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# First-Year Seminars

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**Albion College**

Albion College's distinctive character and commitment to its students begin with the first courses entering students may select. The First-Year Seminars listed in this booklet are special courses Albion has developed to offer opportunities for you to explore beyond the boundaries of the more traditional class.

Structured to create a stimulating learning environment in the small class setting, Albion's First-Year Seminars initiate the intensive contact with our extraordinary faculty that has been recognized as Albion's greatest strength. Small classes like these—with an emphasis on discussion, an opportunity for individualized student research projects, and the development of strong communication skills—serve as the foundation for your undergraduate experience at Albion and will help you develop the appreciation for lifelong learning that characterizes Albion graduates.

The First-Year Seminars are the centerpiece of Albion's dynamic First-Year Experience, which also includes Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration (SOAR), Learning Strategies Programs, and academic and career planning. With programming that enriches every aspect of your life—in and out of the classroom—there's simply no better way to begin your college education than in Albion College's First-Year Experience.

Susan Conner  
Provost

# First-Year Seminars, Fall 2013

All entering students enroll in a First-Year Seminar as part of the College's core requirement for graduation. Please read through the descriptions of the seminars in this booklet and identify your first four choices among these offerings.

Additional information on registering for a First-Year Seminar appears on a separate form which can be downloaded from the Web at [www.albion.edu/student-life/first-year-experience/fye-seminars/](http://www.albion.edu/student-life/first-year-experience/fye-seminars/). Note: In some seminars, a field trip fee will apply.

These seminars are offered as part of the William Atwell Brown, Jr., and Mary Brown Vacin First-Year Experience.

## Africa: Myth and Reality

Emmanuel Yewah—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:45 a.m.–12:50 p.m.

**Course Description**—Using a variety of sources—history, geography, photographs, world fairs, newspaper articles, art, film, music, literature, documentaries, and the Internet—this course, interdisciplinary in scope and eclectic in its theoretical approaches, seeks to study and understand the process of construction of myths about Africa. Moreover, it attempts to deconstruct those myths so as to expose the reality hidden behind them, to acquaint students with the “other” Africa. Additionally, the course helps students develop a sense of who Africans are, what they do, feel, and hope for, reinforced through an experiential trip to Cameroon, West Africa in January 2014. *Field trip fee and passport required of all students who choose to participate.*

**Instructor**—A native of Cameroon, Emmanuel Yewah has expertise in the literatures and cultures of French-speaking peoples, with special emphasis on Africa and the Caribbean. Currently he is professor of French and comparative cultural studies and chair of International Studies Program at Albion College. He earned a Ph. D. in comparative literatures from the University of Michigan. He has published extensively on literature and politics, literature and law, literature and the environment, adaptation of literary texts into film, detective fiction, and African immigrants in the United States.

## Bridging East and West: A Cross-Cultural Communication Perspective

Yuxia Qian—Monday/Wednesday/Thursday, 1:00–2:05 p.m.

**Course Description**—“East is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall meet.” This line by Rudyard Kipling still speaks some truth today when it comes to cross-cultural communication. People with different cultural backgrounds, especially those from East and West, tend to encounter communication difficulties, misunderstandings, and conflict. Why is it so difficult for easterners and westerners to communicate and understand each other? This course attempts to reveal the cultural differences between the Eastern and Western countries, which go beyond the surface of different languages, behaviors, and customs. Readings will introduce students to the fundamental value orientations, and specifically the cultural and thinking patterns, in Eastern and Western countries. A comparative and historical approach is adopted to explore how Asians and westerners think differently and why, and what impact the thinking patterns have on cultural differences. This course offers a close study on some Eastern and Western cultures, such as the Chinese, the Greek, and the American cultures. A practical guide will also be provided on cross-cultural communication between East and West.

**Instructor**—Since joining Albion in 2008, Yuxia Qian (Ph.D., Ohio University) has taught courses in small group and organizational communication, organizational culture, and intercultural communication. Before coming to the U.S., she had been teaching at the collegiate level in China for four years. Interculturally educated and experienced herself, she holds a strong interest in the multi-levels of intercultural communication within and across various organizations.

## Children's Worlds

Jess Roberts—Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday, 10:30–11:20 a.m.

**Course Description**—Both a lived reality and what scholars would call a “cultural construct,” “childhood” begs and rewards careful and creative critical inquiry—and that is precisely what we will give it in this class. Turning to artists and writers for help, we will seek to understand how we define “childhood” and why that matters. We will read works of fiction and nonfiction both for and about children, and we will investigate how things like “wonder,” “vulnerability,” “innocence,” “imagination,” and “cruelty” shape our experience and memory of childhood.

