



ConnCourses - Fall 2018

The following is a list of the ConnCourses with their course descriptions that are being offered this semester. More information about Connections and ConnCourses can be found at: <https://www.conncoll.edu/connections/>

AMS/THE CC: Theater of the AIDS Epidemic

TR 10:25 -11:40 am, Ginny Anderson

HIV/AIDS is a crisis of our lifetime, and artists were among the first to document its role in history. In this course we will analyze theater created in response to the AIDS epidemic from the first documentation of the disease in 1981 to the present. We will consider these works from interdisciplinary perspectives, drawing on politics, economics, and changing medical discourse and practice in order to understand how the embodiment of HIV on stage reflects changing medical and social conditions. After exploring how public knowledge about AIDS has been constructed, we consider the creation and impact of artistic interventions. Through comparison with popular press coverage of key moments in the history of HIV/AIDS in the United States, we examine plays and performance as historical evidence contributing to a cultural chronicle of the epidemic. In conversation with New London's AIDS Service Organization, Alliance for Living, students examine the connections among the local, national, and global histories of the epidemic and make them personal through their own performances, interviews, and awareness-building events. As a ConnCourse, this class makes connections across the liberal arts. *Students may not receive credit for this course and Freshman Seminars 143K and 144H. Open to first-year students and sophomores.*

ANT 114 CC: Power and Inequality

TR 10:25 – 11:40 am, Joyce Bennett

TR 1:15 – 2:30 pm, Joyce Bennett

Power and Inequality in a Global World. Almost half of the world's population lives in poverty. What are the mechanisms of power that reproduce inequality in different settings around the world? Through examining ethnographies of migration from the Middle East to Europe and from south to north in the Americas; systemic racism in the United States; issues of food access and security; and gender disparities in the workplace, students will identify the means by which power is used to create unequal access to resources in different contexts. Why do we have so much poverty on earth? What factors contribute to wealth gaps? How is poverty structuralized and institutionalized? What realities do people living in poverty face, and how do they deal with them? How do intersectional approaches to race, class, and gender apply? Using an anthropological approach, this course investigates how global economic systems reinforce the growing wealth gap and how cultural practices around race, class, and gender are often used to justify and reify unequal distributions. Students will use a variety of anthropological methods such as participant-observation, interviews, and the collection of visual data to gain first-hand knowledge of issues of inequality in our local community. As a ConnCourse, this course makes connections across the liberal arts. *This course is initially open to first-year and sophomore students. It will be open to all*

students after first-year students have pre-registered. Students may not receive credit for this course and Course 104.

ART 210 CC: Decoding Color

M 10:25 am – 12 pm, W 10:24 – 11:40 am, Pamela J. Marks

Decoding Color: Factual vs Actual Color - Bright yellow is one of the easiest colors to detect in human vision, making it a good color choice for humanitarian food parcels. In 2001, cluster bombs dispersing bomblets of this color were dropped in the same areas as food parcels in Afghanistan by the US resulting in dire consequences. Most color choices we make are not life threatening, but an in-depth study of color coding can increase awareness of how important color is in our world. In this course students will learn about the physical attributes of "factual" color and broaden their understanding of "actual" color in context. Do we all see color the same? In studying "factual" color students will learn how color perception works in the eye and brain. They will gain knowledge of the properties of color, history of pigments, identification of color and additive/subtractive color systems. Building on this information, students will look closely at "actual" color in context. Considering the psychological and cultural aspects of color, students will analyze and manipulate color through perceptual training and hands-on studio applications. Creative and personal expression is encouraged. This studio-based course will focus on increasing color awareness and build a consensus regarding color perception. As a ConnCourse, this course makes connections across the Liberal Arts.

BIO 115 CC: Understanding Evolution

TR 9 – 10:15 am, Phillip Barnes

"Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution" (Theodosius Dobzhansky, 1973). In this course, students will study the nature of science in order to underscore the educational and societal need that we have today to confront the challenges presented by creationism and by the pseudoscience pervasive in our culture. Students will distinguish science from pseudoscience by applying the concepts of genetic change, the origin of species, evidence for evolution, patterns of diversity, phylogenetic relationships, and the evolution of humans. Drawing on information from historical, artistic, mathematical, medical, and literary fields, students will assess the impact of evolution in multiple disciplines. Implications about evolution for medicine and human diversity will enable students to examine ethical issues and understand the value of diversity in our species, *Homo sapiens*. As a ConnCourse, this class makes connections across the liberal arts. *Students may not receive credit for both this course and Biology 103. Open to first-year students and sophomores only.*

