

MONTSERRAT SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS 2009/2010

THE MONTSERRAT PROGRAM IS GROUPED INTO FIVE DIFFERENT THEMATIC CLUSTERS: CORE HUMAN QUESTIONS (C); THE DIVINE (D); GLOBAL SOCIETY (G); THE NATURAL WORLD (N); AND THE SELF (S). EACH CLUSTER CONTAINS SEMINARS EXAMINING THE THEME FROM A VARIETY OF PERSPECTIVES.

❧ CORE HUMAN QUESTIONS ❧

MONT 100C

Beauty, Suffering, and Time (fall)

Many different writers, philosophers, and religious thinkers have understood that we live daily on time's cross. On the horizontal axis of that cross, we live from moment to moment, day to day, year to year until we die. As Shakespeare points out, "Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore, So do our moments hasten to their end." When we think of time only as a succession of moments, we cry out, recognizing that what we love and who we love will be lost. The future is always where things come to their end. But the vertical axis of time's cross cuts across linear time and points towards eternity. The "eternity" I speak of is not some "other" realm, but rather the way moments of meaningfulness—of beauty, goodness, holiness, justice, love—intersect linear time, and become actual and incarnate. Through the study of a number of literary works from the Bible to the contemporary novelist Marilynne Robinson, we will look at how our experience of beauty and suffering (the two great means by which we are compelled to ask Why?) are intimately connected to the way we experience time.

MONT 101C

Time and Fullness (spring)

In Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, Emily, who has died in childbirth, is granted her request by the stage manager to relive one day. During that day, she's pained by the beauty of the ordinary and even more so by our lack of awareness of it. When Emily goes back to the graveyard to be with the company of the dead lying there, she asks the stage manager, "Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it?" *That we should realize life as we live it*—that's the idea that we want to look at in the second semester. This semester we will pick up with Marilynne Robinson's idea that "right worship is right perception"; when Robinson spoke of "seeing" or "right perception," she did not mean, of course, the physiological act of the eye. She meant the spiritual capacity to perceive the fullness which exists in each moment and is always waiting for us to be present to it. We will look at literary works that help us recognize what we cannot see, and often experience as missing, even when what we are looking for is right before our eyes.

MONT 102C

Clockwork Universe (fall)

Throughout history humans have attempted to measure and mark time. We have divided time into years and months, days and hours and minutes and seconds. Initially these divisions were an attempt to mark the motion of the sun and the moon and the planets. The techniques of measurement and the marking of time were reflections of the way cultures experienced time. Thus while the Mayan calendar and the Hebrew calendar and the Gregorian calendar all mark the passing of time, they have few markers in common. In part in response to the requirements of scientific and technological progress, our techniques of measurement moved from sundials to pendulums to cesium

clocks allowing us to standardize our measurement of time and to divide time into smaller and smaller increments. Most of the world has agreed to a common calendar – but how does this calendar relate to the year as we experience it? We can measure the winning time of a race in milliseconds – but what is a millisecond? Does our increased ability to measure time enhance or diminish our understanding of time? Is time infinitely divisible? Is the “clock” time we mark an accurate reflection of lived time? How is our experience of time changed by the ways we mark time? Drawing on history, science and mathematics we will explore how our measurements of time have changed, the arguments about the appropriateness of standard models for marking time and the relationship between marked time and lived time.

MONT 103C

Time and Space (spring)

This semester we will explore time as a physical quantity. Much of the work of science through history has been an exploration of motion, an exploration of the relationship between position (space) and time. Newton’s laws of motion are quite effective in predicting the trajectory of a golf ball or the orbit of nearby planets. They assume a notion of absolute time and space – time passes uniformly, position can be determined precisely, the future motion of an object is completely determined. But Newton’s laws are not effective in describing all motion. In the early 20th century Einstein and others introduced the concept of relativity – time and space are not absolutely determined, their measurement depends upon the observer. Does this change our understanding of time, or our experience of time? What is the relationship between time and space? Is time simply another dimension in our description of the world? If so, how do we understand the notion that time seems to have a direction? Or is the passing of time simply an illusion?

MONT 104C

Movies: Coming of Age (fall)

Our first experience of time as a measure of how life is lived usually arrives with the movement from childhood to maturity. Movies offer us a range of coming-of-age stories. In some, a young person is thrown into circumstances that require a moral compass, often one that points away from tradition or convention or the protagonist’s upbringing. In others, he or she suffers a difficult loss but finds a companion ~ perhaps an animal of magical qualities ~ to compensate for that loss. There are sexual coming-of-age films, coming-of-age films that focus on family, and coming-of-age films in which severe physical trials test the hero’s skill, heart and emotional commitment. In all of them, the protagonist embarks upon a difficult journey to discover his or her identity and place in the world.

MONT 105C

Movies: Endings and Memory (spring)

Coming-of-age movies are sometimes remembrances, told from the point of view of an adult looking back on childhood experiences that were life-altering and self-defining. In the second half of our exploration of how movies handle the march of time, we will leap over that divide between childhood and adulthood and look at films that chronicle endings ~ of lives, of eras, of periods of trauma and upheaval ~ and suggest how we remember the past.

MONT 106C

Time, Memory, & the Life Story (fall)

On one level, we live in “clock” time: as we go on living, time marches on, ever forward, into the future. On another level, however, time moves in a different direction; through memory, we move backward, revisiting the past and reshaping it along the way. We might thus speak of “narrative” time: past experiences become episodes in an evolving story, to be rewritten again and again, as new experiences come along and transform the meaning of what has come before. This is where the mystery begins. Common sense tells us that we are “products” of the past, that who we are is determined by our histories. But these histories are continually being revised and rewritten in memory from the vantage point of the present. How can the past determine the present and the present determine the past? Given that the past is continually being rewritten, can there be a “true” story of the past? To what extent are the stories of our lives “fictions,” spun out of the narrative imagination? Drawing on classic and contemporary works in psychology, philosophy, and literature, we will seek to make sense not only of these difficult questions but of the very lives we lead.

