these changes, namely academia, industry, and government. We must additionally account for the social, environmental, and economic impacts while implementing and applying these new solutions. Given its central role in our lives, energy is fittingly the center of many policies subject to heavy public scrutiny.

Chemistry and Biochemistry

Elements of Life in Our Universe

Student Facilitator: Amish Jain | Faculty Mentor: Hung Pham

This seminar aims to demonstrate how core concepts from each of the sciences from physics to chemistry to biology, meaningfully interact with each other to give rise to the phenomena of life. We'll approach this topic in three sections, each focusing on a different phase of life in the universe. Starting at the Big Bang and the formation of the Solar System and the conditions conducive to life, we'll then turn our attention to the elements most related to life, and end at the "end" of the universe. Throughout this journey a simple atom acts as our protagonist, allowing us to see how, from the formation of that atom to its theoretical end, it is able to help or harm life in the universe. Ultimately, my goal is for you all to leave this course more inquisitive, and with a deeper appreciation for the world we inhabit, than when you came in.

Chicana/o and Central American Studies

Mass Incarceration as a Public Health Crisis

Student Facilitator: Vera Arenas | Faculty Mentor: Gaye Theresa Johnson

This seminar will take an intersectional approach to how we view mass incarceration by looking at this issue from a public health lens and exploring its direct effects on people during and after incarceration as well as its downstream health effects on the general public. Topics that will be covered in this seminar include: the racial origins of mass incarceration as well as its health cycle, the social determinants of health, insight into health inside prisons, and the effects that mass

incarceration ultimately has on the health of entire communities and especially the formerly incarcerated. Lastly, the seminar will cover the future of mass incarceration, in which we'll discuss the need to reform the prison system and what our role is in this process.

Aside from weekly lectures which will include discussion among students, this seminar will also include a service learning component with the goal of exposing them to real world mass incarceration activism. Throughout the course of the quarter, students will work in groups to complete a service project for a community organization actively working to help people affected by prisons. Service learning goes beyond traditional volunteering through incorporating a hands-on approach to education by providing students with experiences that reinforce seminar material with meaningful knowledge that they can apply to their future endeavors.

Chicana/o and Central American Studies

Latinx the Word: Discourses and Expression

Student Facilitator: Herman Chavez | Faculty Mentor: Marissa López

This seminar seeks to understand the creative and political dimensions of the term "Latinx" through close readings of ideology. In the first half of the course, we will develop a nuanced understanding of Latinx as a contested identity. In the second half of the course, we will apply this framework to a variety of social expressions. We will examine how Latinx operates within larger institutions, such as in government and universities. We will proceed to explore how writers, artists, musicians, and other creatives employ Latinx to construct identity. You will engage with mediating Latinx between political and creative expressions, considering how Latinx both creates and is created by these forces. This course is based on interdisciplinarity, incorporating critical and applied perspectives from political science, philosophy, comparative literature, musicology, and sociology. However, you will need no prior experience in any particular area; rather, any student interested in entering into dialogue with the dimensions of the Latinx identity is welcome.

Classics

Out from Under: Women's Costuming in the Roman Empire

Student Facilitator: Caroline Lunt | Faculty Mentor: Sarah Beckmann

Fashion is a deliberate medium through which we communicate our values, status, and mood. It is both a daily choice, and a long-term investment. When one chooses what they wear, they are engaging with both their private, intimate selves and the practical societal expectations of where they live. Fashion is more than a superfluous process of ornamenting the body, and for Roman women the clothes they wore constituted a glamorous language of color and form. How does fashion coincide with political revolution? How do women's agencies reflect their political views? What did fashion look like, for all women, not just the elite? How do women negotiate their identity within the constraints of socially acceptable garmenting? What trends have we ignored because they don't fit the "classicizing" image of the natural Roman woman? *Out from Under: Women's Fashion in Ancient Rome* (CL 88S) will ask you to reflect on these questions, and more. This course prepares you to critically examine Roman fashion trends, their histories, and their significance as tools of both social rebellion and oppression. By considering both literary and artistic contexts, this course will introduce you to the world of Roman women's fashion during the time of the Empire. Assignments will be both analytic and creative.

