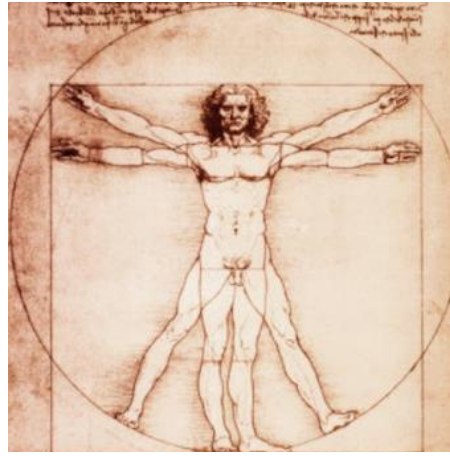


CULTURAL STUDIES



HISTORY

PHILOSOPHY



MATHEMATICS

CREATIVE ARTS



SOCIAL STUDIES



LITERATURE

MATHEMATICS



LITERATURE

SCIENCE



CREATIVE ARTS

SCIENCE



SOCIAL STUDIES

PHILOSOPHY

CULTURAL STUDIES



LIBERAL ARTS
Fall 2021 Course Offerings
Table of Contents

Literature.....2

- Greek Drama (Keppel)
- Ethics and the Environment in American Literature (Gatlin)

History and Cultural Studies.....3

- Europe in the 20th Century (Klein)
- The Renaissance (Vance)
- Philosophy of Art (Vance)
- Religion, Conflict, and Peace (Vance)
- Film Studies I (Strauss)

Science and Mathematics.....5

- Forest Ecology (Duvneck)
- Introduction to Probability and Mathematical Modeling (Duvneck)

Creative Arts.....6

- Drama Workshop I (Keppel)
- Poetry Workshop (Lepson)
- Interarts (Popova)

Faculty.....7

Greek Drama

Patrick Keppel

As the ancient Greek civilization progressed from scattered agrarian and seafaring kingdoms to more ordered city-states of the revolutionary tyrants and eventually to the democratic Athenian Empire, dramatic expression moved from ecstatic acts of worship of Dionysus to an organized annual religious/civic festival to an increasingly secular and political act, as central to the function of Athenian society as the Assembly. The major plays of the Classical period that this course examines—the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides and the comedies of Aristophanes—are dramatic representations of the effects of this change on individuals and society. They are profound explorations of the dynamic tensions in the human psyche, described in rich metaphors and lyrics and played out through the interaction of compelling characters. The plays are also complex reflections on Classical Greek society itself, celebrating how far it has progressed even while expressing ever deepening concerns about its current direction and future prospects.



Ethics and the Environment in American Literature

Jill Gatlin

How are environmental problems linked to social justice? What roles does literature play in these cultural, political, and ethical debates? This course looks at how social categories such as race, class, nationality, and gender shape diverse encounters with the environment. Reading American literature from industrialism to the present (including works by Rebecca Harding Davis, Muriel Rukeyser, John Muir, Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, June Jordan, Helena María Viramontes, and Simon Ortiz), we'll discover the unique ways that poets and fiction writers protest urban and workplace pollution or express feelings of vulnerability in nature while they examine what it means to be an American. We'll also consider what literature can teach us about the world we inhabit, researching current events and taking a Roxbury "Toxic Tour" field trip with a local environmental justice organization. As we tackle difficult problems of injustice, we will look at writing as a powerful tool of protest, hope, and resistance.

