

# 2017-2019 RTC Course Offerings

## Fall 2017

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

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

### **HU5004 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**

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.....Amador**

**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 coloniality 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.....Collins**

**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, Krzysztof 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 15022 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.....Slack**

**CRN 15023      3:35pm – 4:50pm 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 6060 Special Topics in Philosophy: Philosophy of Language...Marratto**

**CRN 15024      9:35-12:05pm Thursday**

This course will consider the philosophy of a language as a major development in 20th century thought. Our examination may include formal-logical accounts of language (Russel, Ayer, Frege, early Wittgenstein), structuralism (Saussure), and phenomenological approaches to language (Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty). We will then investigate significant developments in later 20th century thought about language, possibly including: the later Wittgenstein's conception of "language games"; Merleau-Ponty's problematic of language and ontology; Foucault's conception of "discourse," discursive formations, and power; Austin's conception of "speech acts" and performativity; Derrida's concepts of writing, "grammatology," and technicity; embodied cognition theories of language (Merleau-Ponty, David McNeill, and Lakoff and Johnson); Butler's feminist deployment of speech-act theory, phenomenological, and deconstructive approaches to language. We will consider the implications of these different approaches to language for our understandings of rhetoric, communication, subjectivity and politics. **(Methodology)**

**HU 6050 Special Topics in Language & Literature.....Viera-Ramos**

**CRN 14036      7:05pm – 9:35pm Thursday**

Everything you always wanted to know about psychoanalysis but were afraid to ask cinema.

The title of this seminar echoes Slavoj Žižek's edited volume—and bestseller—Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Lacan But Were Afraid to Ask Hitchcock. Beside the theoretical component of this book, Žižek's endeavor helps to take psychoanalysis out of its hermeneutic discourse to a wider intellectual thinking community like, in his case, political philosophy. Since its rising texts, psychoanalysis has developed a symbiotic relationship with philosophy, literature, theater and the social sciences (such as anthropology or history). Parallel to psychoanalysis, the film industry—and its consequent theorization—opened a different sensibility for the modern consumer of "spare time." Adopting a similar symbiotic relationship, both cinema and psychoanalysis share those same conflicts dwelling in the modern subject. By following Žižek's spirit of introducing psychoanalysis to a wider intellectual thinking community, this seminar

seeks to interrogate a selection of films aiming to approach basic psychoanalytic concepts that come handy when researching in the twentieth and twentieth first-centuries culture.

**(Global Literacy)**

**HU 6114 Spec Top in Visual Representation: Feminism & Visual Media....Shoos**

**CRN 15025      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 Communication.....Brady**

**CRN 15026      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.

# Fall 2018

**HU5002 Rhetoric and Composition.....Abeles**

## **CRN**

Rhetoric's recorded history dates back to the time of Socrates, but Rhetoric and Composition is a much more recent invention, with origins in the peculiar political, social, and philosophical exigencies that characterize modern society and, most specifically, the modern university classroom. This course explores how this relatively young discipline has encountered and responded to these challenges, with a variety of pedagogical and research methods that, amidst their diversity, continue to speak to the broader philosophical and political challenges that face students, teachers, and the academy. At issue will be the changing economic and institutional role of higher education, the challenges that a variety of civil rights movements put and continue to put to the academy, the increasing integration of technology and literacy, and debates with other allied disciplines about what academic traditions are best positioned to teach the means of effective communication. Throughout the course, we will keep in mind that these contemporary issues are not so much a departure from the rhetorical tradition as they are a continuation of rhetoric's propensity to contest both with and against philosophy, as well as composition's long history of exploring how communication is vital to the health of political agents and their agency.

