USSY 201. Mathematical Life and Death in the Ancient Greek World. 3 Units.
A seminar on the earliest mathematical proofs. The Greek Thales studied with Egyptian priests and gave the first geometric proof. Pythagoras went to Egypt, on Thales's advice, then founded a mathematical religious colony in Italy. Plato took much philosophy and mathematics from the Pythagoreans. Aristotle took only mathematics. Their arguments over mathematical science echoed in the world-city of Alexandria, where even slaves were encouraged to be scholars. There Euclid wrote the standard mathematics text for the next 2,000 years. The great Archimedes synthesized Platonic and Aristotelian conceptions. His mathematics inspired Galileo’s and Newton’s physics. His war machines inspired a Roman soldier to kill him on sight. A woman, Hypatia, later became the leading mathematician and Platonist philosopher of Alexandria and was torn to pieces by a mob for her pagan ideas. What did mathematics mean to these people? What can we learn about religious freedom, or about the science of war? Why do we all accept mathematics form 200 BC whole only specialist scholars remember the physics, biology, or religion of ancient Greece? Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 209. Art and Math. 3 Units.
Students in this University Seminar will explore relationships between art and mathematics. Topics include: pattern, symmetry and beauty in natural forms; symmetry and proportion in art, architecture, ornament and design; perspective and optics; number, iteration, and infinity; mathematical and computer techniques and themes in art, architecture and design. Note: This class is limited to students participating in SAGES. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 211. Beethoven and the Age of Revolution. 3 Units.
Beethoven’s music is symbolic of the age and spirit of change which reached its zenith with the French Revolution. Fueled by political, social, and emotional reactions, his oeuvre was remarkable in every way. From the early works, imitative of Haydn and Mozart, through his truly unique later compositions, Beethoven was revolutionary in his person and in his music. The course will center around specific Beethoven masterworks which are being presented by University Circle Institutions, and student attendance at these concerts will be required. Class sessions will involve discussions concerning the historical and cultural setting, influences, and analytic investigation into these masterworks. Readings will be taken from Joseph Kaman and Alan Tyson (The New Grove Beethoven), Frida Knight (Beethoven and the Age of Revolution), and George Marek (Beethoven: Biography of a Genius). This course is directed towards the general university student, and no specialized knowledge of music is necessary, although certain rudimentary aspects of musical discourse will be covered. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 227. Travel Writing on Screen. 3 Units.
Through the image of the traveler in a wide range of films, we will examine such issues as border crossing, culture shock, and the nature of memory. Topics include: The Grand Tour, pilgrimage, exile, and imaginary journeys. A group presentation, 5 short-reaction papers, and a take-home final essay are required. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 229. Art Mirrors Art. 3 Units.
At the beginning of the Renaissance, about the year 1400, an important new theme arose in painting, sculpture and printmaking—the theme of art about art. At a time when the status of artists in society was rising, new subjects began to appear in western European art that depicted both the artist and the process of making art. Self portraits of artists, depictions of Saint Luke painting the Virgin Mary, images of women as artists and muses, classical and mythological stories of art making (Pygmalion and Galatea, Apelles painting the mistress of Alexander the Great), depictions of painting and sculpture studios and of art academies and instruction, scenes of art galleries and collections, still lifes about art, all reflected this new cultural interest in art as a topic in itself. This seminar will look at individual works of art and subject types to understand what they tell us about the role of the arts and the changing status of the artist in the Renaissance and early modern period, up to the eve of the French Revolution, about 1789. The works we study will thus be understood as symbolic indicators of social status and ideas about what art meant to European society. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 233. Constructing the Self. 3 Units.
The purpose of this seminar is to explore how individuals construct and present the self. The class will explore what we know of the self from historical, sociological, psychological, and philosophical perspectives. We will examine how the meaning of the self has changed over time. We will also explore where the self comes from, and the role of parents, peers and society in making a person who they are. Finally, we will explore how the self is defined for others, whether through an online presence, fashion choices, or the names that people prefer for themselves. Specific topics will include Freud’s view of the self as unavailable to consciousness, the importance and fallacy of high self-esteem, individualist and collective societies, and the ethics of self-presentation. Students should expect to develop their critical thinking as well as writing and oral presentation skills through this class. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 241. The Birth of the Modern: 1905-1925. 3 Units.
"The Birth of the Modern: 1905-1925" will attempt to answer the question "What is the modern?" by exploring some of the breakthrough works of literature, music, art, and scientific theory in the first decades of the twentieth century. We will study what characterizes the new modes of thinking or "language" of modernity, developed in experimental work across the arts, the sciences, and the social sciences. We will be examining some of the major manifestos of and statements about the nature of Modernism in order to see how they illuminate, for example, a novel by James Joyce or a painting by Picasso, a composition by Stravinsky, a scientific theory of Einstein's, or a psychological theory of Freud's. At the conclusion of the seminar, students will present their findings and write a research paper about "the modern" as it relates to a field of particular interest to them. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 246. How to Make a Leader. 3 Units.
Leaders are both born and made. Some seem to naturally know what to do and some need to study and practice to gain the necessary skills. Both groups can be successful and it usually requires a combination of natural ability and effort to become the very best. Leaders often point to role models as being important to the development of "natural" or acquired ability. This course is appropriate for both those who are intellectually curious about leadership. The course will be divided into three sections. The first part will involve reading and discussions to explore and identify what leaders are like and what they do. During the second part you will observe leaders in action and talk to them about what they think makes them successful. Some examples of what you may observe will include a surgeon in the operating room (theater), a coach with his/her players, an executive in the board room, a concertmaster with his/her musicians and a judge in a courtroom. The third part of the course will involve readings and discussions during which you will develop a personal approach to the level of leadership to which you aspire. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 249. Paris: From Revolution to Globalization. 3 Units.
This course explores the history of Paris as it became the center of French national life, international culture and politics in the 19th century and a global city in the late 20th. The course acquaints students with the history of Paris as a dynamic environment deeply influenced by industrializing forces during this period. We will study contemporary writings, art and popular culture economic developments, political and military events, and architectural and engineering projects that have profoundly shaped the city and popular responses to it. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 250. Medical Narratives. 3 Units.
This course examines the relationship between medicine and narrative by exploring the representational structures and narrative conventions that have been used to understand and communicate the experience of illness, to tell stories about the human body, and to diagnose and treat disease. The course focuses on literary texts (including novels, plays, short stories and memoirs) written by doctors, patients, nurses and creative writers, as well as on medical case histories from different cultures and historical periods. It examines such topics as the uses of narrative in medical practice; the uses of metaphor in conceptualizing and representing disease; the ethical dilemmas posed by medical research and practice; the therapeutic value of narrative; the structural similarities (and historical links) between detective fiction and medical case histories; the imaginative function of illness in literature; the cultural myths and iconography of disease in different historical periods; the representation of physical and mental illness and the human body in language and art, and cultural responses to major health crises such as bubonic plague, syphilis, and AIDS. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 275. Colors, Capses, and Characters: American Comics Symbolism. 3 Units.