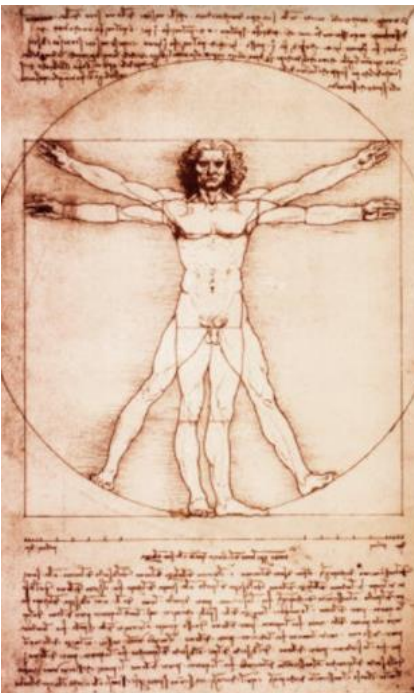




Europe in the 20th Century

James A. Klein

Ian Kershaw has described Europe's epic journey through the 20th Century as 'To Hell and Back.' Together, we will follow that journey, exploring Europe's descent into economic catastrophe, totalitarianism, and the chaos of world war. We will consider the philosophies that drove institutional politics, social thought, art and literature in the years leading up to that world war, and those that responded to the horror of 1939 – 1945. Then we will follow Europe's path out of that hell and toward our own age, watching as Europeans built new lives, embraced new values, and voiced new political, cultural and artistic values. We will consider not only major figures of European politics - Lenin, Hitler, Stalin, Churchill, De Gaulle, and Khrushchev – but those of European culture: thinkers like the nationalist Ernst Junger; Filippo Marinetti, leader of the Italian Futurists; Jean Paul Sartre, the great voice of French existentialism; Simone de Beauvoir, the champion of European feminism; Federico Fellini, the visionary of Italian cinema; and Ingmar Bergman, whose films captured the search for meaning that occupied so much of European thought in the second half of the century.



The Renaissance

Jacob Vance

This course will study the Early Modern Period (1350-1650) in Western Europe by focusing on the emergence and development of the movement known as Renaissance humanism. We will address the following questions: What were the social, political, and economic changes that brought about the rise of the Renaissance in general and humanism in particular? What were the conditions that emerged in Italy in the late fourteenth century and that gave rise to the beginnings of the Renaissance humanism? Beginning with Petrarch, and moving through such Italian Renaissance authors as Lorenzo Valla, Niccolò Machiavelli, and Castiglione, the course will trace how Renaissance humanistic culture developed in Italy and then became a powerful cultural force extending into Northern Europe, notably Germany, England, and France. Readings from major northern Renaissance humanist and Reformation authors include Erasmus, More, Luther, Rabelais, Calvin and Montaigne. Through social, linguistic, historical, political, religious, and artistic works, we will explore the innovations of Renaissance and humanistic thought from 1350 to 1590.

Philosophy of Art

Jacob Vance

This course will explore early modern and modern Western philosophical thought about art and aesthetic experience. It will focus on philosophical problems and debates that remain important today, beginning with the Ancient Greek philosophical tradition (Plato and Aristotle), and continuing through several periods in Western philosophy: the European Enlightenment (Hume, Kant, Schiller), the European Romantic period (Hegel, Schelling, Schopenhauer), and the European Modern Period (Nietzsche, Tolstoy, Heidegger, among others). In dealing with these periods and authors, the course will familiarize students with fundamental questions in the philosophy of art, and a number of different responses to those questions. What is art, and how can we define it? What is artistic experience, and how can it be described in philosophical terms? What is taste? What standards do we use to judge art? The course invites students to engage in and to practice philosophical reasoning and discussion about art, as well as to develop skills in formulating arguments both orally and in writing.



Religion, Conflict, and Peace

Jacob Vance

This course introduces students to the academic study of religion, focusing on the subject of religion, violence and peace. Religion, Conflict and Peace (RCP) is an interdisciplinary academic field of study because it focuses on the relations of racial, ethnic, economic, social, political, and cultural forces contributing to conflict and violence. The course explores, from both theoretical and practical perspectives, factors that contribute to religious conflict and violence, but it more specifically addresses how the perception that religion causes violence can be challenged and changed. By studying religion as a multidimensional phenomenon, RCP looks at the potential role for promoting peace that religion offers in contemporary affairs, at regional, national and global levels. The course thus examines religious violence as a complex phenomenon, inviting students to consider its possible place in world affairs as a possible force of conciliation.



Film Studies I

Tracy Strauss

This course explores critical perspectives for viewing films, examining the viewer's engagement in the visual image, aural atmosphere, and narrative. We will examine how visual and aural elements of film work together to convey meaning and create their overall effect. How do lighting, camera angle, and frame composition work together? We will study narrative structure, character and conflict, camera movement and camera shots, lighting, editing techniques, as well as the use of sound and silence. We will also consider how music shapes our perception of the portrayal of a story on screen, and the variety of roles music plays in film. We'll debate the music-scene relationship, whether music complements or contradicts the action or mood of what is happening visually. Possible genres of exploration include drama, the western, queer film musical, thriller, animation, and noir.





