

Spring 2026

IS104 Forms of Love

AY/BA1/Begin in Berlin Core Course

Module: Medieval Literatures and Cultures

Instructors: [Giulia Clabassi](#), [Tracy Colony](#), [Sinem Kılıç](#), [David Hayes](#), [Geoff Lehman](#), [Katalin Makkai](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

In this course, we trace the development of the concept of love from its roots in diverse intellectual traditions to its cultural prominence in the European Middle Ages. Perhaps in no other time or place has a single concept held as much cultural power. Yet the meaning of love was sharply contested: both the cloister and aristocratic court claimed love as its domain. Moreover, the secular and religious meanings of love were capable of a rich interplay. Focusing upon this interplay, the course traces the journey of a specific form of love (fin'amor or so-called "courtly love") from Muslim-ruled, multicultural al-Andalus to Occitania (Provence) to Northern France in the 12th century. Although the Medieval world seems alien to us, and in many ways has come to stand for what we now reject, its images and ideals of love formed, as C.S. Lewis says, "the background of European literature for eight hundred years," and still exert their influence on contemporary culture.

IS212 Early Modern Science

BA2 Core Course

Module: Early Modern Science

Instructors: [Ewa Atanassow](#), [Maria Avxentevskaya](#), [Giulia Clabassi](#), [Gilad Nir](#), [Thomas Raysmith](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The course seeks to introduce the scientific advances of the early modern period (with particular focus on the seventeenth century): the developments that defined the principles, methods and frameworks of modern natural science as it exists today. We not only explore the philosophical basis and conclusions of this historical development, but its experimental procedures, and come to an understanding of their practical form and the meaning of their results. In the first section, we

concentrate on the new understanding of space, matter and motion deriving from the cosmologies and mechanical theories of this era (the basis of modern physics). In the second, we consider the remarkable advances in the life sciences at this period (examining anatomical and medical texts), and finally, attend to the emergence of what came to be called "chemistry" out of the mystical practice of alchemy. Included in the course are visits to exhibitions and collections in Berlin, which will help us to reflect on the way in which scientific practices and their discoveries have been historicized, and why we ought to enhance our critical awareness of such historicizing.

IS322 Modernism Core course - Global Modernisms

BA3-4/PY Core Course

Module: Modernism

Coordinator: [James Harker](#), [Laura Scuriatti](#), [Gilad Nir](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Modernism is generally thought of as a period characterized in literature and art by radical experimentation, by the invention and re-invention of new forms, and by an aesthetic that privileged the present, the modern, the new. As such, it also reacted to and reflected on the process of modernization and different notions of modernity. Modernism was, in fact, a complex constellation of phenomena that saw close interaction among the arts, literature, politics, philosophy, science and economics, and that questioned the most basic categories of aesthetic, political and philosophical thought. The course will focus on three related topics, which will be investigated in relation to each other through a variety of philosophical and theoretical texts, literature, artworks and architecture from across the globe: 1) theories of modernism, modernity and modernization; 2) the role played cities as increasingly dominant cultural centers, hegemonic forces and subject matter of modernist literature and the arts; 3) the increasing expansion of industry, colonization and global commerce, with a particular focus on literary responses to the perceived dehumanization brought about by technological advancement, bureaucracy and exploitation of the environment.

IS123 Academic Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Module: Senior Core Colloquium

Coordinators: [Ulrike Wagner](#), [Nina Tecklenburg](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This seminar is a training in the methods of academic research. Focusing on

representative contemporary research in the humanities and the social sciences, it supports students in proceeding with their own individual research projects by focusing on the essential elements of independent scholarly work: the choice of a topic or object of study; the outline of the main components of an article or scholarly paper; finding, gathering, collating and interpreting the sources needed for the project; correct citation, attribution, and bibliographical documentation, and lastly, the effective presentation of the final work, as well as peer review and constructive feedback. Including the participation of thesis supervisors and other faculty members, this course accompanies the first semester of preparation for the thesis project.

Art and Aesthetics Foundational

FA114 Beginning Painting

Module: Artistic Practice

Instructor: [Katie Kirbach](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This studio arts painting course is designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of painting, emphasizing materials and process-oriented learning. Painting provides a direct means of “seeing” by engaging all the senses of the individual artist in the activity of making images. Expression and discovery through a studio course serve to heighten visual awareness, and observe and understand space. Students will have the opportunity to experiment with various painting materials and techniques, including acrylic, watercolor, and gouache, among others. This class will provide in-depth painting instructions and cover topics such as color theory, composition, brushwork, etc. Alongside this hands-on approach, the course incorporates a variety of references to art history, exploring the works of a number of artists, including their mode of perception, background, and historical context. These insights will open a space through which a deeper understanding of the art form is gained, and students can incorporate such a new perspective into their work. The concrete framework for this course includes individual and group discussions, as well as practical exercises in the form of short workshops and exhibition discussions linked to excursions.

FA103 Found Fragments and Layered Lines: Mixed-Media Techniques for Drawing and Collage

Module: Artistic Practice

Instructor: [John Kleckner](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This studio art course explores contemporary and historical approaches to drawing and collage. Suitable for all levels of artistic ability, the goal is to enhance aesthetic comprehension and personal expression through the creation of mixed-media drawings and collages. We begin by transcribing embodied experience into visual compositions, attending to our visual perception to strengthen the coordination of mind, eyes, and hands. Course activities will ask students to: make analytical drawings of figures and/or object arrangements, develop conceptual methods of composing, make abstractions from nature by working outdoors, gather materials from Berlin's famous Flohmärkte (flea markets) to use in collages and assemblages, work collaboratively on large-scale drawings, and experiment with innovative combinations of text and imagery. A core theme will be exploring the potential to generate new and surprising content from the juxtaposition of found printed fragments and hand-drawn lines. Of special interest for our class discussions will be works created by current and historical Berliners, such as Dada artist Hannah Höch. The majority of classes are studio work sessions. There will also be several group critiques, weekly slideshow presentations, and contemporary art gallery visits. The semester culminates in the "Open Studios" exhibition in the BCB arts building at Monopol Berlin. Students are expected to be self-motivated, open to exploring new ways of working, and comfortable sharing their artworks in class.

Studio work is the priority, so this course will require a significant amount of time working outside of class sessions. Prospective students should email their questions to the professor directly at: j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu

FA106 Beginners Black and White Photography Class: The Slow Photo

Module: Artistic Practice

Instructor: [April Gertler](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The Slow Photo is an introduction to Black and White photography. The class will focus on learning how to use a manual camera and finding one's way in an analogue darkroom. Students will be exposed to the rich photographic history of Berlin through presentations, discussions and a historical walk through parts of the city. The historical component of the class will cover works by Berlin-based photographers from Helga Paris to Michael Schmidt. Assignments throughout the semester will mirror various photo styles used in the historical examples discussed, from Portraiture to Street Photography. Camera techniques and Black and White printing will be the fundamental basis of the class. Students will leave the class

understanding the time commitment and concentration it takes to produce beautiful Black and White analog images.

FA108 Beginners in Digital Photography - Your own point of view

Module: Artistic Practice

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Carla Åhlander](#)

This course offers an introduction to digital photography with a focus on artistic expression. It is designed for those who wish to learn digital photography at a basic level — covering the fundamentals of the camera, including exposure, composition, and lighting — while also developing their photographic work into a personal project. The course includes in-class critiques and discussions on the choice of method, technique, subject matter, and presentation. Parts of the course will involve reviewing work of both contemporary and historical photographers, alongside introductions to the technical and theoretical tools you will need for your own practice. There will be opportunities to explore both documentary approaches and staged photography. Throughout the semester, students will complete a series of assignments that will serve as the basis for developing their own photo series. We will ask questions such as: What is my unique way of looking at the world? What is my own point of view? It is an advantage if you can use your own camera in this course, but a limited number of cameras are also available to borrow from BCB for shorter periods of time.

FA112 Marble Stone Sculpture

Module: Artistic Practice

Instructors: [Raphael Beil](#), [Tobia Silvotti](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This seminar introduces students to basic techniques of working stone by hand, using simple, traditional tools such as hammers and various chisels. The aim is to create our own marble sculpture. Along the way, we learn how to handle the necessary tools, from the first rough work, to the differentiation and finally the partial grinding and polishing of the marble. We learn the basics of three-dimensional form, proportion and structure. In order to create our own work of art, we also discuss the possible sources of creativity, and ways of accessing inspiration and the imagination to create a very individual sculpture. The seminar will conclude with a presentation of all sculptures and joint analysis of the different artistic languages present in the

works. The workshops will be accompanied by lectures on the works and public sculpture projects of Raphael Beil and other contemporary sculptors. Weather permitting, our workshops will take place in a sheltered beautiful garden in Reinickendorf on the grounds of Monopol. Tools, possibly light machinery and work tables as well as work protection will be provided. No previous experience is necessary to participate in the course.

Please note there is a fee of €40 for participation in this course to cover material expenses.

FA145 Foundations of Filmmaking: The Short Form

Module: Artistic Practice

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Janina Schabig](#)

This hands-on course explores the technical foundations of filmmaking. You will be introduced to different kinds of cameras, learn all about your camera and how to use its manual settings, work with natural and studio lighting, record and design your own sound and navigate through the basics of editing in Adobe Premiere. Class sessions combine brief lectures, screenings, discussion, and practical exercises, encouraging you to develop both a critical eye and a personal voice in filmmaking. By the end of the course, you will have produced a series of short works, and built the skills to begin translating your ideas into moving images.

FA107 Ceramics

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Joon Park](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This studio course covers broad ceramics-making techniques at the foundational level. It explores a variety of ceramic materials and methods for the production of functional ware and ceramic art objects. Students learn basic skills of clay preparation, clay recycling, wheel-throwing, hand-building, slip casting, glazing, and applying decorations. The selected works will be glazed and fired in collaboration with the Ceramic Kingdom in Neukoelln.

Please note there is a fee of €50 for participation in this course to cover material expenses and firing processes.

FA104 Introduction to the Art of Porcelain-Making

Component: Elective

Professor: [Maria Volokhova](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Discover the world of “white gold”. This is what the precious porcelain has always been called because of its special properties: white, translucent, graceful, non-porous material that is harder than ceramics and not that easy to produce. During playful and creative experimentation with the material and through trying out a variety of decorative possibilities, we uncover the fundamental principles of porcelain casting. The course involves studying porcelain and its properties, creating an individual piece, building a plaster mold, and casting a limited edition in porcelain.

FA113 Introduction to Glass Making

Component: Elective

Professor: [Nadania Idriss](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

During this class students will learn the 2000-year-old technique of making molds that are used to make glass objects. We will go on a journey from the positive form to thinking about negative and hollow spaces. We will also learn how to cut and polish glass so that each object will go from prototype to working model to finished object. A pop-up show at the end of the class will allow all of us to reflect on the process and show our sculptures to a wider audience. Mold-blowing is a technique of shaping glass by using negative forms made of plaster. The gaffer (main glassblower) prepares the molten glass and blows it into the mold. Participants will learn to assist the gaffer and have an interactive experience of the process. This workshop is geared toward an experience of learning a new and exciting technique, so do not be discouraged if your piece is not successful. Join the class with lots of ideas and don't be afraid to try!

Please note there is a fee of €50 for participation in this course to cover material expenses.

FA156 Dance Lab: Body Space Image. Dance and Visual Arts

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Eva Burghardt](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

In addition to ongoing movement training as an essential foundation, this course explores the crossover between dance and visual arts, looking at dance and choreography outside of its usual context, the theater space. Drawing from contemporary dance and improvisation techniques, students will train their body as an “instrument,” deepening its awareness, sense of presence and musicality, practicing listening to oneself as well as others. Starting from this inner awareness, we bring attention to our surroundings, making connections to other bodies, objects, space and architecture. Weather permitting, we will leave the dance floor and take our explorations out into the neighborhood to work site-specifically. How can we refresh our eyes and reshape experiences of known places with our present body? How can the experience of the surroundings inspire, inform and bring form to the dances within us or create relationships with the environment we live in? How does our body relate to forms, lines, textures, colors, sounds, or the history or memories of a place? How does it change our experience of a place as a dancer or spectator? Open score improvisations and tasks will be assigned individually and to the group. A final presentation, including sketches, experiments and scores created by students will be shown at the end of the semester. Throughout the course, we will look at and discuss the works of those artists who widened the understanding of dance and choreography, crossing the borders between dance and visual media, e.g., postmodernists Trisha Brown, Simone Forti and Anna Halprin and contemporary figures such as Tino Sehgal, William Forsythe, Willi Dorner or Anne Imhoff. Two off-site excursions to performances in Berlin, including discussions and a written reflection afterwards, will be an integral part of the course. Two off-site excursions to performances in Berlin, including discussions and a written reflection afterwards, will be an integral part of the course.

SC215 Reflecting Human-Environment Relations (Through Sound)

Modules: Artistic Practice / Approaching Art through Theory

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Francisca Rocha Gonçalves](#)

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

In light of the serious impact of human activities on the environment, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and noise pollution, we must rethink our relationship with the natural world. A significant barrier to this reimagining is the long-lasting division

between 'culture' and 'nature' in Western thought. Through a cross-disciplinary approach that includes acoustic ecology, the arts, environmental artistic activism, and natural history, this foundational course reflects on recent and ongoing efforts to dismantle such a divide, providing students with a blend of theoretical and practical knowledge. Students will critically examine the reasons behind the societal separation of nature and culture and how this division has shaped our environmental perceptions and actions. They will develop a deeper appreciation of the interconnectedness of all life forms and the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in addressing complex ecological issues. Approaches include investigating how soundscapes and acoustic ecology can challenge conventional boundaries of the nature-culture divide, reflecting on the potential of creative expression to re-connect culture and nature, examining the role of environmental artistic activism in addressing noise pollution and ecosystem impact, and engaging in hands-on practical activities and fieldwork to connect theory with real-world experiences. Alongside the practical activities, students will engage with critical theoretical readings by thinkers such as Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway, and Jane Bennett, as well as composers and sound ecologists such as Murray Schafer and Hildegard Westerkamp. These readings will offer insights into the historical separation of nature and culture, the contemporary efforts to overcome this divide, the broader implications of the Anthropocene, and how artists work to create awareness of the environmental crisis.

TH133 Elfriede Jelinek: A Study of Directing and Acting Postdramatic Texts

Module: Artistic Practice

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Julia Hart](#)

No female playwright has so strongly influenced the contemporary theatre in Germany as the Austrian Nobel Laureate Elfriede Jelinek. In the fall of 2017, she was awarded the prestigious Faust prize for her relentless, searing observations and analysis of social phenomena. She focuses on three targets in her playwriting: capitalist consumer society, the remnants of Austria's fascist past in public and private life, and the systematic exploitation and oppression of women in a capitalist-patriarchal society. Her work is highly controversial. How has Elfriede Jelinek's writing affected theatre-making in Germany? How can her writing be considered postdramatic? Theatre scholar Karen Jürs-Mundby writes that Jelinek and other postdramatic playwrights "produce what could be called 'open' or 'writerly' texts for performance, in the sense that they require the spectators to become active co-writers of the performance text. The spectators are no longer just filling in the predictable gaps in a dramatic narrative but are asked to become active witnesses who reflect on their own meaning-making." Language is

not necessarily the speech of characters- if there are definable characters at all! In this seminar, we will read, discuss, and rehearse scenes from the most recent plays of Elfriede Jelinek available in English translation as directors, actors, and dramaturges. This course will explore concrete methods of directing and acting when working with postdramatic theatre texts. We will also attend performances of Jelinek's plays at theaters in Berlin and discuss the new documentary film "Elfriede Jelinek - Language Unleashed" directed by Claudia Müller.

FM212 Freud and Jung Go to the Movies: Psychoanalysis and Film

Module: Approaching Arts through Theory

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Matthias Hurst](#)

In this introductory course, basic concepts and structures of psychoanalysis – as theorized by Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung – will be explored in relation to their significance for film and film interpretation. Contemporary with the rise of cinema, psychoanalysis has been both a method of understanding film, and itself a subject of film representation. It has provided a model for cinematic form, through the idea of the dream as an articulation of repressed desire, and the unconscious as the source of the power and vividness of visual images. It has also inspired feminist film theory like Laura Mulvey's concept of the "male gaze" that has become one of the cornerstones of modern film criticism. Films we will watch and discuss include *Freud* (1962, John Huston), *Il portiere di notte* (1974, Liliana Cavani), *Riddles of the Sphinx* (1977, Laura Mulvey), *Equus* (1977, Sidney Lumet), *The Company of Wolves* (1984, Neil Jordan), *Malina* (1991, Werner Schroeter), *When Night Is Falling* (1995, Patricia Rozema), *Marseille* (2004, Angela Schanelec), *A Dangerous Mind* (2011, David Cronenberg), *Enemy* (2013, Denis Villeneuve) and *Un divan à Tunis* (2019, Manele Labidi).

AH201 Made in Germany? Art and National Identity, 1800-2000

Modules: Art and Artists in Context

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Aya Soika](#)

Questions of belonging and national identity constitute a particularly complex issue in German art and culture. In the early 1800s, painters such as Caspar David Friedrich looked back to the Gothic period and promoted the ideal of the Holy

Roman Empire. His work was part of attempts to create a kind of German national unity in the aftermath of the French invasions undertaken by Napoleon I. With the development of Germany into an industrial powerhouse and a unified national-imperial state from the 1870s onwards, artists felt the need to explore new ways of seeing. At the same time, they continued to struggle with questions of identity: was it 'appropriate' to look for aesthetic inspiration to Paris, to the 'enemy nation' defeated in 1871? And how did the so-called 'Expressionists' position themselves within the European art scene? Debates over art's social and political relevance intensified in the early decades of the twentieth century, and were taken up again with new fervor after the First World War. The legendary 'Weimar years' – which only lasted from 1919 until Hitler's rise to power in 1933 – saw the emergence of Berlin Dada, New Objectivity and the Bauhaus. The Nazi dictatorship followed a cultural agenda shaped by racial ideology. After its collapse in the wake of war and genocide, the relationship between art and its societal meaning became even more contested. Theodor Adorno proclaimed that it was barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz. Collective memories of the German past, and the Cold War conflict between capitalist democracy and socialist dictatorship, continued to influence artistic production. This class offers an introduction to Germany's difficult history through the examination of artistic positions from Romanticism over pre-World War one Expressionism, the Weimar Years, and Nazi Cultural Politics to the memorial discourses in the post-reunification period of the 1990s. Field trips to museums are an integral part of the course.

