Great Issues in Social Science

American Encounters with China:

Cross-Cultural Histories and Global Dynamics

**HSP 155   CRN  5473**

**Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
3:30 – 4:35pm**

**Dr. Joseph W. Ho**

**Course Description:**  This course examines cross-cultural encounters between China and the United States from the late 18th through the 21st centuries.  Using diverse interdisciplinary and historical lenses, the course covers topics that include transnational communities (Americans and Chinese abroad), the development of trans-Pacific cultural networks, and the roles of empire, global religion, national identities, modern media, and race and gender in influencing historical Sino-US relationships.  While US-China relations are conventionally defined by issues of diplomacy and politics, the goal of this course is to consider the many ways in which cultural exchanges “on the ground” have profoundly shaped American views of China and Chinese views of the US over time.

**\*\*THIS COURSE COUNTS FOR: Honors Social Science & MHC/Historical & Cultural Analysis\*\***

***Note:*** *if you have taken or now are taking a section of HSP155, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration*

Great Issues in Social Science  
Women in Media

**HSP 157    CRN  5435**

**Monday, Wednesday, Friday   
1:00 p.m. - 2:05 p.m.**

**Olin Hall**

**Jasmine LaBine, M.A.**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**  As access to television and film continues to grow and evolve with the advent of streaming services, most Americans have a seemingly endless array of media content at their fingertips, ready to be consumed on demand. Such media not only reflects cultural ideals of gender and womanhood, but also informs our socialization surrounding gender identity. This course will

examine media’s role in constructing a binary system of gender that has long favored men and oppressed women, as well as how modern media continues to reinforce patriarchal structures through the objectification and dehumanization of women.

To understand media’s role in socialization, one must explore the many channels and genres of media to which our society has access. Emphasis will be placed on film and television, but other areas of media including journalism, comedy, music, advertising, sports, and gaming will be analyzed. Alongside communication theory, historical, sociological, psychological, political, anthropological, and economic factors will be explored. Similarly, to understand the effect that

media has on women, one must approach analysis critically and from a perspective of intersectionality. Discussions of representation will include analyses of race, age, and sexual orientation.

**\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS FOR: Honors Social Science & Gender\*\***

***Note****: If you have taken a section of Honors Social Science, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration*

Great Issues in Fine Arts:

 WOMEN, GENDER, AND CONTEMPORARY ART OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE DIASPORA

**HSP 178     CRN  5474**

**Monday, Wednesday, Friday**

**9:15 – 10:20am**

**Dr. Demerdash-Fatemi**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course examines contemporary artistic practices of artists based in the Middle East and within the diaspora, through the lens of women’s perspectives and gender issues. Taking cues from the late Jamaica-born cultural theorist Stuart Hall—in his argument that cultural identity is fluid, mobile, hybrid, and often plural in nature—this mid-level course examines contemporary visual and literary cultures (e.g. architecture, literature, painting, sculpture, photography, film, and beyond) against the backdrop of migration and cosmopolitanism, created by predominantly women artists who originally hail from, or have roots in, a range of Middle Eastern and North African nations. In addition to the intersections of cultural identity and geopolitics, our queries will focus on artistic production vis-à-vis issues of gender and women’s plural subjectivities.

Identity in the Middle East and North Africa is an inherently complex matter, and it is rendered even more complex with the women artists we will look at this semester. The Middle East and North Africa are plural, diverse regions with incredibly multicultural, multi-religious (e.g. Muslim (Shi’a, Sunni), Jewish, Coptic, Catholic, Druze, Orthodox Christian, Zoroastrian, etc.), multiethnic (e.g. Armenian, Jewish, Berber/Amazigh, Arab, Turkic, Kurdish, Farsi/Persian, etc.), multilingual (e.g. Arabic (a Semitic language) and its various dialects, Hebrew, Amazigh (a Berber language), Farsi (an Indo-European language), Turkish (Ural-Altaic language), Urdu (Indo-Aryan/Indo-European).