When you enter this class, be prepared to read and talk books that challenge some of the most enduring myths about “children.” Be prepared to question and confront the work of nostalgia. Be ready to write words that will help you access, comprehend, and represent the complicated realities of your not-so-distant past. Expect to work and to play, to challenge and be challenged, to learn in the classroom and in the world beyond its walls.

**Instructor**—Jess Roberts (Ph.D., University of Michigan) had an itinerant childhood: she attended eight different schools in five different states before she finished seventh grade. She has spent the last eight years reading, writing, and teaching here on the banks of the Kalamazoo.

## The Far Side of Health

Robert Moss—Tuesday/Thursday, 8:00–9:50 a.m.

**Course Description**—Gary Larson in his various Far Side publications depicts life with a touch of irony and double meaning that I can really appreciate. Something else that I can really appreciate is health, in its various dimensions. I hope to get to you to consider health in five of its various dimensions: physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual, and how they can affect your life. We will look at how you can be proactive in considering these health dimensions before they consider you. While the questions we pursue may be serious, we will balance our study with some Larsonish perspectives. We will be looking at the extremes (Far Side), the norms (probably even more Far Sided), and what might be considered to be a “balance” of these five dimensions of health. Finally, health will be evaluated within an individual perspective and within a societal perspective. We will see how social and cultural contexts, economics, and ethics may play a role in what is perceived as “healthy.” Field trips will include visiting health consortiums that approach health in this multifaceted way.

**Instructor**—Bob Moss (Ph.D., ATC, FOT) received his doctorate in biomechanics from a university whose sports teams are called “the Salukis.” He is also a certified athletic trainer, whatever that is. However, in the world of “the more letters behind your name the more important you are” the most important letters behind his name are FOT, the meaning of which you will discover by enrolling in this course. He makes a concerted effort to stay healthy in the five areas of health mentioned above but finds that balancing health with life is sometimes like mixing oil and water.

## Film Noir

Robert Starko—Tuesday/Thursday, 2:15–4:05 p.m.

**Course Description**—This class will examine the history, development, and techniques of film noir, the dominant cinematic style of the 1940s and '50s. Plunge into the sordid world of dark shadows, extreme camera angles, hard-boiled private eyes, and deadly femmes fatales. Trace film noir from its roots in German Expressionism to the turmoil of the Second World War, and, finally, through the fear and paranoia of the Cold War and the nuclear age. Study the famous directors: Fritz Lang, Alfred Hitchcock, Billy Wilder, Robert Siodmak, and Anthony Mann. Enjoy classic performances by some of the best actors of the twentieth century: Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, Burt Lancaster, Kirk Douglas, Barbara Stanwick, and Joan Crawford. Learn how the genre evolved and reflected the political climate change during a volatile period of our history.

**Instructor**—Robert Starko holds an M.F.A. in acting from Illinois State University. He has been active in the performance scene in the Detroit area, having worked for the Attic Theater, the Performance Network, Michigan Opera Theater, The Jewish Ensemble Theater, the Purple Rose, and Wild Swan Theatre Company. He also has worked in commercials, voice-overs, and industrial films.

## The Golf Course

Andrew French—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 3:30–4:35 p.m.

**Course Description**—While this niche sport has increased in popularity over the past decade, few appreciate how golf courses impact our daily lives. This seminar will address a wide variety of themes surrounding the idea and concept of the golf course, the people who occupy them, and how they are paid for including: environmental impact, social and status perceptions, economic impacts for both private owners and municipalities, and the history of its evolution. Unlike a basketball court or football

field, each golf course is unique and seen through the eyes of the course architect, player, observer, and even the environmental activist, social activist, or taxpayer. Irrespective of how much or little you have golfed, this course should challenge any pre-conceived notions you have surrounding the game. The goal of this course is to use the golf course as a vehicle to identify and consider larger social issues as they take place through the lens of the golf course. Students should think and be able to respond to sociological questions of class, inclusion, and status. Additionally, students are expected to identify environmental concerns and fiscal issues that municipalities must encounter.

**Instructor**—Andrew French (Ph.D., University of Illinois) is professor of chemistry and coordinator for sustainability studies. He is interested in both the science of golfing and golf courses, as well as the concept of the golf course as a “place,” and the history, sociology, and sustainability of golf courses. Partnering with Jordan Rich, former golf coach at Albion and current director of user services at Albion, who created much of this seminar’s content, we hope to bring to students new perspectives about this amazing sport.