MONT 107C

Time, Self, & the Good Life (spring)

As we will have seen through the inquiries pursued thus far, narrative – the fashioning and refashioning of the story of the past in and through memory – is a key feature of the elusive being we call the “self.” As some important thinkers have suggested, in fact, there is a distinct sense in which we *are* our stories, our very identities, as selves, emerging through the imaginative fabric of narrative. Even as we move ever backward in time through narrative, however, there remains the challenge and task of moving forward, of growing, developing, flourishing as human beings and as the unique selves we are. How might we begin to relate the backward movement of narrative with the forward movement of development? What are the *ends* of human development? What does it mean to grow, to flourish, to become *better*? Is it simply a matter of living a life conventionally deemed “good”? Is there something more to the good life, something deeper, perhaps even *beyond* time? In this semester too, we will draw on a wide variety of sources both to clarify some challenging questions and ideas and to formulate for ourselves what our own paths to the good life might be.

MONT 108C

Killing Time: Seeking Eternity (fall- 2 sections)

Though we live in time, we also desire what is timeless. Why is that, and what is it that we really want? Is it simply to “escape” time or make it stand still, or is it something more deeply meaningful? In this course, we shall explore the different forms this desire can take, how it is expressed, and how it might be satisfied. What is it about us that is unwilling or unable simply to live in time? Why do we long for a sense of the eternal? This longing may be associated with a desire for happiness, but it can also make us profoundly unhappy and frustrated with life, leading to what Nietzsche called “the spirit of revenge” (or “the will’s ill-will against time”). Thoreau says that one cannot “kill time without injuring eternity.” If so—if seeking eternity is not the same as simply “killing time”—how can we better understand what we are longing for? Focusing initially on the experience of “mourning,” we shall draw from philosophical, psychological, literary, and artistic sources as we struggle with these questions.

MONT 109C

Freeing Time: Presence (spring -2 sections)

Having thought about the desire to free ourselves from time, we shall now consider whether and how time itself might set us free. We all know the value of “free time,” and are often reminded about the importance of “living in the present.” But then, we have also experienced the depressing emptiness of free time, and know all too well that living in the present is easier said than done. This course explores the possibility that, in seeking freedom and meaning outside of time, we may be looking in the wrong place—that the promise of eternity really lies in the present. In what sense is it possible to live in the present, and what would such a life be like? Why is it such a challenge to do something that sounds so simple? What is missing from a life without “presence” (a life exhausted by preoccupation with the past and anxiety about the future)? If experiencing presence is not the same as simply living in “the present”—if it is not purely passive but is something we must actively achieve—what then does it involve? Philosophical, psychological, literary, and religious sources (esp. Plato, Thoreau, Heidegger, and Kierkegaard) will guide our reflections.

❧ THE DIVINE ❧

MONT 100D

Concepts of Death (fall-2 sections)

In this semester we will explore religious experiences of the divine through an examination of the core human experience of finitude: death. All human beings die, and there are a number of individual, communal, and cultural expressions surrounding the inevitable event of death (food offerings, processions, wakes, cremation, burial rites). To understand the shared patterns and distinctive variety of these responses, we will examine primary religious/theological sources, reflections in fiction (especially speculative/science fiction), images, and contemporary real-life experiences (worship services, art exhibits, films). We will focus on the Christian/Catholic tradition, but other religious traditions will be addressed.

MONT 101D

Concepts of Afterlife (spring-2 sections)

In this semester we will explore religious experiences of the divine through an exploration of the core human conception of transcendence: afterlife. All human beings die, and there are a number of individual, communal, and cultural explanations of what happens after death (heavens, hells, divinization, reincarnation, annihilation). To understand the shared patterns and distinctive variety of these responses, we will examine primary religious/theological sources, reflections in fiction (especially speculative/science fiction), images, and contemporary real-life experiences (worship services, art exhibits, films). We will focus on the Christian/Catholic tradition, but other religious traditions will be addressed.

MONT 102D

Transcending Self Reflection (fall)

Socrates' admonition, “Know thyself?” challenges us to understand and articulate our identity, our origins and our ultimate purpose and destiny in relationship to the transcendent. We will examine how ancient authors employ epic, lyric and epinician poetry, drama, historical narrative, philosophical reflection, letters and memoirs to shape “self” image in light of this tripartite goal. The critical lens of transvaluation will help us consider how various cultures offer contemporary interpretations of that reflective

process as expressed through gesture, masks, tests, disguises and artistic depiction and in both personal friendship and more corporate social endeavours. Creative and critical assignments will help students engage in the reflection process.

MONT 103D

Model Christian Discerners (spring)

“Discernment of spirits” is central to St. Ignatius’ Spiritual Exercises where he invites retreatants to deepen their relationship with God through a series of meditations divided into four “weeks.” Rooted in the biblical and pagan traditions of self-reflection, “discernment” remains a central concern throughout two millennia of Christian experience. St. Ignatius’s writings will serve as our critical lens for examining how authors ranging from St Augustine and Theresa of Avila to Therese of Lisieux and Thomas Merton, employed varied genres while contemporary artists use film and other media to enhance our understanding of “discernment.” Students will engage in the process of “discernment.” through critical and creative assignments.

MONT 104D

Nature, Values, God: History (fall)

What is nature and what is its relation to the divine? This course in the history of the philosophy of nature will begin with the ancient Greek philosophies of nature, examine medieval attempts to prove God’s existence from nature, then move to the scientific revolution of the 17th century, its philosophical interpretation, and the problems it caused for the modern understanding of knowledge and of God.