**\*\*THIS COURSE COUNTS FOR: Honors Fine Arts & Gender\*\***

*Note: If you have taken taking a section of Honors Fine Arts, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration.*

Great Issues in Fine Arts - **“From the Ballroom to Hell” – Vienna 1814-1815**  
HSP 172     CRN  5167  
Tuesday – Thursday  2:15 - 4:05p.m.  
Observatory Professor Maureen Balke  
  
**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Vienna 1814-1815—Napoleonic war, politics, the Congress of Vienna, censorship, secret police, rapidly changing society; the diversions young people sought to “escape” from unpleasant (or horrific) realities of war.   
Such diversions ranged from grand public spectacle (major concerts, opera, the theatre, grand balls, celebrity virtuosos, exotic animals) to the intimate salon and Schubertiade, held in private homes and including poetry, song, and tableaux.   
To counter the “Hell” and chaos of war and the battlefield (the dominion of men), the “Ballroom” in particular became the dominion of ladies, including the development of elaborate rituals and games concerning costume, etiquette and dance. In tandem with dramatic and rapid changes in dress from the French aristocratic model to the more free and form-revealing “Josephine” style, new and scandalous dances (such as the Waltz—but not at all the sedate version we know today!) developed. Ballroom “games” for choosing one’s dance partner, including “The Mirror” and “Whips and Reins”, frequently resulted in embarrassment (for those partaking) and great hilarity (for onlookers!). All these activities were a form of “escape” from life’s stresses, within “safe” societal boundaries.  
Meanwhile at the Congress of Vienna, called to re-balance power on the continent in order to prevent another Napoleon, the Prince de Ligne summarized the proceedings thus: “You have come at the right moment. If you like fetes and balls you will have enough of them; the Congress does not move forward, it dances.”   
We will study the political, social, and musical context in which all these reactions to the times occurred. We will study the Congress of Vienna (with its political, strategic, festive, and amorous complexities), and read the diary of a Napoleonic footsoldier (with eye-witness accounts of horrific battlefield conditions, starvation, privation, infestation, disease and slaughter), and view the A&E production *Napoleon:  An Epic Life*. We will read etiquette and dance manuals from the period, and look at historical costume, etiquette, class structure, and dance through viewing *Pride and Prejudice* and portions of *Amadeus.* We will listen to music of Schubert and his contemporaries, and study selected readings about Viennese history and society.  
Class members will create individual projects presented at the end of the semester. Projects may involve music, historical information or skits, dance, ballroom games, battlefield strategies, etc. according to students’ interests.

**\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS FOR:  Honors Fine Arts & MAC/Artistic Creation\*\***

**You do NOT have to be a dancer, singer, actor, poet, musician, historian, or political scientist in order to contribute to class!**  
  
***Note:*** *If you have taken or now are taking a section of Honors Fine Arts, you may not take this course unless you have written permission from the, Director of Honors, before registration.*

Great Issues in Humanitites

HSP 135H     CRN  5475  
Tuesday, Thursday     
10:30 – 12:20pm  
Vulgamore 202  
Dr. Ronney Mourad

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will examine some of the institutional, legal, and ethical dimensions of the relationship between religion and politics.  In seeking to understand this relationship, we will draw on political theology, history, philosophy, and political science.  We will look at some classic Christian models for the relationship between church and state in their historical contexts, trace religious responses to the emergence of modern secularism, and examine some contemporary theological prescriptions regarding the role of religion in liberal democracies.  Class material will emphasize theoretical approaches to the topic, but student papers may apply these approaches to issues such as school prayer, the reference to God in the Pledge of Allegiance, or the display of religious symbols in government buildings.

**\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS TOWARD: Honors Humanities & MHC/Historical & Cultural\*\***

***Note****:  if you have taken or now are taking a section of Honors Humanities, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration*

Great Issues in Humanities

Refugees, Forced Migration, Statelessness

HSP 135   CRN  5476  
Tuesay, Thursday  
2:15 – 4:05pm  
Dr. Laura Brade

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**  Refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons. The world is currently in the midst of a crisis of mass displacement. The United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 65.6 million people worldwide were living in a condition of displacement in 2017. The levels of displacement today are the highest on record, surpassing numbers at the end of World War II. With prospects for return bleak, this is not a situation that is going away anytime soon. This course examines the experience of refugees and displaced persons from the first mass civilian displacement during World War I through the present, centering on interactions between refugees, policy makers, and local populations against an international backdrop. We will pay special attention to the intersection of the refugee experience with human rights developments. We will make use of primary sources and secondary literature, fiction, memoirs, film and other media in the course of our examination.