## Human Rights and the New Wars

Carrie Booth Walling—Monday/Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.–12:20 p.m.

**Course Description**—In the context of globalization what we think of as war is becoming an anachronism. The wars of the first half of the twentieth century were large-scale conventional wars fought between nations. Yet since the 1990s, millions of civilians have died, and millions more have become refugees or displaced persons in “new wars”—a mixture of war, organized crime, and massive violations of human rights. These wars are different from old wars in terms of their goals (identity politics), the methods of warfare (the use of guerilla tactics and the targeting of civilians as the purpose of the war), and how they are financed (through plunder and the black market).

In this course we will examine the characteristics of new wars by studying two cases: the Bosnian War (1992-1995) and the civil war in Sierra Leone (1991-2002). In our studies, we will look at the targeting of civilians as a war tactic, the use of child soldiers, and the exploitation of natural resources to fund wars. We will contrast the characteristics of new wars with old wars and think about how the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan fit into these categories.

Finally, we will examine how states (countries) and the international community have responded to new wars including through international humanitarian law, the provision of humanitarian assistance, military intervention, and the establishment of special courts to try the perpetrators for war crimes violations. The seminar will include student poster presentations, films and documentaries, and experience-based learning opportunities.

**Instructor**—Carrie Booth Walling (Ph.D., University of Minnesota) conducts research on the causes of, and responses to, international human rights violations including military humanitarian intervention and the establishment of international courts. Her publications include the book, *All Necessary Measures: The United Nations and Humanitarian Intervention* (2013) and journal articles on ethnic cleansing, humanitarian intervention, and international human rights trials. She teaches courses in political science including international law, human rights, transitions to democracy, international ethics, and causes of war. Outside of Albion, she enjoys spending time with her family, involvement in Flint and Michigan politics, and participating in human rights advocacy.

## **Knowledge: Searching for “Truth” in Information, Facts, and Statistics in the Internet Age**

Cheryl Blackwell—Monday/Wednesday/Thursday, 1:00–2:05 p.m.

**Course Description**—Do we really know what we think we know? How do we know what we know? What is truth? How do statistics inform us? What do we mean by facts? These questions compel us to look at the methods we use to understand the world around us. These questions are particularly relevant in today’s society as advances in science and technology lead to discoveries that challenge our notions of knowledge and commonly held beliefs. This seminar will examine some of the strategies, methods, and techniques used to determine what is factual, what is false, and what is unknown. It will encourage the development of well-researched ideas and opinions, and stress verbal and written communication.

**Instructor**—Cheryl Blackwell (M.L.S., University of Michigan) has been a reference librarian at Albion College since 1987. Her main research interest is library instruction, specifically research strategies and the research process. Her “other” interests include mid-twentieth-century modern design and finding the perfect date!

## **Machinery of Life**

Christopher Rohlman—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:45 a.m.–12:50 p.m.

**Course Description**—The past two decades have witnessed remarkable advances in medical science and our understanding of the biomolecular science of living systems. Even with all the apparent answers these advances have provided, we continue to face both the local and global challenges of infectious disease, adequate access to basic health care, and cancer. These technical challenges also present bioethical issues that arise as a natural consequence. Are we merely the sum total of our molecular parts? Can biomedical science provide solutions to these problems? What do we need to understand about the basic science of living systems and medicine in order to be active participants in these discussions? We will consider these questions, and others, in hopes of gaining a better vision of the resulting impact biotechnology and biomedical science will have on ourselves, and our society, and how our answers to these questions will shape this century.

**Instructor**—Chris Rohlman’s research and teaching interests lie in the areas of biochemistry and the structural biology of living systems. He has been involved in undergraduate science and math education and student-faculty collaborative research throughout his career. He chose a career as a faculty member at liberal arts colleges that value both classroom learning and undergraduate research. Along the way he has managed to balance and meld his professional interests in science with a love of music, lifelong learning in a range of disciplines, and a life outside the lab. When he is not in the science center you can find him on the course, on the sidelines of soccer matches, along the trails running, hiking or biking, or listening to good music.

## **Mathematics and Technology in the Arts**

David Reimann—Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday, 9:15–10:20 a.m.

