The Committee on Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science (CHSS) is an interdisciplinary graduate program dedicated to advancing social, historical, and philosophical perspectives on science. Its areas of interest are broad, extending across the sciences and from the ancient world to the present day. Its faculty derive from many departments in the University, but particularly from History, Sociology, Anthropology, and Philosophy. We currently have major strengths in the study of evolutionary biology, psychology, and medicine, and in issues of the social activity of science, such as those relating to scientific authority, credibility, communication, and intellectual property. Students in the Ph.D. program have an opportunity to investigate such aspects of the scientific enterprise in depth, within its many rich historical, social, and philosophical contexts. They are also encouraged to grapple with the practices and approaches of science itself.

A brief description of the Committee’s degree requirements is provided below, along with a representative list of courses that have been taught in recent years. For more complete information, you are encouraged to consult the website at http://chss.uchicago.edu/. This site contains an up to date description of faculty research interests, a complete statement of degree requirements, descriptions of individual courses being taught this year, a calendar of events (including meetings of the Committee’s regular Workshop in the History, Philosophy, and Sociology of Science), a list of students who have received Ph.D.s from the Committee with the titles of their dissertations, and more.

Those with questions about the Committee should write to the Administrative Assistant, The Committee on Conceptual and Historical Studies of Science, The University of Chicago, 1126 East 59th Street, Chicago, IL 60637 (bethcalderon@uchicago.edu (bbmackev@uchicago.edu)).
APPLICATION

New students are admitted to the Committee through the Division of the Social Sciences. Applicants will be expected to submit undergraduate transcripts, scores from the general Graduate Record Examination, three letters of recommendation, short descriptions of their interests and/or reasons for wanting to study in CHSS, and a writing sample.

The application process for admission and financial aid for all Social Sciences graduate programs is administered through the divisional Office of the Dean of Students. The Application for Admission and Financial Aid, with instructions, deadlines and department specific information is available online at: https://apply-ssd.uchicago.edu/apply/. (https://socialsciences.uchicago.edu/admissions/apply/) Questions pertaining to admissions and aid should be directed to ssd-admissions@uchicago.edu or (773) 702-8415.

Our application process is now entirely online (paperless). **All supporting material - including letters of recommendation, transcripts, and writing samples (if required by a specific department) - must be submitted electronically through the online application.**

More information about applying to programs in the University of Chicago's Division of the Social Sciences can be found at https://socialsciences.uchicago.edu/admissions/how-to-apply (https://socialsciences.uchicago.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/).

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Every new student in CHSS is assigned an adviser, with whom he or she designs an individual program of study. Because the interests of students within CHSS vary widely, so too do these programs. Yet all students are expected to fulfill certain common requirements. Full and up to date details are given on the website, but the main elements are described here.

Students choose one of the following options:

1. **SCIENCE OPTION:** The student may earn a master’s degree in a science (here understood to include mathematics, statistics, and social science).

2. **PHILOSOPHY OPTION:** The student may earn a master’s degree in philosophy.

3. **HISTORY OPTION:** The student may earn a master’s degree in history.

All students must complete a total of at least fourteen courses at the University for a grade of B or better, including at least five CHSS courses. Students must also take 2 quarters of individual “reading and research” classes with a CHSS faculty member, leading to a research paper to be completed by the end of year 2. This paper must attain a grade of A- or higher. They must maintain at least a B+ average every quarter. Students must take a coherent series of six courses in a scientific area at the University, approved by the Committee, at a level appropriate to their preparation and of an appropriately advanced nature. (The term science here includes social sciences as represented in the University’s Division of the Social Sciences.) This will normally mean that students must take at least some portion of their science work at a graduate level. Note that if a student enters the program with a master’s degree in an appropriate area, the committee determines what level of credit is given for it.

Among the coursework of the first two years, students should take three courses offered by the committee: Philosophy of Science, History of Science, and Introduction to Science Studies.

All coursework incompletes remaining at the end of an academic year must be cleared by the start of the next academic year. All students should finish the course requirements (including the R/R courses and research paper) by the end of the 2nd year. Students are generally expected to complete their two qualifying exams by the end of the fall quarter of year 3. Students are generally expected to have passed their proposal defense by the end of the spring quarter of year 3. Every CHSS student submits to the Committee a written report on their progress by May 1 each year. If the student is in candidacy then this report should include a schedule for remaining research and writing. In the spring quarter of every year, the Committee evaluates the progress of all students. If a student is not advancing in line with the expectations, then that student may be placed on probation or asked to leave the program.