The history of the comic book is a vital site for critical questions about intersections of art and popular culture in America. In this course we will not simply read "funny books;" but will examine a genre that is as unique as its many colorful protagonists: from Popeye to Superman, Wonder Woman to the X-men, comics have given us larger-than-life characters who are often caricatures of dominant (and sometimes subversive) American ideologies. We will learn not only the history of this unique genre, but will interrogate what it means to truly read comics artistically, politically, culturally, and symbolically. At heart, reading comics in an exercise in interpretation: given visual symbols, what meanings can we take from them? What can comics tell us? And how can we write about them in intelligent, critical ways? In this course we will learn to approach comics through critical thinking strategies; that is, questioning what they are, what they say, and where they come from. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 279. Navigating Contemporary Art. 3 Units.
Art has always had a shifting, complicated relationship to the general public. In today's world, contemporary art is sometimes regarded as a detached, self-reflexive, and elite mystery reserved for in-the-know connoisseurs and aspiring scene-makers. Yet there are many points of entry for meaningful dialogue about the art, the artists, and the audience that comprise the world of contemporary art. This seminar will explore the critical and cultural contexts that can help foster this conversation. It will include visits to local museums, galleries, and artists' studios, and culminate in a tour of the Progressive Art Collection. The goal of the seminar is to inspire a genuine interest in contemporary art and provide students with the tools required to think, speak, and write more clearly about it. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USST 280. Passport to Eastern Europe. 3 Units.
Images and texts shape rather than merely reflect the world and its geopolitical structures. Novels, films, and myths make significant contributions to the varied ways that people make sense of continents, nations, and other (often too conveniently used) geopolitical categories such as the East and West. After considering the ways in which the European continent has been imagined over the centuries, we will explore texts and films that have contributed to the invention of East Central Europe and the Balkans and continue to shape our understanding of the eastern parts of Europe. The class will include analyses of current news coverage of this area to unpack representations disseminated by the media and to reflect on the forces that aim to shape our understanding of geopolitical entities. Ultimately, the course hopes to address geopolitical assumptions, evaluate cultural contexts, and help you think critically about the constructed nature of geopolitical categories. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USST 284. The Art of Madness. 3 Units.
Taking a historical approach, this course will examine the relationship between the evolution of social and medical attitudes toward mental illness and fictional representations of madness in literature. Beginning with the early modern period, students will compare period sociological and medical narratives on mental illness to fiction works with representations of madness. In so doing, students will consider how the interactive dynamics of art and science contribute to cultural and social thought. Specific areas of inquiry will include: the development of psychology and its effect on societal perceptions of mental illness; cultural developments that occurred in response to changing perceptions of mental illness over the centuries; and the use of representational structures and narrative conventions in understanding and communicating the experience of mental illness. Other interrogations will include the imaginative function of mental illness in literature (e.g., melancholy's role in creativity); the cultural myths in iconography of mental illness in different historical periods; and ethical dilemmas regarding mental illness as reflected in both medical and literary narratives. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USST 285D. The World of African Literature. 3 Units.
In this seminar, we will look at how a diverse number of African writers have responded, in both form and content, to three periods in Africa's literary history: the 1960s, or the decolonization period, which produced nationalist literature; the 1970s and 1980s, or the neocolonial period, which produced revolutionary novels; and the 1990s through the present, a period producing literature that contends with globalization. In an attempt to answer the riddle of what makes an African novel African, we shall grapple with fundamental questions concerning the origin of the novel, how it came to Africa; African literary traditions; and the language of the African novel. We will also use African literature to explore universal questions about politics and literature: What is a protest novel? What is the role of the writer and of art in society? The goal of the seminar is to increase your appreciation of African literature and literature in general, and at the same time sharpen your analytical, critical, oral and written skills. You will be expected to lead discussions, engage in peer critiques and, through scholarly essays, engage African literature. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USST 285N. The American Dream: Real and Imagined. 3 Units.
What is meant when we or our leaders talk about "the American dream"? Is it a political cliche, a myth, or something fundamental to our national ethos? In this seminar students will explore what is meant by "the American dream." We will pose the questions: how it has been defined by artists, writers, political leaders, immigrants and the native-born; how it has changed over time; and to what extent the dream is real and/or imagined? Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USST 285T. Art, Music and Culture. 3 Units.
This course uses the intersections of art and music as a way to understand how the arts reflect, interact with, and influence the cultures in which they develop. After an introduction to research and writing in the arts (week 1), the course continues with a survey of certain historical periods and masterpieces of European and American art and music from 1700 to the present (weeks 2-6). It then takes up a few important themes in the interaction of music and the visual: 1) the concert hall as the intersection of architecture and acoustics (week 7); 2) the art museum and its music (week 8); 3) music and film (week 9); 4) the Broadway musical (week 10), and 5) rock music and its artifacts (week 11). A full week (12) of instruction on writing and oral presentation then prepares students for a seminar paper and seminar report, the creation and refining of which constitutes the final phase (weeks 12-15) of the course. Requirements and activities include, in addition to the seminar paper and report, a series of activities including three optional and three required events centered on the Cleveland Museum of Art and its concerts, the Cleveland Orchestra at Severance Hall, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USST 285V. Castaways and Cannibals: Stories of Empire. 3 Units.
Through a study of texts that exploit "new world" images like the castaway, the cannibal, the wild man, and the exotic woman, this course explores the ideologies that propelled nineteenth-century imperialism, particularly regarding the British in Australia and South Africa. The class will consider how British settlers made "homes" in hostile and unfamiliar climates, how they addressed the problem of unfriendly and unequal contact with indigenous peoples, and how contemporary novelists reevaluate the historical past. The course will work under the premise that contemporary geopolitical realities have been shaped by the imaginative work of British colonialists who, under the principle of terra nullius or "no man's land," claimed the land and the resources of these southern territories and dismissed the very existence of the indigenous peoples that populated them. The scope of the course will be broadly historical, exploring works that participated in British imperialism, as well as those that take a modern perspective. Course materials will be drawn from a variety of genres, including fiction, poetry, film, ethnography, natural history, history, and criticism. Ultimately, students will consider how narratives participate in the shaping of reality and of real-world relations of power. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 285X. Living in the Digital Age. 3 Units.
Digital technologies have changed the world we live in. This brave new world is populated by new-media, video, games, and social networks. To survive this world we need a vocabulary of criticism and authorship, a "New Media Literacy" that we can use to effectively and efficiently embrace our roles as both artist and critic. This course explores a wide variety of New Media themes in both contemporary and historical contexts. Students in the course will analyze their ever-evolving relationship to New Media as both viewers and creators. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 285Z. The Ubiquitous Frankenstein. 3 Units.
This seminar will explore the birth, evolution, devolution, and undead nature of the Frankenstein myth in popular culture. Using Mary Shelley's novel, her source texts, 19th- and 20th-century critical accounts, and 19th- and 20th-century popular cultural manifestations, the seminar participants will discover how "Frankenstein" found its way into the Western mind and continues to provoke responses both in those familiar and in those completely unfamiliar with the novel. The course will touch on issues of literary influence, science/technology, religion, ethics, education, literary merit, popular culture relevance, and adaptation as art form. Central questions for the seminar include: (1) Does the Frankenstein myth as we perceive it today have anything to do with Mary Shelley's original novel? (2) What were the moral and ethical implications of Shelley's novel for her time and for the generations afterward? (3) Is an "accurate" film adaptation of a literary work possible or needed? (4) Is being ubiquitous a blessing or a blight for a literary work? Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 286S. Shakesploitation of an Icon: Four Hundred Years of Shakespeare Marketing. 3 Units.