**Course Description**—Mathematics and art are two ancient disciplines with many connections. Geometry plays an important role in the arts from perspective drawings, to wheel-thrown ceramics, and sculptural forms. Western music uses a scale based on mathematically defined intervals. Symmetry is a theme in both art and mathematics. Artists are often at the

forefront of employing new technology in the creative process. Many artists now make extensive use of computer software and three-dimensional printing. We will look at the historical developments in mathematics and art and see how these influenced ancient artists and new developments that continue to influence both mathematics and art. We will read and write about these developments, see how artists use mathematics, discuss their implications, and create related artworks. A trip to a major art museum is planned. We will have a large collaborative group art project that engages the entire campus in some concept using mathematics and technology in a major way. Students need not be experts in mathematics or arts, but should be comfortable using basic algebra and a willingness to be creative!

**Instructor**—David Reimann (Ph.D., Wayne State University) is a mathematician and computer scientist interested in the applications of mathematics and computer science to art. He is currently studying the historical development of symmetry, tessellations, and interlace patterns and creating software to produce such patterns. He enjoys traveling and is an avid cyclist.

## **Mauka and Makai**

Suelynn Henke—Monday/Wednesday, 9:15–11:05 a.m.

**Course Description**—This seminar emphasizes understanding, appreciation, and respect for the history and cultures of the peoples of the Hawai’i and provides opportunities for students to reflect upon their own cultural moorings and belief systems. Diverse epistemological perspectives about place, identity, language and schooling are explored through interaction with historical texts, fiction, poetry, music, and film. There is a possibility of educational travel to Hawai’i in January, depending upon interest.

**Instructor**—Suelynn Henke received a Ph.D. in curriculum with an emphasis in cultural studies from Miami University’s educational leadership program. She taught high school in Cincinnati and spent two years teaching at the University of Hawai’i-Hilo on the Big Island before coming to Albion in 2002. She is interested in narrative research and teaches courses in sociocultural foundations of education and secondary education. She enjoys spending time with her family, two dogs, and cat. Her hobbies include reading and playing tennis.

## **Microbes and Human Affairs**

Ola Olapade—Monday/Wednesday, 9:15–10:20 a.m.; Friday, 9:15–11:20 a.m.

**Course Description**—This writing-intensive seminar will try to critically answer the rhetorical question: “Are microorganisms humans’ friends or foes?” through various in-depth discussions of scientific literatures, short laboratory activities, field trips to industrial sites, and video documentaries that are selected to focus on different microbial groups, i.e., bacteria, fungi, algae, protozoa, and viruses (obligate intracellular parasites), especially their diverse activities as they ultimately influence humans within their immediate environments. The diverse microbial activities vis-à-vis human affairs to be critically explored in this seminar will include contributions to agricultural practices, food production and spoilage, biotechnology, and bioremediation as well as in causation of various communicable infections.

**Instructor**—Ola A. Olapade (Ph. D., Kent State University) is a microbiologist with general interest in the areas of microbial ecology, environmental microbiology, bioremediation, and public health. He continues to conduct several research activities and published those results from studies that examined microbial community composition, structure, and enzymatic activities in various freshwater and marine

environments including on surfaces, in lakes, streams, rivers, and coastal systems. At Albion, he teaches upper-level courses including microbiology, environmental microbiology, virology, and epidemiology. He enjoys spending time with family at home and on the road during extensive travelling.

## Minds and Machines

Dan Mittag—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 2:15–3:30 p.m.

**Course Description**—This course will consider some fundamental philosophical questions surrounding knowledge and consciousness. We will start by considering what conditions need to be met in order to know that something is true. We then will wind our way toward issues surrounding consciousness and artificial intelligence. Some questions we will consider are the following: Is there any good reason to reject the commonsense view that we know how the world used to be, is now, and will be soon? What is the connection between philosophy and empirical psychology? Could we construct a machine that is genuinely conscious? If so, how could we reasonably determine whether we had succeeded?

**Instructor**—Dan Mittag is a faculty member of the Philosophy Department at Albion College. His research focuses on the concept of justified belief, and he teaches courses in logic, epistemology, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of language. In his spare time he enjoys scavenging for vinyl records and seeking out live jazz.

## Mountains

Mick McRivette—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:45 a.m.–12:50 p.m.

**Course Description**—“Mountains” is a discussion-based class exploring various aspects of the world’s great peaks and mountain ranges. A fundamental question we will seek to answer is why mountains exist. We will investigate the geological forces that create mountains and those that destroy them, and learn why their locations are anything but random. Several other mountain-related themes will also be examined, including the nature of humanity’s fascination with them, their role as natural barriers that both invite and impede exploration, and their significance to the cultures that call them home. Some of the cultures we will be focusing on are the Tibetans in the Himalayas and Tibet, the Incas in the Andes, the Native Americans in the Rocky Mountains, and the Appalachian Americans of mountainous regions of the eastern United States. To explore these topics, students will read a collection of books and articles, participate in a variety of related activities including discussions, debates, and hands-on investigations, and write several papers.