BOT 115 CC: How Plants Feed the World

MW 9 – 10:15 am, BOT 115L: M 1:15 – 4 pm or BOT 115L: W 1:15 – 4 pm, Rachel Spicer

Have you ever wondered why potatoes sprout in your cupboard? Why do plants even make potatoes in the first place? And is that sweet corn you eat in the summertime genetically modified? Who were the first people to eat corn, anyway? And did you know that cashews are closely related to poison ivy? Students will learn about basic plant biology through the lens of global agriculture, with an emphasis on asking and answering questions. The course explores how different plants are grown around the world to support human nutritional needs and culinary tastes. We will also get our hands dirty - literally - growing plants and visiting local gardens and field sites. This course includes both lecture/discussion meetings and weekly labs. Students will grow their own gardens in the greenhouse and track the development of their plants from seed to fruit through both careful illustration and scientific observation. We will also perform several experiments to learn firsthand how plants grow, what they need to survive, and how they behave in different environments. Field trips to the on-campus Sprout garden and

to FRESH New London will provide a hands-on introduction to local small-scale and community farming. On field trips to the Arboretum, we will look for evidence of colonial era farms right here in New London, and talk about how the Mashantucket Pequot raised crops here before the arrival of European colonists. Last but not least, we will learn how to identify members of some of the most important crop families grown around the world. As a ConnCourse, this class will make connections across the liberal arts. *Open to first-year students and sophomores; and to others with permission of the instructor. Corequisite: Registration is also required in BOT 115L.*

CLA 102: The Roman World

TR 10:25 -11:40 am, Darryl Phillips

An exploration of Roman civilization, tracing the growth of Rome from a small hill town in Italy to the center of a vast and diverse Mediterranean empire. Through examining literature, laws, inscriptions, coins, works of art, and archaeological remains, students will do the work of an historian, uncovering and reconstructing the world of the Romans. How did the Romans succeed in establishing a long-lasting empire in a region that historically has been plagued by political, cultural, and religious divisions? What led to the eventual downfall of Rome? How has Rome influenced (for better and worse) the development of the Western world? The course considers these and other questions, drawing upon interdisciplinary approaches that provide insight into the political, economic, and social systems of the Roman world. As a ConnCourse, this class makes connections across the liberal arts. *This course is initially open to first-year and sophomore students. It will be open to all students after first-year students have pre-registered. Juniors and seniors may pre-enroll with permission of the instructor.*

COM 110 CC: Introduction to Comp Science & Problem Solving

MW 2:45 – 4 pm, COM 110L: F 1:15 – 4 pm or COM 110L: F 9:40 – 11:40 am, Christine Chung

What is computer programming? How can computers be programmed to perform specific tasks such as play music, display images, draw graphics, and analyze data for relevant information? In one form or another computers have become an essential part of modern life; at home, work, school and on the go. This is because computers can be programmed to solve problems of various forms. In this class we will start by learning the basics of programming and then explore how these skills can be used to tackle the many real-world problems that are all around us. Students will learn computer programming using the programming language Python. They will have the opportunity to explore the role that technology plays in everyday life and in a variety of disciplines by learning to write computer programs to solve problems in areas such as visualization of text or data, political speech analysis, image processing and sound manipulation. Along the way, we will also explore graphics and animation, simulation, object-oriented design, and text manipulation. Students will progress from initially writing small simple programs to creating their own, unique self-designed final projects for the course.

These application areas will enable students to connect the acquired skills in programming and problem-solving to the wider perspectives of the liberal arts education and to real-world problems. Problem solving using computer programming is an empowering skill that can greatly enhance the students' ability to succeed in any field. Even more generally, it is a great way to expand and hone critical and analytical thinking for creative, yet disciplined, problem solving in all aspects of life.

EAS 104 CC: Controversies in East Asia

MW 1:15 – 2:30 pm, Michael Chan

With the 2020 Tokyo Olympics approaching, the dominance of South Korean technology in an intensely competitive global market, and China's increasing economic presence on the world stage, the East Asian region is becoming pivotal in shaping the world in the 21st century. At the same time, the East Asian region is also enduring some of

its greatest dangers, including the Fukushima nuclear disaster, the threat of a nuclear North Korea, and China-led geopolitical disputes throughout the region. In this course, students will acquire the necessary tools for grappling with these issues and other such "controversies" in the East Asian region. Students will build their toolkit through the analysis of literature, film, art, and music dealing with topics such as the historical memory of World War II, national identity, disputed territories and political tensions, fascism and communism, and questions of gender and sexuality. Through analyzing these cultural products, students will learn to understand and interpret the significance of these issues, both to the East Asian region and to themselves as Connecticut College students. As a ConnCourse, this class makes connections across the liberal arts.