Following the interregnum in England, William Shakespeare began a long, sustained trajectory as a cultural icon, first in England, but eventually among all English-speaking cultures. In the process, Shakespeare's works have been reinterpreted, adapted, re-contexted, commoditized, and re-purposed for the sake of art, educational relevance, and entertainment. In the process, Shakespeare has often become the tool of unabashed commercialism, a practice which has come to be known as "Shakesploitation." But why is Shakespeare's work so frequently purloined? Why are out of context references to him so ubiquitous? Why do people tend to equate the name of Shakespeare with qualities of genius? Why has his works been continually adapted (often shamelessly) not only for the stage, but into other genres, including operas, paintings, novels and films? How do we account for the proliferation of Shakespeare-based self-help books such as Shakespeare on Leadership? Why is the infant stimulation video Baby Shakespeare a best-seller? This course will explore these questions not only by reading a selection of Shakespeare's most enduring works, but also by examining criticism, adaptations, and marketing strategies that have been applied to Shakespeare's image and works over the last four centuries. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 286U. Puzzled. 3 Units.
"Puzzled" will look at the practice of puzzle making and puzzle-solving and explore the meaning of puzzles for different cultures throughout history. We will read works from the disciplines of math, history, anthropology, philosophy, and literature. We will explore why certain types of puzzles became popular and how puzzles have transferred from one culture to another. We will examine the role of code writing and code-breaking in the military and in the world of business. We will read examples of fiction and watch films that adopt the form of the puzzle as a narrative device. We will think about the function of puzzles as instruments to exercise the faculties of reason and logic and as a means of leisure or pleasant distraction. Students will be asked to both solve and create puzzles over the course of the semester. They will write analytical essays on topics related to the practice and history of puzzle making and puzzle solving, and they will pursue a research topic that revolves around an issue or problem that has "puzzled" them. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 286V. Food Craze: (No) Reservations. 3 Units.
The great number of food-related TV-shows indicate an unprecedented interest in questions about and fascination with food; in fact, these TV shows allure viewers with the appeal of a myth: eating involves discovery (Anthony Bourdain’s No Reservations, On the Road Again with Mario Batali, Planet Food), thrill (Bizarre Foods), or "supernatural" competition (Man vs. Food, Top Chef). These television shows and food-related writings that accompany them in earnest "worship" food and often promote ideas of multiculturalism by which exciting and novel locales, foods, and meal preparatory techniques are discovered. The objective of this course is to "indulge" in these shows and food writings and scrutinize them: What explains such fascination with the viewing of and reading about food? In what ways can food-exploration trips expand on ideas and critiques of multiculturalism and globalization? What explains the centrality and "mythical" nature of food in the twenty-first century? To begin these conversations, we will touch on a plethora of food writing works including works motivated by environmental and health concerns such as Michael Pollan’s essays. Then we will look at the world of cookbooks (including the cookbooks of Julia Child and Rachel Ray), food blogs and TV-shows, and essays by Bill Buford and Calvin Trillin among many others. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 287F. Telling True Stories: Literary Journalism in America. 3 Units.

Literary journalism is a genre of nonfiction writing that employs all of the reportorial and truth-telling covenants of traditional journalism, while employing rhetorical and storytelling techniques more commonly associated with fiction. In short, it is journalism as literature. This course will introduce you to major themes in American literary journalism, the genre’s representative writers, and the enduring questions of the field. For example, we will ask how these stories work as narratives, as scientific explanations, as political tools, and as entertainment. How do these categories overlap? How do they motivate us to act? Where are these stories published and who is the readership? How do historical and cultural contexts influence and appear in the works? What is the relationship between (literary) journalism and democracy? What is the relationship between form and content? Is there a difference between physical truth and emotional truth? In the process of answering these questions, this course will emphasize close reading, interdisciplinary thinking, and the writing process. Through reading assignments, class discussions and presentations, and paper writing we will have the opportunity to examine, analyze, and develop our own interpretations about these multifaceted writings and the diverse cultural experiences and meanings they chronicle. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 287G. Shadowplay/East and West. 3 Units.

Shadows flicker across the screen, drawing us back to the precursors of the cinema and forward to digital effects. To borrow Gorki’s phrase, the cinema is truly a “train of shadows.” This course focuses on interactions between shadow theatre, dance, visual arts, the cinema, and traditional forms of play. While the main focus is on traditional artistic forms, we also explore modern variants, including the use of shadows in contemporary photography. We will look at shadows in different (yet overlapping) contexts, and compare the effects of still and moving shadows. All of these contexts involve moments of narrative and silence. Through a series of short papers which will be integrated into a longer paper, each student will explore his/her approach to a central question: What does it mean to play with shadows? Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 287M. Literature of 9/11. 3 Units.

Nearly 10 years after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, politicians, economists, artists, and educators continue to use the umbrella term “post-9/11” to describe our general cultural sensibility. Yet, what does it mean, specifically, to live in a “post-9/11” America? How have the cataclysmic events of that day altered our political and intellectual points of view? In this course, we will explore these questions by considering how novelists, poets, and other writers have and continue to represent September 11th. We will analyze techniques used to narrate the story of 9/11, investigating how American cultural values—critiques of such values—influence the aesthetic choices that writers make. Our course will begin chronologically at “Ground Zero,” as we examine representations of the immediate urban trauma while exploring the tensions between memorial and commemoration, spectacle and commercial pursuits. We will then focus on works by both American and international authors addressing the days and months following the attacks. We will examine how America is depicted with respect to its foreign policy and domestic politics, paying particular attention to the space of the “home.” In addition to novels, short fiction, and poetry, we will read cultural criticism and some philosophy. Students will be given additional opportunities to explore film and other visual or new media representations of 9/11. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 287O. What is Art for?. 3 Units.

Together we will study a crucial and distinctive aspect of the human mind: the uniquely human ability to engage in the production and reception of art. This course will explore human responses to artistic works in a wide range of media: literature, music, painting, and performance. Some of the larger questions we will be addressing in this course are the following: What is art for? Is art simply a kind of cognitive play that refines behavioural options over time? How is art related to (or dependent on) simulation, empathy and aspects of social cognition? What precisely can science contribute to explaining the aesthetic response and the artistic impulse? What, given the inherent constraints on human creativity imposed by human cognitive abilities, are the unique artistic conventions that contribute to experiencing a work of art as a work of art? What are the conceptual, intentional, emotional dimensions of art, manifested as they are in artistic creativity, talent and appreciation? Like most big questions, these are addressed in different ways by the disciplines of psychology, neuroscience, evolutionary biology, philosophy, and aesthetics. By exploring some collisions among these multiple perspectives we will learn more than through any single perspective. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 287T. King Arthur’s Days and Knights. 3 Units.
Few legends have remained popular and vital as long as the story of King Arthur has. Beginning with brief references in sixth-century histories, Arthur has risen again and again in medieval adventure stories, Victorian lyrics, and contemporary cinema. Over thirty-five films, in fact, have depicted the adventures of the Round Table. How can we explain this phenomenon? To investigate this question, this seminar will trace the development of the legend from its oldest remaining written manifestations to the present day. A chronological approach will allow us to see how Arthur’s story accumulated new elements over time, including the famous love affair between Lancelot and Guinevere and the equally famous quest for the Holy Grail—neither of which appeared in the earliest versions of the story. We will discuss topics such as what Arthur has represented at different periods in time and how his story changes when it is retold in different genres and media. We will also consider how writers have adapted Round Table stories to suit political and social agendas. Finally, to broaden our perspective we will spend a unit exploring legends from a variety of cultures and comparing their presentation of heroism. Texts will include Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, pieces of Sir Thomas Malory’s The Death of Arthur, the indispensable Monty Python and the Holy Grail, and portions of its new incarnation, Spamalot. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 287X. Paris in the Arts. 3 Units.
