First-Year Seminars

COLT 0510C - The World of Lyric Poetry
Instructor: Dore Levy
Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:20 a.m.
Term: Fall 2009

Lyric poetry is the prime mode for conveying emotion in many cultures, from ancient times to the present day. This course will survey the variety of forms and themes from the earliest texts from Greece, Rome, China, and Japan; then the glories of the Renaissance and the Tang Dynasty; and ending with the challenges for lyric expression in the modern world.

EDUC 0410C - The Literature of Children and Young Adults
Instructor: Shirley Brice Heath
Meetings: Thursday 4:00-6:20 pm.
Term: Fall 2009

This course considers the literary, dramatic, and visual qualities of the literature of young readers since the 18th century, with a dominant, but not exclusive, focus on literature in English. Topics covered will include dominant themes in visual and textual aspects of these literatures, as well as their history and relationship to societal economics and valuations of children, schooling, and moral codes.

EDUC 0410D - Brown v. Board of Education
Instructor: Tracy Steffes
Meetings: Thursday 4:00-6:20 p.m.
Term: Spring 2010

Using sources in history, education, and law, this seminar explores the landmark Supreme Court case of Brown v. Board of Education, which found school segregation unconstitutional and challenged the entire foundation of legal segregation. We will explore the legal, political, and social issues that culminated in Brown and examine the development and deployment of remedies, with particular emphasis on school integration and educational equity. We will consider the legacy of Brown, its impact on the Civil Rights movement, schooling, law, and politics in the late twentieth century, and its implications for the future.

EDUC 0410E - Empowering Youth: Insights from Research on Urban Adolescents
Instructor: Deborah Rivas
Meetings: Wednesday 3:00-5:20 p.m.
Term: Spring 2010

In this seminar, students will consider the design, analysis, and interpretation of research on youth in urban settings. We will examine the roles of power, privilege, and multiculturalism in research. In the experiential component of the course, students engage in fieldwork in a local school or community-based youth organization. Students design and undertake a research project, thereby bridging theory with practice.

ENGL 0450A - Hawthorne and James
Instructor: Stuart Burrows
Meetings: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 2:00-2:50 p.m.
Term: Spring 2010

This course introduces a pair of writers whose work continues to shape our understanding of American literature and American identity. Focusing on much of their most important work, our aim will be to understand how their conceptions of the relationship between writing and history both complicate and complement each other.
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ETHN 0090A - The Border/La Frontera
Instructor: Evelyn Hu-Dehart
Meetings: Monday 3:00-5:20 p.m.
Term: Spring 2010
This seminar examines the historical formation and contemporary reality of the U.S.-Mexico border within the framework of globalization. Students will study written texts and visual materials in both Spanish and English in order to develop an understanding of how the border is construed from bilingual (English and Spanish), multicultural (U.S. mainstream, Mexican, and Mexican-American), and transnational (U.S. and Mexico) perspectives. Students enrolled in this seminar must be reasonably proficient in comprehending, reading, and speaking Spanish.

FREN 0720A - From Courtly Love to Postmodern Desire
Instructor: Virginia Krause
Meetings: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 12:00-12:50 p.m.
Term: Fall 2009
This course explores the enduring romance between French culture and Eros, from twelfth-century courtly literature to contemporary film. The ambiguities of desire are brought to the fore across changing religious and social contexts. Readings include Duras, Flaubert, Freud, and Baudrillard. Open to students with a 5 on the AP French test, a 700 and above on the SAT II French test, or with instructor's permission. Email Virginia_Krause@brown.edu if you have any questions.

GEOL 0160I - Diamonds
Instructor: Stephen Parman
Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:20 a.m.
Term: Fall 2009
This course examines the science and human history of diamonds, and shows how they have interacted over the years. Students will investigate how and where diamonds are formed in nature and what they tell us about the Earth. We will also explore the role diamonds have played in our history and culture.

HIST 0970A - Object Histories: The Material Culture of Early America
Instructor: Linford Fisher
Meetings: Wednesday 3:00-5:20 p.m.
Term: Spring 2010
History is not just about people; it is also about things! In this seminar, we will explore the world of early America through the lens of objects—boats, dresses, plows, houses, wagons, watches, silver cups, wigs, blankets, land, gardens, hammers, desks—and the cultures that produced and consumed them. Over the course of the semester we will visit resources for the study of history that exist on or near Brown's campus, such as the John Carter Brown Library, the Rhode Island Historical Society, and the John Brown House Museum. We will take several field trips to local historical sites, both on and off campus. Our primary focus will be specific objects and their contexts and histories.
First-Year Seminars

HIST 0970B - Tropical Delights: Imagining Brazil in History and Culture
Instructor: James Green
Meetings: Thursday 4:00-6:20 pm.
Term: Fall 2009

This seminar examines the many ways that Brazilians and foreigners have understood this vast continent-size country, ranging from early European explorers’ anxieties about cannibalism to modern images of the Amazonian rainforest, Rio De Janeiro’s freewheeling Carnival celebrations, and the array of social movements mobilizing for social justice. Through an examination of historical sources, literature, movies, and popular culture, students will consider how multiple images and projections of Brazil have shaped national and international notions about the country.

