WCS - World Cultural Studies

WORLD CULTURAL STUDIES Courses

WCS 100L. Introduction to World Literatures and Cultures. 3 Credits.
This multicultural course introduces the student to the forms and meanings of cultural expressions from around the world, with an emphasis on world literature. It provides students with the vocabulary necessary for the appreciation and comparative analysis of these works as representations of rich and diverse cultural values. A primary focus of the course will be the role of culture in the formation of national and individual identity, paying special attention to gender, sexuality, race, class, and struggles for social justice. All works will be read in English.

WCS 307. Understanding European Culture through Film. 3 Credits.
This course provides students with an historic overview of films from a variety of European countries. Students will gain the vocabulary necessary to analyze individual films and for the comparative analysis of films from different cultural and historical contexts. The course will focus on issues such as national and individual identity, film as aesthetic form, gender and sexuality, and popular culture. (cross-listed with COMM 307) Prerequisite: Junior standing or permission of instructor.

WCS 310. Japan: A Cultural Odyssey. 3 Credits.
Exploration of Japanese culture and society from local and global perspectives. Topics may include language, arts, literature, music, food, traditional and contemporary culture, entertainment, media, religion, gender, education and work. The course aims to foster in-depth cultural understanding beyond stereotypes and to develop critical thinking and analytical skills to reflect on one's own experiences and assumptions about cultural similarities and differences. All readings, discussions, and lectures in English. No knowledge of Japanese is necessary. Cross-listed with JAPN 310. Prerequisites: ENGL 110C and junior standing or permission of instructor.

WCS 311. Communicative Competence: Speaking and Listening. 3 Credits.
This course is primarily a conversation course to develop linguistic and cultural proficiency in verbal communication. Task-oriented communication strategies in cross-cultural training will be practiced by presenting students with models that demonstrate appropriate linguistic and cultural competencies. Students will practice these skills by role-playing, giving presentations, enriching self-awareness with practiced in-group discussions on various topics (such as, prejudice, racism, values, and customs) that dispel stereotypes and foster more in-depth social-cultural understanding, and with participation in guided cultural encounters. Students will improve their listening and comprehension skills and deepen cultural proficiency by learning how to communicate and collaborate with other people and cultures in a global age. Prerequisite: ENGL 110C.