Students will travel to the Appalachian Mountains in October for a camping trip in order to examine mountain-building processes, a unique mountain culture, and the scenery discussed in the course firsthand. They will also hike a portion of the Appalachian Trail. *Field trip fee.*

**Instructor**—Mick McRivette (Ph.D., UCLA) is a visiting assistant professor of geology and has been affiliated with Albion since 2008. He is also the director of Albion’s Geology Summer Field Camp in the Rockies. His academic interests revolve around the active construction of mountain belts, in particular the mountains of the Tibetan Plateau. To accomplish this, he spends significant time hiking in China and mapping major geologic structures.

## Orcs, Elves, and the Environment

Nels Christensen—Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:45 a.m.–12:35 p.m.

**Course Description**—If there was anything J.R.R. Tolkien loved as much as studying (and creating his own) languages, stories, myths, and legends, it was trees and all things green and growing. This course brings together two main areas of study—literary analysis and ecology—and applies them to what is arguably one of the most popular and influential works of fiction in the 20th century: J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings*. Three main goals will guide our exploration of Tolkien’s great novel: (1) to enjoy and study its literary and imaginative value, (2) to understand its relevance to current issues of environmentalism, sustainability, and ecological literacy, and (3) to use it as a test case for your introduction to the rewards and challenges of college-level writing and thinking. You should expect a full-immersion educational experience. So, in addition to rigorous literary and ecological analysis, you need to be ready to write your own snatches of literature, to sketch your observations of the natural world in a self-reflective journal, to throw yourself into the strange world of Tolkien’s Middle-earth, and to tromp around regularly in the Whitehouse Nature Center.

**Instructor**—Nels Christensen (Ph.D., Michigan State University) grew up in northern California near the Cascade and Sierra Nevada Mountains. For the past 12 years, he has spent his time teaching and canoeing in Michigan and New England.

## The Psychology of Superhumans

Eric Hill—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 2:15–3:20 p.m.

**Course Description**—A Dutch man named Wim Hof holds the world record for the longest time immersed in ice water (1 hour, 13 minutes, and 48 seconds). In his book, Hof describes using his mind to control his body temperature. How can this be possible? In Afghanistan, just outside of Kabul, Razia Jan, founder of the Zabuli Education Center, risks her own life every day in a quest to provide free education for the women of Afghanistan. What would motivate someone to sacrifice so much for people she does not yet know? In 2001, Erik Weihenmayer reached the summit of Mount Everest. He is the only *blind* mountain climber ever to accomplish this feat. What is his source of resilience? How did he make it to the top? American Kim Peek could read the left page of a book with his left eye, the right page of the same book with his right eye, and then retain 98% of the details he had just read. Do we all have the potential for such “super” memory?

This seminar will explore the psychology, philosophy, neuroscience, physiology, and maybe even the physics of what makes each of us so similar, and so special. Class discussion will be based on a wide variety of readings designed to help us think about the limits and limitlessness of what it means to be human. In addition to reading news articles and viewing and discussing stories of “superhumans” on television shows, news shows, and documentaries, we will reflect on our own experiences with superhumans as well as those we’ve had experience with in class. Who has amazed you with their selflessness, their resilience, their heroism? In what ways are you, or might you become, a “superhuman.” What do all of these unique individuals, including yourself, tell you about the human condition? What are the limits of our potential? What do you see in our future?

**Instructor**—Eric Hill, who is originally from East Tennessee, received a Ph.D. in social psychology from Arizona State University. In general, his research examines the relationships among religious fundamentalism, cognitive styles, and prejudice, though he has a wide variety of research interests including life meaning, meaningful coincidence, scale construction and validation, and gender. This will be his fourth

year at Albion College, and he occasionally finds time to take a short run, go for a bike ride, or play some video games. He usually opts for the latter.