HIST 0970C - Animals and History
Instructor: Karl Jacoby
Meetings: Wednesday 3:00-5:20 p.m.
Term: Spring 2010

Human beings have lived alongside animals for millennia. Yet only rarely have these creatures featured in historians’ thinking and writing about the past. This course endeavors to introduce students to some of the conceptual questions at the heart of the historical enterprise by revisioning American history around such animals as the horse, the wolf, the buffalo, the passenger pigeon, and the pig.

HIST 0970U - The Politics of Gender in the U.S. from World War II to the E.R.A.
Instructor: Robert Self
Meetings: Monday 3:00-5:20 p.m.
Term: Spring 2010

This course focuses on gender and sexuality in the U.S. from World War II through the defeat of The Equal Rights Amendment in 1982. We will examine issues of privacy, gender equality, reproduction, marriage, the family, homosexuality, and roles and expectations of men and women in both private and public life.

LITR 0610A - Unpublishable Writing
Instructor: Thalia Field
Meetings: Tuesday 12:00-2:20 p.m.
Term: Fall 2009

This writing workshop is primarily for fiction students interested in working on projects that do not fit into conventional avenues of publication (i.e. books, print). We will explore how extended narrative can incorporate a variety of relationships to time, materials, sequence, indeterminate or procedural approaches, and collaboration. Assigned reading and independent research will support your own creative projects throughout the semester.

MCM 0800E - Race and Imagined Futures
Instructor: Wendy Chun
Meetings: Wednesday 3:00-5:20 p.m.<br />Film screening: Tuesday 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Term: Fall 2009

Why is race so important to imagining utopian or dystopian futures-to signaling world peace or Malthusian disaster? What do these imaginations tell us about contemporary anxieties over/desire for multiculturalism and globalization? This course responds to these questions by examining speculative, science, and utopian fiction and films by African-, Asian- and Euro-American authors/film makers. Readings will be theoretical as well as literary. Students MUST register for the lecture section and the screening.
First-Year Seminars

MUSC 0021C - Bach
Instructor: Louis Jodry
Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:20 a.m.
Term: Fall 2009

The course will be an examination of the life and works of J. S. Bach, with an emphasis on the context in which he wrote and performed his works. Choral and keyboard works will be emphasized, and 18th century ideals of sonority and issues of performance practice will be included. Students who read music are encouraged to register; performance opportunities will be explored depending on the members of the class.

MUSC 0021D - Latino Diaspora Music
Instructor: Kiri Miller
Meetings: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 11:00-11:50 a.m.
Term: Fall 2009

This first-year seminar will explore the discipline of ethnomusicology and the cultural diversity of the Americas through the lens of Latin American music. Readings will focus on popular music and dance genres that originated in the Caribbean and Mexico and are now practiced in North American diaspora contexts. Students will undertake individual ethnographic projects on a wide variety of Latino diaspora music traditions, to be documented via publicly-accessible research blogs. Recurring themes that cross-cut the course will include migration, cultural hibridity, youth culture, and musical collaboration/appropriation. The seminar will facilitate an understanding of the historical development and transnational pathways of musical traditions. No formal background in music is required.

POBS 0810 - Belonging and Displacement: Cross-Cultural Identities
Instructor: Patricia Sobral
Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:20 a.m.
Term: Fall 2009

This seminar focuses on the representation of immigrants, migrants, and other "border crossers" in contemporary literature from Brazil and other countries. How do people respond to the loss of home and the shift to a new culture? Is "going home" possible? How do individuals deal with their dual or triple identities? Students will explore these and other questions while reading works by Pinon, Lispector, Sciar, Rushdie, Salih, Cristina Garcia, V. S. Naipaul, and others.

POBS 0910 - On the Dawn of Modernity
Instructor: Onesimo Almeida
Meetings: Wednesday 3:00-5:20 p.m.
Term: Fall 2009

This seminar analyzes how a mindset that would later be called "modernity" slowly emerged from the medieval world and how the trials and errors of 15th and 16th century navigators helped shape that transformation. Readings focus on developments in astronomy, geography, shipbuilding, mathematics, philosophy, and what could be called early anthropology, as stepping stones to the first scientific revolution.
First-Year Seminars

POLS 0820G - Race and Political Representation
Instructor: Katrina Gamble
Meetings: Thursday 4:00-6:20 pm.
Term: Fall 2009

While representation is a central tenet of democracy, people disagree over what political representation means and the best way to ensure equitable representation for all citizens. In this course, students will study representation and its various forms. We will then use these concepts to examine research on how well American democratic institutions capture the interest of racial and ethnic minorities.

POLS 0820Q - The Politics of American Federal Holidays
Instructor: Roger Cobb
Meetings: Wednesday 3:00-5:20 p.m.
Term: Fall 2009

Ten days have been designated as holidays for federal government employees. Why were those days selected? What actions of determined people and crucial events led to their creation? What conflicts surrounded their creation and subsequent observance?

RELS 0090B - Hindu and Christian Modes of Loving Devotion
Instructor: Donna Wulff
Meetings: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00-2:20 p.m.
Term: Fall 2009

This course explores two modes of devotion prominent in the medieval West and in medieval and modern India, both centering on the human incarnation of divinity, as Jesus Christ and as Krishna. The first considers the divine as child and plays on the paradox of the omnipotent God of the universe as a seemingly helpless infant. In the second, God is conceived as a lover, and erotic passion serves as an image and avenue of religious realization.