Since the late eighteenth century, Paris has been a favorite subject for visual artists and writers alike, as well as the birthplace of several seminal artistic movements, such as Impressionism, Cubism, and the New Wave. This course will use representations of Paris in the arts as lenses through which the identity and recent history of this major city will come into focus. Further, stories, photographs, and films that stage the city of Paris and its people will also allow us to explore the broader relationship between art, the city, and the plight of modern man. The course will include a wide range of artworks, from mid-nineteenth century photographs documenting the destruction of Medieval Paris and the advent of a rational capital, to stories chronicling the fate of hopeful newcomers, and films where the city is treated either as intimate landscape or impersonal grid. The course will be both discussion based and writing intensive: students will be encouraged to envision class participation and writing assignments as means to analyze collaboratively, as well as individually, the material at hand. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 288C. Fly Fishing: the Sport, the Metaphysics, and the Literature. 3 Units.
According to WorldCat—the world’s largest database of library content—the amount of literature on fly fishing dwarfs that of any other sport. What explains this interest? In this seminar, we will examine the appeal and cultural significance of fly fishing, especially as a site for understanding an individual’s relationship to the natural world. We will read both fiction and non-fiction works that will help us explore the fundamental nature of sport, how it varies from other forms of recreation, and whether sport can be considered art. We will also investigate what prompts authors to imbue fly fishing with metaphysical, spiritual, or aesthetic dimensions. And we will study how the intent and style of such works differ from traditional academic research writing, as well as how those elements of craft might be integrated into an effective academic writing style. We will also learn by experiencing some of the sport’s skills, including fly tying and casting. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 288E. Fantastic Voyages: The Journey in the Ancient and Medieval World. 3 Units.
When we make a record of a journey to an unfamiliar place (regardless of whether or not we really went there), we are framing difference. On the one hand, we create a record of what we see and experience, while on the other, we reveal our own cultural standpoint based on how we represent that experience. In this seminar, students will read a selection of narratives from antiquity to the late medieval era that purport to depict a “real” journey into the unknown, with the intent of examining how the representation of different cultures by the traveler, whether real or imaginary, shapes and defines cultural boundaries. Our focus will be on journeys within the cultures of the Mediterranean and Europe (including Britain), and will include texts from Greek, Roman, Middle Eastern, and Western travelers. Students will consider the texts in relation to their context and audience, evaluate the authority of the author’s account using primary source material, and draw on subsequent scholarship. By undertaking a symbolic journey through the eyes of different travelers, students will learn not only to examine texts from several perspectives, but also to recognize the ways in which cultural differences and “otherness” are constructed. We will begin with the concept of the journey in the ancient world, particularly how different cultures traveled and how their mode of transport (horse, boat, foot) and mode of living (nomadic, sedentary) influenced their perception of the people they encountered. As we move from antiquity into the medieval era, we will trace how religious, political, and economic changes influenced representations of other cultures. In addition to written texts, we will study visual references, including illustrations based on the seminar’s required texts as well as early maps. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 288I. Diversions: Experimental Stories and New Media. 3 Units.
In this course, students will study works in which the authors and artists have experimented with traditional linear forms and created stories that are, for instance, labyrinthine, framed, collaged, geometrical, digressive, and even networked. While both print-based and digital texts offer spaces for diverse and deeply engaging written or visual performances, they also require further critical inquiry into the ways in which they create, reflect, or resist social and cultural values. Our focus in this course will be exploring how stories (and other texts) - in print, on screen, on canvas, in digital formats - that don't follow or that play with conventional rules of order encourage us to participate in making sense of our contemporary world. The goals of the course include: exploring the relationship between form and content in written and visual productions, developing a critical perspective from which to enjoy, assess, and respond creatively to traditional print and multimedia presentations, and making excellent use of research resources at CWRU and cultural resources at University Circle. In addition, students will work to develop their writing and presentation skills and to innovate novel models of research writing. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 288J. Cultural Representations of Violence. 3 Units.
The twentieth century was arguably the most violent in human history. That legacy has carried into our own time: from 9/11 to school shootings to the recent conflict in Libya, violence surrounds us. But what exactly is violence? How is it that we all recognize it when we see it? How do we represent it to ourselves? Most importantly, how do we make sense of it? Can we make sense of it? This class will explore these questions by studying the uneasy role violence plays in literature, film, performance art, and other cultural productions. As we do so, we will consider two central and potentially conflicting ideas. On the one hand, violence tends to resist our abilities to represent it; any depiction seems somehow inadequate to the real thing. At the same time, representations of violence surround us constantly, and for any number of political, cultural, and social reasons. Thus, violence in modern and contemporary culture is paradoxical, both permeating and resisting our imaginations. Through class discussions, written responses, presentations, and independent research projects, we will explore these and other ideas, considering how art attempts to comprehend violence and how artistic representations of violence relate to (implicate?) their audience. Although our focus will be largely on art, and primarily literature, our approach will be necessarily interdisciplinary. Be prepared to weigh in on topics as diverse as politics, aesthetics, philosophy, gender and sexuality, war, trauma, and colonialism. Undoubtedly, violence can be a painful subject, but the goal of our seminar is to pursue a rigorous intellectual and imaginative inquiry into one of the most pressing topics of our time. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 288K. Hiroshima: History, Memory, Representation. 3 Units.
On August 6, 1945, when the U.S. first used nuclear weapons against Japan, the name "Hiroshima" ceased to designate merely a place, and came to signify an event, an anxiety, and a prognosis for the future. This course seeks to interrogate the various and overlapping discourses which constitute the symbolic nexus around Hiroshima--and, to a lesser extent, Nagasaki. We will be asking how the event of the bomb has been understood according to different disciplinary perspectives (history, psychology, literature, and film) and how it is represented from both American and Japanese perspectives. Accordingly, our investigation will be an intensely comparative attempt to answer the question: if there is something like what Robert Lifton calls "the atomic bomb experience," then how is that experience captured in different forms of cultural expression? Or, perhaps more importantly, how do these cultural objects speak to an ongoing negotiation with historical trauma in the present? What differences and similarities do we find among different, cross-cultural encounters with the atomic bomb? Our investigation into the politics of representation around this event will lead us ultimately to ask whether it is even possible to capture the novelty and horror of an event that in many ways exceeds language altogether. After orienting ourselves to the history of the bombings and the psychological and philosophical issues at stake in them, we will turn to some of its canonical representations in John Hersey's Hiroshima and Masuji Ibuse's Black Rain. From there, we will look at Yoshihiro Tatsumi's graphic novel Goodbye. And we will conclude with the cinematic representations of Alain Resnais's Hiroshima mon amour and Ishiro Honda's Godzilla. As a University Seminar, the course will also include substantial instruction in research and writing, leading to students' production of a medium-length research paper which they will work on throughout the semester. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 288R. Cultural and Ethical Issues in American-Chinese Business Relations. 3 Units.