WCS 312W. Communicative Competence: Writing and Reading. 3 Credits.
This is an intensive writing course designed with writing assignments that examine various cultural contexts that enable students to understand cultural content, style, audience and organization. The main objective of the course is increased awareness of and sensitivity to appropriate word choice, and syntax in the targeted languages. Students will engage in writing for different cultural audiences and in varied contexts such as literary, artistic and media expressions around the world. Special emphasis is placed on the methodology of close reading as students hone the analytics skills and vocabulary necessary to interpret idioms, regionalism, cultural expressions and overall intercultural skills observed in various genres and cultures. Students will analyze compelling global issues and the diverse cultural perspectives that inform them. Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 321. Human Rights and World Literature and Cultures. 3 Credits.
Struggles for human rights and social justice often find their most evocative expression in literary works from around the world. In this course, students will work toward an understanding of different cultural perspectives that inform world concepts of human rights. We will focus on novels, short stories, and poetry. We will also consider the fundamental value of these artistic expressions as both spaces of empathy and agents of change in society. As we discover texts from around the world we will also delve into important socio-political contexts that inform each work. Lastly, this course will turn the lens toward the reader's own values and ideas, and inspire a reconsideration of our place in this world. Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 330. Contemporary Cultures and Media. 3 Credits.
A study of film as a means of communication from an intercultural perspective. The course is designed to cultivate an ability to deal with film in a critical way, as well as broaden understanding of film and culture in a global context. A variety of cinematic traditions will be examined including film works from Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and North and South America. Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 395. Topics in World Cultural Studies. 3 Credits.
This course invites students to discover approaches to global problems and concerns through an analysis of cultural expressions from around the world. Students will consider the ways in which literary and artistic expression (literature, film, visual art, music) draw from and impact broader social and political contexts. Prerequisites: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 400. Global Cultural Studies. 3 Credits.
This course will examine selected cultural studies perspectives on mass communication. It will cover cultural studies philosophies, theories, and/or approaches to the study of cultural artifacts and practices that may include some of the following: postmodernism, deconstruction, feminism, and post-colonialism. The readings will include theoretical texts as well as artistic or cultural texts that will more clearly illustrate the theoretical positions. Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 407. Advanced Grammar and Syntax. 3 Credits.
This class is designed to solidify and refine students’ working knowledge of written skills in the targeted languages, with an emphasis on increasing their written sophistication. Focus is on analysis of vocabulary, grammar, and cultural nuances in the syntax to examine how language reflects the ways of life and beliefs of its speakers, contrasted with the extent of language’s influence on culture. Students will refine their skills in written inter-cultural communication, paying attention to idioms and the fine points of “cultural grammar,” communicative competence and specialized discourse to develop excellent communication skills. This course is intended to prepare students for using their knowledge of language and culture in professional settings. Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 410/510. Berlin-Paris: Crucibles of European Ideas. 3 Credits.
This course explores the cultural movements that have characterized the German-French commonalities and differences from the early 1900s through the 1990s in cross-disciplinary discourses such as film, literature, art, politics, and economics. Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 445/545. German Cinema I. 3 Credits.
The first half of the 20th century was the most creative and destructive period in German and European history. Its rich cultural achievements included Viennese psychoanalytical theory of the turn of the century, Art Nouveau, German Expressionism, and the avant garde aesthetics of the Weimar Republic. Conversely, World War I and II exposed the cultural agony and human depravity of modern civilization. This course will trace these various aspects and developments in a variety of exemplary genres. Readings and discussions in German. (Cross-listed with GER 445/GER 545 and COMM 444/COMM 544) Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.
WCS 471/571. Hispanic Women Authors. 3 Credits.
A study of fictional and non-fictional works by Spanish, Spanish-American, and U.S. Latina writers from the 16th to the 20th century. The course analyzes gender identity and roles and the interaction of gender, race, and class in literary representations of courtship and marriage, spirituality, nationalism, colonialism, and multiculturalism. Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 476/576. German-Jewish Literature and Culture. 3 Credits.
A survey of seminal texts by German-Jewish philosophers and writers from the Enlightenment to the present day, including Marx, Kafka, Freud, Schnitzler and Arendt. Prerequisite: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 494. Entrepreneurship in World Languages and Cultures. 3 Credits.
This course is designed to help students enhance their personal and professional development through innovation guided by faculty members and professionals. It offers students an opportunity to integrate disciplinary theory and knowledge related to world languages and cultures through developing a nonprofit program, product, business, or other initiative with other students. Prerequisite: Junior standing.

WCS 495/595. Topics in World Cultural Studies. 3 Credits.
This course invites students to discover approaches to global problems and concerns through an analysis of cultural expressions from around the world. Students will consider the ways in which literary and artistic expression (literature, film, visual art, music) draw from and impact broader social and political contexts. Prerequisites: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 496/596. Topics in World Cultural Studies. 3 Credits.
This course invites students to discover approaches to global problems and concerns through an analysis of cultural expressions from around the world. Students will consider the ways in which literary and artistic expression (literature, film, visual art, music) draw from and impact broader social and political contexts. Prerequisites: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C.

WCS 510. Berlin-Paris: Crucibles of European Ideas. 3 Credits.
This course explores the cultural movements that have characterized German-French commonalities and differences from the early 1900s through the 1990s in cross-disciplinary discourses such as film, literature, art, politics, and economics.

WCS 545. German Cinema I. 3 Credits.
The first half of the 20th century was the most creative and destructive period in German and European history. Its rich cultural achievements included Viennese psychoanalytical theory of the turn of the century, Art Nouveau, German Expressionism, and the avant garde aesthetics of the Weimar Republic. Conversely, World War I and II exposed the cultural agony and human depravity of modern civilization. This course will trace these various aspects and developments in a variety of exemplary genres. Readings and discussions in German. (Cross-listed with GER 445/GER 545 and COMM 444/COMM 544).

WCS 571. Hispanic Women Authors. 3 Credits.
A study of fictional and non-fictional works by Spanish, Spanish-American, and U.S. Latina writers from the 16th to the 20th century. The course analyzes gender identity and roles and the interaction of gender, race, and class in literary representations of courtship and marriage, spirituality, nationalism, colonialism, and multiculturalism.

WCS 576. German-Jewish Literature and Culture. 3 Credits.
A survey of seminal texts by German-Jewish philosophers and writers from the Enlightenment to the present day, including Marx, Kafka, Freud, Schnitzler and Arendt.

WCS 595. Topics in World Cultural Studies. 1-3 Credits.
This course invites students to discover approaches to global problems and concerns through an analysis of cultural expressions from around the world. Students will consider the ways in which literary and artistic expression (literature, film, visual art, music) draw from and impact broader social and political contexts.