Forest Ecology

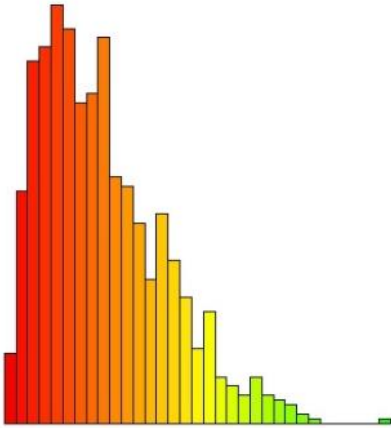
Matthew Duveneck

This course will explore theories and principles of forest ecology as a framework for understanding forest ecosystems. Forest ecology considers forest succession as the change in species structure over time but also addresses disturbance dynamics such as wildfire, carbon and nitrogen dynamics, forest soils, and climate. These drivers operate together over long durations (the life span of the typical tree) to create the forests that are a defining feature of our biosphere. Students will explore these topics through class lectures by the instructor, reading and discussion, completion of hands-on exercises designed to provide experience with quantitative tools, and walking field trips. In addition, a requirement of this class will be to attend an all-day class field trip to a forest with transportation provided or to complete a self-guided tour of a forest requiring your own transportation.

Introduction to Probability and Mathematical Modeling

Matthew Duveneck

What does it mean when you hear that scientists discovered “significant” differences during an experiment? How many samples are enough to adequately describe a pattern? How do multiple uncertain variables influence a system? In this class, students will learn the basic introduction to probability. Probability is the likelihood of an outcome that we are unsure of. We have an intuitive idea of what “You have a 30% chance of getting selected after an audition” means. This statement quantifies that probability or uncertainty because the world is full of variation. While variation can sometimes be predicted, understanding uncertainty and probability is a foundation to scientific understanding. To apply probability and uncertainty to real-world systems, students will build and run their own mathematical models of complex systems. Through this exercise, students will be able to quantify the uncertainty or influence of individual variables in a system. Students will use the free computing software and learning environment “R” to construct and run their mathematical models. As such, very basic programming in R will also be introduced.



Drama Workshop I

Patrick Keppel

Drama Workshop I is a collaborative workshop in the elements of acting and directing: the creation of a “serious-play” space where students can take risks and explore the dramatic art form in order to become better actors and better performers. No previous acting experience is required. Students engage in various sense memory exercises and group improvisations and work together as a unit on a series of scenes from a play currently being rehearsed and performed by students in the Boston University acting program.



Poetry Workshop

Ruth Lepson

In this course, students will read and write poetry, and discuss the poetry of classmates both in the workshop itself and in small groups outside class. As poet Robert Creeley points out, “Form is never more than an extension of content, and content is never more than an extension of form.” To that end, we will concentrate on the techniques of poetry, such as rhythm, repetition of many kinds, line breaks, pace, point of view, figurative language, imagery, juxtaposition, fixed forms & organic form. Students will also listen to poets reading their work online. We will read and listen to a great variety of contemporary poems. At the end of the term the class will give a poetry reading and produce a class booklet.



Interarts

Katya Popova

“Performance art” is an “inter-art” genre, a hybrid of many art disciplines: movement, scenic design, light, sculpture, acting, sound, video, graphic design etc. “InterArts” is an experimental performance laboratory, collaborative in nature. In the course of the semester, students will work on short assignments leading towards the final production at the end of the semester. Students will learn how to express themselves through different means: movement, spacial thinking, visual objects and graphic form. Through studying examples of 20th century performance and installation art, we will investigate different approaches to sound-visual objects. Visiting the MFA, watching local performance art, participating in class critiques, and engaging with guest speakers will all be important parts of the class.



Matthew Duveneck received a B.S. in Resource Conservation from the University of Montana, an M.S. in Forest Resources from the University of Massachusetts, and a Ph.D. in Environmental Science from Portland State University. Previously, he worked on the ground as a firefighter and taught fire science at the Southern Maine Community College. Matthew continues research with collaborators throughout North America including Harvard University/Harvard Forest where they study the interactions of climate change and land use on New England Forests. In addition, Matthew has vast experience and passion for social dance. In the classroom, Matthew aims to engage students to think critically and become active participants in understanding scientific methods and how components of our natural world connect with the ecosystem services they provide.