The American and Chinese economies are the two biggest economies in
the world. The Chinese economy is the fastest growing large economy in
the world. The dynamic American economy is unique in its combination
of large multinational enterprises and small entrepreneurial firms. The
American economy is characterized by a vast private sector, the rule of
law, and the largest private capital markets in the world. The Chinese
economy is 30 years into a period of reform from communist industrial
organization to "socialism with Chinese characteristics", which includes
a significant role for the private sector. The Chinese economy is still an
experiment. The established American business system exists within a
democratic political system, where corporate lobbying has a significant
influence on the creation of laws and government policy. The Chinese
economy is still under the tight control of the Chinese Communist Party,
a one-party dictatorship. When Americans go to China to do business,
they find the cultural, social, political, and moral systems vastly different
than what they are familiar with. Transparency International Ranks China
27 out of 28 of the most corrupt large economies in the world. In China,
bribery of government officials and kickbacks to sales and purchasing
managers is common. Key questions we will investigate are: 1. In what
ways are the two business systems similar and different? 2. What is the
nature of Chinese social relations? How do they differ from American
social relations? What effect do they have on business? 3. What is the
nature of the Chinese political system? What impact does it have on
business in China? 4. How do American business people negotiate the
Chinese business system? Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade
in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer
student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR
Requisites not met permission.

USSY 288W. A History of Noise: Music and Politics from Beethoven to
Jimi Hendrix. 3 Units.
This writing-intensive course examines the roles that noise has played in
discursive discourses throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
Its charged bookends—Beethoven and Jimi Hendrix—invite students to
challenge supposed differences between "Art" and popular music and
examine relationships between music and society. "Who does 'Art'
serve?" "Is it possible to distinguish between 'Art' and noise?" and "Is
sound capable of influence at all?" are among the chief questions this
course explores. The curriculum's historical breadth allows students
to consider these larger questions through a variety of case studies,
including (among others) the bombast and nationalism of Beethoven's
ninth symphony; the Marxist-inspired "emancipation" of sound, as
presented by Arnold Schoenberg; the gender-bending metal of Eddie
Van Halen; and the protest-by-distortion of Hendrix's national anthem at
Woodstock. By the end of this course, students will gain more awareness
of the ways in which the music surrounding them seeks to shape society.
Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR
concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No
previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met
permission.

USSY 288V. Seclusion, Gender and the Exotic: Imagining the Harem. 3
Units.
When the term "harem" is invoked, the first image that comes to mind
is of scantily clad women living in sequestered opulence in some
exotic, yet vaguely "Eastern" place. This image has been reproduced
and perpetuated through art, literature and music to the degree that
even today, familiar themes of seduction, passivity and mystery related
to the harem can be found throughout popular culture. Historically,
gender segregation reaches into antiquity and existed in a variety of
forms, cross-culturally. The term "harem" was not used regularly until
the 13th century, and then only referred to the specific form of gender
segregation used by the Ottoman court. Application of the word "harem"
to all women's quarters in other cultures was the result of European
contact with the Ottoman Empire, despite the fact that other cultures
often had their own, distinct, terminology for women's spaces. In this
seminar, we will explore the history and practice of gender segregation
as a means to examine how the idea of the harem was constructed in the
Eastern and Western imagination. Under what circumstances did
women live separately? How were gendered spaces created, justified
and maintained? Where did our image of the harem come from? Using
primary and secondary sources, we will examine a selection of histories
and representations of the harem in literature, slave and travel narratives,
and religion. As the Western idea of the harem is part of what Edward
Said theorized as "Orientalism", we will explore Said's theory as well as
subsequent theories related to gender and the exotic. In addition, we will
look at images of women's quarters from antiquity to the present and
listen to representations of the exotic in music. Our goal is not only to
study the historical fact of the harem, but also to engage issues related
to gender, the exotic and representation from different disciplinary and
cultural points of view. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a
First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student);
AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites
not met permission.
USSY 288X. 1939. 3 Units.
This course will examine the year 1939. At the time, people in the United States and Great Britain were invested in creating an active and lush fantasy world. There were debutant balls, the World’s Fair, college sports, “The Big Sleep,” “Gone With the Wind,” and “The Wizard of Oz.” Meanwhile Hitler was also conceiving of his dream world. The history of 1939 is the history of these competing fantasies and their collision. In addition to bettering their writing and research skills, students in this class will learn to understand the language and imagery of films, speeches, propaganda, social mores, diplomacy, and other various modes of communication that were used to construct and reinforce the sundry of imagined realities of 1939. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 288Y. Shots in the Dark: Investigating Crime Films. 3 Units.
Crime movies and their subgenres (Gangster, film noir, detective, police) are the most enduringly popular of all Hollywood genres. They’ve been around since the silent era and attest to America’s fascination with crime. But another reason we are so attracted to crime films stems from a pair of contradictory narrative projects that underline the genre. On the one hand, these films valorize the distinctions between the genre’s stock characters—criminal, victim and avenger—in order to affirm the social, moral or institutional order. On the other hand, crime movies explore the relations between the three roles in order to mount a critique that challenges that order. In addition to emphasizing film studies, we will study the films for what they say about crime, criminals and criminal law. As most crime films contain an investigation, so too will the organization of the course. There are methods for analyzing film just as there are methods for investigating a crime scene. Investigation requires identifying, collecting, analyzing and interpreting evidence. We’ll start by investigating what makes the genre so enduring—its mise-en-scene, intent or characters? You will be reporting your findings in three scholarly papers: a formal analysis on a specific film, a sociological analysis of a specific film and a research paper with documentation. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 289A. Do We Have Free Will?. 3 Units.
Concepts such as freedom, choice, moral responsibility, and autonomy are commonly invoked to describe our sense, as human beings, that our actions and thoughts are really our own. This seems like experiential commonsense—when I choose to read a novel instead of a philosophy text it feels like the decision to do so was made by me, that there was no coercion, or other seen or unseen force, that intervened to make me choose as I did. We extend this logic to the judgment of moral and legal responsibility. If you engage in good behavior, you get the praise; if you do bad things, you are blameworthy. Despite our self-perception that we freely make decisions and choose our actions, we sometimes invoke the notion that certain events are the result of some prior cause or circumstance that determines what occurs in the present. In this instance, we do not appear to be fully free in our choices because we cannot undo the causes that dictate what is taking place here and now. To the extent that we experience current actions as having a cause in the past, we are flirting with the idea that our behavior is not wholly free, but determined or conditioned by what has come before. Determinism, necessity, fate, destiny, predestination: these are terms typically used to describe the sense that our actions and thoughts are the result of unknown forces or circumstances beyond our control. This course uses classic and contemporary texts, taken from multiple cultural traditions, to explore the problem of free will and related issues of body/mind dualism and personal identity. Although the term “free will” does not appear in all cultural contexts, found everywhere are questions of whether we are free to act and think as we wish or whether our thoughts and actions are in some way determined. We also read science fiction short stories as thought experiments in order to help us understand the ramifications of various positions on free will and related problems. This course is discussion-based and writing-intensive. Classes focus on analysis and interpretation of texts and ideas. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 289E. Poets of Ohio. 3 Units.