TH215 Visibility, intervention, and collective empowerment: Contemporary approaches to Performance Making

Modules: Artistic Practice

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Azadeh Ganjeh](#)

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

This course investigates contemporary methods of performance-making in theatre and global performance art, with a focus on inclusive narrative strategies that foreground co-creation, care, and cultural critique. The course combines theory and practice through readings, embodied exercises, and group experiments. Central themes include: co-creation with communities as a dramaturgical strategy, performing care and consent, decolonizing narratives and challenging representational hierarchies, creating spaces of appearance and aesthetic resistance. We will discuss and reflect on approaches used by artists and collectives such as *She She Pop*, *Tania Bruguera*, *Tania El Khoury*, *La Pocha Nostra*, *Rabih Mroué*, and *Forensic Architecture*. Through collaborative creation, students will develop works using personal and everyday material, devising techniques, and interdisciplinary

methodologies—including task-based creation, co-narration, and score-making. The course welcomes students from all backgrounds, with or without prior performance experience.

AR204 Art and Interpretation

Modules: Art Objects and Experience

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Geoff Lehman](#)

Describing a painting, the art historian Leo Steinberg wrote: “The picture conducts itself the way a vital presence behaves. It creates an encounter.” In this course, we will encounter works of art to explore the specific dialogue each creates with a viewer and the range of interpretive possibilities it offers. More specifically, the course will examine various interpretive approaches to art, including formal analysis, iconography, social and historical contextualism, aestheticism, phenomenology, and psychoanalysis. Most importantly, we will engage interpretation in ways that are significant both within art historical discourse and in addressing larger questions of human experience and (self-)knowledge, considering the dialogue with the artwork in its affective (emotional) as well as its intellectual aspects. The course will be guided throughout by sustained discussion of a small number of individual artworks, with a focus on pictorial representation (painting, drawing, photography), although sculpture and installation art will also be considered. We will look at works from a range of different cultural traditions, and among the artists we will focus on are Xia Gui, Giorgione, Bruegel, Mirza Ali, Velázquez, Hokusai, Manet, Picasso, Man Ray, Martin, and Sherman. Readings will focus on texts in art history and theory but also include philosophical and psychoanalytic texts (Pater, Wölfflin, Freud, Merleau-Ponty, Barthes, Clark, and Krauss, among others). Visits to Berlin museums to experience works of art firsthand are an integral part of the course.

AR210 New Materialisms in Philosophy and Art

Modules: Approaching Art through Theory

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Nisaar Ulama](#)

*“Language matters. Discourse matters. Culture matters.
There is an important sense in which the only thing that does not seem to matter
anymore is matter.”*

Karen Barad

In this seminar we explore, re-think and revisit relationships between the human and nature. Recent attempts to do this have followed criticism of Western thinking (and acting) as being rooted deeply in a violent division: a sovereign *human subject* on the one hand with *non-human, natural objects* as merely passive material on the other. Alongside this critique, we want to read proposals for a different understanding of what human or nature could possibly mean – after all, climate change and the Anthropocene have fundamentally challenged a hierarchical idea of the relation between these two categories. Understanding matter and materialities as the *non-human* will be of crucial interest. With this aim in mind, we examine the perspectives of philosophy, science and arts. For example, Karen Barad proposes learning from quantum physics to overcome the idea of fixed oppositions defining subjects and objects. Instead, *entanglements*, *intra-actions* and *diffractions* should open up a relational space in which agency is situated. Ultimately, humans are not the only beings in the world who can act. We consider artistic and curatorial as well as theoretical approaches to the potential of matter (e.g. Pierre Huyghe in documenta13). We look at manifestations of the aesthetic which deal with what Jane Bennett calls *vibrant matter*. Further readings for our seminar will include texts by Donna Haraway, Nancy Tuana, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Rosi Braidotti and Bruno Latour.

Artistic Practice Foundational

FA114 Beginning Painting

Module: Artistic Practice

Professor: [Katie Kirbach](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This studio arts painting course is designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of painting, emphasizing materials and process-oriented learning. Painting provides a direct means of “seeing” by engaging all the senses of the individual artist in the activity of making images. Expression and discovery through a studio course serve to heighten visual awareness, and observe and understand space. Students will have the opportunity to experiment with various painting materials and techniques, including acrylic, watercolor, and gouache, among others. This class will provide in-depth painting instructions and cover topics such as color theory, composition, brushwork, etc. Alongside this hands-on approach, the course incorporates a variety of references to art history, exploring the works of a number of artists, including their mode of perception, background, and historical context. These insights will open a space through which a deeper understanding of the art form is gained, and students can incorporate such a new perspective into their work. The concrete framework for this course includes individual and group discussions, as

well as practical exercises in the form of short workshops and exhibition discussions linked to excursions.

FA103 Found Fragments and Layered Lines: Mixed-Media Techniques for Drawing and Collage

Module: Artistic Practice

Instructor: [John Kleckner](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This studio art course explores contemporary and historical approaches to drawing and collage. Suitable for all levels of artistic ability, the goal is to enhance aesthetic comprehension and personal expression through the creation of mixed-media drawings and collages. We begin by transcribing embodied experience into visual compositions, attending to our visual perception to strengthen the coordination of mind, eyes, and hands. Course activities will ask students to: make analytical drawings of figures and/or object arrangements, develop conceptual methods of composing, make abstractions from nature by working outdoors, gather materials from Berlin's famous Flohmärkte (flea markets) to use in collages and assemblages, work collaboratively on large-scale drawings, and experiment with innovative combinations of text and imagery. A core theme will be exploring the potential to generate new and surprising content from the juxtaposition of found printed fragments and hand-drawn lines. Of special interest for our class discussions will be works created by current and historical Berliners, such as Dada artist Hannah Höch. The majority of classes are studio work sessions. There will also be several group critiques, weekly slideshow presentations, and contemporary art gallery visits. The semester culminates in the "Open Studios" exhibition in the BCB arts building at Monopol Berlin. Students are expected to be self-motivated, open to exploring new ways of working, and comfortable sharing their artworks in class.

Studio work is the priority, so this course will require a significant amount of time working outside of class sessions. Prospective students should email their questions to the professor directly at: j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu

FA106 Beginners Black and White Photography Class: The Slow Photo

Module: Artistic Practice

Instructor: [April Gertler](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

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focus on learning how to use a manual camera and finding one's way in an analogue darkroom. Students will be exposed to the rich photographic history of Berlin through presentations, discussions and a historical walk through parts of the city. The historical component of the class will cover works by Berlin-based photographers from Helga Paris to Michael Schmidt. Assignments throughout the semester will mirror various photo styles used in the historical examples discussed, from Portraiture to Street Photography. Camera techniques and Black and White printing will be the fundamental basis of the class. Students will leave the class understanding the time commitment and concentration it takes to produce beautiful Black and White analog images.

FA108 Beginners in Digital Photography - Your own point of view

Module: Artistic Practice

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Professor: [Carla Åhländer](#)

This course offers an introduction to digital photography with a focus on artistic expression. It is designed for those who wish to learn digital photography at a basic level — covering the fundamentals of the camera, including exposure, composition, and lighting — while also developing their photographic work into a personal project. The course includes in-class critiques and discussions on the choice of method, technique, subject matter, and presentation. Parts of the course will involve reviewing work of both contemporary and historical photographers, alongside introductions to the technical and theoretical tools you will need for your own practice. There will be opportunities to explore both documentary approaches and staged photography. Throughout the semester, students will complete a series of assignments that will serve as the basis for developing their own photo series. We will ask questions such as: What is my unique way of looking at the world? What is my own point of view? It is an advantage if you can use your own camera in this course, but a limited number of cameras are also available to borrow from BCB for shorter periods of time.

FA112 Marble Stone Sculpture

Module: Artistic Practice

Instructor: [Raphael Beil](#), [Tobia Silvotti](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This seminar introduces students to basic techniques of working stone by hand, using simple, traditional tools such as hammers and various chisels. The aim is to create our own marble sculpture. Along the way, we learn how to handle the necessary tools, from the first rough work, to the differentiation and finally the partial grinding and polishing of the marble. We learn the basics of three-dimensional form, proportion and structure. In order to create our own work of art, we also discuss the possible sources of creativity, and ways of accessing inspiration and the imagination needed to create a very individual sculpture. The seminar will conclude with a presentation of all sculptures and joint analysis of the different artistic languages present in the works. The workshops will be accompanied by lectures on the works and public sculpture projects of Raphael Beil and other contemporary sculptors. Weather permitting, our workshops will take place in a sheltered beautiful garden in Reinickendorf on the grounds of Monopol. Tools, possibly light machinery and work tables as well as work protection will be provided. No previous experience is necessary to participate in the course.

Please note there is a fee of €40 for participation in this course to cover material expenses.

FA145 Foundations of Filmmaking: The Short Form

Module: Artistic Practice

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Janina Schabig](#)

This hands-on course explores the technical foundations of filmmaking. You will be introduced to different kinds of cameras, learn all about your camera and how to use its manual settings, work with natural and studio lighting, record and design your own sound and navigate through the basics of editing in Adobe Premiere. Class sessions combine brief lectures, screenings, discussion, and practical exercises, encouraging you to develop both a critical eye and a personal voice in filmmaking. By the end of the course, you will have produced a series of short works, and built the skills to begin translating your ideas into moving images.

FA107 Ceramics

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Joon Park](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This studio course covers broad ceramics-making techniques at the foundational level. It explores a variety of ceramic materials and methods for the production of functional ware and ceramic art objects. Students learn basic skills of clay preparation, clay recycling, wheel-throwing, hand-building, slip casting, glazing, and applying decorations. The selected works will be glazed and fired in collaboration with the Ceramic Kingdom in Neukoelln.

Please note there is a fee of €50 for participation in this course to cover material expenses and firing processes.

FA104 Introduction to the Art of Porcelain-Making

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Maria Volokhova](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Discover the world of “white gold”. This is what the precious porcelain has always been called because of its special properties: white, translucent, graceful, non-porous material that is harder than ceramics and not that easy to produce. During playful and creative experimentation with the material and through trying out a variety of decorative possibilities, we uncover the fundamental principles of porcelain casting. The course involves studying porcelain and its properties, creating an individual piece, building a plaster mold, and casting a limited edition in porcelain.

FA113 Introduction to Glass Making

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Nadania Idriss](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

During this class students will learn the 2000-year-old technique of making molds that are used to make glass objects. We will go on a journey from the positive form to thinking about negative and hollow spaces. We will also learn how to cut and polish glass so that each object will go from prototype to working model to finished object. A pop-up show at the end of the class will allow all of us to reflect on the process and show our sculptures to a wider audience. Mold-blowing is a technique of shaping glass by using negative forms made of plaster. The gaffer (main glassblower) prepares the molten glass and blows it into the mold. Participants will learn to assist the gaffer and have an interactive experience of the process. This workshop is geared toward an experience of learning a new and exciting technique,

so do not be discouraged if your piece is not successful. Join the class with lots of ideas and don't be afraid to try!

Please note there is a fee of €50 for participation in this course to cover material expenses.

FA156 Dance Lab: Body Space Image. Dance and Visual Arts

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Eva Burghardt](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

In addition to ongoing movement training as an essential foundation, this course explores the crossover between dance and visual arts, looking at dance and choreography outside of its usual context, the theater space. Drawing from contemporary dance and improvisation techniques, students will train their body as an "instrument," deepening its awareness, sense of presence and musicality, practicing listening to oneself as well as others. Starting from this inner awareness, we bring attention to our surroundings, making connections to other bodies, objects, space and architecture. Weather permitting, we will leave the dance floor and take our explorations out into the neighborhood to work site-specifically. How can we refresh our eyes and reshape experiences of known places with our present body? How can the experience of the surroundings inspire, inform and bring form to the dances within us or create relationships with the environment we live in? How does our body relate to forms, lines, textures, colors, sounds, or the history or memories of a place? How does it change our experience of a place as a dancer or spectator? Open score improvisations and tasks will be assigned individually and to the group. A final presentation, including sketches, experiments and scores created by students will be shown at the end of the semester. Throughout the course, we will look at and discuss the works of those artists who widened the understanding of dance and choreography, crossing the borders between dance and visual media, e.g., postmodernists Trisha Brown, Simone Forti and Anna Halprin and contemporary figures such as Tino Sehgal, William Forsythe, Willi Dorner or Anne Imhoff. Two off-site excursions to performances in Berlin, including discussions and a written reflection afterwards, will be an integral part of the course. Two off-site excursions to performances in Berlin, including discussions and a written reflection afterwards, will be an integral part of the course.

SC215 Reflecting Human-Environment Relations (Through Sound)

Modules: Art, Science, Ecology

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Francisca Rocha Gonçalves](#)

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

In light of the serious impact of human activities on the environment, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and noise pollution, we must rethink our relationship with the natural world. A significant barrier to this reimagining is the long-lasting division between 'culture' and 'nature' in Western thought. Through a cross-disciplinary approach that includes acoustic ecology, the arts, environmental artistic activism, and natural history, this foundational course reflects on recent and ongoing efforts to dismantle such a divide, providing students with a blend of theoretical and practical knowledge. Students will critically examine the reasons behind the societal separation of nature and culture and how this division has shaped our environmental perceptions and actions. They will develop a deeper appreciation of the interconnectedness of all life forms and the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in addressing complex ecological issues. Approaches include investigating how soundscapes and acoustic ecology can challenge conventional boundaries of the nature-culture divide, reflecting on the potential of creative expression to re-connect culture and nature, examining the role of environmental artistic activism in addressing noise pollution and ecosystem impact, and engaging in hands-on practical activities and fieldwork to connect theory with real-world experiences. Alongside the practical activities, students will engage with critical theoretical readings by thinkers such as Bruno Latour, Donna Haraway, and Jane Bennett, as well as composers and sound ecologists such as Murray Schafer and Hildegard Westerkamp. These readings will offer insights into the historical separation of nature and culture, the contemporary efforts to overcome this divide, the broader implications of the Anthropocene, and how artists work to create awareness of the environmental crisis.

TH133 Elfriede Jelinek: A Study of Directing and Acting Postdramatic Texts

Module: Artistic Practice

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Julia Hart](#)

No female playwright has so strongly influenced the contemporary theatre in Germany as the Austrian Nobel Laureate Elfriede Jelinek. In the fall of 2017, she was awarded the prestigious Faust prize for her relentless, searing observations and analysis of social phenomena. She focuses on three targets in her playwriting: capitalist consumer society, the remnants of Austria's fascist past in public and

private life, and the systematic exploitation and oppression of women in a capitalist-patriarchal society. Her work is highly controversial. How has Elfriede Jelinek's writing affected theatre-making in Germany? How can her writing be considered postdramatic? Theatre scholar Karen Jürs-Mundby writes that Jelinek and other postdramatic playwrights "produce what could be called 'open' or 'writerly' texts for performance, in the sense that they require the spectators to become active co-writers of the performance text. The spectators are no longer just filling in the predictable gaps in a dramatic narrative but are asked to become active witnesses who reflect on their own meaning-making." Language is not necessarily the speech of characters- if there are definable characters at all! In this seminar, we will read, discuss, and rehearse scenes from the most recent plays of Elfriede Jelinek available in English translation as directors, actors, and dramaturges. This course will explore concrete methods of directing and acting when working with postdramatic theatre texts. We will also attend performances of Jelinek's plays at theaters in Berlin and discuss the new documentary film "Elfriede Jelinek - Language Unleashed" directed by Claudia Müller.

FM212 Freud and Jung Go to the Movies: Psychoanalysis and Film

Module: Art History, Culture, Society

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Matthias Hurst](#)

In this introductory course, basic concepts and structures of psychoanalysis – as theorized by Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung – will be explored in relation to their significance for film and film interpretation. Contemporary with the rise of cinema, psychoanalysis has been both a method of understanding film, and itself a subject of film representation. It has provided a model for cinematic form, through the idea of the dream as an articulation of repressed desire, and the unconscious as the source of the power and vividness of visual images. It has also inspired feminist film theory like Laura Mulvey's concept of the "male gaze" that has become one of the cornerstones of modern film criticism. Films we will watch and discuss include *Freud* (1962, John Huston), *Il portiere di notte* (1974, Liliana Cavani), *Riddles of the Sphinx* (1977, Laura Mulvey), *Equus* (1977, Sidney Lumet), *The Company of Wolves* (1984, Neil Jordan), *Malina* (1991, Werner Schroeter), *When Night Is Falling* (1995, Patricia Rozema), *Marseille* (2004, Angela Schanelec), *A Dangerous Mind* (2011, David Cronenberg), *Enemy* (2013, Denis Villeneuve) and *Un divan à Tunis* (2019, Manele Labidi).

AH201 Made in Germany? Art and National Identity, 1800-2000

Modules: Art History, Culture and Society

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Aya Soika](#)

Questions of belonging and national identity constitute a particularly complex issue in German art and culture. In the early 1800s, painters such as Caspar David Friedrich looked back to the Gothic period and promoted the ideal of the Holy Roman Empire. His work was part of attempts to create a kind of German national unity in the aftermath of the French invasions undertaken by Napoleon I. With the development of Germany into an industrial powerhouse and a unified national-imperial state from the 1870s onwards, artists felt the need to explore new ways of seeing. At the same time, they continued to struggle with questions of identity: was it 'appropriate' to look for aesthetic inspiration to Paris, to the 'enemy nation' defeated in 1871? And how did the so-called 'Expressionists' position themselves within the European art scene? Debates over art's social and political relevance intensified in the early decades of the twentieth century, and were taken up again with new fervor after the First World War. The legendary 'Weimar years' – which only lasted from 1919 until Hitler's rise to power in 1933 – saw the emergence of Berlin Dada, New Objectivity and the Bauhaus. The Nazi dictatorship followed a cultural agenda shaped by racial ideology. After its collapse in the wake of war and genocide, the relationship between art and its societal meaning became even more contested. Theodor Adorno proclaimed that it was barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz. Collective memories of the German past, and the Cold War conflict between capitalist democracy and socialist dictatorship, continued to influence artistic production. This class offers an introduction to Germany's difficult history through the examination of artistic positions from Romanticism over pre-World War one Expressionism, the Weimar Years, and Nazi Cultural Politics to the memorial discourses in the post-reunification period of the 1990s. Field trips to museums are an integral part of the course.