**\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS TOWARD: Honors Humanities & MHC/Historical & Cultural\*\***

***Note:*** *If you have taken or now are taking a section of Honors Humanities, you may not take this course unless you have written permission the Director of Honors, before registration.*

Great Issues in Humanities

Ancient Faith, Modern World

HSP  131 CRN  5477

Tuesday, Thursday   
2:15 – 4:05pm

Dr. Jocelyn McWhirter

Email: jmcwhirter@albion.edu

**Course Description:** Where did we come from? If we know right from wrong, why do we so often choose to do wrong? Why do bad things happen to good people? In this seminar, we will analyze the Bible’s answers to these and other questions, together with the answers of modern scientists, philosophers, and religious thinkers. We will evaluate these answers as we discuss them in class, often with reference to the PBS series *The Question of God*, which sets the views of Sigmund Freud (a Jew who lost his faith as an undergraduate studying biology) in conversation with C. S. Lewis (an atheist who became a Christian while working as a professor of medieval English). By interacting with the arguments of those who strive to interpret their ancient faith in this modern world, we will test some answers of our own.

This course fulfills the Honors Program humanities requirement as well as the College’s Historical and Cultural Analysis Mode requirement.

**\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS TOWARD: Honors Humanities & MHC/Historical & Cultural\*\***

***Note:  if you have taken or now are taking a section of HSP135, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration***

GREAT ISSUES IN HUMANITIES

**Just Make it Pink: Portrayals of Women in STEM**

**HSP 138    CRN  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday**

**10:30-11:35**

**Dr. Jillian Mortimer**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**  This course will focus on how the portrayal of women and femininity in various forms of American media has impacted the representation of women in STEM fields. According to the American Association of University Women (AAUW) women, “women make up only 28% of the workforce in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), and men vastly outnumber the number of women majoring in most STEM fields in college.” With the push over the last two decades to deliberately increase representation of women in STEM fields via more representation in books, tv shows and movies and a move towards more STEM-based toys, why haven’t these changes made a major impact?

Students in this course will use a lens drawing upon Critical Feminist Theory to view film, TV shows, magazines, toys, books, etc. to study the representation of girls and women in STEM in the media. For instance, when the media is deliberately showing women scientists and/or mathematicians, how are they being portrayed? What science and math are they actually doing and how does it compare to their male counterparts? Do their portrayals reinforce gender norms within their scientific field or do they challenge them? There is a tendency in STEM toys and children’s books marketed to girls to be essentially the same as their “boy” counterparts, but just in pastel colors, called the “Paint STEM Pink” phenomenon. Students will consider the social construction of gender and the way binary constructions of gender are propelled through media and toys. Students will think critically about what it means for a toy to be interesting or desirable to girls. Do these toys need to be different to appeal to girls? If so, how? And why? Are these toys asking girls to engage in authentic STEM activities?

Are the STEM activities marketed to girls reinforcing or challenging gender stereotypes? Investigating these questions will require students to bring together different perspectives on gender and media analysis.

**\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS TOWARD: Honors Humanities & GENDER\*\***

***Note:  if you have taken or now are taking a section of HSP135, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration***

**Great Issues in Science  
THE CHEMISTRY OF FOOD & COOKING**

**HSP 123 & HSP 123L     CRN 5345  &  Lab CRN 5346 – YOU HAVE TO TAKE BOTH  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
10:30-11:35 AND LAB on Wednesday 1:00-4:35pm  
Dr. Reeves**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** It’s easy to think of chemistry as something that takes place only in the laboratory, being done by scientists in white coats and googles. Truthfully, chemistry happens every day, all around us. One noticeable place where everyone is performing chemistry is the kitchen. The food we eat and cook is composed of small molecules. We interact with these molecules when we eat, getting data such as taste and texture, and then later extracting energy to fuel our bodies. We modify these molecules when cooking, turning this mixture of raw flour, eggs, and sugar into cookies or bread. This class takes a look at the food that we eat and cook on a more molecular level and explains these interactions and transformations in scientific terms. We will have readings, discussions, experiment, and, yes, cooking and eating.

The discussion will mainly focus on the science, but there is room for the societal and cultural impact of food as well. What’s the deal with GMOs? How do interact with the social impact of resources like chocolate?