More often than not, contemporary society views poetry as a strange and dated art form. When the genre actually does receive recognition, it is usually under the guise of Hip-Hop or Slam Poetry. While both of those offshoots contain their own poetic and artistic merit, this course intends to familiarize you with contemporary, literary poetry and highlight the dynamic poetry community of Ohio. Luckily for us, many of the poets we will read during the course agreed to visit our class this semester to talk about their work and read their poems. In addition to demonstrating that poetry is alive, well, and thriving all around us, we will also attempt to think critically about this genre. Why do poetic texts, both of the present and the past, seem so difficult to read and understand? What writing techniques, strategies, and styles do poets use that make comprehending their work such a challenge? More importantly, why would anyone choose to write in this manner? Through close readings of the primary texts, researching the historical and literary contexts surrounding contemporary poetry, and discussing the art form with each other (as well as with the poets themselves), we will come to a better understanding of how these texts function. To this extent, our course will engage the symbolic world as we explore the local and national poetry communities, noting how writers found relationships upon geography, aesthetics, and demographics (just to name a few), using written texts to express some emotion, thought, or identity. In order to accomplish these goals, we will read, participate in class discussions, and write extensively about poetry composed by contemporary Ohio poets. Therefore, you will be expected to engage our course texts critically, thinking through the manner in which language operates as a tool for generating and sustaining, as well as undermining, community formation. Requirements to enroll:
1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 289F. Reading and Writing The City. 3 Units.
This seminar will follow Joyce Carol Oates by asking, "If the City is a text, how shall we read it?" To explore this question, we will study a wide range of writings and other cultural productions. The first part of the course will examine classic and contemporary texts about city life from urban studies, history, philosophy, and geography, among other fields. These texts will provide useful frameworks and insights for the second part of the course, where we will analyze contemporary cultural productions that offer their own intriguing urban visions, including fiction, poetry, film, and music. We will analyze how these texts suggest ways of both reading/interpreting and writing/rewriting the city. Requirements to enroll:
1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 289G. The American West on Film. 3 Units.
Few geographical areas in the United States contain as many tall tales and mythological figures as the American frontier. From an extreme point of view, the West is the only American myth because no other nation can claim the cowboy, the Native American, or the immigrant worker on the transcontinental railroad. And yet, each of these figures remains spectacularly diverse. We celebrate their variety and lionize their individuality in film, popular novels, and cultural criticism. From the visions of the New World to the conquest of the frontier, the color of the American West proliferates and transforms, defining our culture. In this course, we will investigate how critics have understood our fascination with the Western frontier. The class will broadly explore version of the frontier in novels, films, and historical accounts. Reading about the history of the actual west, the course will then examine how the films of the twentieth century alter history in order to express the fantasies and anxieties of their own time. By studying both history and film, we will be able to interrogate manifest destiny and the myth of American exceptionalism. What makes the West such an integral part of our understanding of America? How has its actual history become myth? What does the American fascination with the cowboy, the Native American, or the outlaw imply about our nation? Requirements to enroll:
1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 289I. The Art of Science. 3 Units.
This is an interdisciplinary course that will explore the intersection between two disparate but often-connected fields, the history of art and the history of science. Although these fields are separated on college campuses today, they share a history that is united by a common philosophical question: how do we evaluate and know the world around us? The documentation of that knowledge is often visual—whether written or painted, tabulated or carved—images play an essential role in the shaping and recording of information. Beginning with the Renaissance revival of Pliny's Natural History (c. 77-79 BCE) this class will focus on the complex ways in which science and art overlap and enrich one another. Topics explored in this course include: mathematical theory and linear perspective; anatomical dissection and naturalism in figure painting; optics, lenses, and realism; Copernicus, Galileo and religious painting; botany and scientific illustration; natural history and fine art collecting, etc. Classes will be supplemented by visits to the Museum of Natural History, the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the Dittrick Museum of Medical History. Requirements to enroll:
1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 289J. Beauty Myths Today. 3 Units.
Published just over 20 years ago, Naomi Wolf's influential study "The Beauty Myth" significantly influenced popular thinking about body image. Analyzing both cultural trends and empirical data, Wolf argued that as women made unprecedented advances in public life in the latter half of the 20th century, they were at the same time held to increasingly unrealistic standards of physical beauty. Wolf's study not only contributed to extant analyses of sexism in the media, but also introduced to mainstream readers the politics of the representation of women's bodies in popular culture. This course will examine to what extent Wolf's original claim hold true today. In other words, what physical standards must one meet in order to be considered professionally and personally successful? In exploring this question, we will look at the origins and current workings of the American beauty industry, considering the changing representation of the ideal body throughout the 20th century. We'll read texts by historians, philosophers, novelists, poets, cultural critics, and journalists who examine the politics of beauty. To both (re-)define and trace the continuing effects of beauty myths in the 21st century, we'll consider the rhetoric of ideal womanhood as it shows up in popular texts such as websites promoting anorexia, TV shows about plastic surgery, diet books, magazines, and guides for mothers. Students will have opportunities to define the beauty myth more broadly, exploring its effects on men and its mediating presence in other cultural sites. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 289Y. Reading and Writing Biography. 3 Units.
The study and practice of biography, that is, writing about someone's life, is an important tool for understanding how meaning is constructed. In this class, we will learn some of the history of biography and what it hopes to accomplish in its various sub-genres. Why are biographies so popular? Why are we so interested in them? What do they do? Is it possible to perfectly represent an objective truth of someone or does the discussion of someone else's life require a more symbolic interpretation of things? We will engage in reading and discussing some important and contemporary biographies in a variety of styles and genres from autobiography to works of near-fiction. We will learn how researchers use facts to construct more symbolic narratives around an argument that tells a story about someone's life in a way that engages with important issues of self, audience, and the location of truth. As our final research project, we will undertake our own biographical projects where we will do primary research in order to construct focused narratives of people of our own choosing. To work up to this point, we will work on our own autobiographies, look at the lives of things, and look at some films which foreground the narrative of life. This course will be of great use to writers and researchers who must be able to communicate by any kind of true account in a way that is both engaging and comprehensive. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 290C. Out of Proportion. 3 Units.
In this seminar, we will explore the meaning of things great and small, from the largest buildings and greatest distances, to nanotechnology and the smallest viruses. The seminar's goal will be to inspire critical thinking by confronting our fascination with things expanding and contracting, growing and shrinking, things speeded up and things slowed down. We will approach the subject from a variety of disciplines - cultural history, psychology, mathematics, philosophy, literature, economics, and the sciences - with the intention of unpacking both the topic itself and the tools that we use to explain our world. We will ask questions about why we find gigantism and dwarfism unsettling; how we define ugliness and beauty; how we understand the odds and statistics of horrific or wonderful things happening to us; and how this determines our behavior. After examining theory and examples of things "out of proportion", students will produce a research project that combines primary and secondary sources and will make an argument in behalf of an example that they find compelling. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 290N. Django Chained. 3 Units.
To gain a better understanding of the experience and history of slavery from the perspective of the enslaved, we will read the works of Octavia Butler. She knew that the problem with the historical narrative was that slaves did not write it. As a science fiction and fantasy author, Butler spent her career giving voice to the enslaved by recovering their experience and exposing it to the reader through the lens of imagined and symbolic worlds. By reading her work, we will come to understand a different way of viewing history. We will join the historical narrative with the science fiction narrative to arrive at a deeper understanding of the human experience with subjugation and oppression. The class readings will have time travel, vampires, and aliens. However, the most frightening monsters of all will be human. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 290Q. Great Nineteenth-Century Novels: A Close Look at Some Masterpieces of Continental Fiction. 3 Units.