TH215 Visibility, intervention, and collective empowerment: Contemporary approaches to Performance Making

Modules: Artistic Practice

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Azadeh Ganjeh](#)

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

This course investigates contemporary methods of performance-making in theatre and global performance art, with a focus on inclusive narrative strategies that foregrounds co-creation, care, and cultural critique. The course combines theory and practice through readings, embodied exercises, and group experiments. Central

themes include: co-creation with communities as a dramaturgical strategy, performing care and consent, decolonizing narratives and challenging representational hierarchies, creating spaces of appearance and aesthetic resistance. We will discuss and reflect on approaches used by artists and collectives such as *She Pop*, *Tania Bruguera*, *Tania El Khoury*, *La Pocha Nostra*, *Rabih Mroué*, and *Forensic Architecture*. Through collaborative creation, students will develop works using personal and everyday material, devising techniques, and interdisciplinary methodologies—including task-based creation, co-narration, and score-making. The course welcomes students from all backgrounds, with or without prior performance experience.

AR204 Art and Interpretation

Module: Art History, Culture, Society

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Geoff Lehman](#)

Describing a painting, the art historian Leo Steinberg wrote: “The picture conducts itself the way a vital presence behaves. It creates an encounter.” In this course, we will encounter works of art to explore the specific dialogue each creates with a viewer and the range of interpretive possibilities it offers. More specifically, the course will examine various interpretive approaches to art, including formal analysis, iconography, social and historical contextualism, aestheticism, phenomenology, and psychoanalysis. Most importantly, we will engage interpretation in ways that are significant both within art historical discourse and in addressing larger questions of human experience and (self-)knowledge, considering the dialogue with the artwork in its affective (emotional) as well as its intellectual aspects. The course will be guided throughout by sustained discussion of a small number of individual artworks, with a focus on pictorial representation (painting, drawing, photography), although sculpture and installation art will also be considered. We will look at works from a range of different cultural traditions, and among the artists we will focus on are Xia Gui, Giorgione, Bruegel, Mirza Ali, Velázquez, Hokusai, Manet, Picasso, Man Ray, Martin, and Sherman. Readings will focus on texts in art history and theory but also include philosophical and psychoanalytic texts (Pater, Wölfflin, Freud, Merleau-Ponty, Barthes, Clark, and Krauss, among others). Visits to Berlin museums to experience works of art firsthand are an integral part of the course.

AR210 New Materialisms in Philosophy and Art

Module: Art, Science, Ecology

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Nisaar Ulama](#)

*"Language matters. Discourse matters. Culture matters.
There is an important sense in which the only thing that does not seem to matter
anymore is matter."*

Karen Barad

In this seminar we explore, re-think and revisit relationships between the human and nature. Recent attempts to do this have followed criticism of Western thinking (and acting) as being rooted deeply in a violent division: a sovereign *human subject* on the one hand with *non-human, natural objects* as merely passive material on the other. Alongside this critique, we want to read proposals for a different understanding of what human or nature could possibly mean – after all, climate change and the Anthropocene have fundamentally challenged a hierarchical idea of the relation between these two categories. Understanding matter and materialities as the *non-human* will be of crucial interest. With this aim in mind, we examine the perspectives of philosophy, science and arts. For example, Karen Barad proposes learning from quantum physics to overcome the idea of fixed oppositions defining subjects and objects. Instead, *entanglements*, *intra-actions* and *diffractions* should open up a relational space in which agency is situated. Ultimately, humans are not the only beings in the world who can act. We consider artistic and curatorial as well as theoretical approaches to the potential of matter (e.g. Pierre Huyghe in documenta13). We look at manifestations of the aesthetic which deal with what Jane Bennett calls *vibrant matter*. Further readings for our seminar will include texts by Donna Haraway, Nancy Tuana, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Rosi Braidotti and Bruno Latour.

Economics Foundational

MA110 Mathematical Foundations

Module: Mathematics

Instructor: [Ann-Kathrin Blankenberg](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course focuses on the (basic) tools important for the study of political science and economics: analytic geometry, functions of a single variable, and calculus. The course will also be of interest for any student with a general interest in mathematics, or who does not intend advanced specialization in economics. This course is highly recommended for students who want to specialize in Economics, but do not have a strong background in mathematics. After successfully completing this course they

will have to take (the more advanced) Mathematics for Economics course in the fall semester.

This course also fulfills the mathematics and science requirement for humanities students.

EC210 Microeconomics

Module: Microeconomics

Instructor: [Israel Waichman](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Microeconomics is the study of how individual economic units (households and firms) interact to determine outcomes (allocation of goods and services) in a market setting. This course further develops principles and analytical methods introduced by the “Principles of Economics” and the “Mathematics for Economics” courses. The first part of the course deals with the consumer side. We will study the underlying assumptions about consumer preferences and behavior that lead to the creation of individual and market demands. The second part of the course deals with the theory of the firm (i.e., how production and costs create individual and market supply). The third part of the course deals with the market as a whole, combining consumer-based demand with producer-based supply. Here we also study issues related to the efficiency of markets and the workings of welfare economics. Finally, we will learn positive and normative characteristics of alternative market structures: perfect competition, monopoly, monopolistic competition, and oligopoly.

Prerequisites: Principles of Economics and Mathematics for Economics.

EC211 Macroeconomics

Module: Macroeconomics

Instructor: [Stephan Müller](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Macroeconomics is a branch of **economics** that deals with the performance, structure, behavior, and decision-making of an **economy** as a whole. In this course, the functioning of the aggregate economy is introduced and analyzed starting from basic aggregate data measurement and concepts. It provides an overview of macroeconomic issues: the determination of output, employment, unemployment, interest rate, and inflation. The course also evaluates the scope for policy intervention to improve macroeconomic performance. In the first part, we study the

traditional short run model, including goods market and financial markets. In the second part, we will extend it to include medium run developments, such as labor market and inflation dynamics. In the third part, we take a long run perspective and study factors influencing the long run growth potential of a country.

Prerequisite: Principles of Economics

MA151 Introduction to Statistics

Module: Statistics

Instructor: [Ann-Kathrin Blankenberg](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The goal of this course is to introduce students to quantitative methods in economics and politics. The course covers the basics of descriptive and inferential statistics, including probability theory, hypothesis testing. To facilitate students' ability to understand and critically engage with these methods, examples of quantitative social science research are discussed throughout the course. Classes are complemented with exercises to build students' skills in applying the learned methods independently. Many of these exercises use data from public opinion surveys, which cover a wide range of social, economic, and political topics. Working with this survey data, students will also have the opportunity to explore research questions of their own. At the end of the course, students will be able to read and engage with the majority of modern quantitative research. They also will be well prepared to pursue a variety of more advanced quantitative research courses.

This course also fulfills the mathematics and science requirement for humanities students.

Ethics and Politics Foundational

AH201 Made in Germany? Art and National Identity, 1800-2000

Modules: Methods in Social and Historical Studies

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Aya Soika](#)

Questions of belonging and national identity constitute a particularly complex issue in German art and culture. In the early 1800s, painters such as Caspar David Friedrich looked back to the Gothic period and promoted the ideal of the Holy

Roman Empire. His work was part of attempts to create a kind of German national unity in the aftermath of the French invasions undertaken by Napoleon I. With the development of Germany into an industrial powerhouse and a unified national-imperial state from the 1870s onwards, artists felt the need to explore new ways of seeing. At the same time, they continued to struggle with questions of identity: was it 'appropriate' to look for aesthetic inspiration to Paris, to the 'enemy nation' defeated in 1871? And how did the so-called 'Expressionists' position themselves within the European art scene? Debates over art's social and political relevance intensified in the early decades of the twentieth century, and were taken up again with new fervor after the First World War. The legendary 'Weimar years' – which only lasted from 1919 until Hitler's rise to power in 1933 – saw the emergence of Berlin Dada, New Objectivity and the Bauhaus. The Nazi dictatorship followed a cultural agenda shaped by racial ideology. After its collapse in the wake of war and genocide, the relationship between art and its societal meaning became even more contested. Theodor Adorno proclaimed that it was barbaric to write poetry after Auschwitz. Collective memories of the German past, and the Cold War conflict between capitalist democracy and socialist dictatorship, continued to influence artistic production. This class offers an introduction to Germany's difficult history through the examination of artistic positions from Romanticism over pre-World War one Expressionism, the Weimar Years, and Nazi Cultural Politics to the memorial discourses in the post-reunification period of the 1990s. Field trips to museums are an integral part of the course.

PS119 Nation-States and Democracy

Module: Political Systems and Structures

Instructor: [Riaz Partha Khan](#), [Boris Vormann](#), [Aysuda Kölemen](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

Why and how do political systems differ from one another? Which processes have led to the formation of distinct political regimes? And how do these historical variations affect politics today? In addressing these questions in a wide set of contexts, this course provides an introduction to key theoretical approaches and concepts in the comparative study of politics. The focus will be on core topics in political development such as state and nation-building, the role of the state in the economy, its relationship to civil society and processes of democratization. We will also look at different types of political regimes, electoral and party systems—and the ways in which they affect the structure, functioning, and social role of political institutions. We explore these topics from a comparative perspective in combining theoretical texts with case studies. By the end of the course, students will be able to

understand important topics in domestic politics, grasp the diversity of political systems and regimes, and analyze current political developments.

PS146 Globalization and International Relations

Module: Political Systems and Structures

Instructor: [Nassim Abi Ghanem](#), [Aaron Allen](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The discipline of International Relations is devoted to the study of relations between states and societies in the international order. This international order is highly unequal. Some states and societies tend to benefit from the international order, while others are under constant pressure to adapt, and consequently find themselves in numerous relationships of dependency from which they can break free only with difficulty. At the same time, these societies, located in the so-called Global South, are particularly badly affected by the climate crisis. In this seminar, we first address the historical emergence of the current international order, and reflect on how the discipline of International Relations considers this order. In the second section of the course, we will familiarize ourselves with the conceptual tools for analyzing the interplay of coloniality, political economy, and climate crisis. In the third section, we discuss current geopolitical challenges and the role of states and international organizations in addressing these.

PS185 Introduction to Policy Analysis

Module: Political Systems and Structures

Instructor: [Gale Raj](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

This course introduces students to policy analysis and policy making. Public policies are courses of action undertaken by governments to solve societal problems by changing behavior. They include laws, regulations, incentives, and providing services, goods and information. It is important to remember that policies not only include what governments choose to do but also what they choose not to do. Policies by individual governments, groups of governments and intergovernmental organizations can impact outcomes for people, communities, industries, and the environment in different parts of the world. As an introductory course, during the first part of the course, we will spend time learning about and discussing what characterizes and defines a public policy, and how such policies are formulated,

implemented, and evaluated. During the second half, we will apply these foundational concepts by examining and discussing real-world policy case studies addressing current policy problems within a domestic and global context. With this course, students will gain an understanding of a holistic approach to public policy and policy analysis. Students will also learn how to communicate about policy problems, options and recommendations verbally, visually, and in writing.

PL115 Foundations of Political Theory

Module: History of Political Thought

Instructor: [Riaz Partha Khan](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course provides a broad survey of the main intellectual traditions of modern political thought. Our exploration of political theory will proceed from the close reading and analysis of seminal texts that are presented both conceptually and, for the most part, chronologically. The primary focus will be placed on examining the historical antecedents of some of the foundational concepts and practices that distinguish our political behavior and institutions today. While taking account of the historical complexities and stylistic conventions of each text, the course will highlight the recurrent themes that animate these influential writings and continue to shape our contemporary understanding of politics. In particular, the lectures and discussions will be geared towards tracing the conceptual underpinnings of current forms of political organization, such as republicanism, liberal democracy, the modern state, and nationalism, and their effects on the concerns of law, justice, and morality. Some of the critical issues to be discussed include the divergent views of human nature and ideal society, the structure of authority and sovereignty, the rise of political morality, the defense of liberty, equality and justice, and the models of democratic practice.

PS252 Latin America: Colonial Legacies, Modernity, and Indigenous Politics

Module: Political Systems and Structures

Instructor: [Jorge Vega](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course offers a historically grounded and interdisciplinary survey of Latin America's political transformations, with a special focus on how colonial legacies have shaped modern institutions and continue to influence Indigenous life and politics. Drawing from history, political science, and cultural studies, this course will

trace the region's trajectory from the colonial era through independence movements to the present day. Students will also analyze the complex dynamics between states, social movements, and Indigenous communities, examining how these relationships have evolved under various development models and modernization projects.

PL277 Medical Ethics

Module: Ethics and Moral Philosophy

Instructor: [Sinem Derya Kılıç](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The decisions taken in medical treatment are often the subject of complex philosophical and moral debate, drawing on concepts and principles that long predate new technological developments. This course addresses the ethical basis of medical research and practice, including distinct ideas of autonomy, health, well-being, and disease. We cover some of the most prominent and fraught issues that have arisen in the legal regulation of medical care, such as euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, cultural and historical differences surrounding questions of reproduction, and issues of information-flow, informed consent, privacy, truth-telling and confidentiality, as well as questions of medical racism, social justice and rights to healthcare, human research, genetic enhancement, and the ethical dilemmas that arise during global pandemics as we experience them today.

This course fulfills the mathematics and science requirement for humanities students.

PS179 Postcolonial Theory and Politics

Component: Political Systems and Structures

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Aysuda Kölemen](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

How do the forms of knowledge produced by nineteenth-century European imperialism continue to influence the manner in which formerly colonized countries and regions are perceived and understood today? This course examines the ways in which the discipline of political science has been shaped by an historical power imbalance between Europe and the 'Global South,' and explores how postcolonial theory--the study of the conditions and process of decolonization--can be applied to

that field. We consider issues such as the material and cultural impact of colonialism; movements for national liberation; efforts at nation-building, in order to critically examine the modes in which scholarly knowledge about non-Western history, politics and society have been constructed and reproduced. In the second part of the course, we contextualize postcolonial theory by surveying selected contexts and exploring the relationship between the political and the postcolonial. Our inquiry will be structured thematically, addressing--along with colonialism and decolonization--topics such as the nature of the authoritarian state, varieties of nationalism, the politics of gender and sexuality, cultural politics, the relationship between the military and the state, development and humanitarian aid, forms of war, revolution, and the phenomenon of enforced population displacement.

PL141 Play

Module: Ethics and Moral Philosophy

Instructor: [David Hayes](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course is an inquiry into the origin, nature, and purpose of play. Questions to be considered will include: How do we know when something is playful? Is play the opposite of what is serious? of what is boring? of what is work? Are there important differences between animal and human play? Between the play of children and adults? What is a game, and what is a sport? Do these have value beyond rest or pleasure? Would the best life be one spent "playing the finest games," as a character in Plato's *Laws* suggests? Or are there darker aspects to play that ought to make us cautious about it? Is there not only play but a "deep play" experience that the anthropologist Clifford Geertz found in the practice of Balinese cockfighting, for example? How might one distinguish such play from the increasing "gamification" of organizations, products, and services in the contemporary world? Is our increasingly "gameful world" a good thing? What are the connections between play and art, religion, mental health, love, and culture in general? What is the connection between education and play? (In Greek, "paidia" = play; "paideia" = education). In educating ourselves about play, are we also playing? Texts will include some of the major theoretical statements about play (Plato, Schiller, Huizinga, Winnicott), articles in contemporary sociology and philosophy, as well as expressions of play in literature, film, and visual art.

PL208 Introduction to Existentialism

Module: Ethics and Moral Philosophy

Instructor: [Tracy Colony](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

One of the most important philosophical movements of the 20th century is unquestionably Existentialism. The philosophy of existence developed by Jean-Paul Sartre can be seen as the clearest expression of this movement. In this course we will read selections from Sartre and other core representatives of French Existentialism. However, this reading will be prepared for by tracing through important philosophical lines of influence which the existentialists often acknowledged in the works of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Heidegger. All texts will be read in translation, however, parallel readings in the original French or German will be supported and encouraged.

PT149 Civic Engagement and Engaged Research: Berlin Lab

Module: Methods in Social and Historical Studies

Instructor: [Ewa Atanassow](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

This is an [GHEA21](#) Network Collaborative Course ([NCC](#))

Over the semester we will explore historical, philosophical and practical elements of civic engagement while also investigating the underlying question of what it means to be an engaged citizen in the early 21st century. Together, students will address issues related to political participation, civil society, associational life, social justice, and personal responsibility, particularly in relation to the liberal democratic order (and its rupture). The class reflects a balance between theory and practice, exploring notions of civic life while supporting students to be active and thoughtful participants in the communities in which they are situated. More specifically, we will begin to map the local community engagement landscape in Berlin (with all its fault lines) and connect this into theories of civil society and histories of citizen activism in Europe and globally. This work will feed into engaged student research, participation in local and global initiatives, hand-on project development trainings, and the crafting by each student of a project proposal aimed at improving their local communities (however defined). The course will feature seminar discussions, workshops on interviewing and organizing, and field trips to relevant sites, as well as guest lectures by scholars, activists, members of local NGOs, government officials and foundation representatives.

SO204 Urban Ethnography Workshop

Module: Methods in Social and Historical Studies

Instructor: [Agata Lisiak](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

This course introduces students to key qualitative methods in urban ethnography, with an emphasis on participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Each weekly seminar combines theoretical discussion with a hands-on workshop, offering students opportunities to experiment with a range of methodological and analytical tools. Following an initial exploration of the ethical and political considerations of urban research, students will practice field note-taking, design and peer-review interview guides, conduct interviews, analyze data using thematic coding, and write up their findings. Throughout the semester, students will also discuss different examples of ethnographic writing, engaging critically with questions of voice, positionality, and representation.

Literature and Rhetoric Foundational

LT230 Write What You *Don't* Know

Module: Written Arts

Professor: [Joshua Yaffa](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. Credits

What happens when we flip the usual adage of “Write what you know” on its head? In this course, students will seek to imagine, understand, and describe those people and places that are far different from their own—and discover the possibilities of reading and writing outside of the familiar or comfortable. In this course, students will read a range of non-fiction literature—on life in far-flung foreign locales, hardship and deprivation in the American inner city, among other selections—in which authors have purposely put themselves in unknown or unfamiliar situations, to varying results. Some encounters produce insight and empathy; others reveal how broad the gap in experience can be. Can the act of reporting and writing bridge this divide, or does it remain impassible? Led by Joshua Yaffa, writer for The New

Yorker and Bard College Berlin's writer-in-residence, students will consider their own relationship to foreign, strange, unfamiliar, and even challenging settings and subjects. The course will center on a close reading of a selection of non-fiction and journalistic texts; students will then embark on reporting and writing assignments of their own.