## Religion and Science

**Ron Mourad—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9:15–10:20 a.m.**

**Course Description**—Several key historical conflicts have shaped the relationship between religion and science. In 1633 the Inquisition of the Catholic Church condemned Galileo Galilei for teaching the heretical theory that the earth revolved around the sun. Galileo renounced his view under threat of torture and spent the remainder of his life under house arrest. Nearly 300 years later, in 1925, the famous Scopes “Monkey Trial” created a public spectacle over the conflict between biblical creationism and Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution. This trial was only the first of many legal battles in America concerning public school education about the origins of life. We will examine these historical cases and also assess the adequacy of several theological and philosophical attempts to model the relationship between religion and science in the light of our examination. Can we define religious and scientific beliefs so that they complement each other, rather than conflict? Should we? In order to answer these questions, we will investigate the nature of belief itself, seeking insight from the philosophy of science and the philosophy of religion.

**Instructor**—Ron Mourad received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in the philosophy of religion. He teaches a number of courses concerning philosophical theology and Christian ethics in Albion’s Religious Studies Department. His book, entitled *Transcendental Arguments and Justified Christian Belief*, presents part of his research into the nature and grounds of religious knowledge. In his spare time, he seeks domestic bliss with his wife and two sons. He is often filled with a sense of impending doom and enjoys startling small animals.

## Rent and the Bohemian Life

**Maureen Balke—Tuesday/Thursday, 2:15–4:05 p.m.**

**Course Description**—“The bohemian life.” What does it mean? Passion, poetry, and poverty? Life, love, and art? Opposing convention and the status quo? Living for “no day but today” and “measuring lives in love”?

We will study the Pulitzer Prize- and Tony Award-winning musical *Rent* by Jonathan Larson, which is based upon the beloved Puccini opera *La Bohème*, which in turn is based upon the 1840s Parisian novel *Scènes de la vie de Bohème* by Murger. We will compare the struggles of all these “starving artists” as they “strive for success and acceptance” while enduring “obstacles of poverty, illness, and the AIDS epidemic.” Mature thematic material including issues of drugs, sexuality, discrimination, and AIDS will be discussed in the larger context of our own community, society, and the world.

Additional materials for the course include *Philadelphia*, the Academy Award-winning film starring Tom Hanks; Kushner’s award-winning series *Angels in America*; *Moonstruck*, the Academy Award-winning film starring Cher and Nicholas Cage; and selections from *The AIDS Quilt Songbook* and from the current musical, *Avenue Q*. We will also discuss the autobiographical novel *Without You*, by Anthony Rapp, from the original cast of *Rent*.

On her recent sabbatical, Maureen Balke spent several weeks in New York observing the contemporary musical theatre scene, including *The Book of Mormon*. Scenes from this currently-running Tony-Award-winning musical will also be studied in this course.

Note: No in-depth knowledge of musical terminology is required for the course.

**Instructor**—Soprano Maureen Balke (D.M. in vocal performance, Indiana University) has performed opera, musicals, and art song recitals throughout the Midwest and in several European venues, winning several competitive voice awards along the way. The desire to pursue a professional career in music developed while she grew up on a Christmas tree farm in Wisconsin with her nine siblings and parents, all of whom sang and performed music in various genres, including country/western and folk music. Always interested in poetry and languages, she has specialized in German and French art song and has released a CD of art songs by composers Joseph Marx and Anthony Taffs, titled *Never Seek to Tell Thy Love*.

## Seeing the Nazi in American Movies, 1940-2009

**Geoffrey Cocks—Tuesday, 2:15–5:00 p.m., Thursday, 2:15–3:05 p.m.**

**Course Description**—This seminar explores the American movie image of the most malevolent villain of the modern age, the Nazi. There were many versions of the Nazi in Hollywood movies before and after December 7, 1941. There was the Nazi as enemy of freedom, the Nazi as threat to America, the Nazi as enemy of civilization, and the Nazi as murderer of the Jews. After the Second World War, the Nazi assumed new movie guises: the Nazi in hiding, the Nazi plotting a comeback, and the Nazi as a reflection of what was wrong with America. But the Nazi also became the “not see,” as Germans in the 1950s became our allies in the Cold War against Communist Russia. From the 1960s on, the Nazi in American movies resolved itself into two major images. One was as the black, relentless, mechanical mass murderer of the Jews. The other was the Nazi as profitable means of movie entertainment in dramas, adventures, and comedies.

**Instructor**—Geoffrey Cocks, Julian S. Rammelkamp Professor of History, is a specialist in modern German history, and has taught on the Holocaust for many years, building in part on his published work on the history of modern Germany and the Third Reich: *Psychotherapy in the Third Reich* (1985, 1997), *German Professions, 1800-1950* (1990), *Medicine and Modernity: Public Health and Medical Care in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Germany* (1996), *Treating Mind and Body: Essays in the History of Science, Professions, and Society Under Extreme Conditions* (1998), and *The State of Health: Illness in Nazi Germany* (2012). He appears in the film *Room 237*, Rodney Ascher’s 2012 documentary on Kubrick’s *The Shining*. He is also the author of *The Wolf at the Door: Stanley Kubrick, History, and the Holocaust* (2004). He earned his Ph.D. at UCLA.