MONT 105D

Nature, Values, God : Today (spring)

Does natural science show that life and mind are constituted by a nature devoid of values or purposes, and any relation to God? This course in the contemporary philosophy of nature will focus on the problems of values in nature and nature’s relation to divinity. We will consider the impact of evolution, the revolutions of relativity and cosmology, environmental philosophy, and the concept of emergence.

MONT 106D

Oh God 1: Concepts (fall)

Although 'Oh God' is a phrase which many frequently use, comparatively little time is spent reflecting on how the direct object contained in this exclamation is to be understood. This course examines different concepts of divinity in order to better understand and appreciate the manifold ways in which such a concept might enter into our life and discourse. Topics will include the role of divine representation, the problem of evil, and how concepts of divinity might intersect with issues concerning education, development, and society. Readings may include, Socrates, Plato, Thomas, Descartes, and differently scriptural texts.

MONT 107D

Oh God 2: Faith (spring)

Although 'Oh God' is a phrase that is often invoked within a faith-ful (e.g., prayer-ful) context, comparatively little time is spent reflecting on what the substance of such faith as expressed in this exclamation amounts to. This course examines different understandings of faith (with respect to divinity) in order to better understand and appreciate the subtleties, nuances, and potential difficulties inherent in both the concept and activity of faith as it plays a role in human life. Topics will include the role of faith in stable and unstable times, the difficulties involved in distinguishing authentic faith from

supposed faith, and the question as to whether and how it is possible to maintain faith in the face of catastrophe. Readings may include: Augustine, scriptural texts (e.g., Exodus and Job), and Kierkegaard.

MONT 108D

Islam and Pilgrimage (fall)

Both Islamic and Christian pilgrimages structure an intersection of the individual with both natural and built environments, ritualized behavior, and tangible objects. Muslim pilgrims hope to attain a sense of purity, to realize the smallness of the self and the greatness of the divine, and to experience the power of the Muslim community. Islam lists the fulfillment of the hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, as one of the five pillars (or rules) of Muslim conduct. We will consider a variety of buildings, objects, memorabilia, and texts that have been linked to pilgrimage practices from the 7th to the 21st centuries.

MONT 109D

Christianity and Pilgrimage (spring)

Pilgrimages were a vital aspect of Christianity from the early centuries; Emperor Constantine's earliest building projects were St. Peter's in Rome and the Church of Christ's Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Pilgrimage literature abounds in the Canterbury Tales and the Book of Margery Kempe. Ignatius of Loyola travelled on pilgrimage to Montserrat, Jerusalem, and Rome. Today, especially in Hispanic culture, pilgrimage flourishes at Spain's Santiago de Compostela and in the American Southwest. Pilgrimage study reveals equality among men and women and persons of all classes as well as the shared traditions and goals in Christianity and Islam.

MONT 110D

Saints as Models and Mediators (fall)

This seminar will explore how European peoples experienced 'saints' ca. 1300 to ca. 1800, that is, from the early Renaissance to the French Revolution. Focus on 1) the diversity of ways in which saints, female and male, mediated the divine, making the latter closer, more accessible, more tangible, and more approachable, and on 2) how saints offered examples of how to live one's life well, in relation to God and other human beings.

MONT 111D

Modern Saints? (spring)

Since the French Revolution, a process and culture of secularization has challenged traditional religious beliefs and practices. This seminar will consider how the Catholic cult of the saints has both adapted to modern culture and resisted it, ca. 1800 to ca. 2000. Saints considered will include both those officially canonized, as well as those without such recognition but seen by many as holy (including Americans such as Dorothy Day or Thomas Merton).

MONT 112D

Science Looks at Gods: Origins (fall)

Over the last 500 years science has shown itself to be very powerful at investigating and reaching sweeping and consensus conclusions within its self defined domain. A difficulty arises in that there is little consensus about what constitutes that domain. This disagreement is most pronounced when science applies itself to investigating or commenting on the divine. This semester we will enter this fray by surveying the origins

of science to the Newtonian synthesis and worldview, and examine what those who concerned themselves with the natural world said and thought about gods.

MONT 113D

Science Looks at Gods: Present (spring)

In the first semester we considered the origin of science and of the conflict between science and religion. This semester we will examine current discussions about gods from practicing scientists who are atheists, agnostics and theists. We will compare the more intemperate, sometimes obnoxious, and insulting extremes of some atheist and theist scientists to the more temperate discussions of other such scientists. Lastly we will conclude with scientists again who are atheists and theists, but despite their differences, attempt compromise and synthesis, and thereby manage to forge a potential common ground.

✧ GLOBAL SOCIETY ✧

MONT 100G

Writing Southeast Asia (fall)

This cultural anthropology course introduces students to Southeast Asian societies and some of their current-day and historical power dynamics through a close reading of novels, short stories, and childhood memoirs written by authors from Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, and the Philippines. Students will study how anthropologists use printed texts like these as windows on Southeast Asia cultures; at issue will be the social origins and cultural location of print in places like colonial-era Indonesia. Also of interest: state censorship of books in places like Burma; how authors 'write back to power' in places like Cambodia; how international forms of print communication shape Southeast Asian historical memories; how Southeast Asia's rich heritage of oratorical forms such as shadow plays and sung epics has shaped printed texts. Such inquiries are put within the context of anthropologists' long-term interest in listening carefully to Southeast Asians' life histories, in ethnographic fieldwork. This course counts towards the concentration in Asian Studies.

MONT 101G

Vietnam in Films and Fiction (spring)

In the first part of this course we will explore the way Vietnam has been presented in western film and fiction, through works from France, Britain, and the US. The second part of the course will provide a counterpoint for reflection and discussion as we consider films and fiction from Vietnam, as well as works by Vietnamese-Americans. This is not a course about the wars in Vietnam, although many of the western works do have war as a central focus. Rather, students will be encouraged to reflect on what they know and how they know it as they expand their knowledge of a part of the world deeply entwined with US history and culture. The material will be approached from historical and anthropological perspectives. This course counts towards the concentration in Asian Studies.