LT204 Contemporary Currents in East African Literature

Module: Literary History

Professor: [Boneace Chagara](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The eastern part of sub-Saharan Africa—spanning East Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania) and the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea and Ethiopia)—is a vibrant literary landscape. This seminar explores the richness and complexity of contemporary Eastern African literatures through fiction, poetry, narrative nonfiction and digital texts of the 21st Century. The seminar will be structured thematically and historically, encouraging students to trace aesthetic, formal, as well as political continuities and ruptures in Eastern African writing over the past two decades. We will start our inquiry by mapping the shifting terrain of contemporary Eastern African writing, highlighting its historical and geographical contexts. We will then explore how this writing addresses layered textures of everyday life amid shifting political, cultural, and ecological landscapes. We will address themes like the afterlives of empire, urbanization, migration, diasporic subjectivity, the politics of gender and sexuality, among others. Drawing on African philosophical thought and postcolonial literary theory, our approach will emphasize close reading and contextual analysis while paying close attention to form, language, and aesthetics. Students will critically reflect on literature's power to unsettle dominant narratives and imagine alternative lived realities. We shall engage with exemplary texts from Eastern African authors—including Nuruddin Farah and Abdourahman Waberi (Somalia/Djibouti), Scholastique Mukasonga (Rwanda), Maaza Mengiste (Ethiopia), Jennifer Nansubuga and Doreen Baingana (Uganda), Mukoma wa Ngugi, Makena Onjerika, Yvonne Adhiambo and Billy Kahora (Kenya), Haji Gora Haji, Adam Shafi and Abdulrazak Gurnah (Tanzania/Zanzibar)—as well as selections from *Kwani?*, *Jalada Africa*, and *Bahati Books*. Supplemental readings from critical theorists and scholars like Achille Mbembe, Walter D. Mignolo and Paul Gilroy will aid our textual and contextual readings.

LT142 Writing Fiction

Module: Written Arts

Instructor: [Rebecca Rukeyser](#)

Credits 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This class introduces creative writing theory and methodology through the study of, and work within, the genre of fiction. We'll examine the formal and structural components necessary to crafting fiction before tackling craft elements of tone, character building, point of view, temporality, dialogue, and scene. We'll read widely, spending equal time with both canonical writers (e.g. James Baldwin, Katherine Mansfield, Yasunari Kawabata, J.G. Ballard) and contemporary writers (e.g. Carmen Maria Machado, Etgar Keret, Mariana Enriquez, Helen Oyeyemi). This class's assignments include: discussing the distinctive qualities and the malleability of various genres, completing generative writing assignments, and an overview of the process of workshopping written pieces. Students will complete a portfolio of revised short pieces based on in-class prompts as well as a 1,000-5,000-word short story.

LT227 Prophecy: Literature and Divine Intervention

Module: Literary History / Close Reading

Instructor: [Jeffrey Champlin](#)

Credits 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course examines the claim of the prophetic word to call down a higher power that shakes moral and political complacency. Moving from ancient and medieval religious texts to romantic poetry and modernist literature, we look at how prophecy both draws on and interrupts key genres and institutions. Some key questions: How might studying prophetic pronouncements open creative approaches to the future? How do they relate to enlightenment theories of historical progress? Can they help us critique our current cultural fascination with dystopia? What new forms does prophecy take in a supposedly secular age? We will be particularly interested in the role of the minority voice and the relation between the call to action and the new audiences and actors that respond to it. Readings include: texts from the Vedic and Abrahamic traditions, Aeschylus, Hildegard of Bingen, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Joachim of Fiore, William Blake, Heinrich von Kleist, Percy Shelley, William Butler Yeats, James Baldwin, Etel Adnan, and Miranda Mellis

LT217 Detective Fiction

Module: Close Reading

Instructor: [Laura Scuriatti](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

As he got older, the notoriously misanthropic English novelist Kingsley Amis insisted that he would not read anything that did not begin with the words "a shot rang out." What is it about the detective fiction form that exercises a grip on readers, even when all aesthetic interest or ornament has fallen away? This fundamentally compelling quality has allowed detective fiction to nestle at the heart of even the most intricate and complex literary performances (think of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*), or alternatively, to explore issues of identity and social codes that might be deemed too challenging outside of an entertaining, plot-driven mode. The figure of the detective (usually an exceptional character of some kind) has become a cultural icon. Focusing on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century works, we will examine the basic components of the genre, its cultural history (including the advent of professional women detectives), and the connection between detective stories, urban modernity and new epistemologies (for example: criminology and psychoanalysis). Our discussion will be informed by the literary theories have drawn inspiration from the enigmas of detective fiction. The course includes work by Edgar Allan Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle, Virginia Woolf, Dorothy L. Sayers, Walter Benjamin, Jorge Luis Borges, Gertrude Stein, Ernst Bloch, Tzvetan Todorov, Gerard Génette, Sara Lodge.

The following courses are cross-listed with Art and Aesthetics:

FM212 Freud and Jung Go to the Movies: Psychoanalysis and Film

Module: Critical and Cultural Theory

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Matthias Hurst](#)

In this introductory course, basic concepts and structures of psychoanalysis – as theorized by Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung – will be explored in relation to their significance for film and film interpretation. Contemporary with the rise of cinema, psychoanalysis has been both a method of understanding film, and itself a subject of film representation. It has provided a model for cinematic form, through the idea of the dream as an articulation of repressed desire, and the unconscious as the source of the power and vividness of visual images. It has also inspired feminist film theory like Laura Mulvey's concept of the "male gaze" that has become one of the cornerstones of modern film criticism. Films we will watch and discuss include *Freud* (1962, John Huston), *Il portiere di notte* (1974, Liliana Cavani), *Riddles of the Sphinx* (1977, Laura Mulvey), *Equus* (1977, Sidney Lumet),

The Company of Wolves (1984, Neil Jordan), *Malina* (1991, Werner Schroeter), *When Night Is Falling* (1995, Patricia Rozema), *Marseille* (2004, Angela Schanelec), *A Dangerous Mind* (2011, David Cronenberg), *Enemy* (2013, Denis Villeneuve) and *Un divan à Tunis* (2019, Manele Labidi).

Politics Foundational

PS119 Nation-States and Democracy

Module: Comparative Politics

Instructor: [Riaz Partha Khan](#), [Boris Vormann](#), [Aysuda Kölemen](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

Why and how do political systems differ from one another? Which processes have led to the formation of distinct political regimes? And how do these historical variations affect politics today? In addressing these questions in a wide set of contexts, this course provides an introduction to key theoretical approaches and concepts in the comparative study of politics. The focus will be on core topics in political development such as state and nation-building, the role of the state in the economy, its relationship to civil society and processes of democratization. We will also look at different types of political regimes, electoral and party systems—and the ways in which they affect the structure, functioning, and social role of political institutions. We explore these topics from a comparative perspective in combining theoretical texts with case studies. By the end of the course, students will be able to understand important topics in domestic politics, grasp the diversity of political systems and regimes, and analyze current political developments.

PS146 Globalization and International Relations

Module: International Studies and Globalization

Instructor: [Nassim Abi Ghanem](#), [Aaron Allen](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The discipline of International Relations is devoted to the study of relations between states and societies in the international order. This international order is highly unequal. Some states and societies tend to benefit from the international order, while others are under constant pressure to adapt, and consequently find themselves in numerous relationships of dependency from which they can break free

only with difficulty. At the same time, these societies, located in the so-called Global South, are particularly badly affected by the climate crisis. In this seminar, we first address the historical emergence of the current international order, and reflect on how the discipline of International Relations considers this order. In the second section of the course, we will familiarize ourselves with the conceptual tools for analyzing the interplay of coloniality, political economy, and climate crisis. In the third section, we discuss current geopolitical challenges and the role of states and international organizations in addressing these.

PS185 Introduction to Policy Analysis

Module: Policy Analysis

Instructor: [Gale Raj](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

This course introduces students to policy analysis and policy making. Public policies are courses of action undertaken by governments to solve societal problems by changing behavior. They include laws, regulations, incentives, and providing services, goods and information. It is important to remember that policies not only include what governments choose to do but also what they choose not to do. Policies by individual governments, groups of governments and intergovernmental organizations can impact outcomes for people, communities, industries, and the environment in different parts of the world. As an introductory course, during the first part of the course, we will spend time learning about and discussing what characterizes and defines a public policy, and how such policies are formulated, implemented, and evaluated. During the second half, we will apply these foundational concepts by examining and discussing real-world policy case studies addressing current policy problems within a domestic and global context. With this course, students will gain an understanding of a holistic approach to public policy and policy analysis. Students will also learn how to communicate about policy problems, options and recommendations verbally, visually, and in writing.

PL115 Foundations of Political Theory

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Riaz Partha Khan](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course provides a broad survey of the main intellectual traditions of modern political thought. Our exploration of political theory will proceed from the close reading and analysis of seminal texts that are presented both conceptually and, for the most part, chronologically. The primary focus will be placed on examining the historical antecedents of some of the foundational concepts and practices that distinguish our political behavior and institutions today. While taking account of the historical complexities and stylistic conventions of each text, the course will highlight the recurrent themes that animate these influential writings and continue to shape our contemporary understanding of politics. In particular, the lectures and discussions will be geared towards tracing the conceptual underpinnings of current forms of political organization, such as republicanism, liberal democracy, the modern state, and nationalism, and their effects on the concerns of law, justice, and morality. Some of the critical issues to be discussed include the divergent views of human nature and ideal society, the structure of authority and sovereignty, the rise of political morality, the defense of liberty, equality and justice, and the models of democratic practice.

PS252 Latin America: Colonial Legacies, Modernity, and Indigenous Politics

Module: Elective

Instructor: [Jorge Vega](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course offers a historically grounded and interdisciplinary survey of Latin America's political transformations, with a special focus on how colonial legacies have shaped modern institutions and continue to influence Indigenous life and politics. Drawing from history, political science, and cultural studies, this course will trace the region's trajectory from the colonial era through independence movements to the present day. Students will also analyze the complex dynamics between states, social movements, and Indigenous communities, examining how these relationships have evolved under various development models and modernization projects.

PL277 Medical Ethics

Module: Elective / Moral and Political Thought

Instructor: [Sinem Derya Kılıç](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The decisions taken in medical treatment are often the subject of complex philosophical and moral debate, drawing on concepts and principles that long predate new technological developments. This course addresses the ethical basis of

medical research and practice, including distinct ideas of autonomy, health, well-being, and disease. We cover some of the most prominent and fraught issues that have arisen in the legal regulation of medical care, such as euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, cultural and historical differences surrounding questions of reproduction, and issues of information-flow, informed consent, privacy, truth-telling and confidentiality, as well as questions of medical racism, social justice and rights to healthcare, human research, genetic enhancement, and the ethical dilemmas that arise during global pandemics as we experience them today.

This course fulfills the mathematics and science requirement for humanities students.

PS179 Postcolonial Theory and Politics

Component: Elective

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Aysuda Kölemen](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

How do the forms of knowledge produced by nineteenth-century European imperialism continue to influence the manner in which formerly colonized countries and regions are perceived and understood today? This course examines the ways in which the discipline of political science has been shaped by an historical power imbalance between Europe and the 'Global South,' and explores how postcolonial theory--the study of the conditions and process of decolonization--can be applied to that field. We consider issues such as the material and cultural impact of colonialism; movements for national liberation; efforts at nation-building, in order to critically examine the modes in which scholarly knowledge about non-Western history, politics and society have been constructed and reproduced. In the second part of the course, we contextualize postcolonial theory by surveying selected contexts and exploring the relationship between the political and the postcolonial. Our inquiry will be structured thematically, addressing--along with colonialism and decolonization--topics such as the nature of the authoritarian state, varieties of nationalism, the politics of gender and sexuality, cultural politics, the relationship between the military and the state, development and humanitarian aid, forms of war, revolution, and the phenomenon of enforced population displacement.

PT149 Civic Engagement and Engaged Research: Berlin Lab

Component: Elective

Instructors: [Ewa Atanassow](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

This is an [GHEA21](#) Network Collaborative Course ([NCC](#))

Over the semester we will explore historical, philosophical and practical elements of civic engagement while also investigating the underlying question of what it means to be an engaged citizen in the early 21st century. Together, students will address issues related to political participation, civil society, associational life, social justice, and personal responsibility, particularly in relation to the liberal democratic order (and its rupture). The class reflects a balance between theory and practice, exploring notions of civic life while supporting students to be active and thoughtful participants in the communities in which they are situated. More specifically, we will begin to map the local community engagement landscape in Berlin (with all its fault lines) and connect this into theories of civil society and histories of citizen activism in Europe and globally. This work will feed into engaged student research, participation in local and global initiatives, hand-on project development trainings, and the crafting by each student of a project proposal aimed at improving their local communities (however defined). The course will feature seminar discussions, workshops on interviewing and organizing, and field trips to relevant sites, as well as guest lectures by scholars, activists, members of local NGOs, government officials and foundation representatives.

Art and Aesthetics Advanced

AH284 Photography in Germany, 1871 to the Present

Module: Artists, Genres, Movements

Instructor: Ying Sze Pek

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course explores how the history of photography in Germany was intertwined with the country's encounter with modernity. Students will be introduced to canonical episodes and concepts from the history and theory of photography since the time of Germany's unification in 1871. We cover topics such as photography and

nationalism, Weimar-era photographic experimentation and the New Vision, photography and memory, photo-conceptualism, East German perspectives, and photography's digital futures. Our course discusses the work of photographers and artists including Bernd and Hilla Becher, Sibylle Bergemann, Hannah Höch, Candida Höfer, László Moholy-Nagy, August Sander, and Tobias Zielony. We also engage black diasporic and postmigration perspectives to studying this material, addressing approaches and discourses that are urgent and emerging in the field of German cultural studies. Our investigations of photography and Germany thus account for the country's intersectional histories of colonialism, fascism, socialism, and migration. Taking advantage of our location in Berlin, the class visits key photography institutions and collections in the city in selected weeks. For the course assignment, students will write a research paper and may choose to develop a research-based artwork or a piece of writing that incorporates their photographic works, such as a visual essay.

AH302 Ideas of the Aesthetic

Module: Aesthetics and Art Theory

Instructor: [Katalin Makkai](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

"Aesthetics" and "aesthetic" are terms that are often taken for granted inside as well as outside academic discourse. We speak of aesthetic experiences and judgments and qualities, and we employ "aesthetics" to designate the study of such matters. Although their root is taken from the Greek, the now-familiar terms (in their now-familiar usages) are, however, comparatively new. They are commonly regarded as having been introduced into the philosophical lexicon in the eighteenth century—a few hundred years ago. This course studies some of the texts that were key to the discovery, or perhaps the invention, of the "aesthetic". What work was the idea meant to do? How did its evolution retain or reconfigure its original senses and purposes? Is the idea of the aesthetic problematic, ideological, or chimerical? Do we need an idea of the aesthetic to think about art?

FA317 Advanced Painting: Illusionistic Surfaces

Module: Media, Practices, Techniques

Instructor: [John Kleckner](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This advanced studio course is designed to cultivate technical and conceptual

abilities within the field of contemporary painting. A central focus of this course will be ideas, issues, and techniques relating to realistic depiction, illusionistic space, and mimetic representation in paint. Students will develop and pursue individual projects while discussing and reflecting on the power and politics of the gaze, the frame, vantage points, and linear perspective. Students will explore mimesis as visual metaphor and experience the differences between painting from photographic references, direct observation, and imagination. Artworks will primarily be made with oil and acrylic paints, but experimentation with other materials is encouraged and supported. Weekly sessions will include slideshow presentations, readings, and discussions. The majority of class time will be spent painting. Class size is limited to ensure each student has adequate studio space and additional time with the instructor for individual feedback and support. Evaluations and critiques will occur at midterm and at the end of term. The semester culminates in the "Open Studios" exhibition at the BCB arts building at Monopol Berlin.

Studio work is the priority; this course will require a significant amount of time working outside of class sessions. Previous experience with painting required. Prospective students should email inquiries to the instructor directly at: j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu

FA308 Advanced Photography - Finding the Stories

Module: Media, Practices, Techniques

Instructor: [Carla Åhlander](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course integrates practical image-making with photographic analysis to explore the relationship between narrative and photography. It is a critique-based class aimed at developing awareness of what constitutes a narrative and how the meaning of a photograph is constructed.

In addition to producing their own narrative photo series, participants will develop their ability to look at, read, and discuss photographs critically. We will address issues such as subjectivity and objectivity, the private and the public, as well as technical considerations like lighting conditions. The course will also include collaborative exercises between students. Together, we will explore a range of aesthetic, practical and conceptual questions, asking for example, "What is my attitude toward the subject?" or "Where does this narrative begin or end?" During class there will be short photographic assignments to be completed and presented within the same session. For this, everyone must bring their own digital camera (a phone camera is sufficient).

Students will also receive assignments to complete between classes and present in the following session. From approximately the middle of the semester, each student will develop an independent, larger, self-directed project. For this final project, each

student must have access to their own digital camera. They will also produce a written text reflecting on the process and the concepts behind their work. The semester will conclude with a group exhibition or an alternative form of presentation.

FA325 The Photo Zine: A Subversive Phenomenon

Module: Media, Practices, Techniques

Instructor: [April Gertler](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The concept of a "Zine" (pronounced 'zeen') refers to small-circulation (typically an edition of 100 or less), self-published works of original or appropriated images and texts, often reproduced using a copy machine / printer / duplicator. Zines, or 'fanzines' can be traced back to the 1940s. They emerged from science fiction literature initially, created by fans who generated small self published magazines about the stories they loved. Zines famously played a significant role in the punk movement of the 1970s and continue to be found in many subcultures. They often embrace a "do-it-yourself" ethos, challenging established norms of professional design and publishing. Zines offer an alternative, confident, and self-aware mode of expression. Photography is an essential component of most Zines. The Zine functions as a space for visual storytelling, but can also be used to create a preview of an ongoing photographic project. Historically, the kind of photography used in Zines is highly diverse, ranging from personal photographs made specifically for the Zine, to found images from any source. This class will work with printers, copy machines and a RISO duplicator to create Photo Zines and explore the joys of the limited-edition Photo Zine and how it can become an important mode of self-expression. We will work with image and text, using found images and also found text to creating photographs and text specific to the formats we will explore. The class will visit Schickimikki - a Zine library that has Zines from all over the world in their collection. At the end of this class, each student will leave the class with a small library consisting of their own Photo Zines and those made by the other students in the class.