## Steampunk: Exploring Sub-Cultures

**Guy Cox/Megan Kudzia—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9:15–10:20 a.m.**

**Course Description**—Have you ever wished you could build your own ray gun, think through the mechanics of dirigible flight, design a costume you could actually wear, or tinker with clockwork? This course will give you your chance! We’ll start with a grounding in the anthropology of subculture, using the steampunk subculture as our particular lens. We’ll consider, both as a class and individually, present-day issues that steampunk may (or may not) help us to discuss, including but not limited to issues involving class, race, ethnicity, gender, ethics, etc. During our study of the sub-culture concept and steampunk, we’ll write reflective journal entries and a research paper, do a creative project—and maybe a little participant-observation if you are brave enough!

**Instructor**—Guy Cox is director of the Ferguson Center for Technology-Aided Teaching and Learning. Before coming to Albion, he was a member of the Computer Engineering Department at University of California, Santa Cruz, teaching and working in the areas of software engineering and engineering ethics. He has also worked as a project manager and R&D lab manager in Silicon Valley. However, underneath the technology, he is a cultural anthropologist who has been doing participant-observation of sub-cultures—sometimes heavy on the observation, sometimes heavy on the participation—for 25 years. He used to remark that “software engineers are my tribe.” Now some say he has “gone native.”

**Instructor**—Megan Kudzia (M.L.I.S., Wayne State University) is Albion College’s Web services and emerging technologies librarian. Her main research interests are human-computer interface, user experience, and games/gamification. She is also interested in gadgets, culture/subculture, hacking, design, music, and dance. A former English major, she now appears to be past the point of no return on the path to becoming a coder. When not in the classroom or the library, she enjoys running, reading, and cooking.

## **Tales of the Chimichanga: Identity and Culture in U.S. Latino Societies**

**Catalina Pérez Abreu—Monday/Wednesday/Thursday, 1:00–2:05 p.m.**

**Course Description**—Tales of the chimichanga still surround the mystery of its conception. What’s certain is that it isn’t Mexican at all. In fact, chimichanga experts maintain this tasty food was born in a kitchen in the state of Arizona—the hybrid outcome of an accidental burrito drop in the deep fryer. Or so goes the wiki lore, anyway. The fact is that its crispy name is nowhere to be found in a Spanish dictionary or in Mexican kitchens south of the border. So what’s the big deal about chimichangas, you ask? It turns out they are a powerful symbol of cultural and ethnic misconstructions, of artificial social boundaries that influence how we perceive others in relation to ourselves.

In this sense, chimichangas intersect an overarching goal of this seminar: to examine the shared human experience of becoming a cultural *other*, the stranger, in spaces that render us different. These spaces of difference affect members of ethnic communities as much as first-year university students crossing into an unfamiliar “college culture.” In this course, you will explore all sorts of cultural markers that create and maintain this socially constructed *otherness*, paying particular attention to the concept of ethnicity with relation to Latino communities in the United States. In this light, students will study interconnected notions of race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, language, ethnocentrism, and stereotypes through critical readings of a variety of “texts”—films, literature, television series, news media, pop culture—informed by social theory and contemporary criticism. We will supplement our lively classroom discussions with a couple of trips to the Detroit and Chicago areas.

**Instructor**—Catalina Pérez Abreu (Ph.D., University of Notre Dame) teaches Spanish, Latin American literature, and TransAmerican studies in the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures. Among other matters, her research explores the familial space of home both as physical and conceptual sites of identity formation, especially as manifested in nineteenth- and twentieth-century narratives by Latin American and U.S. Latina women writers. A native of the Canary Islands (Spain), she came of age in Venezuela and has voted as a U.S. citizen in the last four presidential elections. She is the proud mother of the sweetest, most beautiful (yet modest) Venezuelan toy poodle.

## **The Trial in Law, Politics, and Culture**

**William Rose—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9:15–10:20 a.m.**

**Course Description**—Since the earliest days of our country, high-profile trials have captured the public’s imagination. These trials have been more than spectacle, however; they also have served as public dramas and barometers of contemporary thought. The drama in the courtroom frequently crystallizes certain social, cultural, and political issues of the time. The study of trials can offer a window into the community in which they took place and shed light on a society’s fundamental beliefs, customs, and cultural values. Over the course of the semester we will examine a number of famous trials from American and European history, both real and imagined. We will rely on source materials drawn from law and literature, ranging historically from the trial of Socrates, to seventeenth-century witchcraft trials, to contemporary trials of alleged terrorists as part of the ongoing “War on Terror.”

**Instructor**—William Rose (Ph.D., University of Massachusetts—Amherst) began teaching at Albion College in 2001. His areas of interest and expertise (both teaching and research) are in contemporary legal and political theory, the history of American political and legal thought, and law and society. He teaches courses ranging from introductory courses in American politics and the history of Western political thought, to upper-level seminars on theories of crime and punishment, and privacy and the surveillance society. Rose is the founding director of Albion’s interdisciplinary concentration in law, justice, and society, and he also serves as the College’s pre-law adviser. Prior to his time in academe, he worked as a lawyer in Ohio and Florida.

## **24 Frames Per Second—The Art of Stop-Motion Animation**

**Michael Dixon—Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 2:15–4:05 p.m.**

**Course Description**—Animation as a discipline has a long history with ever-increasing audiences from adults to younger viewers. This course will nurture an experimental approach to animation as a vehicle for developing its potential as art, entertainment, and communication. We will look at a variety of animation examples to expand the possibilities for creative solutions to making moving images. The course will be rooted in the fundamentals of art and design while expanding into areas like writing, sound manipulation, and digital media. We will look at the approaches to, and production of, 2D and 3D animation with both individual and group projects. Students will cycle through developing the concept, medium, storyboarding, and production phases for each project.

**Instructor**—Michael Dixon is an artist working primarily in oil paint. He is from San Diego, California, and received an M.F.A. in painting from the University of Colorado at Boulder. Dixon joined the Art and Art History Department at Albion College in 2008 where he teaches all levels of drawing, painting, and 2D design. His work has been shown nationally and internationally at museums, universities, art centers, alternative spaces, and galleries. Dixon explores the personal, societal, and aesthetic struggles of belonging to both “white” and “black” racial and cultural identities, yet simultaneously belonging fully to neither. The works of artists such as Robert Colescott, Beverly McIver, Michael Ray Charles, Glenn Ligon, and Kerry James Marshall have informed his work.

## Women's Worlds: Gender in Global Perspective

Trisha Franzen—Monday/Wednesday, 2:15–4:05 p.m.

**Course Description**—Who are the most powerful women in the world? Why is planting trees a women's issue in Kenya and now many other parts of the world? Do the media tell us the answers to these questions? If not, how do we find out the challenges women are facing in so many parts of the world and how women are working to change their lives? This seminar utilizes many sources including documentary films, novels, histories, the Internet, food, and the news media to try to answer these and related questions. Among the topics we will address are families, popular culture, sexuality, work, education, and activism. The course will focus on four regions: South Asia, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East, but each student will conduct research on women in the country of her/his choice.

**Instructor**—Trisha Franzen is professor of women's and gender studies. She earned her Ph.D. in American studies from the University of New Mexico. Author of books on independent women in the United States and Albion's own Rev. Anna Howard Shaw, Franzen loves to garden and cook.

## You Are What You Eat

Marcy Sacks—Tuesday/Thursday, 10:30 a.m.–12:20 p.m.

**Course Description**—There are few acts more basic than eating. What many of us do not realize as we pick up our forks each day is that this seemingly mundane act is intricately linked to culture, economics, and politics—in short, how we eat tells us about who we are. This course puts food into its social contexts. We'll explore how what we eat and the way we eat it express our social identities (as members of social classes, ethnic groups, religions, etc.); how preparing and consuming (or not consuming) food reproduce gender roles; how the economic system for producing and marketing food affects what (and how much) we eat; and how food is both an object of politics (e.g., a target for government regulation) and a subject of politics (e.g., a basis for social movements). This course will explore food as both a commodity and a cultural marker. We will examine a broad range of issues about the production, distribution, and metaphorical significance of food. Participants in the course will have the opportunity to engage in and reflect on the eating, purchasing, preparing, and harvesting of food in a variety of settings.

**Instructor**—Marcy Sacks (Ph.D., University of California at Berkeley) has been teaching history at Albion College for the past 14 years. Her area of expertise is African American history and U.S. race relations. She is currently at work on a book about heavyweight boxer Joe Louis, sports, and race relations in twentieth-century America. When she is not busy teaching or researching, she spends her time running marathons, baking, reading, and parenting.