There is a LAB associated with course. The lab will not just be cooking class, though we will have lots of cooking (and eating!) with it as well. This will be one of the only laboratory science courses where you actually are allowed to eat what you make. A few planned labs include:

1. Fermentation: bacterial vs yeast
2. Eggs and their properties
3. Dutch processed cocoa vs regular cocoa powder: How do they affect a recipe and why?
4. Looking at gluten formation in flour-based products

**\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS TOWARD: Honors Science & Scientific Analysis MSA\*\***

***Note:  If you have taken or now are taking a section of Honors Science, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration***

Great Issues in Science

**SEX AND GENDER, NATURE AND NURTURE**

**HSP 128    CRN  5477**

**Monday, Wednesday, Friday**

**1:00 – 2:05pm**

**Dr. Marc Roy**

**Course Description:** In this course, we will examine how biological factors interact with physical, social, and cultural factors to influence the expression of sex and gender in a variety of animals, including humans.  From the earliest possible moments, sometimes even before birth, we identify individuals as females and males.  Gender roles and identities are reinforced from birth with the clothes we dress infants in and the toys we give them.  But what makes us males and females?  Sex and gender are concepts that have been studied from a variety of perspectives and disciplines.  Are they the same things?  What leads to differences in sex and gender?  While some people have argued that biological factors are the primary factors that determine if an individual is female or male, others have argued that these terms are socially constructed and that social and cultural factors are the primary determinants of sex and gender.

   Our understanding of sex and gender has changed historically and is understood differently in different cultures.  Also in this course, we will examine how these constructs, along with sexual orientation, have changed over time.  We will also explore how gender and sexual orientation are understood and expressed in several different cultures and social groups (e.g. religious groups, race, and ethnicity), including those that the students may have encountered in their lives.  We will use texts from several disciplines including biology, psychology, and anthropology**.**

**\*\*THIS COURSE COUNTS TOWARD: Your Honors Science requirement & the Gender Category\*\***

***Note:  If you have taken or now are taking a section of Honors Science, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration***

Great Issues In Science  
**Three Big Questions**

**HSP 124   CRN  5479  
Tuesday, Thursday  
10:30-12:20pm  
Demian Cho (Physics)**

**Course Description**:  Why does time always flow from the past to the future? What does make things alive? What is consciousness? These seemingly innocent questions are surprisingly challenging to ask and even harder to answer. Science is based on naturalism, the idea that all beings and events in the universe have natural origins. In this course, we narrow our focus and address those questions and some possible answers from naturalists’ perspectives.

In addition to the content knowledge, the seminar aims to hone your academic skills through readings, discussions, and writings. You will learn how to ask the right questions, extract relevant information from sources, and approach the question to arrive at solutions.

Instructor – Demian Cho (Ph.D., University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee) is a theoretical physicist interested in the fundamental natures of both spacetime and the brain. He teaches a wide range of courses, from introductory astronomy to quantum mechanics. In the past, his research involved combining quantum theory and gravity, the quantum nature of black holes, and gravitational wave physics. Recently, he has been interested in computational neuroscience, especially how a population of neurons ‘compute.’

***\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS TOWARD: Honors Science & MMA/Modeling & Analysis\*\****

***Note:  If you have taken or now are taking a section of Honors Science, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration***

**Making Medicine: How Science, Politics, and**

**Money Shape the Medical Profession**

**HSP 124    CRN  5347**

**Tuesday, Thursday**

**10:30 – 12:20pm**

**Craig Streu** (Chemistry & Biochemistry)

**Course Description:** Healthcare is a big business in America. Our health and our economy rely on developments in this rapidly evolving industry. Additionally, a pandemic as well as other recent events have placed the healthcare industry squarely at the center of public consciousness. How does it work and why should we all care? This course will examine the field of healthcare as a whole, but focus on the roles of physicians and pharmaceuticals within it. It is impossible to separate the profession of medicine from the business of healthcare and so the course will often and unavoidably diverge into topics of ethics, marketing, and economics.

**Instructor:** Dr. Craig Streu (Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania) is a biochemist with an avid interest in molecular interventions for human health, otherwise known as drugs. He runs a bustling research lab where he works with students to develop therapeutic drugs of all types, although his most recent work focuses on cancer drugs and antibiotics. When he’s not in the lab he enjoys soccer, cycling, hiking and generally being outdoors with his family and dog.

**\*\*THIS CLASS COUNTS TOWARD: Honors Science & MMA/Modeling & Analysis\*\***

***Note:  If you have taken or now are taking a section of Honors Science, you may not take this course unless you have written permission by the Director of Honors, before registration***