**(Groundwork, Methodology)**

**HU5008 Critical Approaches to Literature and Culture.....Van Kooy**

## **CRN**

This course will focus on the early modern production of literary, theatrical and pictorial imagery of the New World (1603-1840). The purpose of this course will be to explore how aesthetic discourses and practices have mediated historical and contemporary ideas about colonial relations, nature and the environment, race, and modernity. The first four or five weeks of the term will be devoted to achieving a basic understanding of the philosophical traditions and contemporary theoretical approaches that define aesthetics. This reading will include Edmund Burke's 1757 *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and the Beautiful*, but much of our attention will be directed toward Jacques Rancière's *Aesthetics and its Discontents*, *The Politics of Aesthetics*, and *Figures of History*. We will then turn to the literary and cultural component of the course, which will include a selection of period paintings and prints, and works by, amongst others, Shakespeare, Daniel Defoe, Olaudah Equiano, Charles Brockden Brown, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, a selection of plays about the Jamaican and Haitian folk heroes, François Mackandal and Jack Mansong, Elizabeth Sansay's *Secret History; or, The Horrors of St. Domingo* (1808), Victor Hugo's *Bug-Jargal* (1826), and *The History of Mary Prince* (1831).

**(Groundwork, Global Literacy)**

**HU5012 Communication Theory.....Hristova**

**CRN**

Traces the development of communication theories as they relate to oral, written, and visual communication in pre-industrial as well as mass-media environments. The course is designed to help students develop an understanding of theory and research for application in their own fields, and to interpret the effects of mass communication in a variety of contexts. Emphasizes interactions among theoretical, political, historical, and socio-cultural factors.

**(Groundwork)**

**HU5116 Approaches to Alterity and Difference.....Fonkoue**

**CRN**

This graduate seminar will focus on works by a selected list of theorists/thinkers who explored notions of otherness and difference from a variety of disciplines, including history, feminist criticism, philosophy, cultural studies and postcolonial studies. Authors include Gilles Deleuze, Emmanuel Levinas, Hélène Cixous, Judith Butler, Gayatri Spivak, Edward Said, Frantz Fanon, Katherine Hayles and Donna Haraway. The course will study such common socio-cultural categories as race, gender and nationality, but also, ultimately, bring students to reflect of the concepts of humanism and posthumanism.

**HU5110 Backgrounds of Critical Theory.....Adolphs**

**CRN**

This course studies the major critical theories, especially the Frankfurt School, that have influenced contemporary theories such as feminist theory, postmodern theory, cultural studies, critical pedagogy, and discourse theory. Special attention will also be given to present-day theorists whose works have been informed by Critical Theory, above all Jürgen Habermas. Given the subject matter, this course also introduces students to the challenges of reading theoretical texts and texts in translation.

**(Global Literacy, Methodology)**

**HU6070 Special Topics in Rhetoric and Composition: Archival Research.....Romney**

**CRN**

“Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past.”  
—George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four

“I write this history so that it will become memory, so that it will be placed in the archive and see justice” --Incan writer Guaman Poma

This course will give students an overview of theoretical approaches to archives and their

relationship to history. Equal attention will be given to the practice of archival research. The course will include readings from de Certeau, Ridener, and Derrida (among others) and will also include historians of rhetoric and composition who have addressed questions of archival research, such as Jessica Enoch, John Brereton, and Carr, Carr and Shultz. Readings will also include recent publications in the field providing practical guides to archival research. In addition to shorter written responses, students will work on an archival project relating to their own research.

**(Methodology)**

**HU5711 Biomedical Research Ethics.....S. Johnson**

**CRN**

This is a discussion-centered graduate seminar that examines selected ethical theories, principles, and problems in biomedical research ethics, with an emphasis on research using human and animal subjects, including international research. The course provides an introduction to the history of research ethics, and to international ethical codes that have been adopted in reaction to abuses of research subjects. A basic grounding in ethical principles and approaches to bioethics is included. A case-study method designed to develop skills in the analysis of case problems in biomedical research is utilized. The course includes case studies involving social and political science research, the use of social media for research, and analysis of communication (e.g. informed consent documents) in research. This course satisfies the NSF requirements for Advanced RCR Training for students who need to fulfill this requirement. It is of particular value to students interested in health-related research and communication.