MONT 102G

Disaster Economics I (fall)

The Disaster Economics two-semester sequence will use economics to analyze the impact of disasters on society, and disasters to illustrate the concepts of introductory microeconomics. In Disaster Economics I we will examine the effects of great natural disasters, beginning with the Southeast Asian Tsunami of 2004, followed by the devastation of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, and ending with the 2008

earthquake in Sichuan, China. Throughout the year we will follow through the news media disasters happening at the time. The course will cover the first half of the topics of a standard course in principles of microeconomics.

MONT 103G

Disaster Economics II (spring)

This course will explore the social scientific study of human disasters, in particular violent conflict, primarily from the perspective of economics. We will draw upon various principles of microeconomics to investigate the causes and effects of conflict in the international system, and we will use conflicts to illustrate microeconomic concepts. Conflict topics to be surveyed include the bargaining theory of war, conflict between states, civil war and genocide, terrorism, peace missions, conflict datasets, and contemporary (ongoing and emergent) conflicts. The course will cover the second half of the topics of a standard course in principles of microeconomics.

MONT 104G

Everyday Life in Conflict 1914-45 (fall)

The first half of the 20th century in Europe was a time of total war – a cataclysmic period which transformed the way citizens viewed human nature, society, and the world. Covering World War One, the Russian Revolution, the Spanish Civil War, and World War Two, this course will focus on issues of experience and perspective, examining how individuals on rival sides described such shattering conflicts. What did citizens see themselves as fighting for or against? Why did so many come to support dictatorial regimes that linked violence with progress and mass murder with purification, or with the creation of more allegedly “just” and “responsive” kinds of community? We will analyze memoirs, political propaganda, and film, in a seminar format that will combine lecture with student presentation and discussion. This course counts toward the Peace & Conflict Studies concentration.

MONT 105G

East vs. West 1945-2005 (spring)

The second half of the 20th century involved the division of the world into two hostile camps. This seminar will study how individuals on either side of the Iron Curtain came to view the political systems in which they found themselves. How did life differ in “East” vs. “West,” and how did Europeans variously explain their continent’s East-West schism? This seminar will focus largely, though not exclusively, on the Soviet/Eastern European experience of Cold War, as well as the sudden collapse of Communism. We will concentrate on close reading and discussion of primary sources, including newspaper articles, speeches, short stories, and film. This course counts towards the Peace & Conflict Studies concentration.

MONT 106G

Self Writing by U.S. Latinos (fall)

In this course we will study autobiographical writings by Mexican-Americans, Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cuban-Americans in order to explore how these authors find and invent themselves through the writing of autobiography. From our class readings we will develop our own practical definition of a poetics of autobiography as it relates to the memoirs and accounts written by these bicultural and bilingual writers. Particular attention will be given to the aesthetics of autobiography and to how Latino writers experiment with this genre in order to address changing constructions of immigration, language, exile, and identity. This course counts towards the Latin American & Latino Studies concentration.

MONT 107G

Cuban Literature of Exile (spring)

What constitutes a literature of exile? In their works, U.S. writers of Cuban heritage such as Ana Menéndez, Cristina García, and Carlos Eire create images of displacement that become a repository of the "history" and the "story" of exile, images that are at once sites of affiliation and rupture. In addition to studying the prose and poetry of U.S. Cuban writers, the course will examine representative Cuban American films and paintings in order to provide visual parallels to the images of identity, migration and history studied in the works of the writers. This course counts towards the Latin American & Latino Studies concentration.

MONT 108G

Creative Writing (fall)

One of the challenges we face as we look towards a more global world is the ability to imagine and thus come to understand views that stem from cultures, heritages and religions vastly different from our own. This is a course about learning how to make and critically evaluate the visual and written narratives that both form the world around us and shape the ways in which we take in the world. In the first semester of the course, students will concentrate on the study of written narratives, learning the basics of storytelling by crafting their own narratives as well as learning how to read like writers by analyzing literary works for the narrative strategies employed. Through a series of creative writing exercises, students will try their hand at building characters, rendering dialogues, handling the movement of time and developing scenes in order to write their own stories, essays and poems.

MONT 109G

Studio Art (spring)

In the second semester of the course, students will focus on developing narrative works through the visual arts- drawing, sculpture and collage. Working with paper, clay, wire and other materials, students will be challenged to create their own visual narratives through a series of hands-on studio art projects. In comparing and contrasting the experience of written language and visual language we will learn what each has to offer in constructing our worldview. Students will also examine both historical and contemporary artists as a means of gaining a wider perspective on the richness of global visual cultural.

MONT 110G

Spain: Outside Looking In (fall)

Using literature, film, and painting, this course explores the ways in which Spaniards have looked at and remembered their country—and their culture—from beyond Spain's geographical and metaphorical borders. Focusing mainly on the 19th and 20th centuries, this course examines Spain's political turmoil during the period, the struggle between traditional repressive forces and liberal enlightened ideals, as well as artists' capacity for self-reflection and cultural evaluation. Students in this course will undertake an in-depth study of Goya and Picasso's paintings, Lorca's writings, and Carlos Saura's films in order to analyze the underlying perceptions about Spain, Spanishness, and Spaniards in these works.

MONT 111G

Spain: Inside Looking Out (spring)

During Francisco Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975), many of Spain's intellectuals became exiled in Europe, while others remained in the country despite Franco's

repressive policies. Different ways of looking at Spain emerged from both inside and outside the country's borders during this period. Due to a very strong censorship, those who stayed were forced to hide their ideas about the dictatorship behind subtle metaphors. Those who left used distance and memory as tools for examining the causes and effects of the dictatorship. All are forced to look inward in order to come to grips with their sense of history and self. Analyzing works by Dalí, Sender, Martín Gaité, and Almodóvar will allow students to reflect on issues of social justice, moral responsibility, and human freedom.