FA228 Exploring the Expanded Field of Sculpture

Module: Media, Practices, Techniques

Instructor: [Raphaela Vogel](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

In this studio art course, taught by internationally acclaimed artist Raphaela Vogel, students will explore and experiment with an expanded notion of sculpture that considers a variety of media and materials, including collage, painting, video, and sound, as part of a sculptural practice. The first part of the seminar will be dedicated to model building, sketch-making as well as to learning about materials and exploring their different relations to form, time and space. Alongside practical assignments, our discussions will address various theoretical and art historical dimensions of sculpture. Based on readings such as Lessing's canonical essay *Laokoon* and Rosalind Krauss's influential essay *Sculpture in the Expanded Field* we will situate our practice within a broader art historical context and, in particular, reflect on the temporality of sculpture in comparison to other art forms, such as moving images or music. Reading excerpts of Arnold Hauser's *The Social History of Art* our discussions will also extend to the wider social and economic frameworks of art, to the nature of artistic labor and its relation to other forms of labor and production in society. Throughout the semester, students will engage in the creation of individual sculptural elements that we, towards the end of the semester, will combine into a collaborative final project, presented at Open Studios.

FA295 Framing Otherly - Queer-Feminist Moving Image Practices

Module: Media, Practices, Techniques / Artists, Genres, Movements

Instructor: [Angela Anderson](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

What role has moving image technology played in the historical articulation of queer-feminist subjectivities and politics? In the current moment of conservative backlash against the achievements of queer and feminist movements globally, can the moving image continue to be a site of counter-politics? What strategies can be borrowed from the past and re-worked for our present moment, and what needs to be re-invented? These critical questions will frame and guide this theory and practice-based course which will give students an overview of queer-feminist moving image work from the early days of cinema until today. In this class we will watch and discuss iconic works of queer-feminist film and video art together (including for example the work of Barbara Hammer, Vaginal Davis, Martha Rosler, Delphine Seyrig and Carole Russopoulos, Chantal Akerman, and Howardena Pindell) as well as more recent queer-feminist political actions that relied on their recording and distribution for impact (*Pussy Riot*, *La Tesis*). We will also read seminal texts in queer-feminist film theory (including from Kaja Silverman, Laura Mulvey, Linda Williams, and Bell Hooks), complemented by artist talks. Through practical exercises in listening, writing, re-enactment and filming, students will create their own queer-feminist moving image works over the course of the semester. While experience in working with audio-visual media is helpful for this course, it is not a requirement. Students

should however come with a desire to experiment with form and expand their technical know-how in the field of the moving image.

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

AH265 The Art of Afro-Latin America

Module: Artists, Genres, Movements

Instructor: [Cary Aileen García Yero](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Since the early colonial times, art has been integral to the experiences of Afro-Latin Americans and to the development of their societies. Through the arts, Afro-Latin Americans have sustained kinship and created spaces of resistance against racism, reinterpreting the past, engaging with the present, and envisioning new futures. Their art has also been central to the development of Latin American national cultures and identities. Even though Afrodescendant artists bring a distinct voice to hemispheric debates over race and nation, their output has been, until very recently, largely overlooked by museums, curators, and scholars. This course introduces students to the emerging field of Afro-Latin American art, reflecting on the questions of what Afro-Latin American art is and what it does within Latin American societies. It also provides an overview of the main scholarly debates that have shaped the field. The course unpacks the tension over representation and authorship that grounds the concept of Afro-Latin American art; it studies the output created by Afro-Latin Americans, but it also focuses on artistic production that recreates African-related themes. These explorations are grounded on the analysis of primary sources, in particular visual sources, taking both a chronological and thematic approach that studies this artistic production within processes of colonialism, slavery, national formation, and diasporic exchange.

TH220 Making Theater in Berlin: A Collaboration with the Theater Ballhaus Ost

Modules: Exhibition Culture and Public Space / Media, Practices, Techniques

Professors: [Nina Tecklenburg](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course offers an intensive study and practical exploration of how performing arts are produced in Berlin. Our semester-long case study will be Ballhaus Ost, a

theater venue located in Prenzlauer Berg. As one of most vibrant places for bold and innovative independent performing arts in the city, Ballhaus Ost offers a rich program that includes emerging performing artists as well as established, award-winning theater makers such as Monster Truck, Christoph Winkler, or Bard alumna Marie Schleef. In this course, Ballhaus Ost serves as an exemplary theater institution that we will study and explore practically: How do people work in a theater? What departments are needed to make a theater piece? How does one curate a meaningful program? What is the relationship between artists and the institution? Between the institution and cultural policy? Together with the Ballhaus Ost team, we will delve into the work of various departments such as curation and programming, lighting design, communications and fundraising, and, above all, artistic creation: In workshops with artists commissioned by Ballhaus Ost, we will explore their artistic approaches, concerns and working methods. In the second half of the course, the students will have the opportunity to apply what they have learned and develop their own short performances, which will be presented on the stage of Ballhaus Ost. The aim of this course is to gain hands-on experience in creating performing arts within a professional setting and working inside a theater institution, while situating the practices and artworks developed at Ballhaus Ost within the broader context of Berlin's vibrant theater culture and the globalized theater industry. Classes will be taught alternately at BCB and in the rehearsal spaces and on the stage of Ballhaus Ost.

Note: This advanced course is also open to foundational level students.

AR335 Artificial Sex: Technology, Gender, and Sexuality

Module: Media, Practices, and Techniques

Instructor: Anan Fries

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This practicing arts course invites students to develop their own artistic language at the intersection of digital art, performance and video to critically explore how recent technologies are reshaping sexuality and gender. Image- and video-generating large language models are currently flooding our devices with representations of hyper-sexualised bodies. Digital technologies have been used for abusive purposes, violating principles of consent and other legal rights and protections. At the same time, streaming platforms and social media have been essential tools for LGBTQIA+ communities to distribute information, find visibility, build networks and explore and perform identities. And AI companion chatbots are used by some to rehearse intimacy and explore new erotic imaginaries. In this practice-based course, we examine how digital culture and emerging technologies—such as biotechnological tools and artificial intelligence—are transforming traditional notions of gender, body and sexuality. We will critically engage with AI image generators, 3D scans, and

artistically explore various subversive image-making and image-generating strategies. To support our work, we will study Hito Steyerl's concept of the "Mean Image", Elise Hu's notion of the "Technological Gaze", Luciana Parisi's *Abstract Sex*, and the *Xenofeminist Manifesto* by Laboria Cuboniks. The goal of the course is for each student to conceptualise and create a short video essay that expresses their own critical perspective on the interdependencies of technology, gender, and sexuality.

AH226 Private and Public: The Sammlung Hoffman and Berlin's Contemporary Collections

Module: Exhibition Culture and Public Space

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. Credits

Instructor: [Dorothea von Hantelmann](#), Clara Meister

This seminar offers a unique opportunity to take a deep dive into one of the most interesting and prestigious collections of contemporary art in Berlin: the Sammlung Hoffmann. Built by Erika Hoffmann and her late husband since the 1960s, she has made her collection public since the 90s, showing works by artists such as Frank Stella, Andy Warhol, Marcel Broodthaers, Félix González-Torres, Isa Genzken, Wolfgang Tillmans, Miriam Cahn, Irving Penn, Jimmie Durham, and many more. The collection is today displayed in changing presentations within the living and working spaces of Erika Hoffmann in a converted factory building in Berlin-Mitte. The seminar is organized in collaboration with Clara Meister, the collection's director. Most sessions will take place on-site, where we will engage in in-depth discussions of selected artists directly in front of their works and have access to the extensive library of the collection. Among our topics will be themes from the current presentation—the simultaneous existence of contradictory currents such as powerlessness and anger, hope and confidence—explored through both subjective, private and collective social as well as political dimensions. Additional points of reflection will include broader aspects of collecting and collection-building: How does a private art collection emerge, and how can it gain and maintain a public dimension? Throughout the semester, we will also visit other art collections in Berlin, including the Boros Collection, the Haubrok Foundation, and the Feuerle Collection.

AH318 Spaces of Appearance: Exhibitions as Counter-Public Spheres

Module: Exhibition Culture and Public Space

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Elisa R. Linn](#)

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

The seminar addresses curatorial practices in relation to counter-public spheres and spaces of representation. It moves between curatorial theory and exhibition-making and unfolds around specific sites and types of material, archival and theoretical. We draw on Hannah Arendt's idea of space as created through actions, as well as José Esteban Muñoz's concept of "disidentification," to explore the possibility of exhibitions and performances that are site-specific, rooted in everyday life, and challenging to the closed institutional frameworks that can constitute the dominant public sphere. Our key material frames of reference will be the collections of the Schwules Museum Berlin, and the site of which Bard College Berlin is part, a former embassy quarter of the now defunct German Democratic Republic. Other inspirations for our work include Echoes of the Brother Countries (2024), Simon Njami's concept of Xenopolis, and interdisciplinary activist and artistic initiatives, including the GDR's Sonntags Club e.V. or Botschaft e.V.

FM302 Bad Dreams and Beautiful Nightmares: The Films of David Lynch

Module: Artists, Genres, Movements

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Matthias Hurst](#)

David Lynch (1946 – 2025) was one of the last true American *auteur* filmmakers, an explorer of the dark side of our dreams, of postmodern visual culture and of surrealist worlds that are "*wild at heart ... and weird on top*". We will visit the strange and yet immersive cinematic universe of Lynch, beginning with his early short films – *Six Men Getting Sick* (1967), *The Alphabet* (1968) and *The Grandmother* (1970) – to his last feature film, the experimental, multifaceted conundrum *Inland Empire* (2006). Other films that constitute Lynch's memorable work of dreamlike and mysterious representations of the uncanny and the sublime, oneiric visions and disturbing echoes of human anxieties and desires are *Eraserhead* (1977), *The Elephant Man* (1980), *Blue Velvet* (1986), *Wild At Heart* (1990), *Twin Peaks – Fire Walk With Me* (1992), *Lost Highway* (1997), and *Mulholland Drive* (2001).

Artistic Practice Advanced

AH284 Photography in Germany, 1871 to the Present

Module: Theory, History, Art Forms

Instructor: Ying Sze Pek

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course explores how the history of photography in Germany was intertwined with the country's encounter with modernity. Students will be introduced to canonical episodes and concepts from the history and theory of photography since the time of Germany's unification in 1871. We cover topics such as photography and nationalism, Weimar-era photographic experimentation and the New Vision, photography and memory, photo-conceptualism, East German perspectives, and photography's digital futures. Our course discusses the work of photographers and artists including Bernd and Hilla Becher, Sibylle Bergemann, Hannah Höch, Candida Höfer, László Moholy-Nagy, August Sander, and Tobias Zielony. We also engage black diasporic and postmigration perspectives to studying this material, addressing approaches and discourses that are urgent and emerging in the field of German cultural studies. Our investigations of photography and Germany thus account for the country's intersectional histories of colonialism, fascism, socialism, and migration. Taking advantage of our location in Berlin, the class visits key photography institutions and collections in the city in selected weeks. For the course assignment, students will write a research paper and may choose to develop a research-based artwork or a piece of writing that incorporates their photographic works, such as a visual essay.

FA317 Advanced Painting: Illusionistic Surfaces

Component: Advanced Artistic Practice

Instructor: [John Kleckner](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This advanced studio course is designed to cultivate technical and conceptual abilities within the field of contemporary painting. A central focus of this course will be ideas, issues, and techniques relating to realistic depiction, illusionistic space, and mimetic representation in paint. Students will develop and pursue individual projects while discussing and reflecting on the power and politics of the gaze, the frame, vantage points, and linear perspective. Students will explore mimesis as visual metaphor and experience the differences between painting from photographic references, direct observation, and imagination. Artworks will primarily be made with oil and acrylic paints, but experimentation with other materials is encouraged and supported. Weekly sessions will include slideshow presentations, readings, and discussions. The majority of class time will be spent painting. Class

size is limited to ensure each student has adequate studio space and additional time with the instructor for individual feedback and support. Evaluations and critiques will occur at midterm and at the end of term. The semester culminates in the "Open Studios" exhibition at the BCB arts building at Monopol Berlin.

Studio work is the priority; this course will require a significant amount of time working outside of class sessions. Previous experience with painting required. Prospective students should email inquiries to the instructor directly at: j.kleckner@berlin.bard.edu

FA308 Advanced Photography - Finding the Stories

Module: Advanced Artistic Practice

Instructor: [Carla Åhlander](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course integrates practical image-making with photographic analysis to explore the relationship between narrative and photography. It is a critique-based class aimed at developing awareness of what constitutes a narrative and how the meaning of a photograph is constructed.

In addition to producing their own narrative photo series, participants will develop their ability to look at, read, and discuss photographs critically. We will address issues such as subjectivity and objectivity, the private and the public, as well as technical considerations like lighting conditions. The course will also include collaborative exercises between students. Together, we will explore a range of aesthetic, practical and conceptual questions, asking for example, "What is my attitude toward the subject?" or "Where does this narrative begin or end?" During class there will be short photographic assignments to be completed and presented within the same session. For this, everyone must bring their own digital camera (a phone camera is sufficient).

Students will also receive assignments to complete between classes and present in the following session. From approximately the middle of the semester, each student will develop an independent, larger, self-directed project. For this final project, each student must have access to their own digital camera. They will also produce a written text reflecting on the process and the concepts behind their work. The semester will conclude with a group exhibition or an alternative form of presentation.

FA325 The Photo Zine: A Subversive Phenomenon

Module: Advanced Artistic Practice

Instructor: [April Gertler](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The concept of a "Zine" (pronounced 'zeen') refers to small-circulation (typically an edition of 100 or less), self-published works of original or appropriated images and texts, often reproduced using a copy machine / printer / duplicator. Zines, or 'fanzines' can be traced back to the 1940s. They emerged from science fiction literature initially, created by fans who generated small self-published magazines about the stories they loved. Zines famously played a significant role in the punk movement of the 1970s and continue to be found in many subcultures. They often embrace a "do-it-yourself" ethos, challenging established norms of professional design and publishing. Zines offer an alternative, confident, and self-aware mode of expression. Photography is an essential component of most Zines. The Zine functions as a space for visual storytelling, but can also be used to create a preview of an ongoing photographic project. Historically, the kind of photography used in Zines is highly diverse, ranging from personal photographs made specifically for the Zine, to found images from any source. This class will work with printers, copy machines and a RISO duplicator to create Photo Zines and explore the joys of the limited-edition Photo Zine and how it can become an important mode of self-expression. We will work with image and text, using found images and also found text to creating photographs and text specific to the formats we will explore. The class will visit Schikkimikki - a Zine library that has Zines from all over the world in their collection. At the end of this class, each student will leave the class with a small library consisting of their own Photo Zines and those made by the other students in the class.

TH220 Making Theater in Berlin: A Collaboration with the Theater Ballhaus Ost

Modules: Exhibition Culture and Public Space / Media, Practices, Techniques

Professors: [Nina Tecklenburg](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course offers an intensive study and practical exploration of how performing arts are produced in Berlin. Our semester-long case study will be Ballhaus Ost, a theater venue located in Prenzlauer Berg. As one of most vibrant places for bold and innovative independent performing arts in the city, Ballhaus Ost offers a rich program that includes emerging performing artists as well as established, award-winning theater makers such as Monster Truck, Christoph Winkler, or Bard alumna Marie Schleef. In this course, Ballhaus Ost serves as an exemplary theater institution that we will study and explore practically: How do people work in a theater? What departments are needed to make a theater piece? How does one

curate a meaningful program? What is the relationship between artists and the institution? Between the institution and cultural policy? Together with the Ballhaus Ost team, we will delve into the work of various departments such as curation and programming, lighting design, communications and fundraising, and, above all, artistic creation: In workshops with artists commissioned by Ballhaus Ost, we will explore their artistic approaches, concerns and working methods. In the second half of the course, the students will have the opportunity to apply what they have learned and develop their own short performances, which will be presented on the stage of Ballhaus Ost. The aim of this course is to gain hands-on experience in creating performing arts within a professional setting and working inside a theater institution, while situating the practices and artworks developed at Ballhaus Ost within the broader context of Berlin's vibrant theater culture and the globalized theater industry. Classes will be taught alternately at BCB and in the rehearsal spaces and on the stage of Ballhaus Ost.

Note: This advanced course is also open to foundational level students.

FA228 Exploring the Expanded Field of Sculpture

Module: Media, Practices, Techniques

Instructor: [Raphaela Vogel](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

In this studio art course, taught by internationally acclaimed artist Raphaela Vogel, students will explore and experiment with an expanded notion of sculpture that considers a variety of media and materials, including collage, painting, video, and sound, as part of a sculptural practice. The first part of the seminar will be dedicated to model building, sketch-making as well as to learning about materials and exploring their different relations to form, time and space. Alongside practical assignments, our discussions will address various theoretical and art historical dimensions of sculpture. Based on readings such as Lessing's canonical essay *Laokoon* and Rosalind Krauss's influential essay *Sculpture in the Expanded Field* we will situate our practice within a broader art historical context and, in particular, reflect on the temporality of sculpture in comparison to other art forms, such as moving images or music. Reading excerpts of Arnold Hauser's *The Social History of Art* our discussions will also extend to the wider social and economic frameworks of art, to the nature of artistic labor and its relation to other forms of labor and production in society. Throughout the semester, students will engage in the creation of individual sculptural elements that we, towards the end of the semester, will combine into a collaborative final project, presented at Open Studios.

AR335 Artificial Sex: Technology, Gender, and Sexuality

Component: Advanced Artistic Practice

Instructor: Anan Fries

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This practicing arts course invites students to develop their own artistic language at the intersection of digital art, performance and video to critically explore how recent technologies are reshaping sexuality and gender. Image- and video-generating large language models are currently flooding our devices with representations of hyper-sexualised bodies. Digital technologies have been used for abusive purposes, violating principles of consent and other legal rights and protections. At the same time, streaming platforms and social media have been essential tools for LGBTIQ+ communities to distribute information, find visibility, build networks and explore and perform identities. And AI companion chatbots are used by some to rehearse intimacy and explore new erotic imaginaries. In this practice-based course, we examine how digital culture and emerging technologies—such as biotechnological tools and artificial intelligence—are transforming traditional notions of gender, body and sexuality. We will engage with AI image generators, 3D scans, and artistically explore various subversive image-making and image-generating strategies. To support our work, we will study Hito Steyerl's concept of the "Mean Image", Elise Hu's notion of the "Technological Gaze", Luciana Parisi's *Abstract Sex*, and the *Xenofeminist Manifesto* by Laboria Cuboniks. The goal of the course is for each student to conceptualise and create a short video essay that expresses their own critical perspective on the interdependencies of technology, gender, and sexuality.