ENG 130 CC: Time-Traveling Shakespeare

TR 9 – 10:15 am, Lina Wilder

What does it mean to read, perform, or film a play by Shakespeare now? What did it mean in his own time? In this course, we will explore techniques to unlock the language of the plays and poems; build on those skills by investigating the cultural context of Shakespeare's world; and trace the plays forward into our own culture. By doing so, we will gain a better understanding of Shakespeare's plays, as well as a better understanding of their place in our world. Structured around several major works by Shakespeare (such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, and selections from the *Sonnets*; along with a play to be chosen collectively by the class), the course will take us through units focusing on the urban playgoing in Shakespeare's London, food culture in Renaissance England, music and other entertainment, Renaissance technology, Renaissance medicine, and other topics. Fast-forwarding to our own time, we will consider how Shakespeare's works shape and are shaped by our own culture, in the form of films and live; art objects; online Shakespeares; and cultural artifacts such as Shakespeare bobbleheads. We will also consider the dual impulse to enshrine Shakespeare as the emblem of "high" culture and to cut him down to size. As a ConnCourse, this course make connections across the liberal arts. *This course is initially open to first-year and sophomore students. It will be open to all students after first-year students have pre-registered.*

ENG/ES 155 CC: American Earth

MW 10:25- 11:40 am, Michelle Neely

Climate change. Mass extinctions. Whether we are watching big-budget Hollywood disaster films or reading specialized scientific journals, crisis and even apocalypse have become watch-words of our contemporary ecological predicament. How do the categories and narratives that we use to conceptualize environmental issues affect how we respond? Students will engage contemporary ecological crises by investigating how concepts such as nature and sustainability have been imagined by different writers, in different genres, at distinct historical moments. They will learn to recognize and deconstruct some of the most common narrative tropes structuring environmental discourse, such as the pastoral ideal, pollution, wilderness, and apocalypse. As a result, students will be able to analyze and evaluate how narratives about nature shape contemporary conversations about the environment in popular culture and across disciplines. Key environmental concepts will be explored through an interdisciplinary range of course materials, including poetry, short stories, and novels; popular science writing and scientific journalism; nonfictional accounts of climate change; acts of Congress; and films. Authors may include Henry David Thoreau, John Muir, Luther Standing Bear, Octavia Butler, Bill McKibben, Rachel Carson, and Aldo Leopold. As a ConnCourse, this class makes connections across the liberal arts. *This course is initially open to first-year and sophomore students. It will be open to all students after first-year students have pre-registered.*

ES/GEO 120 CC: Living on a Changing Planet

TR 10:25 – 11:40 am, ES 120L: T 1:15 – 4 pm, or ES 130L: W 1:15 – 4 pm, Doug Thompson

We inhabit a dynamic planet replete with physical dangers posed by geologic hazards, climate change and pollution. Societies demand geologic resources, but what costs and dangers stem from development and our attempts to control nature? The course details how the academic field of environmental geology contributes to a multidisciplinary understanding of global environmental problems. Explore your scientific, socioeconomic and ethical connection to our changing planet. Class lectures, discussions and assignments consider the construction, evaluation and dissemination of scientific knowledge and how that information impacts societal decisions and actions. Indoor and outdoor labs utilize students as scientists to collect, assess, explain and map local and global geologic hazards. No previous background in the geosciences is assumed. As a ConnCourse, this course makes connections across the liberal arts. *Three lectures; three hours laboratory work. Corequisite: Registration is also required in ES 120L.*

GOV 276 CC: Presidency: White House 20500

TR 2:45 – 4 pm, MaryAnne Borrelli

The man from Independence. Ike. JFK. LBJ. Tricky Dick. Jerry. Jimmy. The Great Communicator. Bush 41. Slick Willie. Dubya. No Drama Obama. As these names suggest, the American public has alternately praised and condemned its chief executives for being imperial and populist, ambitious and inspirational, statesmen and partisans. What remains constant is the deeply engrained expectation that U.S. presidents will be heroic patriarchs, self-made men who dedicate themselves to the national interest. Gender, race, sexuality, and religion are constitutive of the presidency. Whether they are on the campaign trail or in the Oval Office, candidates and officeholders alike struggle to prove that they are "presidential." Yet presidents do not govern alone. The president is also at the heart of a complex executive bureaucracy. To study the president is to study executive leadership in a rich and complicated organizational, political, partisan context. The questions we will ask and debate include: Who is popularly perceived as having "presidential timber"? Who do presidents nominate and Senators confirm for elite posts in the executive branch? What does this selectivity reveal about the workings of power in the U.S. society and political system? How do presidents set their political agendas? How do presidents make decisions? What are the consequences of these agendas and decisions for voters and constituents? When do presidents lobby Congress? When do presidents pursue litigation in the Supreme Court? What are the consequences of their strategies for the constitutional system of checks-and-balances? As a ConnCourse, this course makes connections across the Liberal Arts.