MONT 112G

Europe's Empires (fall-2 sections)

European imperialism transformed global relationships and laid the foundation for the world in which we live. In 1900, western European states controlled more than 84% of the world's land and a third of its people, leaving behind a legacy of ethnic conflict, economic dependency, and authoritarian governments across the postcolonial world. We will use primary sources, literature, and film to examine imperialism between the 1870s and the 1930s. The seminar will culminate with the spread of communist and fascist dictatorships across Europe by 1939. This course counts towards the Peace & Conflict Studies concentration.

MONT 113G

Memory Wars: WWII and Vietnam (spring-2 sections)

This is not a military history course about WWII and Vietnam. Instead, it is a cultural studies class in which we examine the cultural echoes of those two important wars in relation to the nations and peoples involved and the politics of public memory, that is, how knowledge and understanding of those wars is shaped through representations of the past. We will focus our examination on key films from and about each era, as well as the building of war monuments/museum exhibits.

MONT 114G

Lat-Am Poets : The Cutting Edge (fall)

In Latin America, poets have played an important role in bringing about cultural and political change not only through their writing but also through their active participation in their country's socio-political struggles. Poets such as Cuba's Nicolás Guillén, Chile's Pablo Neruda and Nicaragua's Ernesto Cardenal find in history both the origins of present social injustices and the sources for envisioning a redeemed future society. Using poetry, non-fictional prose and films, this course explores each poet's worldview including the function of poetry itself as an instrument of social transformation. This course counts towards the Latin American & Latino Studies Concentration.

MONT 115G

U.S./Mex Border Hist & Culture (spring)

The "US-Mexico Border" offers a potent symbol of current political debates over immigration in the United States. Yet the meaning of the border for Mexican-, Anglo-, and Native-Americans has undergone significant transformations in the years between 1848 and the present. Through the use of film, literature, poetry, and historical and autobiographical narratives, we will explore the ways people in the US-Mexico Borderlands developed unique cultural, religious, and political identities that transcend national boundaries. Their experiences offer important insight on the modern struggle to define the so-called "insiders" and "outsiders" in American society.

MONT 116G***Violence and Non-Violence 1*** (fall)

This course is the first part of a full-year sequence that will explore the phenomenon of political violence, one of the central moral and political challenges of the contemporary world. The first semester of the course focuses on competing explanations of the causes of violence and their relationship to differing understandings of human nature. Approaches include psychoanalytic, behavioural, economic, and identity-based theories, which will be tested against case studies of political violence that include the military, racial violence in the United States, genocide (both the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocide of 1994, and contemporary religious extremism and suicide bombings. This course counts towards the Peace & Conflict Studies concentration.

MONT 117G***Violence and Non-Violence 2*** (spring)

The second semester of the course turns to philosophical/religious/political debates over non-violence vs. violence as strategies to overturn regimes of oppression and create a more just social and political order. As in the first semester, the ethical debates over non-violent vs. violent approaches will be concretely illustrated through case studies drawn from a variety of historical and cultural contexts. The course will end by posing the question of justice vs. forgiveness as strategies for confronting the legacy of mass violence in deeply divided countries. This course counts towards the Peace & Conflict Studies concentration.

MONT 118G***World Religions and Music*** (fall)

This seminar examines two universal features of human life: music and religion. It will focus on the phenomenon of religion in comparative and global perspective, exploring the connections between religious doctrines, rituals, and cultural performances. The scope will extend from prehistory and tribal traditions, then move to an examination of the major world religions. Major analytical paradigms from the academic study of religion and music will be introduced, especially those useful for interpreting religious belief and cultural praxis. The seminar will devote special attention to case studies in world music, and draw upon student participation in listening to both recorded music and participation in live performances as expressions of reverence for and connection with the divine. The first semester will focus on developing a foundation for understanding religion and music; the traditions of music and religion of several indigenous peoples, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam will be the focus; in the second semester seminar, Balinese, Buddhist, and modern religious traditions will be studied. This course counts towards the Asian Studies concentration.

MONT 119G***Music and Religious Traditions*** (spring)

This seminar will focus on the relationship between religious doctrine and music in world religions. We will approach the divine through the role of visual image, Darsan (“seeing” in Sanskrit), Mantra (sacred sound), and Rasa (the religious sensibility that underlies the performing arts) in Hinduism, Buddhism, Sufi-Islam, and Christianity. We will examine a wide-range of sacred musical and theatrical expressions, ranging from the sacred chants of India, Africa, and Europe to the epic music-theatre performances of Indonesia. Students will have the opportunity to examine and, through performance, experience the connections between sight, sound, and the divine in selected world cultures. This course counts towards the Asian Studies concentration.

❧ THE NATURAL WORLD ❧

MONT 100N

Art & Land in Latin America (fall)

This class will consider how writers and other artists from Columbus forward have looked to the landscapes of Latin America to understand their culture, history, and identity. We will explore how artists from around Central and South America have drawn inspiration from the jungle, the sea, the *pampa*, parks, and gardens to establish a sense of self and national belonging. What protections does the land offer? What threats does it pose? We will focus mainly on Latin American short stories and poetry, with special attention to painting and film. All texts in English, with the option of reading in Spanish. This course counts towards the concentration in Latin American & Latino Studies.

MONT 101N

Landscapes of Spain (spring)

Crossing the Atlantic, we will study how writers and other artists from Columbus forward have looked to landscapes of Spain to understand their culture, history, and identity. From the plains of Castile to the *rias* of Galicia and the Catalonian *montanya*, the landscapes of Spain present a central irony: on the one hand, they inspire a sense of common national purpose, while on the other, they help to establish deep-seated regional differences. Our readings will focus mainly on Spanish narrative and poetry, with special attention to painting and film. All texts in English, with the option of reading in Spanish. This course counts towards the concentration in Latin American & Latino Studies.