The form and nature of the novel has changed a lot since the nineteenth-century. There’s been the modern novel, the post-modern novel, the experimental novel, the graphic novel, and who knows what’s coming next? This course is about what the continental novel was like in the nineteenth-century, the Golden Age of the genre. Its major premise is that you don’t have to be a literature major to read, enjoy, and profit from the old-style classic novels. We will read novels by Balzac, Flaubert, Turgenev, and Tolstoy in modern translations, and we will take our time with them, looking closely at the component parts: narrator, plot, setting, character, dialogue, where the meaning comes from. The course offers, in part, obviously, a chance to read some of the great European novels of the nineteenth-century. It also provides a chance to go at a slow enough pace to allow time to study and discuss in detail the techniques these masters of the novel used so brilliantly. Students who complete the course, therefore, will become both familiar with classic texts and more knowledgeable and skillful readers of any and all narrative fiction. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 290V. Experiencing Mathematics. 3 Units.
You’ve studied mathematics, but have you really experienced it? In Love and Math, author and mathematician Edward Frenkel says that, for him, the experience is tantamount to love. Acknowledging that his field suffers from the reputation of being dry and inaccessible, he challenges this negative view by sharing the passion, beauty, and adventure from his career as one of the leading researchers in the groundbreaking Langlands program, the so-called grand unified theory of mathematics. Like Frenkel, we will discuss the appreciation and enjoyment of mathematics. Furthermore, we will consider other ways in which it is useful and interesting to talk about “experiencing mathematics.” The question of what that phrase means is central to the approach we will take toward the various topics covered in class. We will examine cultural attitudes toward mathematicians and mathematics. Similarly, we will investigate the culture of mathematicians themselves, with particular attention to their ideas about community, collaboration, fairness, and merit. We will also look at the ways, from Big Data to high fashion, that the work of mathematicians actively shapes contemporary society. In addition, we will practice problem-solving techniques for contest mathematics; this activity requires no more than a pre-calculus background. You will not be graded on mathematical problems. Instead, you will reflect on your own problem-solving process. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 290Y. Ecotopia: Imagining the Future. 3 Units.
The present environmental crisis has given rise to diverse imaginative visions of the future. Dystopian novelists and directors have created texts that portray a disastrous future in which humanity refuses to deal with global warming, ocean acidification, and overpopulation. For writers like Aldous Huxley, the future involves a grim vision of a depleted Earth and a human population under threat from its own political madness. Alternatively, writers and filmmakers have imagined hopeful visions of a human future in which we collectively remake society in order to live in harmony with nature. Although dystopian thinkers far outnumber utopians, we will investigate both visions of the future. More specifically, we will examine these possible futures as ways of thinking about the inter-generational ethical obligation that we have to leave behind positive and sustainable conditions for future generations living on Earth. This seminar will tackle that challenge by analyzing ecotopian visions of the planet’s future and by defining ways of creating a sustainable society. Possible novels and films include Brave New World, Ecotopia, The Road, Snowpiercer, Cloud Atlas, and Oryx and Crake. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY, OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 291B. Science (Fiction) Dystopias. 3 Units.
In 1927 the German science fiction classic Metropolis showed filmgoers a mechanized dystopian nightmare in which humans took on the roles of cogs and levers in a giant machine. Years later, George Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty-Four depicted a totalitarian regime reshaping post-war England in a similar way, using surveillance and repetitive activities to turn the population into something less than human. Appropriating science fiction motifs, dystopian narratives have forced us to reconsider how science and technology are used to complicate and at times augment our notion of what it means to be a social animal. In this class, we will consider a range of texts, including novels, short stories, films, and comic books, to explore the interaction between people and the things that they invent. The first half of the course will emphasize traditional utopian texts and readings will include selections from works like Margaret Cavendish’s Blazing World (biological utopia), Yevgeny Zamyatin’s We (mathematical dystopia), and George Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty-Four (technological dystopia). During the second half of the semester we will discuss utopian and dystopian worlds in popular fiction and film, such as science fiction short stories by Harlan Ellison, Alan Moore’s V for Vendetta, and Wall-E, to consider how the utopia/dystopia changed in the latter half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY, OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 291F. Literary Arcadias: Idealized Landscapes and the Intrusion of Reality. 3 Units.
The literary genre of pastoral has long depicted the simplicity of life in a natural environment–a place situated at a time before environmental exploitation, colonization, and urbanization. These pastoral retreats are often given the generic name “Arcadia.” As many critics and authors have noted, however, literary depictions of Arcadia often expose the delicate balance of conflicting realities: peace and war, rich and poor, rural and urban. In this seminar, we will investigate what happens when external reality disrupts Arcadia’s Edenic space. Is the creation of these idyllic settings a way of masking the disturbing realities of class inequality, political power, and environmental degradation? Or are authors attempting to articulate an alternative to them? As part of our investigation, we will consider how the pastoral genre has evolved over time, noting especially how depictions of Arcadia have responded to various cultural, commercial, and political changes. We will also examine how the idea of Arcadia shapes contemporary culture and our own understanding of the relationship between nature and society in the modern world. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY, OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 291G. Revenge, Violence, and Laughter: From Shakespeare to Tarantino. 3 Units.
Why do laughter and revenge so often go hand in hand? In the third act of Shakespeare’s Titus Andronicus, the play’s title character, shortly after learning of several acts of grotesque violence enacted on his family - including the rape of his daughter and the killing of his sons - laughs uncontrollably. When asked why he’s laughing, Titus gives two reasons. First, he says he has “Not another tear to shed,” and second, he says it’s because continuing to cry would keep him from taking revenge on his enemies. This course will explore a series of artistic works where characters are victims and perpetrators of extraordinary acts of violence and injustice, and the response–either from the characters themselves or the audience–includes a grotesque laughter. We'll explore the reasons for this odd conjunction of laughter and revenge, asking the following questions: What is the relationship between pleasure and laughter on the one hand, and justice and revenge on the other? Is revenge, despite its violence, something to be cheered rather than mourned? Can laughter, as Titus suggests, help correct and fight injustice, where tears do not? Where is the line between an upright pleasure at justice being done and a sadistic enjoyment of suffering (even when those suffering are wicked)? Is artistic violence, when exaggerated or extreme, ridiculous rather than shocking? Class discussion will focus on the formal, ethical and social implications of art and literature. This is to say, we will not only discuss how authors get audiences to laugh at murder and dismemberment, but also the political and ethical results of inviting laughter at things like violence against women, genocide, and capital punishment. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY, OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 291J. Improvisation in Jazz and Beyond. 3 Units.
On the surface it might seem that a jazz concert, a medical procedure, and a religious sermon have little in common, but this course examines how all three in fact share certain significant traits. One of these traits is improvisation—the ability of a performer to respond to unanticipated stimuli and create something new. Another trait is the tension between specialization and integration that develops whenever a highly-trained expert performs with or for non-experts, as in the exchange between musicians and audience, doctors and patients, or clergy and congregants.

To answer these questions, we will attend jazz concerts, medical lectures, and church services. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

Risk is everywhere. Some risks are visible and can have potentially significant consequences, such as committing a felony or choosing a life partner. Other risks can have equally serious consequences, but might not be so evident: eating breakfast cereal made from genetically modified crops or ignoring that funny-shaped mole on your shoulder, for example. Sometimes we take risks in situations where we have a lot of control, like deciding to jaywalk when there is no traffic; other times we face risk where we have little control, like choosing a major without being able to predict whether there will be any jobs in that field by the time you graduate. How do we decide what risks are worth taking? Are some methods for assessing risk better than others? How can a better understanding of risk help us improve our decision making, both at the individual and public policy levels? In this course, we will use simple conceptual frameworks from decision theory and behavioral research to show how we measure risk. We will also examine how scientists combine historical records, scientific theories, probability, and expert judgment to assess risk. In addition, we will ask students to respond some of the well-known logical paradoxes, and explain the meaning if their decisions. Finally, we will apply what we learn about risk to a variety of examples from the fields of health, public safety, environmental studies, manufacturing/industrial processes, systems sciences, and finance. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 291Q. P.R., Spin, and Inventing Reality. 3 Units.