Jill Gatlin holds a B.A.M. in Music and B.A. English from the University of Colorado, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in English from the University of Washington, where she taught in the English Department and the Program on the Environment. She enjoys interdisciplinary study of literature, art, and music, with particular interests in cultural studies of nature, race, gender, and sexuality; American literature, minority literature, and environmental justice; romanticism, modernism and postmodernism; and visual and literary landscapes. In the classroom, she aims to help students become confident critical thinkers, readers, writers, and speakers and to facilitate their discovery of the problems and possibilities of language, literary and visual texts, and cultural contexts.

Patrick Keppel's fiction has appeared in a number of literary journals; his story "A Vectorial History of Leroy Pippin" was read by Eli Wallach at Symphony Space in New York as part of NPR's Selected Shorts program. Patrick's plays have been presented at various venues in Boston and New York. His multimedia play about the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire, Triangle , was performed at the Center for Performance Research in Brooklyn in March 2011, at the Sandglass Theater in Putney VT in June 2013, and at NEC in Brown Hall in January 2014 as part of the Music: Truth to Power festival.

James A. Klein (BA, Kenyon College; BA and MA, Oxford University; AM and PhD. Harvard University) received Harvard University's Delancey Jay Award for outstanding work in Constitutional History and New England Conservatory's Louis and Adrienne Krasner Teaching Excellence Award.

Ruth Lepson has been poet-in-residence at NEC for 25 years & has often collaborated with musicians. On the Way: New and Selected Poems will be coming out this year. Her last book, ask anyone, comes with musical settings, by former NEC students, of some of the poems. It won the Philip Whalen Award from Chax Press. Her other books of poems are Dreaming in Color, Morphology (a collaboration with photographer Rusty Crump & including her own photographs), and I Went Looking for You. She edited the anthology Poetry from Sojourner: A Feminist Anthology. She has given many readings, including ones in St. Petersburg, Russia, Barcelona, on NPR's "All Things Considered," at the Woodberry Poetry Room at Harvard, and at MIT. She has taught at Northeastern, Boston College, The Kennedy School of Government, The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, and at other colleges and universities in the area, in addition to giving poetry workshops for all grades through the Mass Poets-in-the-schools program. She worked at Partisan Review and the Boston University Journal and organized poetry readings for Oxfam America. Her poetry and prose have been published in over 100 journals.

Katya Popova is a multidisciplinary artist, graphic designer and educator. She holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and MA from Boston University. Popova works at the intersection of physical texture, shadow, and sound. Her works explore what could have been by tracing the physical gestures and material qualities of everyday things via performance, sonic art or immersive installation. She often collaborates with sound artists. As a graphic designer, Katya has twenty years of professional experience, working in major publishing houses (Random House, Houghton Mifflin), colleges (MIT, Columbia University) and small design firms (Tank Design). Katya taught design and visual art classes at major universities: RISD, Mass Art and others. Presently she teaches courses on visual art and design at NEC. To learn more about her projects please see:

<https://popova.space>

<https://www.popovadesign.com/>

Tracy Strauss has been a Liberal Arts faculty member at NEC since 2011. She teaches College Writing, Liberal Arts seminar, and Film Studies I and II. She also serves as a faculty tutor in the NEC Writing Center and she was the 2017-2018 faculty advisor for NEC's Liberal Arts journal, Hear, Here! The 2015's Writers' Room of Boston Nonfiction Fellow, named by Bustle as one of eight women writers with advice to follow, she's a local bestselling author who has published essays in such publications as Oprah Magazine, Ms., Glamour, HuffPost, Writer's Digest Magazine, and War, Literature & the Arts: An International Journal of the Humanities. She holds an MFA in film/ screenwriting from Boston University.

Jacob Vance holds a Ph.D. in Romance Languages and Literatures from The Johns Hopkins University, a D.E.A (equiv. M.A.) in Early Modern European Culture & Civilization from the University of Geneva, an M.A. in Comparative Literature from the University of Washington (Seattle), a B.A. in English Literature and Western Society and Culture from Concordia University (Montreal), and a DEC (Diplôme d'Études Collégiales) in Social Sciences from Marianopolis College (Montreal).