HIS 101 CC: Big History

MW 9 – 10:15 am, Frederick Paxton

From The Big Bang To The Future Of Humanity And The Cosmos - Since the eighteenth century, physicists and astronomers have been piecing together the history of the universe and our solar system; geologists the history of our planet; evolutionary biologists the history of life on Earth; and archaeologists the history of humanity before written records. Realizing this, some historians have breached the walls between history and prehistory, and between the social and natural sciences, to create a continuous narrative account of everything we know about the past: Big History. Using a textbook and an extended theoretical essay written by leading figures in this emerging field, this course focuses on the fundamental forces that have shaped change and continuity across the 13.8 billion years of observable time. By exploring processes and themes common to natural and human history, students will receive basic training for a lifetime practice of situating everything they learn within the complex web of similarities, and differences, between human behavior and natural phenomena. They will also

have the tools to develop their own ideas about how best to meet the challenges of the present, and shape the future, for the benefit of humanity and the natural systems upon which all life depends. As a ConnCourse, this course makes connections across the Liberal Arts. *Open to first-year students and sophomores only.*

HIS 128 CC: World War I: Making of the Modern World

TR 2:45 – 4 pm, Catherine Stock

What were the causes and the consequences of the First World War and how, a century after "the Guns of August" first rang out, does it still affect our political and cultural world today? Students will explore these questions from an interdisciplinary perspective. They will use traditional historical analysis and primary sources, but will also look at the war through other lenses: photography and the rise of film; literature and the arts; popular music; architecture and cultural memory; gender and the nation; technology; and public health. Students will learn to "de-center" the war, recognizing that traditional narratives often privilege the British, French, or American experience and neglect people in places far from Western Europe, including Russia, Serbia, Egypt, Australia, and Turkey, who also fought and died in this global cataclysm. Finally, students will explore how the war ushered in the era of modernism in culture and politics and will connect the questions it raised about duty, honor, citizenship, and obligation to events and conflicts in our world today. As a ConnCourse, this class will make connections across the liberal arts. *Open to first-year students and sophomores only.*

JS/REL 210 CC: Jewish Traditions

MW 2:45 – 4 pm, Sharon Portnoff

How can an ancient religion be lived today? How can it encompass the various individuals and groups that identify as "Jewish"? Students will address these questions through an exploration of the history of Jewish texts, cultures, and societies from the biblical period to the present. Focusing on Jews and Judaism(s) in a global context, the course questions how Jews responded to the forces of modernity (individualism and nationalism) through the establishment of various sects and how, after the Holocaust, Ashkenazi Jews responded to the catastrophe by (re)establishing a state in Palestine. Students will examine how the responses to these events in turn shape Jewish cultures and societies. Students will read from Judaism's legal, biblical, Talmudic, midrashic, and philosophical traditions and will explore the ways in which those traditions have influenced various contemporary expressions of Judaism. Both primary and secondary sources with different approaches to Judaism will be read as students explore 2000 years of Jewish traditions.

MUS 106 CC: Musical Acoustics

MW 2:45 – 4 pm, James McNeish

The Science of Sound: How do musical instruments produce sound? How can sounds be captured, recorded, and reproduced? What makes some sounds pleasing to the ear, and others painful? Acoustics, the physics of sound, explores these and other questions. The course explores how musical instruments (including the human voice) produce music, reveals the mathematical relationships between the construction of these instruments and the resulting sound waves, considers how the listening environment can alter sound, and explores techniques for capturing, recording, and reproducing sound. The course also explores the anatomy and physiology of the human ear, how it collects and transmits sound to the brain, and how the human mind perceives these signals as sound and music. Students will learn the fundamentals of sound engineering, microphone choice and placement, digital recording, editing and playback, and will put their knowledge to use as they conduct an acoustical study of a specific space on campus to improve the room's acoustics. As an

introduction to musical acoustics, the course requires no background in either science or music. As a ConnCourse, this course makes connections across the liberal arts.

MUS 122 CC: Making Music at the Keyboard

MW 1:15 – 2:30 pm, John Anthony

Have you always wanted to learn to play the piano or to read music? This ConnCourse teaches the fundamentals of music theory: notes, intervals, key signatures, triads, seventh chords, as well as how music exists in time. Weekly lab sessions encourage active learning through one on one and group instruction, four-hand (and more!) keyboard performances. The class explores classical, folk, blues, and jazz musical literature. Students will create short melodies and compositions to be shared and performed, and discussed with each other. In addition to “hands-on” learning at the keyboard, projects and readings introduce the importance of the piano, harpsichord, organ, and synthesizer to people over the centuries and around the world. As a ConnCourse, this course makes connections across the liberal arts. This course is intended for students with little or no background in reading musical notation or playing a keyboard instrument. Students may not receive credit for both MUS 104 and MUS 122.

REL 198 CC: Religious Practices/Ecology

TR 1:15 – 2:30 pm, Sufia Uddin

What do the Saami in Sweden share with inhabitants of the mangroves of Bangladesh? In many sites around the world global demand for natural resources, such as inexpensive shrimp or paper products, compete with indigenous religious communities' practices and their relations with the natural environment. Students examine the ethical dimensions of humans' interactions with the environment, the philosophy of deep ecology, and the impacts felt by indigenous religious communities. Through the study of religious traditions, news stories, scientific studies on environmental destruction, and historical records, students explore different indigenous religious communities' responses to the following questions: What is "nature" and why do we value it? What cosmological dimensions relate humans to nature? How do traditions and teachings support or challenge the idea of nature as simply a utilitarian resource? We will also examine how deep ecology has informed new practices among Christians and Muslims. As a ConnCourse, this class makes connections across the liberal arts.

SLA 105 CC: Intro to Slavic Cultures

MW 1:15 – 2:30 pm, Petko Ivanov

Who are the Slavs and why study them? Taken together, Slavic speaking countries occupy a sixth part of the globe and have played substantial and often decisive role in world history, science and culture (suffice it to name Stalin or Pope John Paul II, Copernicus or Mendeleev, Chopin or Tolstoy). Objectively, Slavic is a linguistic category transformed in the course of the 19th century into an ethno-cultural one. The leading role in this transformation was played by Slavic Studies - the principal site of producing and negotiating Slavic identities. This interdisciplinary course draws on a variety of media (scholarly texts, film, fiction, political cartoons, medieval chronicles) to introduce students to the history of Slavic Studies and the cultures of Eastern Europe. Although we will discuss all of the Slavic cultures at various points throughout the semester, we will focus on three (one "new" and two former) countries - Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia - to more closely examine their development as representatives of East, West, and South Slavic peoples, sampling in the process the dynamics of the integrative / separatist tendencies among the Slavs. Special attention will be paid to nation building (e.g., Macedonia vis-à-vis its continuous contestation by neighbors) and nation breaking (e.g., the peaceful "divorce" of Czechoslovakia vs. the violent destruction of Yugoslavia). We will also discuss non-Slavic

peoples (Jews, Roma, Turks, Hungarians and Romanians) whose history is closely related to that of the Slavs. The Roma, one of the most underprivileged nations today with long history of persecution, will be the focus of separate discussion. Other topics to be addressed are: the political divide between East and West; empires and colonized peoples; religious traditions; the rise of national cultures; insurrections and revolutions; communist regimes; and the political aftermath following the fall of the Soviet Union. As a ConnCourse, this course makes connections across the liberal arts.

THE 102 CC: Greek Mythology in Performance

TR 1:15 – 2:30 pm, Nina Papathanasopoulou

What values did the ancient Greeks have? What did they consider just? Whom did they consider a hero? What did their myths convey about their culture, ideas, and organization of their society? In this course students will study a selection of important mythological stories and figures as represented in Greek literature and art, and will discuss the values, ideas, and issues that these myths are interested with. The course will examine the myth of the Trojan War and stories about Agamemnon, Iphigenia, Achilles, Odysseus, Oedipus, Theseus, Ariadne, Medea, and Helen in order to understand the diverse ways in which ancient authors used myth to explore problems of their time. After gaining a good understanding of each myth, students will look at the modern reception of these myths in theater, dance, and music. Students will compare these different means of communication in order to understand how meaning is developed and how modern authors have used these stories for different purposes across time. Through reading, writing, interactive lectures, in-class discussion, and creative projects, students will compare the different renditions of these myths and will discuss the importance and function of myth and its relation to the society in which it is used. The course will therefore equip students to recognize and address issues that remain vital today: human relationships, the role of the divine, gender, justice, sexual assault, dealing with the other. It will also examine ways to communicate these issues through different ways of performance and the effect of each of these performances.