MONT 102N

Biology of Health and Disease (fall – 2 sections)

Through discussion, experimentation, computer simulation, and occasional formal lecture, we will consider the various ways in which humans experience disease. What counts as health? Is it solely the responsibility of the medical profession to provide and maintain it? Is the popularity of pharmaceutical treatment justified? Is the goal of “personalized medicine” a worthy one? How should we address issues of health and disease in developing countries? Various categories of disease include infectious disease, disease with non-microbial environmental cause, genetic disease, and ailments whose causes are as yet only poorly understood. Chronic and acute illness will be distinguished along with physical and mental health. In addition we will consider the category “disease,” literally dis-ease, and the tendency of our culture to broaden the definition, which may narrow the concept of “normal.” Readings will be chosen from *Scientific American* and similar sources with an appropriate mix of technical and non-technical language.

MONT 103N

Stewardship and Sustainability (spring – 2 sections)

The Christian tradition identifies all of creation as belonging to God (e.g., Psalm 24) and human beings entrusted with its care. Throughout history we have used creation for human thriving. Sometimes we have overused and/or abused creation. While the abuse of creation was always wrong, it was hardly noticed until we became aware that our destructive practices were harming our own health and well being and were a serious threat to the well being of future generations. This has led us to make efforts to use the resources of creation more responsibly. Sustainability refers to the use of creation’s natural resources in ways that guarantee their survival. We will consider responsible stewardship with respect, in particular, to human population (e.g., footprints and

consumption) and with respect to water as an essential, but limited and diminishing, natural resource.

MONT 104N

The Language Instinct (fall)

Is human language, as Steven Pinker and others claim, an innate biological instinct wired into our brains by evolution, like web spinning in spiders or sonar in bats? Or is it more of a cultural creation made possible by our general cognitive abilities and our social interaction, as others maintain? What, in short, is the role of nature and nurture in shaping human language? This course explores this fundamental question by examining language as a complex, and often misunderstood, part of our natural world.

MONT 105N

The Structure of the Mind (spring)

Building upon our main themes last semester, this course examines the question of how we in general should think about the structure of the human mind. Is the mind like a computer, endowed with a universal language of thought? Or is it more like a “toolbox” containing specific tools for solving practical problems? And is the mind “molded” through experience and social influences? More concretely, we will address these questions by investigating the nature of moral reasoning and our cognitive ability to gain knowledge of other minds.

MONT 106N

Identifying Patterns (fall)

Are we experiencing global climate change? Does a high-fat diet lead to increased risk of certain cancers? Statistical thinking is one method humans have developed to discern underlying patterns in the information we gather from the natural world and address questions like these. It is an ever-growing component of our public debate on issues in the environment, human health, and politics. In this course, you will learn the basic tools of descriptive statistics and statistical inference. Throughout this semester and the next, we will focus on real-world data and see how statistical methods are applied. There are no prerequisites beyond usual high school mathematics.

MONT 107N

Understanding Randomness (spring)

How likely are we to see Joe DiMaggio’s 56 game hitting streak surpassed in our lifetimes? The mathematical study of probability is designed for questions like this, where chance and randomness play a key role. It also forms the foundation for the statistical inference techniques we learned in the first semester. In order to use those techniques to draw reasonable conclusions, it is necessary to understand how and why they actually work. Hence this course will take a detailed and occasionally critical look at the ways reasoning about probabilities is used to identify patterns via statistics. In the process, you will develop an appreciation of the power and the limitations of statistical thinking and learn to analyze claims backed by statistics.

MONT 108N

Contexts of Care (fall)

Course description: This course will help students evaluate the broader historical, intellectual, philosophical, economic, and social context in which health care is provided. The course is broken into units focusing on different perspectives on health care. Units will focus on: the relationship between science, policy, and social context in the diagnosis and treatment of AIDS, the history of medical training in America, “doctor’s stories”

and “patient stories” that relate first-hand experiences of care and coping with illness, and lastly, on health care policy in an aging society.

MONT 109N

Biochemistry of Human Health (spring)

The practice of modern medicine is greatly influenced by our understanding of the molecular basis of human physiology. Both the diagnosis of disease and current methods of treatment are intimately related to our understanding of the biological chemistry of the human body. This course will deal with concepts of biochemistry in the context of topics related to health and disease. After developing a basic understanding of biochemistry, we will consider a range of topics including the immune system, heart disease, cancer, and infectious disease. Material in the course will be covered through a combination of lecture and discussion.

MONT 110N

Literature and Science (fall)

This course will explore the way literature and science inform each other, meeting at a matrix of shared humanistic concerns. We will not examine science and literature from the vantage point of science fiction. Instead, we will look at them in the way they most realistically illuminate each other. Some of the most eloquent literary statements in science have been in defense of itself, the way, for example, the Second Law of Thermodynamics can be read to provide a defense of evolution. At the same time, many of our writers embrace science as the means of humanistic expression. Allegra Goodman’s novel, *Intuition*, for example, reflects the stops and starts of the scientific process, whereas the narrative structure of Thomas Pynchon’s *The Crying of Lot 49* simulates the very principle of entropy in the Second Law of Thermodynamics as well as the premise of information theory. We will examine these and various works of fiction and non-fiction. Our seminar will follow a Socratic method of discussion.

MONT 111N

Literature and Medicine (spring)

For much of the twentieth century there has been a disconnect between the practice of medicine and the patient as person, as if the person were irrelevant to science’s diagnosis and treatment of the patient. With Elizabeth Kubler-Ross’s 1969 stress on the person’s five stages of grief in terminal illness (*On Death and Dying*), medicine began the long road back to a more humanistic approach to the patient. Though Kubler-Ross was herself later viewed as dehumanizing the patient as a mere series of stages, the impact of the humanities on medicine continued its steady march. With the AIDS pandemic, patient memoirs, effectively reasserting their personal identities and stake in their treatment, as well as patient histories from a doctor’s perspective or else that of family and friends, began to spring up everywhere. Today we have books on the clash between third world cultures and Western medicine and even detective novels with autistic narrators. Most recently we have seen the insertion of the field of narrative medicine into the curriculum of one of the country’s most prestigious medical schools. This course will explore the interaction of the humanities and medicine in both fiction and non-fiction.