Communication

Emotional Intelligence: Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Student Facilitator: Phoebe Melikidse | Faculty Mentor: Karyl Kicenski

In this course, a repertoire of verbal and non-verbal communication theories will be applied to engage this invaluable skill. During the weekly 50-minute class sessions, students will learn several communication concepts such as paralanguage, the facial feedback hypothesis, and active listening. Subsequently, students will have the opportunity to apply the concepts through hands-on activities, developing their emotional intelligence in each class. Throughout the course, students and the facilitator will work together to create a supportive climate that encourages growth. By implementing theories, practice, and a positive mindset, it will be discovered how emotional intelligence skills can be the keys to success in work, relationships, well-being, and beyond.

Computer Science

De-mystifying Computer Science

Student Facilitator: Zack Berger | Faculty Mentor: Amit Sahai

To most, computers are a black box technology. We use them every day, yet many people have no idea how they work! That understanding is hidden behind a rigorous engineering curriculum of coding and complicated math. As a result, computer science is inaccessible for a lot of people.

The core questions of CS can be answered for anybody, regardless of their major. Demystifying Computer Science aims to provide an accessible and holistic understanding of computing for everyone.

This is a technical class, but no technical background (or prerequisite) is required. Anybody can take this class without any computer science or STEM experience. Many of you may have prior knowledge of computing — we will contextualize that knowledge in the field of CS throughout the quarter.

We will start at the beginning with bits (1s 0s) and work our way up together. By the end, we will have an end-to-end understanding of computing. Three questions will guide us throughout the course, and soon we'll be able to answer all of them.

Computer Science

Machine Learning 101

Student Facilitator: Sidharth Ramanan | Faculty Mentor: Glenn Reinman

Machine Learning (ML) is becoming increasingly relevant across a variety of industries - chances are that some day you will be working on a project that leverages ML in some capacity. Knowing the fundamentals of ML can better contextualize your work and make it more fulfilling once you have the full picture. It's an exciting field that's growing very fast, so you will be able to understand and discuss new trends and applications even with technical people. It's a very intellectually fulfilling subject. My focus is to uplift those with no background on ML. The only prerequisite is an open and present mind. Moreover, this class will

remain light on math and programming since my goal is to emphasize high-level ideas in the class.

Computer Science

Technology of X-files: Aliens and Paranormal

Student Facilitator: Aditya Mishra | Faculty Mentor: Achuta Kadambi

The primary focus of this course is the same as the primary focus of the X-Files, the “Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence” (SETI). Near the end of the course we will be having discussions about how computer science is used to debunk certain findings of paranormal phenomena. This particular field of research requires a broad knowledge of signal processing, (astrophotography, computer vision) and distributed computing - all of which we will be covered in this course. A large part of this course will be focused on the philosophical implications of Extraterrestrial Search and in particular, first-contact. No previous knowledge of computer science is required for this course as this course serves as an introduction to these topics.

Earth, Planetary and Space Sciences

Applied Astrobiology: Design your Own Alien Microbe

Student Facilitator: Emery Grahill-Bland | Faculty Mentor: Tina Treude

In this course, we will walk through the basics of planetary science and exoplanet studies that relate to astrobiology. Then, we will explore the biological pathways that microbes can take to survive in average and extreme conditions on Earth. Throughout the course not only will we be covering content, but we will be actively engaging in discussion and about the synthesis of these two branches of science.

The course will be structured as a ‘flipped-classroom’ which means discussion and problem solving occur in the classroom, while lecture content is covered at home. I personally have had wonderful experiences with learning in flipped-classroom style and I am excited that we will also be able to use our in classroom time to discuss the topics that you all find most interesting, together.

All of the content will be presented at a level that is accessible to students with absolutely no background in STEM at UCLA.

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Urban Ecology: Coexistence in Urban Landscapes

Student Facilitator: Michael Yu | Faculty Mentor: Pamela Yeh

When the subject of nature is brought up, one often thinks about the lush rainforests of the Amazon or the breathtaking mountain range of the Himalayas. However, often overlooked are the wildlife that cohabit the urban environment alongside us. From the crows and ravens that peer down at us from telephone poles to the squirrels that cross our paths, the urban environment provides habitat for a myriad of different species. Who else calls Los Angeles their home? What are some of the challenges they face living in this human-dominated landscape? What are some of the adaptations that allow them to dwell in this novel urban ecosystem?

This course seeks to allow students to seek out the answer to these questions and share their experiences in this journey. The first third of the course will introduce students to the broad discipline that is Urban Ecology and the biodiversity within urban ecosystems, with an emphasis on the city of LA. The second portion of the course will address the many challenges urban wildlife face and some of the adverse impacts that our activities have had on our non-human neighbors. Finally, in the last few weeks, we will dive into the fascinating adaptations that allow some wildlife to flourish in this environment and things that are being done to make cities a more suitable place for wildlife. Through a series of readings, discussions, interactive activities, and lectures, this course aims to allow students to gain a connection to and appreciation for the wildlife that surrounds them every single day.

Education

Kids, School, and COVID-19: K-12 Education in Time of Pandemic

Student Facilitator: Chris Mauerman | Faculty Mentor: Anna Markowitz

This course will examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the United States' K-12 students and public education system. This class will take an intersectional approach to examining how various aspects of

student wellness were, and continue to be, affected by: school closures and reopenings, virtual schooling, and changes to federal and state policy + funding over the past two years. Specifically, students will be reviewing such topics as learning in a virtual space, standardized tests, early childhood education, physical & nutritional health, mental & social health, and federal & state investments as they relate to the pandemic. School responses to COVID-19 are very much ongoing, as the implications of the crisis are being continuously discovered and addressed. This class strives to anchor itself in pre-pandemic trends, but will also respond as much as possible to ongoing changes.

For each of these topics, students will discuss what happened during the pandemic; learn how it is consistent/inconsistent with ongoing challenges to educational equity; for whom it is of particular importance; and how it has been addressed by federal, state, district, or school policy. Students will be encouraged to share their own perspectives/experiences and collaborate to imagine how policy may be harnessed to address issues of educational inequity.

Electrical and Computer Engineering **Internet and Free Speech**

Student Facilitator: Elsa Barland Dubil | Faculty Mentor: John Villasenor

This seminar takes a detailed look at how the Internet has changed political discussion surrounding free speech- from censorship to content moderation- as well as examined many proposed solutions. Taught from an engineering and technology background, this class will look at both the how and why of these issues and will equip you with the new understanding of engineering and public policy. No background in the subject matter is required. It is my goal that everyone who leaves this class feels more knowledgeable and confident in their own civic engagement surrounding free speech privacy and big tech.

English

Dear Friend, Old Friend, Good Friend: Male Friendship in Shakespeare

Student Facilitator: Justin Huwe | Faculty Mentor: Colleen Jaurretche

In this seminar, we will examine how friendships between men are depicted in two Shakespeare plays: *The Merchant of Venice* and

Hamlet. These plays will serve as case studies as we seek to better understand the inner workings of male friendship. These plays present a perfect opportunity to critically analyze how male friends navigate their emotions. Specifically, we will learn how to use a “male friendship lens” when reading literary texts.

Honors Collegium

Avatar: The Last Airbender--Connections to Real Life

Student Facilitator: Joey Lu | Faculty Mentor: Jennifer Jung-Kim

When the American animated television series Avatar: The Last Airbender (ATLA) was brought back to Netflix mid May 2020 last year in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic, no one could have anticipated how popular it would be again— particularly among Asian American young adults. Fifteen years after the first episode of this fantasy children's cartoon was launched, children, young adults, and not-so-young adults partook in watching or rewatching this animated series. Why may this be and how do themes presented in ATLA reflect current and historic, real-life issues?

The first half of the course will focus on understanding ATLA and its connection to important historical phenomena, touching upon the Cambodian Genocide, the Vietnam War, and extractive colonialism primarily in East and Southeast Asia. Through discussion of the relationship between the four elemental nations in the show, the course will discuss how the show reflects larger themes of colonialism, militarism, and international power dynamics globally.

The remainder of the course aims to analyze student's own perceptions and connections to ATLA in current times. By reading articles on cultural studies and listening to podcasts discussing the popular cultural phenomenon that is ATLA, this course will seek to make connections from ATLA to real-life events, experiences and future discuss cultural representation in the media. Through discussion, this course also seeks to understand why ATLA is so popular and nostalgic to many in the Asian American community, especially during the time of Covid-19.

Honors Collegium

Psychology Behind Imposter Syndrome: Managing through Mindfulness

Student Facilitator: Somya Panchal | Faculty Mentor: Jennifer Lindholm

This course will involve an in-depth discussion on imposter syndrome, the psychological reasons for its prevalence in college students, and an extensive examination of its potential effects on our daily lives. Integration of strategies and self-care techniques such as meditation, breathing exercises, self-reflections, podcasts, and much more, will help facilitate the lecture content. We will also gain professional insight from knowledgeable guest speakers and thorough discussions. The overall goal is to adopt a safe space, increase confidence, and enhance our capacity for self-reflection through curiosity and discussion. Two overarching questions that will help guide our work together throughout the seminar are: How can imposter syndrome affect our lives? What mindfulness tools and techniques can we use to mitigate imposter thoughts?

Honors Collegium

DNA Nanotechnology: from Fundamentals to Applications

Student Facilitator: Passa Pucghai | Faculty Mentor: Elisa Franco

Nucleic Acid nanotechnology is an exciting field, allowing engineers and scientists to utilize chemistry derived from nature (that of RNA and DNA) to build intricate and useful devices and nanostructures. This course hopes to impart an overview of the field: starting from foundational principles in biochemistry and molecular biology to self-assembly and design of nanostructures to applications in molecular computing to ethical considerations, and to contemporary and relevant related technologies.

Political Science

Colonialism, International Law, and Standard of Civilization

Student Facilitator: Nihal Anees | Faculty Mentor: John Branstetter

This course will deal with the standard of civilization, a legal and discursive concept integral to historical and modern international law. It is the clearest manifestation of colonialism in international law, asserting a hierarchy amongst nations according to the 'sophistication' of their civilization and distributing rights and responsibilities on that basis. Over the course of 10 seminars, we will survey the historical development and use of the standard of civilization at two pivotal points in colonial history. The first half of the course will chiefly concern the era of extra-territoriality in the 19th century, where Europeans in non-European territories did not have to answer to local laws or policies. The second will deal with the League of Nations' Mandate system, which granted the governance of many regions in Asia and Africa to the colonial elites that had emerged victorious from World War I and formed the body. During both parts, we will deal in detail with Japan and the Ottoman Empire. Readings and lectures will span topics in international law, political science, and history, and students will be encouraged to think critically about the similarities and differences between two ostensibly unrelated countries and their colonial histories.

Public Health

Effective Communication of Science and Public Health Messages: Convincing Masses

Student Facilitator: Minh Bui | Faculty Mentor: Alice A. Kuo

Introduction to communication and miscommunication of science and public health messages. Highlight specific examples of miscommunication such as the MMR vaccine link to Autism, Climate change, and COVID-19. Explore the underlying historical, political, and scientific causes of these controversies. Discussion of the adverse effects of these controversies to the scientific and public health field.

Spring 2023 USIE Seminars

African American Studies

Seeking the Sakhu: Introduction to Pan-African Black Psychology

Student Facilitator: Thyra A. Cobbs | Faculty Mentor: Caroline Streeter

This seminar is an introduction to Pan-African Black Psychology which involves the application of African-centered psychological theories and concepts to the mental health of continental and diasporic African peoples. The course will begin with the socio-historical development of African-centered Black Psychology, from its historical roots in ancient Egypt to the founding of the Association of Black Psychologists during the 1960s to the present day. An emphasis will be placed on the radical school of thought in African American Psychology, but Pan-African psychological science will be applied to the diverse cultural and social experiences of continental and diaspora Africans. The dialectic relationship between the traditional African worldview and African philosophies such as Ma'at, Ubuntu/Botho, and Kawaida with Pan-African Black Psychology will be discussed in depth. Students will gain an understanding of Africentric research methods and psychological interventions by the end of the course.

Anthropology

The Ecology of Love

Student Facilitator: Jordan Yanowitz | Faculty Mentor: Jessica Lynch

This course will be centered on understanding how love shapes our interactions with each other and with our shared home in the world. We will begin by establishing a common understanding of what love is and where it comes from. We will explore how we interact with the world through love, and how the context of our development is colored by love or a lack thereof. We will build an understanding of what it means to love one's body and mind and the role of intersubjectivity in the cultivation of love between oneself and others. Working across ecological scales, we will examine how all of our relationships, with our kin, our friends and with a broader community are affected by love, and the role that love plays within these contexts. The love of our home is

central to the ecology of love – after exploring love across interpersonal scales, engage with love of places, of ideas and of the whole of nature. Connecting these to history, we will work toward understanding the essential aspects and limitations of love.

Love is a deeply personal yet nearly universal idea amongst people and is something that should be studied in a way quite different from a standard scientific topic. For each of these topics, students will be encouraged to engage and share their own subjective experience to build a more holistic understanding throughout our learning community. Students will be expected to engage with both the scientific, and philosophical ideas presented in the class and to work to integrate their own perspectives to drive their own inquiry into the ecology of love.

Asian American Studies

Oceanic Filipinx Studies: The Currents of Anticolonial and Abolitionist Futures in Hawai'i

Student Facilitator: Sean Sugai | Faculty Mentor: Espiritu Lê Evyn Gan-dhii

"The ocean that surrounds us is the one physical entity that all of us in Oceania share. It is the inescapable fact of our lives. What we lack is the conscious awareness of it, its implications, and what we could do with it... All of us in Oceania today, whether Indigenous or otherwise, can truly assert that the sea is our single common heritage." — Epeli Hau'ofa, *We Are The Ocean*

"... [T]he new Oceanic studies may be well-intended attempts to transcend historical differences in the name of a common threat to humanity, but when not articulated with Native Pacific studies can have the effect of erasing struggles in and around the islands for sovereignty and stewardship of resources"

-- Paul Lyons and Ty P Kāwika Tengan, *Introduction: Pacific Currents*

What does it mean to be Filipinx-American in settler occupied Hawai'i? How does the ongoing settler colonialism, militarism, and imperialism in the Philippines and the Filipinx diaspora shape movement into and out of Hawai'i? How might embracing a (trans)oceanic approach to Filipinx identity in Oceania strengthen relationalities between Filipinx studies and Native Pacific studies and disrupt empire in Oceania? And what does anticolonial and abolitionist work look like for lands, oceans, and peoples of and across Oceania?

This seminar will introduce students to Filipinx-American history and culture in settler occupied Hawai'i, particularly thinking comparatively through the ways in which Filipinx settlers negotiate structures of dispossession, racialization, and migration to Hawai'i in relation to broader structures of US empire and colonization in the Philippines and in diaspora. Through book excerpts, journals, poetry, literature, and film from Filipinx scholars in Hawai'i and in the Philippines, as well as from Native Hawaiian and Polynesian scholars and activists, students will engage in current debates in Oceania as it relates to settler-Indigenous relationalities and sovereignties. Touching on both the history and ongoing activist efforts in Oceania and elsewhere, such as Standing Rock, Black Lives Matter, and Mauna Kea Protests against the Thirty Meter Telescope, this seminar will ultimately aim to demonstrate how intimacies between land, ocean, and people offer new ways to imagine anticolonial and abolitionist futures against empire in Oceania and beyond.

Asian Languages & Cultures: South Asia

Philosophy of Poetry in the Context of South Asia

Student Facilitator: Rashi Garg | Faculty Mentor: Gyanam Mahajan

How is a poem able to convey emotion? Why do poets use restrictive forms and meters? What characterizes an aesthetic experience? Through discussion-based seminars, these questions, which are rooted in the philosophy of poetry, will be considered using theories from both South Asian and Western aesthetics. All theoretic learning will be grounded in a quarter-long exploration of the Urdu Ghazal, through which students will gain experience aesthetically analyzing works of poetry.

Asian Languages & Cultures

Survey of Contemporary Mandopop

Student Facilitator: Shenghan Li | Faculty Mentor: Michael Berry

This course will primarily focus on the introduction and analysis of twenty-first century Mandopop produced in Mainland China and Taiwan. Discussions will be centered around how diverse Mandopop lyrics reveal contemporary Chinese society through social, cultural, and political lenses. The majority of the songs this course will cover are

centered around individual songwriters such as Joker Xue and Li Ronghao. Topics will include the popular genre China Wind (which mixes themes from traditional Chinese poetry and aesthetics with contemporary pop sensibilities), the articulation of love, hidden political meanings, the clash between traditional and contemporary ideology, and more. Students will understand contemporary China through pop music—a unique and understudied primary source.

Biomedical Research

Maternal Child Health: Disease and the Microbiome

Student Facilitator: Annabelle Leka | Faculty Mentor: Kirsten Turlo

The body is made up of trillions of microorganisms that make up what we know as the microbiome. The maternal microbiome in particular undergoes changes during pregnancy that affects the mother and child, playing an important role in building immunity and fighting disease. Where a woman lives, the food she eats, and the cultural decisions she makes to care for her baby— all of these things can affect the microbiome, the immune system, and the impact of disease on a mother and her child.

In this course, we will study how disease and the microbiome acts and develops at the maternal child level. We will also examine the role of microorganisms in developing antibiotic resistance and how this affects maternal and child health. We will discuss infections and diseases seen during pregnancy and how this can affect an infant's health. We will take a look at how infectious disease plays a role in this, as well as the development of antibiotic resistance as an added issue. Later, we will examine some case studies of countries outside of the United States that face high levels of maternal mortality. We will then review primary literature to see how different methods of delivery, feeding, and nutrition affect the microbiome, as well as implications of these changes to mothers and their infants.

Chicana/o and Central American Studies

Exploring Environmental Health Issues in the Latino Community

Student Facilitator: Isabella Blanco | Faculty Mentor: Genevieve Carpio

While pollution in the United States poses potential health risks for everyone, a large percentage of U.S. Latinos live and work in communities that are disproportionately burdened by air pollution, contaminated drinking water, and pesticides. This seminar will be an introductory course on the state of U.S. environmental health issues in the Latino community. Examples of topics that will be covered in this seminar include the intersections of transportation and labor, lack of access to green space, the impacts of urban planning, and environmental movement building. Students will have the opportunity to explore and discuss the political, economic, and social factors that contribute to these issues. This course will feature guest speakers from nonprofits seeking to address specific public health challenges for Latinos. Students will complete a final service project for a local community organization that includes course teachings. By taking this seminar, students will gain valuable skills in critical thinking, collaboration, and environmental justice research.

Communications

Instagram & Influencers: Life in the Age of Social Media

Student Facilitator: Alex Kermani | Faculty Mentor: Tim Groeling

Whether keeping in touch with family and friends on Instagram, applying to jobs through LinkedIn, or mindlessly scrolling on TikTok, social media has become a pervasive part of modern life. While the reach of Social Media has only grown, we can approach these online platforms from a variety of perspectives to gain a greater understanding as to why we behave as we do on them. In this seminar we will approach a variety of social media phenomena from its effect on our mental health to meme culture. Through assigned readings, activities, and presentations, students will gain a thorough appreciation and greater understanding of how we as a society interact with social media, and how social media interacts with us in return.

English

The Space Between: Tropes of Mixedness in Contemporary Mixed-Race Literature

Student Facilitator: Emily Kim | Faculty Mentor: Caroline Streeter

Welcome to Mixed Race Literature! This seminar will survey contemporary mixed-race literature with the goal of answering the question: What is mixed-race literature, and what are the implications of the presentations of mixedness they contain? The course will introduce why it may be difficult to define mixed race literature, explore scholarship surrounding presentations of mixedness, and present a brief contextual history of mixedness in the U.S. Each week will correspond to a different theme or pattern of representation: binary vs. fluid representations of mixed identity, mixed characters' association with tragedy, mixed people as symbols for a better world, as shapeshifters, as cultural "bridges," and as metaphors for cultural crossings. The course will discuss the one drop rule and blood quantum laws, as well as how mixedness is associated with alienation. Finally, we will return to our opening definition of mixed-race literature and seek to redefine it based on what we have learned. Alongside these assigned readings, you'll be exposed to excerpted scholarship in class to provide critical frameworks through which to analyze and critique representations of mixedness in the readings.

English Composition

Experimental Writing Workshop

Student Facilitator: Cory Chen | Faculty Mentor: Amber West

What if you wrote using braille? What if you created a story with fragrance, or wrote a poem in 6 languages or in a made-up language? What if puppets performed a poem? What if your poem is a tour through a mansion where you pass by words inscribed on random objects? What if your story had 21 characters or no characters? What if the setting was a cardboard box, or spanned across all 7 continents? This 1-unit course is a brief, but expansive exploration into different forms of experimental writing, including Avant Garde techniques from the nineteenth century to the contemporary era. As an English Composition course, we will learn by doing: employing experimental techniques in our own writing including linguistic and syntactic deviation, collage and other organizational deviation, temporal contortionism, genre hybridity, and multimodal writing. We will confront questions like: what is language? How can we bend language, sounds, syllables, syntax, and structure in purposeful ways? Students will understand and take influence from how authors, poets, and experimentalists like E.E Cummings, Gertrude Stein, Ernest Gadsby, Charles Yu, and others

utilize innovative methods to reinvent our notions of writing and meaning. Students will engage in supportive peer-review workshops to write their own experimental poems, short stories, novel chapters, and other pieces that defy the categories that we have created in literature. At the end of 10 weeks, students will have a portfolio of 5 original, experimental works and have gained an opportunity to make unique literary and community connections along the way.

Labor Studies

A Faster Fashion: The True Cost

Student Facilitator: Abeeha Hussain | Faculty Mentor: Caroline Luce

A Faster Fashion: The True Cost is a class that takes an in-depth look at garment production under a new age of Fast Fashion and its rapid growth around the world. The course and its materials are applicable to anyone who wears clothing. Students will gain an understanding of the racial, ethnic, cultural, climate, and legislative impacts that fast fashion has had around the world through a series of class discussions, readings, and case studies of real-life events. Students will also be engaged with speakers from unions, the garment industry, and legislative aides working on labor policy to get a real-life grasp on the work being actively done to push back fast fashion from accelerating. In contrast to the way fast fashion is centered on just unethical practice, this course uses intersectionality as a framework for identifying garment workers—the majority of whom are women, people of color, immigrants, refugees, etc—at the vanguard of the labor movement in the United States and around the world. It highlights their past and contemporary struggles, the fights from the beginnings of worker/labor education to modern day climate crisis awareness and social welfare advocacy. Popular culture, consumerism and fast fashion trends impact the lived realities of workers in sweatshops, and racial and gendered expectations shaped public perceptions of garment workers. By doing so, the course reveals the true cost to fast fashion by carefully explaining the intersection at which fashion historically and continues to have a central focus on global trade, industrialization, gender, immigration, and unionization.

Life Science

Making the Grade – At What Cost?

Student Facilitator: Eva Danesh | Faculty Mentor: Shanna Shaked

This seminar will dissect the relationship between mental health and the current structure of the education system. Positive psychology, the characteristics that allow humans to flourish, and behavioral change, how to live by those lessons in real life, will be the foundations of our journey of examining the things undergraduates often connect with life satisfaction — a high grade, a prestigious internship, or a top graduate school — and where the source of motivation lies.

You will get a holistic understanding of our current education system, from the original intention of grades to how they differently motivate well-performing and struggling students, while also evaluating modern change. We will discuss experiences Bruins have had experimenting with new evaluation methods, including the introductory biology course adopting an A/F only grading system for one quarter and UCLA's medical school shifting to pass/fail grading.

This course will also give you opportunities to reflect on your experiences both in school and in life and prepare you to share the skills and knowledge you gain with others.

Medicine

An Introduction to Medical Clinical Research

Student Facilitator: Daniel Bolotin | Faculty Mentor: Veena Ranganath

Welcome to “An Introduction to Medical Clinical Research”, a student-taught seminar course which will focus on providing students with a well-rounded understanding of the history, ethics, and methodology behind medical clinical trials. This one-hour weekly seminar requires no previous knowledge of research or statistics and will be aimed at anyone in the general undergraduate population with an interest in medical clinical research.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, social media and news websites were inundated with countless articles and posts covering the recent advancements and setbacks in the fight against the virus. Ultimately, clinical trials played a pivotal role in testing the medications, procedures, and vaccines that were developed against the

coronavirus. Acknowledging the increasing relevance of clinical research in our modern society, students will be encouraged to relate the information learned throughout the course of the seminar to current world events and personal experience. By the end of the seminar, students will be able to think critically about clinical research presented in the media and be familiar with the resources available at UCLA and beyond.

Musicology

International Sounds of the Sixties and Seventies

Student Facilitator: Mallika Singh | Faculty Mentor: Robert Fink

This course aims to combat the sanitization of international artists from the late 60s and well into the 70s, hoping to humanize them in ways that study playlists and party mixes cannot. Various international takes on American genres, such as disco and rock will be examined: from analyzing the American military's influence in Southeast Asia and how this led to Cambodian psychedelic rock, to studying the sociopolitical factors that encouraged Italian jazz to compose the score to the rise and fall of the adult film industry in America. This course is for those with a passion for music, history, and an intersection of the two that takes us back to some of the most tumultuous, and some of the most sonically transcendental time periods this world has seen.

Neuroscience

Biological Superpowers: Examining Human Outliers and Enhancements

Student Facilitator: Abigail Holder | Faculty Mentor: Rafael Romero

Have you ever wanted to have superpowers? From rare genetic mutations to sudden prodigies, this seminar delves into the extraordinary realms of human biology, with the purpose of exploring the extremes of the human body and mind, analyzing current popular areas of research and bioethics, and examining potential applications of remarkable anomalies in our population to future society. This course will look at real case studies of innate, acquired, and engineered abilities in a way such that students will leave with a better understanding of

modern issues and debates in biology, the impressive capacities of human physiology, and of themselves.

Psychiatry

Music, Movement, and Medical Therapy: The Impacts of Music Therapy and Dance Therapy on Neurodevelopmental, Neurodegenerative, and Mental Health Conditions

Student Facilitator: Christopher Chae | Faculty Mentor: Rujuta Wilson

Beautiful melodies and passionate dances are two inspiring forms of art that captivate our hearts. But not many know that these two ways of expressing emotion do more than inspire. This seminar aims to explore the psychotherapies of Music and Dance therapies and its neurological and physiological effects on the mind and body. Students will be introduced to a new perspective on ways to view healthcare and engage in creative thinking to make the healthcare system more pertinent and catered to the patient experience. Experts in the field will be invited to share real world applications of Dance and Music therapy in treatment as well as in practice. The class will dive into current evidence-based results based on clinical research being done to further our knowledge in the field. Through critical examinations of neurodevelopmental disorders, neurodegenerative diseases, and mental health conditions, we will understand the effects of such therapy and its additive nature to build holistic treatment plans. This will be a discussion-based class serving to engage students in interdisciplinary thought through the lens of different neurosocial perspectives.

Society and Genetics

Covering COVID-19: Science Journalism, Public Health, and Society

Student Facilitator: Victoria Li | Faculty Mentor: Michelle Rensel

As businesses closed during the pandemic, individuals looked increasingly to online and digital sources for up-to-date information on COVID-19. This course will be about the task of pandemic-era journalism, as well as related efforts to communicate scientific developments to the public. It will focus on the complex process of translating and interpreting scientific research to lay audiences, the role experts play in

that process, various intersecting priorities among all stakeholders (e.g., news outlets, public health officials, and the general public), and the effort of combating health misinformation. While other classes have focused solely on public health, or how to become an effective writer, this seminar will focus on our current pandemic reality with an interdisciplinary lens.

Society and Genetics

Seminal Examples in Environment and Disease

Student Facilitator: Gurugowtham Ulaganathan | Faculty Mentor: Patrick Allard

How does your Environment influence you? Have you ever wondered why some people are more susceptible to their surroundings? This quarter, we will explore some of these exciting questions and with the help of historical case studies and notable scientific research that have been pivotal to our understanding of the role of the Environment in influencing Health Outcomes. We will start in the 1940s with the Dutch Famine and go up to present-day work involving the Gut Microbiome, look at their history, how they have affected the human populace and what we can take away from them. Finally, at the end of the quarter, through an expert Guest Research Lecture and Q&A composed of researchers who study environmental influences on health, you will get a sneak peek at the innovative methods being used in a scientific setting and possibly get involved in research. With that said, I welcome you to the seminar and to a great time!

World Arts and Cultures

Pilgrimage: Ancient Paths & Modern Practice

Student Facilitator: Aldo Schwartz | Faculty Mentor: Peter Sellars

For thousands of years, people have been walking, climbing, and crawling – through deserts, forests, mountains, and plains – in search of something greater than themselves. Pilgrimage – the ritual procession towards, between, or through sacred sites – is found in nearly every religion and geographic region. But what exactly is a “pilgrimage,” and why would someone embark on one?

This course aims to illuminate the varied motives and meanings of pilgrimage in both the ancient and modern world.

Through experiential learning, historical case studies, and group discussions, students will explore pilgrimage as ritual devotion and transformation – in both religious and secular contexts. Students will also explore the ways that pilgrimage can inform their own lives by reflecting on personal journeys and making their own pilgrimage routes.

By integrating the lessons of pilgrimage practice, students will move forward with vision, purpose, and a willingness to tread new paths for generations to come.