AH226 Private and Public: The Sammlung Hoffman and Berlin's Contemporary Collections

Module: Theory, History, Art Forms / Arts, Institutions, Engagement

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. Credits

Instructor: [Dorothea von Hantelmann](#), Clara Meister

This seminar offers a unique opportunity to take a deep dive into one of the most interesting and prestigious collections of contemporary art in Berlin: the Sammlung Hoffmann. Built by Erika Hoffmann and her late husband since the 1960s, she has made her collection public since the 90s, showing works by artists such as Frank Stella, Andy Warhol, Marcel Broodthaers, Félix González-Torres, Isa Genzken, Wolfgang Tillmans, Miriam Cahn, Irving Penn, Jimmie Durham, and many more. The collection is today displayed in changing presentations within the living and working spaces of Erika Hoffmann in a converted factory building in Berlin-Mitte. The seminar is organized in collaboration with Clara Meister, the collection's director. Most sessions will take place on-site, where we will engage in in-depth discussions of

selected artists directly in front of their works and have access to the extensive library of the collection. Among our topics will be themes from the current presentation—the simultaneous existence of contradictory currents such as powerlessness and anger, hope and confidence—explored through both subjective, private and collective social as well as political dimensions. Additional points of reflection will include broader aspects of collecting and collection-building: How does a private art collection emerge, and how can it gain and maintain a public dimension? Throughout the semester, we will also visit other art collections in Berlin, including the Boros Collection, the Haubrok Foundation, and the Feuerle Collection.

AH265 The Art of Afro-Latin America

Module: Cultures of Knowledge Production

Instructor: [Cary Aileen García Yero](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Since the early colonial times, art has been integral to the experiences of Afro-Latin Americans and to the development of their societies. Through the arts, Afro-Latin Americans have sustained kinship and created spaces of resistance against racism, reinterpreting the past, engaging with the present, and envisioning new futures. Their art has also been central to the development of Latin American national cultures and identities. Even though Afrodescendant artists bring a distinct voice to hemispheric debates over race and nation, their output has been, until very recently, largely overlooked by museums, curators, and scholars. This course introduces students to the emerging field of Afro-Latin American art, reflecting on the questions of what Afro-Latin American art is and what it does within Latin American societies. It also provides an overview of the main scholarly debates that have shaped the field. The course unpacks the tension over representation and authorship that grounds the concept of Afro-Latin American art; it studies the output created by Afro-Latin Americans, but it also focuses on artistic production that recreates African-related themes. These explorations are grounded on the analysis of primary sources, in particular visual sources, taking both a chronological and thematic approach that studies this artistic production within processes of colonialism, slavery, national formation, and diasporic exchange.

AH318 Spaces of Appearance: Exhibitions as Counter-Public Spheres

Module: Art, Institutions, Engagement

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Elisa R. Linn](#)

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

The seminar addresses curatorial practices in relation to counter-public spheres and spaces of representation. It moves between curatorial theory and exhibition-making and unfolds around specific sites and types of material, archival and theoretical. We draw on Hannah Arendt's idea of space as created through actions, as well as José Esteban Muñoz's concept of "disidentification," to explore the possibility of exhibitions and performances that are site-specific, rooted in everyday life, and challenging to the closed institutional frameworks that can constitute the dominant public sphere. Our key material frames of reference will be the collections of the Schwules Museum Berlin, and the site of which Bard College Berlin is part, a former embassy quarter of the now defunct German Democratic Republic. Other inspirations for our work include Echoes of the Brother Countries (2024), Simon Njami's concept of Xenopolis, and interdisciplinary activist and artistic initiatives, including the GDR's Sonntags Club e.V. or Botschaft e.V.

FA295 Framing Otherly - Queer-Feminist Moving Image Practices

Module: Advanced Artistic Practice / Theory, History, Art Forms

Instructor: [Angela Anderson](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

What role has moving image technology played in the historical articulation of queer-feminist subjectivities and politics? In the current moment of conservative backlash against the achievements of queer and feminist movements globally, can the moving image continue to be a site of counter-politics? What strategies can be borrowed from the past and re-worked for our present moment, and what needs to be re-invented? These critical questions will frame and guide this theory and practice-based course which will give students an overview of queer-feminist moving image work from the early days of cinema until today. In this class we will watch and discuss iconic works of queer-feminist film and video art together (including for example the work of Barbara Hammer, Vaginal Davis, Martha Rosler, Delphine Seyrig and Carole Russopoulos, Chantal Akerman, and Howardena Pindell) as well as more recent queer-feminist political actions that relied on their recording and distribution for impact (Pussy Riot, La Tesis). We will also read seminal texts in queer-feminist film theory (including from Kaja Silverman, Laura Mulvey, Linda Williams, and Bell Hooks), complemented by artist talks. Through practical exercises in listening, writing, re-enactment and filming, students will create their own queer-feminist moving image works over the course of the semester. While experience in working

with audio-visual media is helpful for this course, it is not a requirement. Students should however come with a desire to experiment with form and expand their technical know-how in the field of the moving image.

FM302 Bad Dreams and Beautiful Nightmares: The Films of David Lynch

Module: Theory, History, Art Forms

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Instructor: [Matthias Hurst](#)

David Lynch (1946 – 2025) was one of the last true American auteur filmmakers, an explorer of the dark side of our dreams, of postmodern visual culture and of surrealist worlds that are "wild at heart ... and weird on top". We will visit the strange and yet immersive cinematic universe of Lynch, beginning with his early short films – Six Men Getting Sick (1967), The Alphabet (1968) and The Grandmother (1970) – to his last feature film, the experimental, multifaceted conundrum Inland Empire (2006). Other films that constitute Lynch's memorable work of dreamlike and mysterious representations of the uncanny and the sublime, oneiric visions and disturbing echoes of human anxieties and desires are Eraserhead (1977), The Elephant Man (1980), Blue Velvet (1986), Wild At Heart (1990), Twin Peaks – Fire Walk With Me (1992), Lost Highway (1997), and Mulholland Drive (2001).

SO275 Permutations of the Public

Module: Cultures of Knowledge Production

Instructor: Cynthia Browne

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

Public, as a noun or adjective, traverses multiple disciplines and discourses. As a Euro-American concept that received its most explicit theorization and historicization in the wake of the Enlightenment, it has become a central category in understanding the political dimensions of cultural transformations across a wide array of domains. This course examines its significance for understanding how power, freedom, and authority become enacted and reconfigured in modern states. The course combines reading and discussion of the concept's foundational formulations by key political philosophers (Juergen Habermas, Hannah Arendt, Jacques Ranciere, Michael Warner, Kluge and Negt) with its analytical use in historical and ethnographic scholarship, as well as its significance in contemporary art practices (i.e. Tania Bruguera, Haus der Statistik Modellprojekt, Christoph Schlingensiefel). This reach,

which incorporates studies the Global South draws attention to how specific instances of the public sphere, such as da'wa publics in Cairo, circulating imagery in post-Suharto Indonesia, decollagist practices in post-WWII France, hydraulic publics in Mumbai, and parallel public spheres in the former Soviet Union have challenged, revised, and expanded classical conceptualizations of this space.

Economics Advanced

EC318 Philosophy of Economics

Module: Ethics and Economics

Instructor: [Stephan Müller](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course offers an introduction to the theoretical, methodological and ethical foundation of economics. The first part examines the foundations of rational-choice theory. We assess its underlying axioms and principles from a normative and a descriptive perspective. We examine the interpretation of economic models and the metaphysical underpinnings of economics. The second part focuses on methods employed by economists in testing theories and establishing facts, laws and causal relations. We examine how and under which conditions these methods work, and what kind of question they can answer. In the third part we examine the ethical foundations of welfare economics. Topics will include the moral limits of markets, theories of well-being, inequality and distributive justice, and the evaluation of economic outcomes and policies.

EC313 Environmental Economics

Module: Behavioral Economics / Choice, Resources, Development

Instructor: [Israel Waichman](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The course centers on the economic analysis of environmental issues. We will start by addressing market failures related to the environment and to the management of natural resources. Throughout the course we will discuss both global and local environmental issues (e.g., global and local resources held in common, energy production, climate change, water pollution, overfishing, etc.). Our goal will be to review and critique the policy instruments provided by economics and management science to overcome market failures. We also confront the practical issues affecting

the application of these instruments, including the question of how monetary values can be assigned to environmental goods.

EC250 Industry Networks and Economic Development

Modules: Global Economic Systems

Instructor: [Thomas Eife](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The course Industry Networks and Economic Development explores the impact of industry networks on countries' GDP and their development opportunities. The curriculum is divided into two parts to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of network theory and its practical applications. In the first part of the class, students will delve into the fundamental concepts and principles of graph theory. We study key network measures and strategies for handling bipartite networks. The course places a strong emphasis on the visualization of networks. Part 1 includes a short primer in programming using Python and Gephi. In the second part, we will use the statistics package Stata. No prior knowledge of Python, Gephi, or Stata is required. The faculty will try to organize complimentary copies of Stata. Building on the foundation laid in part one, we focus on practical applications of network theory in economic contexts. Students will explore the historical and contemporary use of input-output tables, understand the role of the Product Space in measuring countries' development opportunities, and analyze and apply productivity networks.

Ethics and Politics Advanced

HI250 The Postcolonial Transition in Africa

Module: Advanced Topics in Global and Comparative Politics

Instructor: [Romain Tiquet](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This seminar explores the complex history of Africa's transition from empire to nation during the twentieth century, introducing students to key themes and debates in African history. The course traces how the postcolonial transition unfolded in different contexts—from the rise of powerful anti-colonial movements after the First World War to the emergence of a constellation of sovereign nation-states between the late 1940s and the 1960s. These developments are situated within their broader historical contexts: the crises of the 1930s, the Second

World War, and the onset of the Cold War. Reflecting the heterogeneity of decolonisation processes, our discussions will address topics such as: the nature of colonial rule and the meaning of decolonisation; the formation of postcolonial states and the emergence of new forms of citizenship; the social and economic transformations across African societies during this period; and the challenges of writing a social history of these regions. Our work will be grounded in a wide range of readings, including historical surveys, academic articles, and primary sources. We will also reflect on methodological questions, critical historiography, and the use and status of archival material.

PL244 Resonance: Time, Attention, and the Arts of Connection

Module: Movements and Thinkers

Instructor: [Manuel Gebhardt](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

How do we cultivate a life that is meaningful rather than merely busy? This seminar introduces the contemporary German sociologist Hartmut Rosa, best known for his account of social acceleration (why life feels ever faster) and resonance (what makes life feel alive and connected). Resonance arises when we enter into a reciprocal, responsive contact with the world—whether with people, nature, art, music, work, or ideas. It is the opposite of alienation, where the world remains silent or is treated merely as a resource. For Rosa, it is not material possessions or mere productivity, but this living, reciprocal responsiveness that is essential to a fulfilled life. Building on this account, we use resonance as a cross-disciplinary lens on time, attention, and the arts of connection across art, work, education, and technology. We pair accessible selections from Rosa with readings in philosophy, sociology, cultural studies, and creative nonfiction, and we practice what we study through weekly “resonance labs” – brief field exercises such as sound-mapping, slow looking, micro-craft, and attention walks. Students learn to analyze sites of alienation and to articulate conditions for more resonant spaces in classrooms, workplaces, communities, and the arts. Assignments include short reflection notes, one seminar facilitation, a midterm essay, and a final research or creative project with critical commentary.

PS369 Critical Geopolitics

Module: Global Social Theory

Instructor: [Boris Vormann](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

As a field of study, geopolitics examines the spatial dimensions of interstate power relations. Modern thinking about geopolitics emerged at the turn to the 20th century, as the British Empire unraveled and new colonial and hegemonial disputes erupted. After World War II, geopolitics lost much of its analytical lure, due to the fact that the Nazi regime had built many of its political claims on such geostrategic considerations (Lebensraum). After the fall of the Iron Curtain, new transportation and communication technologies seemed to make distance and space irrelevant categories for political thinking and action, given the plummeting of transaction costs and globalization processes. Climate change and depleting resources, renationalization tendencies, large-scale infrastructural development projects and resurfacing territorial conflicts have all led to a reinvigoration of geopolitical thinking and practice in the very recent past. What potential futures does this imply for cooperation and for conflict? This course critically engages conceptual and theoretical texts in geopolitics, examines historical examples, and explores three of today's most pertinent geopolitical relationships: China's one-belt-one road initiative, Russia's territorial ambitions, and the reinvention of transatlantic relations.

PT325 The European Union: Institutions, Policies, and Procedures

Module: Law, Politics and Society

Instructor: [Berit Ebert](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The institutions and political processes of the European Union (EU), namely the concept of supranationality, offer a unique construct of international collaboration that was developed with clear goals by founding members. Developing from the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, the Union has gone on to evolve principles of membership and cooperation that go far beyond economic interests and imperatives. These are embodied in Article 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon, ratified in 2009, which upholds a commitment to human rights, solidarity and equality. But the EU has faced and continues to face immense challenges: Brexit, the financial crisis of 2008, the war in Ukraine, and the rise of populist movements, and most recently, the current US government's apparent decoupling from European security and defense interests. In this course, we will introduce the essential structure and decision-making mechanisms of the European Union: the European Council, the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Central Bank, and the Committee of the Regions. We will also compare these institutions'

supranational characteristics with those of the nation-state and of international organizations with a focus on governance structures in the EU. Major cases tried in the European Court of Justice and key legal principles that have shaped the Union's political advancements will be interpreted. Furthermore, we will discuss some of the European Union's policies and current political developments, among them the European electoral-law reform, the reform of the judicial system in Poland and the rule-of-law mechanism, as well gender equality. Students will engage with original EU policy documents to acquire the skills of analyzing and interpreting them. At the end of the seminar, students will have a solid knowledge about the functioning of the Union's institutions, and the evaluation of legal texts, treaty provisions, and policy approaches, enabling a clearer assessment of the future of the European project in a time of crisis, as well as a more astute understanding of broader political processes.

PT355 International Organizations and Human Rights Advocacy

Module: Civic Engagement and Social Justice

Instructors: [Berit Ebert](#), Danyah Jaber (Al-Quds Bard)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [GHEA21 Human Rights Certificate](#) requirement

This seminar exposes students to the practical work of human rights actors in the context of securing and advocating for human rights through inter- and supranational organizations. It is divided into two sections. We begin by giving students a general overview of the role of key players in creating and implementing human rights. We then delve into the processes, institutions and material factors that influence inter- and supranational behaviors vis-a-vis human rights obligations. Lectures look in-depth at the role of individuals and collectives of peoples in campaigning for human rights and addressing violations. This will culminate in analysis of cases that have been key in shaping the international human rights regime. The second part of the course familiarizes students with the practical capacities required to run human rights advocacy campaigns. Through guest lecturers, students will be introduced to insight and expertise on lobbying; campaigning; and research, monitoring, and reporting, including a two-day training with Amnesty International in Berlin. Finally, students will develop human rights-based approaches and strategies to create their own advocacy campaign. At the end of the semester, all students of the seminar will meet in Berlin and visit organizations such as the representative office of the European Union and meet with experts from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the Berlin office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights.

PL342 Democracy and the Ethics of War

Module: Movements and Thinkers

Instructor: [Erica Benner](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [GHEA21 Human Rights Certificate](#) requirement

Are democracies more peaceful and virtuous than other forms of government? Some friends of democracy say yes: self-governing citizens are less likely to rush into wars than autocratic or oligarchic leaders, and more likely to respect human rights and the rule of law when their states resort to force. Others point out dangerous gaps between ideal democratic principles and unjust or warlike realities. This course examines the recurring tensions between democracy, ethics, and war. With readings from history, philosophy, political and international relations theory, and literature, we'll consider several broad frameworks for understanding these tensions: international 'realism', the dynamics of democratic competition and communications, gender roles, imperialist mindsets, and the political economics of liberal democracies. Then we'll take a closer look at cases where direct or indirect involvement in wars has created complex ethical challenges for democracies. We will ask: Are some forms of democracy more war-prone than others? How can leaders and citizens maintain ethical standards – and robust democratic institutions – under pressure from the conflicts that lead to wars? How might individual democracies and the international system be reformed to disincentivise violence and regulate the deeper causes of war?

PL328 Communism in Theory, History and Film

Module: Movements and Thinkers

Instructor: [Ewa Atanassow](#), Denis Skopin

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

What is communism? What was everyday life like in so-called communist countries, and what were the cultural horizons of their citizens? What impact did communism have (and is it still having) on today's European societies? Noting the long genealogy of communist ideals reaching back to Plato's *Republic*, we will study the nature of Soviet-type communist society by exploring its ideological foundations, tumultuous history, and cultural output. Our goal will be to understand the communist project without denigrating it, but also without ignoring the monumental violence perpetrated in its name, and the challenges it faced as an economic system. We'll

begin by probing the social and political theory of revolutionary Marxism, and its contested reception by the main architects of 20th-century communist regimes. We'll then examine how this theory was applied in historical practice to various aspects – economic, institutional, cultural and political – of social life under what was then termed “really existing socialism.” Taking the USSR and DDR as examples, we'll familiarize ourselves with their specific contexts, and draw on film as an artistic reflection of the self-understanding, normative horizon, and daily life of socialist culture. In addition to readings and film screenings, students will visit exhibitions and museums devoted to the communist past, as well as sites in Berlin whose history relates to this period.

PL362 The Problem of the Philosophy of History

Elective: Movements and Thinkers

Instructor: [Thomas Raysmith](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

G. W. F. Hegel articulated the following problem for those who assert that philosophy has a history. Philosophy is often claimed to discover unchanging truths. Yet history delivers an array of discordant systems. It would thus seem that there is no history of philosophy but only a history of conflicting opinions. In this course, we will study various conceptions of philosophy advanced by thinkers past and present who have attempted to support either the position that philosophy has a history or the position that it does not. We will consider the ways in which philosophy has been distinguished from other disciplines, the question of whether there are any common and perennial philosophical topics, and the methodologies proposed for conducting research in the history of philosophy. We will also analyse and challenge traditional narratives of the history of philosophy in light of critiques of sexism, Eurocentrism, colonialism, etc. This course is an investigation into how we do and should tell and research the history of human thought.

HI315 Cultural Memory and Historical Politics in East-Central Europe

Module: Movements and Thinkers / Civic Engagement and Social Justice

Instructor: [Ostap Sereda](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

The course will start by exploring the main conceptual frameworks in the field of memory studies and then re-examine them by discussing selected cases of cultural memory, the politics of history, and commemorative practices in the region of East

Central Europe (broadly defined) after WWII, with a focus on the period after 1989/91. We will study the role of the state, academia, public intellectuals, and new mnemonic actors in the reshaping of collective memory through commemorative practices, school education, museums and monument culture, the tourism industry, the symbolic markers of urban landscapes, and the media. We will also analyze the various political and legislative actions of historical politics in the region and the historiographic and public discussions relevant to these measures.