Students must then pass two qualifying exams:

1. An oral examination based on readings in the constituent disciplines of CHSS. In general, students choose to focus mainly on one discipline, such as History, Philosophy, Sociology, or Anthropology.

2. An oral examination based on a draft syllabus for an undergraduate course and teaching statement compiled by the student.

The order in which students take the exams does not matter. These exams are, in part, designed by the students themselves. In the case of each exam, the process begins when the student proposes to the Chair two faculty members to serve as an exam committee. At least one of the two must be a member of CHSS. The committees for the two exams may overlap, but they must not be identical. Following the approval of the Chair, and with the commitment of the two faculty members, the student will then work with the committee to develop reading lists for the exams. The administrative assistant of CHSS should be given a copy of the student’s
approved reading list and questions for inclusion in their file. The student arranges the exact day and time of the exam in consultation with the members of the exam committee.

After all of the above requirements have been satisfied, a student may form a dissertation committee. These normally consist of three faculty members, with one designated as the chair. At least two members of the committee, one of them the chair, must be members of CHSS. The student chooses the committee, subject to the approval of the Chair of CHSS and the agreement of the faculty involved. Once the committee has been formed, the student will work with its members to develop a dissertation proposal. The student will defend the proposal in a proposal hearing. The dissertation proposal defense should happen by the end of spring quarter of year 3. The exact day and time of the hearing should be arranged by the student in consultation with the members of the committee and the Chair of CHSS. The student must inform the CHSS administrative assistant of the day and time chosen, and do so sufficiently far in advance that it is possible for the administrative assistant to notify the faculty, and get copies of the proposal to them, a full two weeks in advance of the hearing. If the proposal is approved at the hearing, the student will be considered to have advanced to “Ph.D. candidacy.” At this point, a student will proceed to write the dissertation itself.

At this point the student writes a dissertation proposal, and defends it at a hearing before his or her dissertation committee. He or she is then considered to have advanced to Ph.D. candidacy, and proceeds to write the dissertation itself.

Once the student submits a completed dissertation, and the chair of the dissertation committee secures agreement from all the committee members that it is ready to be defended, a dissertation defense may be scheduled. The exact day and time should be arranged by the student in consultation with the members of the committee and the Chair of CHSS. The student must inform the CHSS administrator of the day and time chosen, and give the administrative assistant both a copy of the dissertation and a short written summary (on the order of 5 to 10 pages). He or she must do so sufficiently far in advance that it is possible for the administrative assistant to notify the faculty, and get copies of the summary to them, a full two weeks in advance of the defense. The faculty present at the defense make the final decision on whether to accept the dissertation.

COURSES

The department website offers descriptions of representative courses offered in recent years: [https://chss.uchicago.edu/content/courses/](https://chss.uchicago.edu/content/courses/)

Please see University of Chicago Class Search ([https://my.uchicago.edu/](https://my.uchicago.edu/)) for specific class schedule information.

CONCEPTUAL AND HISTORICAL STUDIES OF SCIENCE COURSES

CHSS 30100. Wit & Wisdom in 18th-Century Literature. 100 Units.

TBD

Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 36003

CHSS 30400. Music & Science in the Early Modern Period. 100 Units.

TBD

Equivalent Course(s): MUSI 43705

CHSS 30506. Cities, Space, Power: Introduction to urban social science. 100 Units.

This lecture course provides a broad, multidisciplinary introduction to the study of urbanization in the social sciences. The course surveys a broad range of research traditions from across the social sciences, as well as the work of urban planners, architects, and environmental scientists. Topics include: theoretical conceptualizations of the city and urbanization; methods of urban studies; the politics of urban knowledges; the historical geographies of capitalist urbanization; political strategies to shape and reshape the built and unbuilt environment; cities and planetary ecological transformation; post-1970s patterns and pathways of urban restructuring; and struggles for the right to the city.

Instructor(s): N. Brenner Terms Offered: Winter. Not offered in 2023-2024 academic year.

Equivalent Course(s): SOCI 30506, ENST 20506, CEGU 20506, KNOW 30506, CHST 20506, HIPS 20506, PLSC 20506, CCCT 30506, SOCI 20506, PLSC 30506, ARCH 20506

CHSS 30574. Sociology Structure and Agency. 100 Units.