Is it reality or is it spin? We all know the terms—"it's spin," "it's P.R.," "he's a flack"—and none of them are said kindly. Yet, over the past century public professionals have become an often invisible multi-billion dollar manipulation of our collective perception of reality. Sometimes this manipulation is benign. But just as often it can weaken our democracy through weapons of words, images, and argument. This seminar will explore the origins and consequences of this silent, symbolic revolution. We will look at the uses of P.R. today in business, politics, and popular culture; examine the tools used to construct and sell those perceptions; and look into the values underlying these activities. We will do so through both academic and media materials, as well as through writing, research, and discussion. All of these are intended to deepen your critical thinking and writing skills, and build your research, discussion, and oral presentation strengths.

Students who have received credit for USSO 260 may not receive credit for this course. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 291T. Demystifying the Guerilla Fighter: Imperialism, Race, and Revolution in Latin America. 3 Units.
The image of Ernesto "Che" Guevara is embossed in many a t-shirt, poster, and bumper sticker across college campuses. Guevara's writings and, more specifically, select catchy quotes, also have circulated in websites and popular films for the last couple of decades. In this course we will examine the myths surrounding men like Guevara by tracing the history of conquistadores, nuns, mystics, insurgents, and revolutionaries in Latin America from the colonial to the modern period. Toward this goal we will look at an array of personal letters, diary entries, government documents, religious texts, essays, prose, and works of literature written by women and men who viewed themselves, and were viewed by others, as speaking to, or ushering in, transformative change. As a class we will also examine the connections between imperial projects and calls for action in colonial and early modern Latin America and the Caribbean, explore the relationships between slavery, gender norms, and capitalism, and assess the changing nature of what freedom, reform, and revolution meant to various actors from the late eighteenth century to the late twentieth century. Indeed, our end goal as a class is to map out what some of our assumptions have been regarding what it means to be a guerilla fighter, connect it to how calls for change have manifested themselves across time, unearth the ironies and allure of radical frameworks, and investigate what this understanding can do for us as we tackle questions of change and possibility. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 291W. "Never Such Innocence Again": World War I in Literature and Culture. 3 Units.
As cities around the globe mark the centennial of World War I (1914-1918), this seminar will explore the relationship between that watershed moment and the varieties of literature and art it inspired. In what ways did "the Great War" shape the direction of twentieth-century culture? How was language itself altered, as new vocabularies emerged (e.g., "shell-shock," "the home front") and previously venerable terms such as "honor" and "sacrifice" acquired radically different connotations? What strategies did writers and artists evolve in order to contend with the magnitude of the conflict and its unprecedented human cost? Assessing the war's impact on Western thought, the poet Philip Larkin famously wrote, "Never such innocence again"—yet this loss of innocence also coincided with the birth of new forms of literary and artistic expression. In this course we will discuss and write about such innovations as they occurred in the visual arts—painting, sculpture, film—and in literary works by Ernest Hemingway, Virginia Woolf, and other writers who used the resources of imaginative literature to grapple with the Great War and its consequences. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.
USSY 291Z. Marriage Plots. 3 Units.
Why do so many stories end with a wedding? Our course will consider the form of the marriage plot: we will look at how stories often begin with young(ish) people meeting and falling in love, and how the process of storytelling denies (or frustrates) their initial connection. Through the telling of the story, however, the young lovers overcome obstacles in myriad forms: controlling parents, financial insecurity or class differences, religious difference, even magical spells. We will think about what these stories do for their readers and viewers. We will also think about how various other stories—of riots, of government, of dissatisfaction with life—get couched in marriage plots. What is it about a marriage plot that ensures stability, satisfies our desires, and gives us such necessary closure? How does the form of “comedy”—for this is the overarching genre that relies so heavily upon marriage plots—work with and reshape the marriage plot over time? We’ll also briefly ponder how supporters of marriage equality have used the marriage plot. Finally, our investigation into the marriage plot will look at marriage plot comedies that refuse to conform to the typical marriage plot: dark humor from a novel like Villette to films like Harold and Maude or The War of the Roses. This course investigates the presence of the marriage plot across multiple literary genres: dramas, novels, film, and television. We will also read and view courtship narratives from across historical periods from the Renaissance until today. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 292C. The Moral Suspicion of Money. 3 Units.
Money is morally suspicious—the root of all sorts of evil. This suspicion isn’t merely that bad people do bad things with money; it is that somehow the use of money helps make otherwise good people bad. But money is everywhere, pervasive and practical, and so a technology we both need and distrust. Money prices give us reasons when deciding what to do. But we think that money often gives us “good” reasons to do bad things and bad reasons to do good things. And sometimes assigning certain things monetary values at all seems unreasonable. We use money to express our values, yet complain money often distorts them, or has become a value itself. We use money to relate to each other in mutually beneficial commerce and trade, but worry that money degrades our relations. In this interdisciplinary course we’ll investigate the birth of both money and the idea of its badness. We’ll survey history, literature, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, film, and the day’s news for culturally varied expressions of, and reactions to, this suspicion. We’ll first ask, “What is money?” (“How do things like rocks, metals, shells, or data-bits become, and continue to be, money?”) and “What is morality?” (“What might we mean when we claim some act, person, situation, or system is morally better or worse?”). We’ll then consider specific suspicions and morally evaluate them, along the way raising questions such as: Why can I rent myself out as a landscaper but not as a prostitute? Is the Iranian kidney market better than U.S. waiting lists, or “bio-violence”? Should Americans with slave ancestors be paid for their family past? Is there a moral difference between a corporate raider and a pirate? What is Aristotle’s explanation for why Capitalists often produce crap? Why might Nietzsche think Wall Street’s Gordon Gekko might be right that “greed is good?? What does Marx mean when he claims money-driven markets are “alienating?” If money expresses our values, ought anything be above money? Is anything beyond price? Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.

USSY 292I. The Cinema of Otherness. 3 Units.
One way that humans understand themselves is to consider some counterpart entity—an Other—against which the Self can be understood. This Other, though perhaps based on knowledge of a real person or people, is always shaped by the Self’s projected fears and desires. At a cultural level, these projections result in generally held stereotypes that the powerful use to maintain their superior position in a hierarchical relationship. Movies are one place where stereotypes of the Other are created and maintained. Movies shape how we see, think and feel toward the Other. In this course, we will attempt to understand how film manufactures Otherness by studying several key Hollywood movies. We will examine their use of racial and ethnic categories of Otherness, as well as how they position the viewing Self as white. We will also examine other sites of difference, such as gender, sexual orientation, religion, bodily disfigurement, paying special attention to symbolic representations of these differences in the form of robots, monsters and aliens. Requirements to enroll: 1) Passing letter grade in a First Seminar OR concurrent enrollment in FSTS 100 (if transfer student); AND 2) No previous/concurrent enrollment in FSSY/USSY; OR Requisites not met permission.