MONT 112N

Utopian Visions (fall)

This class will focus on how writers from the 16th to the 21st century have envisioned alternative worlds. Utopian literature has deep philosophical and political roots which should become clear as we look most closely at those texts which give special

consideration to what we would now call “ecological” concerns. Works studied will include Thomas Moore's *Utopia*, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Bacon's *New Atlantis*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, Hawthorne's *Blithedale Romance*, Perkins' *Herland* and Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, described by the author as “an ambiguous Utopia.” Throughout the semester we will consider what attitudes toward science and nature are implicit in the world each author invents with words.

MONT 113N

Dystopian Visions (spring)

This class will consider literary texts which envision a future or alternative world which has somehow failed to cope successfully with unresolved conflicts between the World of Nature and the World of Technology. Texts will include Well's *The Time Machine*, the movies *Metropolis* and *Blade Runner*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, Percy's *Love in the Ruins*, Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle*, and Jame's *World without Men*. Though these works critique the ways in which technological innovation threatens nature, they could not physically exist had it not been for technology, whether that of the printing press or that of the camera. We will study carefully both the warnings these texts issue but also consider what answers they may suggest. Can nature and technology reach detente?

MONT 114N

Serendipitous Science (fall – 2 sections)

Most scientific discoveries come about as a result of a series of carefully planned and executed experiments. Occasionally, however, “even the best laid plans of mice and men....” lead to completely unexpected and beneficial results. In this course, we will look at various examples of such serendipitous discoveries and, with the benefit of hindsight, study what it was that went wrong that turned out so right. Specific examples will include both serendipitous and “pseudoserendipitous” results: the vulcanization of rubber, splitting the atom, the synthesis of urea (the first successful production of a “naturally occurring organic compound), and the discovery of various medical treatments.

MONT 115N

The Road to Armageddon (spring – 2 sections)

In this semester, we will follow the trail of scientific discoveries from early concepts of energy, to concepts of mass, to the interconversion of energy and mass represented by Einstein's famous equation: $E = mc^2$, the success of which led to the production of the first atomic weapons. Along the way we will encounter the professional jealousies, rivalries, misogyny, and ethical dilemmas, and honest differences of opinion that are often overlooked in the analysis of great discoveries.

❧THE SELF❧

MONT 100S

Childhood, Self, and Society (fall)

Though all people begin their lives as children, all children do not experience the same childhood. This seminar explores fundamental questions about childhood, self, and society: Why do cultures organize childhood differently? How do American childhoods differ across social class and generation? How do different childhoods influence the selves of children? Are some childhoods better than others? To explore these questions, we will examine research by social scientists in anthropology, history, sociology, and other disciplines. Students will be given opportunities for self-reflection, analyzing how their childhood and self compares with those of children in other times and places.

MONT 101S

Moral Selves in Childhood (spring)

“Kids are people too.” How might this claim influence the way we think about what it means to be a self? How do children exercise moral agency? What difference does their vulnerability make in our description of moral categories including sin and virtue? This seminar will draw principally on themes within the Christian traditions to explore the moral agency of children, their rights and responsibilities and the implications these have on the rights, responsibilities, and relationships of adults. We will consider examples in the contexts of a global consumer culture, violent conflict, and healthcare decision making.

MONT 102S

God, Country and Citizenship (fall)

We say we are “One Nation Under God?” What does that mean in a society that has disestablished religion? in a nation committed to religious liberty? What does it mean for the full and equal citizenship for all people? What happens when secular law and religious obligation conflict? How has the law structured our answers to these questions? How has religion structured our understanding of the law? These are among the questions we will examine in this course. We will give special attention to how church-state interactions contribute to or negate the inclusiveness of the political community and its commitments.

MONT 103S

Race, Sex, Ethnicity, Identity (spring)

How has race, sex and national origin limited participation in the political community and fostered separate group identities? How have those excluded sought inclusion? Does the quest for equality require group differentiated rights? Does the law allow it? Do group differentiated rights conflict with liberal and democratic commitments to equality and justice for all citizens? How has law created, constrained and defined American citizenship? What has been achieved? What remains to be done? What is the meaning of “We the People” yesterday and today? These are the central questions of this second semester course.

MONT 104S

Identity or Disability (fall)

In this seminar we will use deafness and the deaf population as a lens through which we can examine the complex issue of identity from a fresh and important viewpoint. In particular, we will examine the subjects of deafness and the Deaf community from a cultural and linguistic perspective rather than from a medical, pathological point of view. Throughout the seminar we will grapple with such questions as “Is deafness something to be “fixed” or is it something to be celebrated?” Students will be challenged to learn and think about how a majority (the hearing population) influences opinions, decisions, and policies that directly affect a minority group (the deaf population). By gaining an understanding of individuals different from ourselves, we can better understand how perceptions, attitudes, and, most importantly, actions, shape and influence our individual lives and the larger world around us.

MONT 105S

Identity and Disability (spring)

This seminar examines the impact of chronic illnesses and physical and psychiatric disabilities on the meanings of self. Framed by a sociological perspective, different illness narratives and memoirs provide an opportunity to think about illness and identity

politics, the reformulation of self within illness trajectories or after a disabling event. Whether it is polio, the onset of Alzheimer's, PTSD, an HIV/AIDS diagnosis, the discovery that one is manic depressive (or bipolar), a crippling crash, or becoming old, people's experiences of themselves are fused with societal definitions of well and not-well and 'normal' and 'not'. Throughout the semester we will explore the largely uncharted territory of how people find themselves managing life-altering illnesses and disabilities.