The subtitle of this course may very well be How to Think Sociologically. It's required of sociology majors but open to students majoring in other disciplines, including economics, STEM fields, and the humanities. The aim of the course is to impart a distinctly sociological perspective and equip students with sociological modes of explanation (as opposed to, say, economic or biological ones) in the belief that such a framework will enrich their understanding of the world. Our focus will be on unpacking two fundamental concepts in sociology, social structure and agency, and examining them in relation to one another. We will consult both classical and contemporary sources and discuss real-world applications. While the readings include dense social theory, every effort will be made to make the ideas at stake accessible to a non-specialized audience. The course will be run like a seminar and discussion intensive. It is imperative that students complete the readings on time and participate actively in discussions.

Instructor(s): M. Garrido Terms Offered: Spring. Not Offered in 2023/2024

Equivalent Course(s): SOCI 30574, SOCI 20574, HIPS 20574
CHSS 30576. Social Theory for the Digital Age. 100 Units.
Society rearranges and we don’t always know where it is heading. When the postmodern moment had arrived in the 1980s it perplexed social theorists, hence its characterization as simply a “post”-stage of modernity. Digitization is one answer to the question of direction of change in the last decades. In this class, we take the ongoing transformations that we attribute to digital media as a starting point to ask what challenges they provide to social theory that may force us to reconsider some of our most basic concepts and premises. We will understand the term digital age broadly to refer to the rise of algorithms, sensors, (big) data, machine learning, and computational methods, all developments that swirl in and around the Artificial Intelligence scene and intersect with and replace purely human relations. The class gives particular attention to concepts such as action and interaction, embodiment, social situations, subjectivity and autonomy, as well as society as communication.
Instructor(s): K. Knorr Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): SOCI 30576, SOCI 20576, HIPS 20576

CHSS 30927. Knowledge as a Platter: Comparative Perspectives on Knowledge Texts in the Ancient World. 100 Units.
In various ancient cultures, sages created the new ways of systematizing what was known in fields as diverse as medicine, politics, sex, dreams, and mathematics. These texts did more than present what was known; they exemplified what it means to know - and also why reflective, systematic knowledge should be valued more highly than the knowledge gained from common sense or experience. Drawing on texts from Ancient India, Greece, Rome, and the Near East, this course will explore these early templates for the highest form of knowledge and compare their ways of creating fields of inquiry: the first disciplines. Texts include the Arthashastra, the Hippocratic corpus, Deuteronomy, the Kama Sutra, and Aristotle’s Parva naturalia.
Terms Offered: Not offered in 21-22.
Prerequisite(s): Lorraine Daston
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 30927, KNOW 31415, SALC 30927, HREL 30927

CHSS 30928. Thinking the Present through the Past: Classic Works of History since 1750. 100 Units.
As proudly empirical as the sciences, as interpretive as the humanities, and as analytical as the social sciences, history as the pursuit of knowledge about the past resists classification. Because all history is written through the lens of the present, most works of history cease to be read after a generation, especially during the modern period, as the pace of change accelerated. In this seminar we will read some of the exceptions, including works by Kant, Toqueville, Michelet, c.Cassirer, Huizinga, Lovejoy, and Frances Yates, to understand how powerful vision of the past can transcend its own present.
Instructor(s): Lorraine Daston Terms Offered: Not offered in 21-22.
Prerequisite(s): Permission of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 30928, HIST 45002, KNOW 30928

CHSS 30929. The Strange World of Francis Bacon. 100 Units.
Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was a statesman, natural philosopher, essayist, and one of the most original thinkers of a spectacularly original age. Hailed as a visionary of modern science, reviled for his politics, praised for his prose style, admired for his legal reasoning, and skewed as a naïve empiricist, Bacon eludes modern categories. This seminar will look at his thought in the round. Texts include The Great Instauration, the New Organon, the Essays, and New Atlantis.
Note(s): Instructor’s consent required.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 45003, SCTH 30929

CHSS 30961. The Values of Attention. 100 Units.
Attention confers value - aesthetic, moral, epistemic, and now monetary value - upon whatever it singles out from the stream of experience. This seminar explores the long history of the theories and practices of attention in philosophy, religion, science, psychology, and the arts. Guiding questions include what objects are deemed worthy of attention and why, extreme states of attention such as religious contemplation or scientific observation, the schooling of attention through practices such as reading and web-surfing, theories of how attention works, and pathologies of attention.
Instructor(s): Lorraine Daston Terms Offered: TBD. Course is not being offered AY 21-22.
Prerequisite(s): Reading knowledge of at least one other language besides English; students who wish to enroll in the seminar should contact the instructor directly by email.
Note(s): Note: This course will be taught during the first 5 weeks of the quarter.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 30961, HIST 45004