**(Advanced RCR)**

## **Spring 2019**

**HU5070 History and Theory of Rhetoric.....R. Johnson**

**CRN**

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)**



**HU5112 Theoretical Perspectives on Technology.....Bell**

**CRN**

This seminar will help prepare students to investigate aspects of digital and other technologies relevant to their individual research projects. We will spend one third of the semester on key readings in the philosophy of technology, one third on key readings from the Science and Technology Studies (STS) tradition, and one third on readings in the history and culture of technology. At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to construct a comprehensive bibliography of sources relevant to the study of a technology of their choice, identify the theoretical perspective of each source and the tradition of which it is a part, and begin to place their own theoretical and methodological commitments within an ongoing scholarly conversation about the chosen technology. Most readings will come from collections such as Readings in the Philosophy of Technology and editions of the Handbook of Science and Technology Studies; other works may include The Machine Question (Gunkel); Aircraft Stories (Law); Scripts, Grooves, and Writing Machines (Gitelman); and The Languages of Edison’s Light (Bazerman).

**(Groundwork)**

**HU5114 Visual Theory and Analysis.....Kitalong**

**CRN**

What is at stake in a shift from a primarily text-based to a more visual culture? We will explore this question from a cross disciplinary perspective, beginning in the first half of the semester with readings and screenings from the "classics" of visual theory, including Barthes, Berger, Tagg, Mitchell, Kress & Van Leeuwen, and Stafford. In the second part of the semester, the screen will take on a more central role as we examine theories of visuality in light of technologies of image manipulation, data visualization, simulation, and virtual or augmented reality.

**(Groundwork)**

**HU 6070 Special Topics in Rhetoric and Composition: Rhetorical Analysis.....Marika Seigel**

**CRN**

This course will introduce you to different methods of and perspectives on rhetorical analysis in academic writing. By the end of the course, you should: (1) be able to choose a method of analysis most appropriate to your research questions, forum, and subject matter; (2) have a greater understanding which disciplines tend to employ rhetorical analysis as a method and how rhetorical criticism intersects with other disciplines and areas of inquiry; (3) be familiarized with the professional forums where rhetorical analysis is discussed and practiced (journals, organizations, conferences, etc.), and; (4) gain familiarity and experience with the conventions of academic writing in fields that employ rhetorical analysis as a method.

**(Methodology)**

**HU6111 Special Topics in Gender Studies.....Bergvall**

**CRN**

This course challenges the notion of simplistic gendered/sexed binaries in the study of how nature, nurture, and ideology create and are affected by language. Drawing on a variety of textual sources (written, oral, electronic, visual) from a variety of media, we will consider how complex sexed and gendered variations are rendered (and often stereotyped) through a number of discursive strategies. We will review and utilize diverse linguistic and multimodal theories and methodologies in the collection and analysis of texts, e.g., Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, Lazar), Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, Eckert & McConnell-Ginet), and Performativity (Goffman, Austin, Butler), and examine studies of language, gender, and sexuality drawn from a number of cultures around the world (e.g., from diverse US cultures including Native American and African American; as well as studies done in other nations, e.g., Poland, Japan, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Brazil, Thailand, Israel). Students will engage in several smaller studies to practice various data collection and analysis methods, present synopses of outside readings to the class, and will undertake one large term project and presentation. Students are strongly encouraged to develop projects useful for conference presentations, publications, theses or dissertations.

**(Global Literacy, Methodology)**

**HU5100 Qualitative Humanistic Research.....Sotirin**

**CRN**

This seminar is about qualitative methodology focused on ethnographic sensibilities and issues. Students are required to conduct a field project because the only way to understand ethnographic issues is to encounter them in the process of a field study. During the semester, students will conduct observational and interview research in a chosen fieldsite. This requires IRB approval and ongoing ethical considerations, fieldnotes, interpretive analysis, interviewing, transcription, reflexivity, and a final paper. Weekly critical readings will address both practical and theoretical concerns. We will examine arguments about the criteria and conduct of qualitative research as well as theoretical challenges addressing such issues as authority, authenticity, representation, embodiment, politics, performativity and materiality. Students will develop both a sophisticated understanding of qualitative research issues and experience with the research process.

**(Methodology)**

**HU6115 Special Topics in Technical Communication: Communication and Climate Change.....Waddell**

**CRN**

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 rhetoric, risk communication, scientific and technical communication, media and mass communication studies, and psychology.