MONT 106S

The Great American Duel Begins (fall-2 sections)

Many debates that consume our nation today descend from the political duel fought by Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton at its birth. What is our relationship to nature, to government, to money, to God? Jefferson wanted a nation of farmers who governed themselves, Hamilton—a nation of investors connected by a strong central government. Both argued eloquently for political freedom, yet Jefferson owned slaves and Hamilton distrusted the people. We will study their famous publications and their private letters, their relationships and even their homes, to understand how their ideals and contradictions still shape us today.

MONT 107S

The Great Duel Continues (spring – 2 sections)

After immersing ourselves in the life, times, and writings of Jefferson and Hamilton, we will trace how their ideas have been spun into a web of American identity and policy. This semester will study the subsequent American revolutions their ideas helped to spark: Emancipation, states' rights, the New Deal, the Sixties, even today's division between Democrats and Republicans bear the stamp of both men. Ultimately, Jefferson and Hamilton offer models of the impact one person can have on a nation's history; their example will challenge us to think how we too might contribute to the work of our own day.

MONT 108S

Body & Mind from 1800 to 1900 (fall)

The curious relationship between the human mind and body has fascinated literary writers. When psychology emerged as a modern science in the nineteenth century, fiction especially began to probe and shape the way readers understand this reciprocal bond that determines who we are, what we feel and how we relate to one another. From *Frankenstein* to "The Yellow Wallpaper," we will examine literary techniques, cultural constructions and scientific theories to ask how these fictions define and convey love, terror and madness. Our aim will be to discover differences and continuities with our present understanding of how mind and body work.

MONT 109S

Memory and the Modern Novel (spring)

In the spring, we will move forward in time and focus on one process of mind that captivated twentieth-century literary writers: the nature of memory. We will ask what cognitive scientists know about how memory works; how remembering informs the narrative techniques of modern fiction; and why collective remembrance of war haunts British and American literature for much of the last century. Examining the fractured remembering that shapes Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* and why World War II is buried within Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*, we will together develop our own theory about modern fiction's fascination with recalling the past.

MONT 110S

Tales of Desire (fall)

Desire - a sense of longing for a person, object or outcome - is a critical motivating force shaping how the self interacts with the world, and has been a leading source of artistic inspiration. How did the representation of desire affect great works of the Western literary tradition from antiquity to the nineteenth century? We will examine the transformation of this theme over the ages and across various genres and cultures. The reading will include several interpretations of the Phaedra and Hippolytus tale, the evolution of the Don Juan myth, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*.

MONT 111S

Desire in Modern World (spring)

This course will explore the representation of desire in modern fiction, film and media. How is longing for self and others affected by reading fiction, watching films, using the internet or flipping through glossy magazines? How do contemporary art and media affect our desire and dreams? Is there a distinctive border between high and popular culture? To answer these questions, we will read and watch film adaptations of such masterpieces as Mann's *Death in Venice*, Nabokov's *Lolita*, Frisch's *Homo Faber*; Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and will analyze various popular culture/media artifacts.

MONT 112S

Eastern & Western Perspectives (fall)

What is the nature of the self? Is there really a 'self' or is what we call a "self" an illusion? What is the ultimate goal of human existence, if any? Is it to realize oneself or to transcend oneself? Are there qualities of selves or actions that promote harmony with the community or with nature at large? How is the self related to reality? Is there a permanent reality beneath the visible world of change—or is the motley of change all there is to the world? Is there a self/soul that exists beyond this life?

MONT 113S

Contemporary Challenges (spring)

Can one cultivate virtues, creativity, love, authenticity, harmony with nature, society and the rest of the world? How can one realize oneself and others while avoiding self-deception and destruction in the face of an increasingly materialistic world which challenges these qualities of the self? What social, political and environmental conditions are required for self realization? Does one have rights to these conditions and does one have obligations to enhance them?

MONT 114S

Ancient and Medieval Quests (fall)

This course studies the quest--the search for fame, truth or faith--in the ancient and medieval worlds. We'll examine the heroic quest in early epic and drama, such as *Gilgamesh*, the *Odyssey*, the *Oedipus* cycle and *Beowulf*, followed by readings of medieval chivalric quests such as *Yvain* and *Lancelot*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and *Lais* of Marie de France. The semester ends with *Everyman*, a medieval morality play. We will also screen a group of films set in the Middle Ages.

MONT 115S

The Quest in the Modern World (spring)

In the spring semester we turn to contemporary quests in a global world. First we will examine modernism—modern man or woman in search of a soul, to rephrase a line from psychoanalyst C. G. Jung-- through readings from Woolf, Joyce, Eliot, and Yeats

up to the beat generation and Kerouac. In the second half of the course we move to writings on the African diaspora by Hurston, Morrison, Jones, and others. As in the fall, texts will be supplemented with films--classics of the road trip genre and takes on the absurd.

MONT 116S

Insiders (fall)

Political power in ancient Rome was throughout its history a jealously guarded prize, held and obtainable by only a select few. Despite the exclusive nature of Roman politics, we can also identify a pattern of accessibility, where it was possible for someone with talent, energy, and connections to join the ranks of the governing elite. In this course we study how you could become a political insider in ancient Rome. By reading orations, letters, and rhetorical treatises, we consider the role that family, friends, education, and comportment played in winning – and retaining – a seat in the inner halls of power.

MONT 117S

Outsiders (spring)

In the hierarchical, stratified, and rigid society that was ancient Rome, there were always those who got the short end of the stick. This course focuses on the people whose political rights were curtailed or who ran afoul of the state: women, slaves, freedmen, and early Christians. We attempt to understand their experience of the world, while recognizing that their voices have been all but silenced. We consider how they wielded influence, and the efforts of the powerful to put them in their place, by turning them, in comedy, history, satires, and novels, into weirdos and monsters, time and again.