CHSS 30962. Nature’s Authority. 100 Units.
From ancient times to the present, nature’s authority has been invoked by revolutionaries and reactionaries alike to justify social, political, and economic arrangements made by humans. Despite much trenchant philosophical criticism, nature seems to an irresistible resource in very human debates about power, work, sex, money, and much else. This seminar asks why this tradition has been so persistent and pervasive and where nature’s authority comes from. Readings will emphasize primary sources, from Aristotle to contemporary environmentalists. This course will meet two times per week for 3 hours, during the 1st five weeks of the quarter, March 28 - April 27.
Terms Offered: Spring. Course will be taught Spring 2022
Note(s): Instructor consent required. Primarily aimed at graduate students, but also open to well-qualified undergraduates.
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 20962, HIST 45005, SCTH 30962

CHSS 31000. Good Hands: Research Ethics. 100 Units.
Basic research is intended to explore and evaluate truth claims at the edge of our understanding of the natural and physical world, and it is this very quality that renders it useful as science. Yet, this often creates significant ethical questions for the research as well as for the social order in which all research takes place. Often, courses in research ethics focus on the establishment and enforcement of canonical rules of behavior, where the goal is to inform the investigator about how to follow these established rules. This course will turn to a different set of problems in research ethics. While we will begin with a foundation in the history of research ethics, reviewing the key cases that shaped the policies about which we have consensus, (human and animal subject protections; authorship, etc.) will consider the problems about which there is not yet a clear ethical course: what are the limits of human mastery? Why is research deception so prevalent? Are there experiments which are impermissible and why? What is the obligation of the researcher toward their community? How can we think clearly and ethically in situations of deep uncertainty? We will consider how moral philosophy as well as theological arguments have shaped research science and reflect on the nature, goal and meaning of basic and translational research in modernity.
Instructor(s): F. Albritton Jonsson Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Required course for new MS program in Biological Sciences. This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 31001, RETH 31000

CHSS 31302. Radicals in Early Modern Britain. 100 Units.
Throughout the 1640s and 1650s it seemed to many in England that the world they had grown up in-a world characterized by patriarchy and hierarchy, by inequality and privilege, by an established church and a monarchical state-was being turned upside down. Against a backdrop of conflict between Parliament and Crown, a power vacuum had opened, and in this vacuum both organized radical groups and individual visionaries saw the opportunity to make a revolution. The goals of these radicals were diverse, and often in contradiction. Some wanted the creation of a strict republic, even a democracy; some sought the elimination of private property; others the abolition of marriage; still others the creation of a millenarian Fifth Monarchy led by King Jesus himself. What they shared was a common desire to remake England into a fundamentally different society, and a failure to achieve their goals. Or was it a failure? Today the voices of these radicals have disappeared from most histories of modern political thought. And yet this forgotten corpus of writing reveals a very different early modern world, with strains of communism, proto-feminism, and dissent that fed the imaginations of radicals for centuries, including many well beyond England. This seminar introduces students directly to the ideas of the seventeenth-century English radicals. They will engage with the history and historiography of the English Revolution, read a variety of primary sources, and complete a research paper.
Instructor(s): A. Johns Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 21302, HIST 31302, HIPS 21302

CHSS 31406. Britain 1760-1880: The Origins of Fossil Capitalism. 100 Units.
Britain rose to global dominance after 1760 by pioneering the first fossil-fuel economy. This course explores the profound impact of coal and steam on every aspect of British society, from politics and religion to industrial capitalism and the pursuit of empire. Such historical investigation also serves a second purpose by helping us see our own fossil-fuel economy with fresh eyes through direct comparison with Victorian energy use. How much does the modern world owe to the fossil capitalism of the Victorians? Assignments include short essays that introduces students to primary sources (texts, artifacts, and images) and a longer paper that examines in greater depth a specific aspect of the age of steam.
Instructor(s): F. Albritton Jonsson Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 21406, HIST 31406, CEGU 21406, HIST 21406, CEGU 31406

CHSS 31413. Sex and Enlightenment Science. 100 Units.
What do a lifelike wax woman, a birthing dummy, and a hermaphrodite have in common? This interdisciplinary course seeks answers to this question by exploring how eighteenth-century scientific and medical ideas, technologies, and practices interacted with and influenced contemporary notions of sex, sexuality, and gender. In our course, the terms "sex," "Enlightenment," and "science" will be problematized in their historic contexts using a variety of primary and secondary sources. Through these texts, as well as images and objects, we will see how emerging scientific theories about sex, sexuality, and gender contributed to new understandings of the human, especially female, body. We will also see how the liberating potential of Enlightenment thought gave way to sexual and racial theories that insisted on fundamental human difference. Topics to be covered include theories of generation, childbirth, homosexuality, monstrosities, race and procreation, and hermaphrodites and questions about the "sex" of the enlightened scientist and the gendering of scientific practices.
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 21413, GNSE 21413, HIST 22218, HIPS 21413

CHSS 32000. Introduction to Science Studies. 100 Units.
This course provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary study of science, medicine, and technology. During the twentieth century, sociologists, historians, philosophers, and anthropologists raised original, interesting, and consequential questions about the sciences. Often their work drew on and responded to each other, and, taken
CHSS 32102. Technologies of Race Making. 100 Units.

This course considers the intersections between technology, science, and race. It explores how technologies have been developed and used to assign racial meaning to people’s identities and bodies and how this has impacted economic, political, and social power structures. We will read studies relating to historical and present-day technologies and discuss topics such as racial science, phrenometry, biometry, surveillance and policing, artificial intelligence and automation, and data production and reuse. A major theme that runs through the course is the practice of race-making, how biological race is enacted and made relevant in specific technological practices. Which assumptions and expectations about human variation are built into the technologies? What are the effects of its use in practice? How does race making configure into more durable forms, such as standards, databanks, and protocols? This class will be bi-modal, with in class and online options.

Instructor(s): Iris Clever Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 22100, HIPS 22100, PHIL 31408, HIST 56800, HLTH 22200, ANTH 32305, SOCI 40137

CHSS 32205. Taking Back the Land: Anthropology, Geography & Ethnoscience for Land Justice. 100 Units.

In a world of settler property regimes, corporate holdings and national parks, how are communities reclaiming the lands they’ve lost? National parks overturned; indigenous community conservation areas established; food deserts restored with expanding networks of community gardens; the last decade has seen an eruption of opportunities for land justice amidst continuing challenges from ongoing processes of capitalism, colonialism, and climate change. This course offers a holistic anthropological approach to land justice activism that begins with strategies for building collaborations, before looking at tools to help assert claims over territories and resources, and finally, exploring ways of restoring reclaimed lands with new foodways, forests, and community governance. Alongside critical readings and guest teachings from land justice activists in Southeast Asia and North America, the course will examine how a diversity of citizen science tools are being combined with indigenous, anthropological, geographic, and ecological methods to formulate a toolkit for land justice activism and community land/resource management. From counter mapping territory with remote sensing to effective strategies used to block mining projects; from indigenous conservation planning to guerrilla gardening: this course will explore different approaches to reclaiming lands and resources.

Instructor(s): Marshall Kramer Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 22205, ANTH 22206, ANTH 32207, MAPS 32205, ENST 22205, CRES 23305, GLST 22205

CHSS 32227. The Philosophy of Thomas Kuhn. 100 Units.

Thomas Kuhn was both an historian and a philosopher of science, with broader interests in philosophical issues pertaining to the nature of language, truth and knowledge - and, in particular, pertaining to questions concerning the possibility of communicability, commensurability, and inter-translatability across radically divergent conceptual schemes, theoretical frameworks, or grammatical/linguistic structures. This course will be devoted to a close examination of the treatment of these topics in Kuhn’s work. For purposes of orientation, we will begin with several class meetings in which we read his classic work The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, first published in 1962, along with some the central texts which figured in the controversies that book ignited in connection with the aforementioned topics. We will then examine some of the second thoughts Kuhn himself expressed concerning that work in scattered essays written between 1969 and 1977 (some of which are collected in The Essential Tension). The second half of the course will be on Kuhn’s work from 1978 until his death in 1996, starting with the essays collected in The Road Since “Structure”, and further developed in The Presence of Science Past (his 1987 Shearman Lectures) and The Plurality of Worlds (his final unfinished magnum opus). (B) (II)

Instructor(s): James Conant Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 22277, PHIL 32277, HIPS 22277

CHSS 32500. Modal Logic. 100 Units.

TBD
CHSS 32504. