2016-2018 RTC Course Offerings

Fall 2016

HU 5002 Rhetoric and Composition .................................................. Romney

CRN 84643  12:35pm – 1:50pm  TR  Walker 329B

This course considers key theoretical, pedagogical, and historical issues and events that have linked the fields of rhetoric, composition, and literacy studies. *(Groundwork)*

HU 5008 Critical Approaches to Literature & Culture ....................... Adolphs

CRN 84644  7:05pm – 9:35pm  W Walker 329B

This course explores key approaches to literature and culture from a critical (interpretive) perspective. We will focus on exile literature and film, especially works by exile writers, artists and scholars who left Nazi Germany. This seminar will introduce students to the question of how communication influences representation, understanding, and cultural practice. We will focus on issues of cross-cultural studies, thereby addressing questions that should fulfill the Modern Language requirement for PhD students. With regard to exile studies, we will read major works of exile literature, both fictional and critical (political and philosophical essays, speeches, movies and radio broadcasts). *(Groundwork, Global Literacy)*

HU 5012 Communication Theory ................................................... Bell

CRN 84645  7:05pm – 9:35pm  M Walker 329B

In the influential article "Communication Theory as a Field" Robert Craig (1999) outlined seven different traditions of communication study, each characterized by the way in which communication itself is defined. This seminar will focus on what Craig called the cybernetic tradition, which views communication as the flow of information. We are often told that we live in an "information age" where the creation, distribution, use, collection, and manipulation of information is fundamental to economic, political, and cultural activity. How did information become a key concept for communication theory in the late 20th century, and what impact does this have on how and what we study as "communication"? We will take a broad, chronological approach to the development of "information" as a concept, reading selections from primary works
(e.g., Weiner, Shannon, Bateson) as well as analysis (e.g., Day, Hayles, Kittler). We will look at the implications of information theory for the development and use of communication technologies and well as for technical (Bowker & Star), social (Brown & Daguid; Gibson), and political (Schiller; Galloway) communication. (Groundwork)

HU 5030 Linguistic Analysis.................................................................Bergvall

CRN 84646 11:05am – 12:20pm TR Walker 329B

This course takes up discourse analysis by first surveying some theoretical and methodological foundations (e.g., Saussure’s signifiers, Foucault’s orders of discourse, Bakhtin’s heteroglossia in the novel, Bourdieu’s habitus, as well as Chomsky’s idealized speaker/hearer, and Gumperz’s communicative competence). Then we focus on a subset of approaches: Conversation Analysis (e.g., Schegloff, Jefferson), Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, van Dijk, Gee, Lazar), Communities of Practice (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet), and Multimodality (Barthes, Kress & van Leeuwen) that affect how we choose and analyze texts (and images/other modalities). We conclude by examining the analysis of issues, e.g., the study of gender/sex/sexuality (Butler, Cameron), science studies (Bergvall), decolonization (Tuhiwai Smith), and/or political discourse (Chilton). Students will practice sample analyses of different discursive forms (oral, written, electronic, visual...), considering their social settings, and then undertake (or continue) a larger project that analyzes how the affordances of different texts and other semiotic channels shape and are shaped by their messages and intentions.

(Methodology)

HU 5711 Biomedical Research Ethics.........................................................Johnson

CRN 84647 9:35am – 10:50am TR Walker 329B

This is a discussion-centered graduate-level course that will examine selected ethical theories and problems in medical ethics, with an emphasis on research using human and animal subjects. The course will provide an introduction to the history of research ethics, and to different international ethical codes that have been adopted in reaction to abuses of research subjects. A basic grounding in ethical theory and approaches to bioethics will be included. A case-study method designed to develop skills in the analysis of case problems in clinical medicine and biomedical research will be utilized.

(Advanced Conduct of Research Requirement)
HU 6050 Special Topics in Language & Literature..........................Van Kooy

CRN 84648  2:05pm – 3:20pm  TR Walker 329B

What does it mean to think globally? Globalization is a common term but what are its historical and cultural contexts and antecedents? In this course our collective task is to investigate the relatively recent global turn in many academic disciplines by examining early paradigms of what Manfred Steger refers to as the ‘global imaginary.’ Arguably, a global consciousness emerges in the Romantic era (1770-1840), one that is tied to imperialism, slavery, global war (the Napoleonic wars), and emerging technologies and scientific discourses. Throughout the semester we will discover contesting global perspectives, which will lead to discussions of how the period’s literary works knit together complex cultural narratives and how these relate to contemporary theories about empire and imperialism, globalization, modernity, war, aesthetics, and conceptualizations of technology and nature.

(Global Literacy)

Spring 2017

HU 5020 Composition Theory.............................................................Kitalong

CRN       7:05pm – 9:35pm  M Walker 329B

An introduction to such issues in composition theory as the relationships of thought to language, of spoken to written language, of reading to writing, of writing to learning, and of process to product.

HU 5070 History & Theory of Rhetoric..............................................Johnson

CRN       7:05pm – 9:35pm  TR Walker 329B

Moves from a focus on classical rhetoric to a selective overview of rhetoric in the medieval, Enlightenment, modern, and contemporary periods. There will be a consistent theme of inquiry concerning the applications of rhetorical theory to the practices of producing texts in various forms and the teaching of writing through rhetorical theories. Further, we will read primary and secondary texts pertaining to the various periods.

(Groundwork)
HU 5112 Theoretical Perspectives on Technology…………………………..Marratto

CRN 9:05am – 12:05pm W Walker 329B

In this course we will explore different theoretical approaches to technology as it intersects with society, communication, ethics and politics. Among the approaches we will consider are phenomenology, critical theory, Marxism, feminism, deconstruction, actor-network theory. Among other things, what these contemporary approaches to thinking about technology have in common is their skepticism regarding a traditional understanding of technology as a simple ensemble of tools or instruments to be used for human purposes. In challenging this instrumentalist view, these approaches would draw our attention to the ways in which technology actively shapes our world and our sense of our own possibilities for action within it. We will evaluate these different theoretical approaches and consider their implications.
(Groundwork, Methodology)

HU 5114 Visual Theory and Analysis..................................................Hristova

CRN 9:00am – 12:00noon M Walker 329B

A critical survey of selected theoretical, philosophical, and methodological issues that inform various disciplinary perspectives on the study of the visual, such as sociology, film and television theory, communication, and art history.
(Groundwork)

HU 6115 Special Topics in Technical Communication…………………..Waddell

CRN 3:35pm – 4:50pm TR Walker 329B

In 2015, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called climate change “one of the most crucial problems on earth.” Unfortunately, climate change has also been characterized as “probably the largest science communication failure in history” (Stoknes, 2015). A 2013 study published in Environmental Research Letters concluded that between 1991 and 2011, 97.1% of those peer-reviewed, climate-change studies that expressed a position on anthropogenic global warming “endorsed the consensus position that humans are causing global warming.” Nevertheless, a 2014 Yale study found that 35 percent of Americans still believe that global warming is caused mostly by natural phenomena.

In an attempt to identify key strategies for improving communication about climate change, this course will consider work from a broad range of approaches to communication, including scientific and technical communication, rhetoric, communication studies/cultural studies, media and mass communication studies, critical discourse analysis, and psychology.
Fall 2017

HU 5004 Cultural Theory.......................................................................................Strickland

CRN 85018  3:35pm – 4:50pm TR  Walker 329B

HU 5004 Cultural Theory

This course explores key issues in how cultural contexts and processes of communication affect representation, understanding, and practice. Topics include a historical overview of the concept of “culture” in Modernity; theories of ideology and subjectivity; structuralism, poststructuralism and psychoanalytic frameworks for understanding culture; humanist, feminist, materialist, and postcolonial theories, and issues of cultural production and circulation in digital and new media environments.

Required Texts:
You'll need to acquire four books, *The Portable Karl Marx*, edited by Eugene Kamenka, *Cultural Theory: An Introduction*, by Philip Smith and Alexander Riley, *The Theory Toolbox* by Jeffrey Nealon and Susan Searles Giroux, and *Biopolitics: A Reader*, by Timothy Campbell and Adam Sitze. These should be available at the bookstore, or you can get them from Amazon.com or other online booksellers. There will be other readings made available as online texts. *(Groundwork, Global Literacy)*

HU 5006 Continental Philosophy..............................................................................Morrison

CRN 85019  2:05pm – 3:20pm TR  Walker 329B

HU 5006 Continental Philosophy

This course will explore the themes of identity and difference in 20th century philosophy and political theory. We will begin with an examination of influential accounts of human subjectivity in the works of Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Simone de Beauvoir, Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Frantz Fanon and Judith Butler. Generally speaking, “subjects” in continental thought are understood as embodied beings-in-the-world who are defined by relations to others, relations mediated by language and technology, and characterized by power. Continental philosophy has thus offered a significant and influential challenge to traditional “humanist” theories of autonomous subjectivity and agency. In the second part of the course we will focus specifically on the question of language and discourse as conditions of identity-formation. And in the last section, we will look at the contemporary political and economic context of identity-formation. In particular, we will examine the issues of ethnicity, class, nationality, and migration in the context of globalization through selections from works like Jean-Luc Nancy’s *Globalization,*
Derrida’s Rogues, and Butler and Athanasiou’s Dispossession and Thomas Nail’s The Figure of the Migrant.

(Groundwork, Global Literacy)

**HU 5007 Critical Perspectives on Globalization**

**CRN 85020** 7:05pm – 9:35pm Thursday Walker 329B

This course explores through various critical methodologies how the categories of Nation, Race, Class, and Gender (to name a few) work to define the construction of "The Global" as a concept. Students will engage theories in critical sociology and anthropology; historical materialist political economy and systems-theory; and contemporary analyses of colonization and biopolitics, in order to analyze how the role of creating categories of study is central to studying world-historical processes of global integration. In the course, students will be asked to draw from their own research interests (from Scientific and Technical Communication to Cultural Studies) in order to produce novel categories or refine current categories for comprehension of globalization as a process and the Global as a concept. This course is intended to satisfy both the Methods and Methodologies and the intercultural/global literacy requirement.

(Groundwork, Global Literacy)

**HU 6010 Special Topics in Communications – Media Studies**

**CRN 85021** 7:05pm – 9:35pm Wednesday Walker 329B

This course introduces approaches to media studies and various methods of inquiry focused around three overlapping areas of communication research: 1) the medium as technological object, cultural form, and historical artifact; 2) media practice as industries and institutions; 3) audience and media reception. The course considers the methodological assumptions and objectives of a range of qualitative texts within these three areas, drawing from semiotics, medium theory, media archaeology, cultural history, political economy, social theory, and cultural studies. We examine the nature of research questions particular to the field of media studies as well as the strengths and limitations of methods used to address such questions. Readings include explanations of methodological approaches, but by way of specific interesting theoretical and/or empirical studies on such topics as the printing press, news, Hollywood, television, celebrity, fandom, advertising, and media policy, to name a few. Assignments include short analysis papers on different methodological approaches and a proposal design outlining a research project.

(Methodology)
HU 6050 Special Topics in Language & Literature: Introduction to Poetic Theory & Praxis

Seigel

CRN 84347  9:35am – 10:50am  TR Walker 329B

"But we enter on burning ground as we approach the poetry of times so near to us..."

––Matthew Arnold

This course will explore poetics broadly, including, but not limited to: Transcultural poetics (alternate languages, writing systems, text-forms, oral cultures & performances); a brief world history of poetics; genealogies & continuities of the avant-garde; architectonics of the book; present practices in innovative poetics (eco- & bio-politics, poetics of the political economy of affect, contemporary cross-cultural poetics & translation, violence and representation, gender and experiments in form, poetics of minor literatures, speculative poetics and contemporary imagination, etc.). Students will read and reflect on the writings of Peter Bürger, Mary Ann Caws, Renato Poggioli, Marjorie Perloff, Kryzysztof Ziarek, etc. Coursework will conclude with an article length paper on poetics as well as an attempt at a short poetry manuscript (doing is learning).

(Global Literacy)

Spring 2018

HU 5003 Technical and Scientific Communication

Fiss

CRN    9:35am – 12:05pm Thursday

This course provides an advanced introduction to Technical and Scientific Communication, especially in its intersections with science and technology studies. The interdisciplinary field of Technical and Scientific Communication combines history, theory, professional practice, and pedagogy to encourage the examination of science and technology as evolving, complex forms of knowledge, social constructs, and realms of human life.

We begin by reading about current research in the field and looking at a few frameworks for considering Technical and Scientific Communication from the perspectives of rhetoric, philosophy, history, communication, education, and other fields. We then work through a series of case studies to try out the different approaches. Throughout, we’ll be thinking about how well the frameworks match the case studies, as we consider the varied places of Technical and Scientific Communication in the workplace, the laboratory, the classroom, and our broader lives.

(Groundwork)
HU 5113 Cultural Studies

CRN 3:35pm – 5:50pm TR

Introduction to the theoretical history, methods, and practice of cultural studies. Includes the influence of literary humanism, Marxism, structuralism, subcultural studies, feminism, postmodernism, articulation theory, Deleuze and Guattari. 

(Global Literacy, Methodology)

HU 6050 Special Topics in Language & Literature

CRN 7:05pm – 9:35pm Thursday

Advanced study of topics in language and literature including U.S., British, and world. May include intercultural and comparative studies and the reading of literature, literary and critical theory, translation and film.

(Global Literacy)

HU 6060 Special Topics in Philosophy: Philosophy of Language

CRN 9:35am – 12:05pm Thursday

In this course we will examine a range of philosophical understandings of the nature of language and its central role in human existence such as in discourse, communication, thought, action, world constitution, self-understanding and historical understanding. We will look at formal-logical; phenomenological; structuralist and post-structuralist; and hermeneutic conceptions of language, among others.

HU 6114 Spec Top in Visual Representation: Feminism & Visual Media

CRN 2:05pm – 3:20pm TR

This course will examine the work of contemporary feminist visual media theorists, critics, and artists/practitioners and their engagement with key intellectual and political issues in media and media representation. Particular attention will be given to debates that have arisen around feminism and media studies and how they are informed by the intersections and tensions between gender, race, class, dis/ability, sexual orientation, and age/generation. Course readings and screenings will be interdisciplinary and drawn from areas such as film studies, cultural studies, communication, queer and
trans theory, and new media so that students gain a sense of the field of feminist media studies and its influences and possibilities.

**HU 6115 Special Topics in Technical Communications**

**12:35pm – 1:50pm TR**

This course traces social, political, and cultural issues that have emerged in science and technology studies as a result of feminist examinations of gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and the physical body. The course begins with an examination of selected historiographies intended to counter descriptions of feminist work as linear, unified, pure, and complete, and to propose, instead, that it is fluid, plural, contradictory, and ongoing. Using the latter as a conceptual framework, the course takes up feminist texts that probe definitions of scientific and technological knowledge, theorize the distinctions between the two, and suggest how both knowledge systems contribute to gender essentialism. Drawing on interdisciplinary scholarship—women’s studies and biology, history, anthropology, sociology, psychology—the course examines feminist research that probes the practices and exclusions that result from such essentialism and call for alternatives to it. The course concludes by considering ways to respond to these calls, foregrounding the multiple facets of feminist commentary, the range of insights emerging with and among the scholarly disciplines, and the impact of the humanities on recent feminist studies of science and technology.