PS326 Political Economy of Development

Module: Global Social Theory

Instructor: [Gale Raj](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course engages on the topic of 'development' in the era of globalization understood here as the interconnectedness of economic activity across borders, since World War II. We will focus on understanding how powerful thinkers and domestic and global political institutions helped shaped policies, practices and outcomes of different patterns of globalization. There is a greater focus on these outcomes for countries of the Global South. Organized in three parts, the course begins by chronicling the ideas surrounding reconstruction and economic development after the World War II. Next, we turn to the shift towards neoliberal market economies during the 1980s and examining its ideology and policies which became a cornerstone of neoliberalism and which were spread globally by the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization throughout the 1990s, with dire repercussions for countries in the Global South. Finally, we will focus on the rise of globalized industries which emerged as part of foreign investment practices by multinational corporations supported by liberalization-friendly regulations and the more recent shift, since the early 2000s, towards global outsourcing and the formation of vast global production networks. We will discuss what implications these developments have for the Global South, considering ideas of postcolonial core-periphery relationships.

PS327 A Critical Appraisal of the Arab Spring: 2010-2023

Module: Movements and Thinkers

Instructor: [Usahma Darrah](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course deals with the mass protests that swept across the Arab World in the 2010s as part of a global series of democracy movements. To study this phenomenon, we will look at the historical emergence of modern Arab states within regional systems that share a common language, culture and public space. Students will learn to contextualize the broader Arab region using analytical tools such as the concepts of state formation, the role of geopolitical alignments, the workings of political economy and the social contract, the phenomenon of the rentier state, and the dynamics of the deep state. In examining the protest movements and violence in key Arab countries, students will develop answers to the following questions: How did Arab civil society try to bring about dignity and democracy? How was the counter-revolutionary repression by some Arab states supported by Iran and Russia? What challenges did the upheaval and protracted conflicts in the MENA and Gulf regions present for Western interests and policies? How has US policy, in particular, affected the perceptions and posture of key Arab actors in relationship to the West? Where does the Arab Spring represent a turning point toward a democratic trajectory, and where did it lead to failed statehood? Does the migration fallout from the Arab Spring mark the end of liberal politics in the EU?

PS390 German Foreign Policy and National Security Decision-Making

Module: Law, Politics and Society

Instructor: [Aaron Allen](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This multidisciplinary course explores the structural evolution of the Federal Republic of Germany's role in the world since the end of World War II to the current *Zeitenwende*. Through an interactive approach, students will be able to contextualize contemporary German foreign policy challenges from their geographic, material, and ideational roots. Furthermore, course activities and assignments are tailored to assist students in becoming foreign policy practitioners fully capable of applying national security decision theories. The curriculum threads together historical cases, international relations scholarship, and security studies in order to provide a holistic understanding of all the constituent parts influencing Germany's external posture. Why is contemporary Germany often referred to as a reluctant leader? What are the unique attributes of German-style foreign policy currently being developed? A critical appraisal of topics such as the institutions shaping elite policy-making, the legacy of the Cold War and reunification, relations with the European Union, and the triangulation between the great powers of the United States, Russia and China offers students the necessary tools to answer these core questions. A complementary emphasis on professional development will allow participants to garner practical skills through simulations, seminar debates, and presentations.

PS393 Labor Movements and Public Policy

Module: Law, Politics and Society

Instructor: [Dave Braneck](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course will look at the labor movement in the United States, using organized labor as a lens through which to analyze the convergence of the state, shifting institutional frameworks, and social movements. Students will be able to assess the role of organized labor within US politics generally, grappling with the opportunities and limits of labor as a means for enacting change, as well as how labor fits into, shapes, and is affected by institutional arrangements. A historic perspective will be taken in order to mark developments within the state and how this context has affected and been affected by organized labor. Students will be tasked with employing and sharpening existing understanding of state and policy structures while gaining critical knowledge and analytical skills that they will be able to apply to analysis of the state and other actors.

SC301 Performing Science and Medicine: The Lab, the Clinic and the Public Realm

Component: Movements and Thinkers

Instructors: [Sasha Bergstrom-Katz](#), [Michele Luchetti](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Suitable for multi-disciplinary artists and humanities students alike, this course addresses the relationship between science, medicine, and society through a discussion of critical texts and creative activities inspired by art, performance, and theater. It uses works of theater and contemporary art alongside critical texts from the history, philosophy, and sociology of science and medicine to develop a conversation about the ways in which performances of science in the laboratory, the clinic and in the public sphere communicate key concepts and practices. These include ideas of objectivity, rationality, trust, power, as well as modes of faith and healing. The increasing complexity of science and its interactions with the social realm call for an expansion of traditional humanistic methodologies to encompass approaches that foster personal engagement, curiosity, creativity, and active criticism. For this reason, the course integrates seminar-style discussions of core historical, philosophical, and sociological topics on science and society with practical sessions that rely on arts-based activities to stimulate a creative first-person engagement with these topics. Further, it contributes to a timely study of the relationship between art and science. The overarching goal of the course is twofold. On the one hand, it aims at providing participants with key skills to critically engage

and discuss issues related to science and society; on the other hand, it exposes them to a vast array of arts-based activities through writing, performance and art-making workshops during which they can act on their critical engagement and exercise a number of skills that are widely transferable within and outside of academia and art. Divided into three sections: Performing Experiments, Performing Medicine, and Public Performances, the course aims at a new understanding of the relation between science and medicine.

SC255 Water Histories: Society, Conflict, and Power

Instructor: [Sam Hege](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Module: Public Policy / Civic Engagement and Social Justice

Concerns about water access and safety are intensifying, driven by rising sea levels, droughts, and aging infrastructure. In this course, we will critically examine contemporary water crises within their historical context. By studying a variety of water formations—such as rivers, oceans, aquifers, and wetlands—we will explore how water shapes both the history of colonialism and its enduring legacies. Topics we will cover include floods, hurricanes, maritime transportation, hydroelectricity, and irrigation agriculture. We will also pose key questions, such as: How can one care for a river? Can water be owned? What unseen labor, basic infrastructure, and resources are needed to make water flow? Throughout the course, we will draw on case studies from both the Global North and the Global South, encouraging students to synthesize a wide range of materials and develop analytical skills through comparative frameworks. While using transnational case studies means that there will not be neat and linear narratives to draw from, students will be challenged to think critically about the history of water through a more diverse set of perspectives and experiences.

SE302 Evidence and Inquiry: Open Source for Human Rights Research

Module: Civic Engagement and Social Justice

Instructor: Fred Abrahams, Marija Ristic

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [GHEA21 Human Rights Certificate](#) requirement

This course introduces students to the rapidly evolving field of open source investigations, including the tools and techniques to document and

expose human rights violations. Beginning with a survey of the field, including the origins and developments of open source research, the course offers hand-on training in the skills needed to discover, preserve, verify and present evidence of abuse, with a continued focus on ethical considerations, digital security and the well-being of researchers. Using investigations from human rights groups, media, and courts, the course will critically assess the impact and limitations of open source research in advancing accountability, rule of law and social change. Guest speakers from Berlin and elsewhere will share their insights and experiences.

SO275 Permutations of the Public

Module: Movements and Thinkers

Instructor: Cynthia Browne

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

Public, as a noun or adjective, traverses multiple disciplines and discourses. As a Euro-American concept that received its most explicit theorization and historicization in the wake of the Enlightenment, it has become a central category in understanding the political dimensions of cultural transformations across a wide array of domains. This course examines its significance for understanding how power, freedom, and authority become enacted and reconfigured in modern states. The course combines reading and discussion of the concept's foundational formulations by key political philosophers (Juergen Habermas, Hannah Arendt, Jacques Ranciere, Michael Warner, Kluge and Negt) with its analytical use in historical and ethnographic scholarship, as well as its significance in contemporary art practices. This reach, which also incorporates studies from the Global South, draws attention to how specific instances of the public sphere, such as da'wa publics in Cairo, circulating imagery in post-Suharto Indonesia, decollagist practices in post-WWII France, hydraulic publics in Mumbai, and parallel public spheres in the former Soviet Union have challenged, revised, and expanded classical conceptualizations of this space.

PS275 The Role of China and Russia in a Multipolar World: Developmental Strategies and Forms of Cooperation in the Global South

Component: Elective

Instructor: Felix Jaitner

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

In recent years, the strong influence of western powers in Africa has dwindled. At the same time, China and Russia have increasingly shown the ambition to exert their

influence in the Global South. Increased economic activity (especially in the extractive sector), and military support (arms exports and the private security company 'Wagner') underscore these ambitions. Another example for increased South-South cooperation is the expansion of the BRICS. At the same time, tensions between the USA and China are intensifying, which is reflected above all in sanctions in the technology sector (chips) or stricter trade tariffs. Meanwhile, the Russian government grounds its active foreign policy in Africa on the idea that it is an anti-Western global power and former supporter of anti-colonial movements. This raises the question of how far the relations between China, Russia and African countries differ from those of traditional Western colonial powers. Can the relations of both countries with Africa be described as South-South relations? Does the political and economic trajectory of these relations alter the self-determination of the continent or does it rather reinforce asymmetries similar to Western countries?

The seminar examines the emergence of the multipolar world order and attempts to analyze the dynamics and conflicts that shape it, with particular attention to how these developments affect the global South.

Internship

IS331 Berlin Internship Seminar: Working Cultures, Urban Cultures

Instructor: [Florian Duijsens](#), [Agata Lisiak](#), [Clio Nicastro](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits (in combination with an internship)

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) and [GHEA21 Human Rights Certificate](#) requirements

Students enrolled in the Bard College Berlin Internship Program are required to complete the Berlin Internship Seminar, an interdisciplinary course designed to accompany the internship experience. We will meet on a weekly basis and discuss contemporary ways of living and working in Berlin and beyond: What do we mean when we talk about work? Do we need to love what we do? What renders work in/visible? How is work gendered and classed? How is work organized temporally and spatially and how does it, in turn, affect the city and its residents? What distinguishes the spaces in which we live and work today? Which new forms of work have recently emerged in Berlin? Which of them seem to thrive? How do Berlin's art institutions and citizen-activist organizations operate? Besides in-class discussions, invited lectures, and off-campus visits, the seminar offers a platform for the exchange of observations, reflections, and comments on individual internships.

Students must already be in the process of arranging an internship with Careers Office before registering. If a student has arranged their own internship, they should

contact careers@berlin.bard.edu to register your internship before enrolling in the course.

Literature and Rhetoric

LT268 Theories of the Body

Module: Theories of Literature and Culture

Instructor: [Clio Nicastro](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The body has always attracted the interest of thinkers and researchers from different disciplines, from philosophy to critical theory to neuroscience. The crucial challenge is to overcome the dichotomy between mind and body, reason and feeling, that has affected Western culture especially from Descartes on. What does it mean to think through the body and what are its 'dialectics' (Lisa Yun Lee)? Is there such a thing as a 'natural' body or are bodies always constructed by class, race, gender, and our personal stories? This course introduces the main theories of literature and culture by looking at the body as an object of the "medical gaze" (Barbara Duden, Michel Foucault) and of political/gender persecutions (Silvia Federici) as well as a site of both active and passive resistance and expression. The experience of the body is often at the limit of the expressible and challenges the artistic and verbal forms we have available to articulate and give meaning to it. Furthermore, we will look at efforts to find a language to speak for/through the body, its desires, and its idiosyncrasies (Dodie Bellamy, Audre Lorde). What kinds of stories are mapped and inscribed in our physical bodies (Paul B. Preciado, Roxane Gay)? Does the body forget? And how are our bodies influenced by their narratives and representations?

LT362 Premodern to Postcrash: Ireland in Short Fiction

Module: Literary Movements and Forms / Writer and World

Instructor: [Catherine Toal](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Irish literary prose has certain familiar themes—rural deprivation, political conflict, religious division, the dominance of the Catholic church, emigration. It has recognizable phases in its English-language traditions: the dominance of literature written by the Anglo-Irish landowning class in the eighteenth- and nineteenth centuries, the emergence of modernist experiments against the realist novel in the

twentieth (by figures such as Joyce and Beckett) and later oscillations between varieties of realist craft and more radical narrative forms. This course looks at the modes of writing found in the classic Irish short story as well as the development of more ambiguous genres crossing boundaries between life-writing and fiction, poem and narrative. We address the main developments of Irish history, the central works of modern Irish literature, the notable recent renewal of the literary scene since 2015, and the connections between Irish writing and other traditions: European, Anglo-American and postcolonial. Along the way, we explore the current preoccupations in Irish writing, and how these resonate with or depart from past motifs. Writers discussed include Elizabeth Bowen, Frank O'Connor, Edna O'Brien, John McGahern, Eugene McCabe, Sean O'Reilly, Claire Keegan, Colin Barrett, Wendy Erskine, Louise Kennedy, Nicole Flattery.

LT212 Advanced Fiction Writing Workshop

Module: Producing Literature

Instructor: [Clare Wigfall](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

With over nineteen years experience of teaching creative writing, British author Clare Wigfall has developed a method that aims to break down the barriers that inhibit so that the creative process can come naturally. Under her gentle guidance, you will develop a body of new work, learning craft organically through practice and exposure to great writing. The carefully-structured workshops are a springboard, designed to stimulate ideas and encourage experimentation; one or two might even move off campus – how might a museum prove a source of inspiration, for example? A park? The city we live in? Focus will be given to new genres you might not yet have considered, such as fantasy or historical fiction, or how you might weave myths and legends into your work. Also explored will be the subject of how our own experience can shape our fiction, while also considering the issue of how writing fiction can give us scope to imagine places and experiences we've never lived in our own lives. You have already begun to develop a voice that is uniquely your own, and will take this further now with opportunities to share your work with a group of fellow writers who you can trust to give you invaluable critique. Alongside this, the reading element of this course will be key; from writers such as Annie Proulx to Carmen Maria Machado, or Katherine Mansfield to George Saunders, the selected reading will cast the net wide to throw you into the literary sea, also introducing you to writing *about* writing from authors such as Zadie Smith and Alexander Chee. With a proven track record of inspiring her students to produce award-winning, publishable writing, Clare will offer the opportunity to talk about how to submit work to literary journals, or space can be found to give focus to a subject uniquely inspiring to the group. Plus, there will of course be a chance to share new work with the world at the end-of-semester reading, always a well-attended event. Open to students who have

already taken a foundational fiction workshop, as well as new students with some writing experience under their belt, you are very welcome to make contact with Clare before registration to introduce yourself and ask any questions.

LT255 Living in Translation: Contemporary European Literatures

Module: Writer and World

Instructor: [Saskia Vogel](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Translation is more than a creative literary practice, it is also a way of seeing and engaging with the world around. How do we make sense of ourselves in ever-shifting personal, technological, and political contexts? Taking Europe as a geographical starting point, this course uses this question as an entry point to explore contemporary European literatures, with a focus on writers who don't fit neatly into categories and whose work offers an expanded and complex view of 20th- and 21st-century Europe. We'll look at the work of writers living in Europe, including Sulaiman Addonia (UK/Belgium), Balsam Karam (Sweden), Ágota Kristóf (Hungary/Switzerland), Niviaq Korneliussen (Greenland), among others, as a springboard for conversation on themes of migration, class, identity and language. Engagement with the assigned readings will be interwoven with discussions and exercises around the creative practice of literary translation, with the aim of illuminating the practice of translation itself (for the student curious about the role and work of a literary translator) and how the notion of translation can help us make sense of life today: ourselves and another, generational divides, the social contract, technological developments, and more.

LT333 German Literary History

Module: Literary Movements and Forms

Instructor: [Martin Widmann](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course offers students a broad and comprehensive introduction to German literary history, tracing its development from the earliest written records in the German language to contemporary works. Through close readings of representative texts from key periods—including the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Modernism—as well as movements such as Naturalism and Expressionism, we will examine how aesthetic forms and literary expression have evolved in response to

shifting historical and cultural contexts. In addition to exploring the formation and transformation of literary traditions, we will reflect on how narratives of national literary history both shape and reflect ideas of national identity. Our survey will include works by canonized authors such as Lessing, Goethe, Kleist, Heine, Droste-Hülshoff, Rilke, Thomas Mann, Irmgard Keun, and Emine Sevgi Özdamar. To broaden the scope of inquiry, we will engage with voices historically excluded from the canon and engage with renegotiations of established narratives through seminal texts of literary theory like Deleuze/Guattari's concept of "minor literature" or Hans Mayer's *Außenseiter*. Guest speakers from the literary world will share contemporary perspectives on selected texts, fostering connections between historical inquiry and present-day literary discourse. In addition, museum visits or excursions will provide further opportunities to contextualize these texts within broader cultural and historical frameworks. Course materials and class discussions will be in both German and English. Students are expected to have at least B1-level proficiency in German. Throughout the course, students will develop specialist vocabulary and skills enabling them to write about and discuss literary works in German.

PL244 Resonance: Time, Attention, and the Arts of Connection

Module: Theories of Literature and Culture

Instructor: [Manuel Gebhardt](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

How do we cultivate a life that is meaningful rather than merely busy? This seminar introduces the contemporary German sociologist Hartmut Rosa, best known for his account of social acceleration (why life feels ever faster) and resonance (what makes life feel alive and connected). Resonance arises when we enter into a reciprocal, responsive contact with the world—whether with people, nature, art, music, work, or ideas. It is the opposite of alienation, where the world remains silent or is treated merely as a resource. For Rosa, it is not material possessions or mere productivity, but this living, reciprocal responsiveness that is essential to a fulfilled life. Building on this account, we use resonance as a cross-disciplinary lens on time, attention, and the arts of connection across art, work, education, and technology. We pair accessible selections from Rosa with readings in philosophy, sociology, cultural studies, and creative nonfiction, and we practice what we study through weekly "resonance labs" – brief field exercises such as sound-mapping, slow looking, micro-craft, and attention walks. Students learn to analyze sites of alienation and to articulate conditions for more resonant spaces in classrooms, workplaces, communities, and the arts. Assignments include short reflection notes, one seminar facilitation, a midterm essay, and a final research or creative project with critical commentary.

Politics

HI250 The Postcolonial Transition in Africa

Module: Advanced Topics in Global and Comparative Politics

Instructor: [Romain Tiquet](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This seminar explores the complex history of Africa's transition from empire to nation during the twentieth century, introducing students to key themes and debates in African history. The course traces how the postcolonial transition unfolded in different contexts—from the rise of powerful anti-colonial movements after the First World War to the emergence of a constellation of sovereign nation-states between the late 1940s and the 1960s. These developments are situated within their broader historical contexts: the crises of the 1930s, the Second World War, and the onset of the Cold War. Reflecting the heterogeneity of decolonisation processes, our discussions will address topics such as: the nature of colonial rule and the meaning of decolonisation; the formation of postcolonial states and the emergence of new forms of citizenship; the social and economic transformations across African societies during this period; and the challenges of writing a social history of these regions. Our work will be grounded in a wide range of readings, including historical surveys, academic articles, and primary sources. We will also reflect on methodological questions, critical historiography, and the use and status of archival material.

PS369 Critical Geopolitics

Module: Global Social Theory

Instructor: [Boris Vormann](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

As a field of study, geopolitics examines the spatial dimensions of interstate power relations. Modern thinking about geopolitics emerged at the turn to the 20th century, as the British Empire unraveled and new colonial and hegemonial disputes erupted. After World War II, geopolitics lost much of its analytical lure, due to the fact that the Nazi regime had built many of its political claims on such geostrategic considerations (Lebensraum). After the fall of the Iron Curtain, new transportation and communication technologies seemed to make distance and space irrelevant

categories for political thinking and action, given the plummeting of transaction costs and globalization processes. Climate change and depleting resources, renationalization tendencies, large-scale infrastructural development projects and resurfacing territorial conflicts have all led to a reinvigoration of geopolitical thinking and practice in the very recent past. What potential futures does this imply for cooperation and for conflict? This course critically engages conceptual and theoretical texts in geopolitics, examines historical examples, and explores three of today's most pertinent geopolitical relationships: China's one-belt-one road initiative, Russia's territorial ambitions, and the reinvention of transatlantic relations.

PT325 The European Union: Institutions, Policies, and Procedures

Module: Advanced Topics in Global and Comparative Politics

Instructor: [Berit Ebert](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

The institutions and political processes of the European Union (EU), namely the concept of supranationality, offer a unique construct of international collaboration that was developed with clear goals by founding members. Developing from the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, the Union has gone on to evolve principles of membership and cooperation that go far beyond economic interests and imperatives. These are embodied in Article 2 of the Treaty of Lisbon, ratified in 2009, which upholds a commitment to human rights, solidarity and equality. But the EU has faced and continues to face immense challenges: Brexit, the financial crisis of 2008, the war in Ukraine, and the rise of populist movements, and most recently, the current US government's apparent decoupling from European security and defense interests. In this course, we will introduce the essential structure and decision-making mechanisms of the European Union: the European Council, the European Commission, the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the European Central Bank, and the Committee of the Regions. We will also compare these institutions' supranational characteristics with those of the nation-state and of international organizations with a focus on governance structures in the EU. Major cases tried in the European Court of Justice and key legal principles that have shaped the Union's political advancements will be interpreted. Furthermore, we will discuss some of the European Union's policies and current political developments, among them the European electoral-law reform, the reform of the judicial system in Poland and the rule-of-law mechanism, as well gender equality. Students will engage with original EU policy documents to acquire the skills of analyzing and interpreting them. At the end of the seminar, students will have a solid knowledge about the functioning of the Union's institutions, and the evaluation of legal texts, treaty provisions, and policy approaches, enabling a clearer assessment of the future of the European

project in a time of crisis, as well as a more astute understanding of broader political processes.

PT355 International Organizations and Human Rights Advocacy

Module: Civic Engagement and Social Justice

Instructors: [Berit Ebert](#), Danyah Jaber (Al-Quds Bard)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This seminar exposes students to the practical work of human rights actors in the context of securing and advocating for human rights through inter- and supranational organizations. It is divided into two sections. We begin by giving students a general overview of the role of key players in creating and implementing human rights. We then delve into the processes, institutions and material factors that influence inter- and supranational behaviors vis-a-vis human rights obligations. Lectures look in-depth at the role of individuals and collectives of peoples in campaigning for human rights and addressing violations. This will culminate in analysis of cases that have been key in shaping the international human rights regime. The second part of the course familiarizes students with the practical capacities required to run human rights advocacy campaigns. Through guest lecturers, students will be introduced to insight and expertise on lobbying; campaigning; and research, monitoring, and reporting, including a two-day training with Amnesty International in Berlin. Finally, students will develop human rights-based approaches and strategies to create their own advocacy campaign. At the end of the semester, all students of the seminar will meet in Berlin and visit organizations such as the representative office of the European Union and meet with experts from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, the Berlin office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights.

PL342 Democracy and the Ethics of War

Module: Advanced Topics in Global and Comparative Politics

Instructor: [Erica Benner](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Are democracies more peaceful and virtuous than other forms of government? Some friends of democracy say yes: self-governing citizens are less likely to rush into wars than autocratic or oligarchic leaders, and more likely to respect human rights and the rule of law when their states resort to force. Others point out dangerous gaps between ideal democratic principles and unjust or warlike realities.

This course examines the recurring tensions between democracy, ethics, and war. With readings from history, philosophy, political and international relations theory, and literature, we'll consider several broad frameworks for understanding these tensions: international 'realism', the dynamics of democratic competition and communications, gender roles, imperialist mindsets, and the political economics of liberal democracies. Then we'll take a closer look at cases where direct or indirect involvement in wars has created complex ethical challenges for democracies. We will ask: Are some forms of democracy more war-prone than others? How can leaders and citizens maintain ethical standards – and robust democratic institutions – under pressure from the conflicts that lead to wars? How might individual democracies and the international system be reformed to disincentivise violence and regulate the deeper causes of war?

PL328 Communism in Theory, History and Film

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Ewa Atanassow](#), Denis Skopin

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

What is communism? What was everyday life like in so-called communist countries, and what were the cultural horizons of their citizens? What impact did communism have (and is it still having) on today's European societies? Noting the long genealogy of communist ideals reaching back to Plato's *Republic*, we will study the nature of Soviet-type communist society by exploring its ideological foundations, tumultuous history, and cultural output. Our goal will be to understand the communist project without denigrating it, but also without ignoring the monumental violence perpetrated in its name, and the challenges it faced as an economic system. We'll begin by probing the social and political theory of revolutionary Marxism, and its contested reception by the main architects of 20th-century communist regimes. We'll then examine how this theory was applied in historical practice to various aspects – economic, institutional, cultural and political – of social life under what was then termed "really existing socialism." Taking the USSR and DDR as examples, we'll familiarize ourselves with their specific contexts, and draw on film as an artistic reflection of the self-understanding, normative horizon, and daily life of socialist culture. In addition to readings and film screenings, students will visit exhibitions and museums devoted to the communist past, as well as sites in Berlin whose history relates to this period.

PL362 The Problem of the Philosophy of History

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Thomas Raysmith](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

G. W. F. Hegel articulated the following problem for those who assert that philosophy has a history. Philosophy is often claimed to discover unchanging truths. Yet history delivers an array of discordant systems. It would thus seem that there is no history of philosophy but only a history of conflicting opinions. In this course, we will study various conceptions of philosophy advanced by thinkers past and present who have attempted to support either the position that philosophy has a history or the position that it does not. We will consider the ways in which philosophy has been distinguished from other disciplines, the question of whether there are any common and perennial philosophical topics, and the methodologies proposed for conducting research in the history of philosophy. We will also analyse and challenge traditional narratives of the history of philosophy in light of critiques of sexism, Eurocentrism, colonialism, etc. This course is an investigation into how we do and should tell and research the history of human thought.

HI315 Cultural Memory and Historical Politics in East-Central Europe

Component: Elective

Instructor: [Ostap Sereda](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

The course will start by exploring the main conceptual frameworks in the field of memory studies and then re-examine them by discussing selected cases of cultural memory, the politics of history, and commemorative practices in the region of East Central Europe (broadly defined) after WWII, with a focus on the period after 1989/91. We will study the role of the state, academia, public intellectuals, and new mnemonic actors in the reshaping of collective memory through commemorative practices, school education, museums and monument culture, the tourism industry, the symbolic markers of urban landscapes, and the media. We will also analyze the various political and legislative actions of historical politics in the region and the historiographic and public discussions relevant to these measures.

PS326 Political Economy of Development

Module: Global Social Theory

Instructor: [Gale Raj](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course engages on the topic of 'development' in the era of globalization understood here as the interconnectedness of economic activity across borders, since World War II. We will focus on understanding how powerful thinkers and domestic and global political institutions helped shaped policies, practices and outcomes of different patterns of globalization. There is a greater focus on these outcomes for countries of the Global South. Organized in three parts, the course begins by chronicling the ideas surrounding reconstruction and economic development after the World War II. Next, we turn to the shift towards neoliberal market economies during the 1980s and examining its ideology and policies which became a cornerstone of neoliberalism and which were spread globally by the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization throughout the 1990s, with dire repercussions for countries in the Global South. Finally, we will focus on the rise of globalized industries which emerged as part of foreign investment practices by multinational corporations supported by liberalization-friendly regulations and the more recent shift, since the early 2000s, towards global outsourcing and the formation of vast global production networks. We will discuss what implications these developments have for the Global South, considering ideas of postcolonial core-periphery relationships.

PS327 A Critical Appraisal of the Arab Spring: 2010-2023

Module: Advanced Topics in Global and Comparative Politics

Instructor: [Usahma Darrah](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course deals with the mass protests that swept across the Arab World in the 2010s as part of a global series of democracy movements. To study this phenomenon, we will look at the historical emergence of modern Arab states within regional systems that share a common language, culture and public space. Students will learn to contextualize the broader Arab region using analytical tools such as the concepts of state formation, the role of geopolitical alignments, the workings of political economy and the social contract, the phenomenon of the rentier state, and the dynamics of the deep state. In examining the protest movements and violence in key Arab countries, students will develop answers to the following questions: How did Arab civil society try to bring about dignity and democracy? How was the counter-revolutionary repression by some Arab states supported by Iran and Russia? What challenges did the upheaval and protracted conflicts in the MENA and Gulf regions present for Western interests and policies? How has US policy, in particular, affected the perceptions and posture of key Arab actors in relationship to the West?

Where does the Arab Spring represent a turning point toward a democratic trajectory, and where did it lead to failed statehood? Does the migration fallout from the Arab Spring mark the end of liberal politics in the EU?

PS390 German Foreign Policy and National Security Decision-Making

Module: Advanced Topics in Global and Comparative Politics

Instructor: [Aaron Allen](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This multidisciplinary course explores the structural evolution of the Federal Republic of Germany's role in the world since the end of World War II to the current *Zeitenwende*. Through an interactive approach, students will be able to contextualize contemporary German foreign policy challenges from their geographic, material, and ideational roots. Furthermore, course activities and assignments are tailored to assist students in becoming foreign policy practitioners fully capable of applying national security decision theories. The curriculum threads together historical cases, international relations scholarship, and security studies in order to provide a holistic understanding of all the constituent parts influencing Germany's external posture. Why is contemporary Germany often referred to as a reluctant leader? What are the unique attributes of German-style foreign policy currently being developed? A critical appraisal of topics such as the institutions shaping elite policy-making, the legacy of the Cold War and reunification, relations with the European Union, and the triangulation between the great powers of the United States, Russia and China offers students the necessary tools to answer these core questions. A complementary emphasis on professional development will allow participants to garner practical skills through simulations, seminar debates, and presentations.

PS393 Labor Movements and Public Policy

Module: Public Policy

Instructor: [Dave Braneck](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

This course will look at the labor movement in the United States, using organized labor as a lens through which to analyze the convergence of the state, shifting institutional frameworks, and social movements. Students will be able to assess the role of organized labor within US politics generally, grappling with the opportunities and limits of labor as a means for enacting change, as well as how labor fits into, shapes, and is affected by institutional arrangements. A historic perspective will be

taken in order to mark developments within the state and how this context has affected and been affected by organized labor. Students will be tasked with employing and sharpening existing understanding of state and policy structures while gaining critical knowledge and analytical skills that they will be able to apply to analysis of the state and other actors.

SC301 Performing Science and Medicine: The Lab, the Clinic and the Public Realm

Component: Elective

Instructors: [Sasha Bergstrom-Katz](#), [Michele Luchetti](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Suitable for multi-disciplinary artists and humanities students alike, this course addresses the relationship between science, medicine, and society through a discussion of critical texts and creative activities inspired by art, performance, and theater. It uses works of theater and contemporary art alongside critical texts from the history, philosophy, and sociology of science and medicine to develop a conversation about the ways in which performances of science in the laboratory, the clinic and in the public sphere communicate key concepts and practices. These include ideas of objectivity, rationality, trust, power, as well as modes of faith and healing. The increasing complexity of science and its interactions with the social realm call for an expansion of traditional humanistic methodologies to encompass approaches that foster personal engagement, curiosity, creativity, and active criticism. For this reason, the course integrates seminar-style discussions of core historical, philosophical, and sociological topics on science and society with practical sessions that rely on arts-based activities to stimulate a creative first-person engagement with these topics. Further, it contributes to a timely study of the relationship between art and science. The overarching goal of the course is twofold. On the one hand, it aims at providing participants with key skills to critically engage and discuss issues related to science and society; on the other hand, it exposes them to a vast array of arts-based activities through writing, performance and art-making workshops during which they can act on their critical engagement and exercise a number of skills that are widely transferable within and outside of academia and art. Divided into three sections: Performing Experiments, Performing Medicine, and Public Performances, the course aims at a new understanding of the relation between science and medicine.

SC255 Water Histories: Society, Conflict, and Power

Instructor: [Sam Hege](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Module: Public Policy / Civic Engagement and Social Justice

Concerns about water access and safety are intensifying, driven by rising sea levels, droughts, and aging infrastructure. In this course, we will critically examine contemporary water crises within their historical context. By studying a variety of water formations—such as rivers, oceans, aquifers, and wetlands—we will explore how water shapes both the history of colonialism and its enduring legacies. Topics we will cover include floods, hurricanes, maritime transportation, hydroelectricity, and irrigation agriculture. We will also pose key questions, such as: How can one care for a river? Can water be owned? What unseen labor, basic infrastructure, and resources are needed to make water flow? Throughout the course, we will draw on case studies from both the Global North and the Global South, encouraging students to synthesize a wide range of materials and develop analytical skills through comparative frameworks. While using transnational case studies means that there will not be neat and linear narratives to draw from, students will be challenged to think critically about the history of water through a more diverse set of perspectives and experiences.

SO204 Urban Ethnography Workshop

Module: Qualitative Methods in Social Sciences

Instructor: [Agata Lisiak](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

This course introduces students to key qualitative methods in urban ethnography, with an emphasis on participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Each weekly seminar combines theoretical discussion with a hands-on workshop, offering students opportunities to experiment with a range of methodological and analytical tools. Following an initial exploration of the ethical and political considerations of urban research, students will practice field note-taking, design and peer-review interview guides, conduct interviews, analyze data using thematic coding, and write up their findings. Throughout the semester, students will also discuss different examples of ethnographic writing, engaging critically with questions of voice, positionality, and representation.

SE302 Evidence and Inquiry: Open Source for Human Rights Research

Module: Civic Engagement and Social Justice

Instructor: [Fred Abrahams](#), Marija Ristic

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [GHEA21 Human Rights Certificate](#) requirement

This course introduces students to the rapidly evolving field of open source investigations, including the tools and techniques to document and expose human rights violations. Beginning with a survey of the field, including the origins and developments of open source research, the course offers hand-on training in the skills needed to discover, preserve, verify and present evidence of abuse, with a continued focus on ethical considerations, digital security and the well-being of researchers. Using investigations from human rights groups, media, and courts, the course will critically assess the impact and limitations of open source research in advancing accountability, rule of law and social change. Guest speakers from Berlin and elsewhere will share their insights and experiences.

SO324 Quantitative Methods in Social Sciences

Module: Quantitative Methods in Social Sciences

Instructor: [Nassim Abi Ghanem](#)

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Why do people vote the way they do? Why does violence erupt in some states while in other states it does not? Can development aid improve democratization and development? One way of answering these questions is through effective analysis of quantitative data. This course focuses on the different strategies of quantitative statistical analysis. We explore how to read, understand, and critically assess quantitative research. Students will engage in quantitative research design, testing hypotheses, unpacking causal mechanisms, and applying probability and regression analysis tools. Finally, students will learn how to present the interpreted data logically and systematically in research output. In this course, students will also learn the basics of R software to conduct statistical analysis. Towards the end of the course, we will also briefly explore social network analysis (SNA) and qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) as alternative quantitative social science methods.

SO275 Permutations of the Public

Component: Elective

Instructor: Cynthia Browne

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

Fulfills [Civic Engagement Certificate](#) requirement

Public, as a noun or adjective, traverses multiple disciplines and discourses. As a Euro-American concept that received its most explicit theorization and historicization in the wake of the Enlightenment, it has become a central category in understanding the political dimensions of cultural transformations across a wide array of domains. This course examines its significance for understanding how power, freedom, and authority become enacted and reconfigured in modern states. The course combines reading and discussion of the concept's foundational formulations by key political philosophers (Juergen Habermas, Hannah Arendt, Jacques Ranciere, Michael Warner, Kluge and Negt) with its analytical use in historical and ethnographic scholarship, as well as its significance in contemporary art practices. This reach, which also incorporates studies from the Global South, draws attention to how specific instances of the public sphere, such as da'wa publics in Cairo, circulating imagery in post-Suharto Indonesia, decollagist practices in post-WWII France, hydraulic publics in Mumbai, and parallel public spheres in the former Soviet Union have challenged, revised, and expanded classical conceptualizations of this space.

PS275 The Role of China and Russia in a Multipolar World: Developmental Strategies and Forms of Cooperation in the Global South

Component: Elective

Instructor: Felix Jaitner

Credits: 8 ECTS, 4 U.S. credits

In recent years, the strong influence of western powers in Africa has dwindled. At the same time, China and Russia have increasingly shown the ambition to exert their influence in the Global South. Increased economic activity (especially in the extractive sector), and military support (arms exports and the private security company 'Wagner') underscore these ambitions. Another example for increased South-South cooperation is the expansion of the BRICS. At the same time, tensions between the USA and China are intensifying, which is reflected above all in sanctions in the technology sector (chips) or stricter trade tariffs. Meanwhile, the Russian government grounds its active foreign policy in Africa on the idea that it is an anti-Western global power and former supporter of anti-colonial movements. This raises the question of how far the relations between China, Russia and African countries differ from those of traditional Western colonial powers. Can the relations of both countries with Africa be described as South-South relations? Does the political and economic trajectory of these relations alter the self-determination of the continent or does it rather reinforce asymmetries similar to Western countries?

The seminar examines the emergence of the multipolar world order and attempts to analyze the dynamics and conflicts that shape it, with particular attention to how these developments affect the global South.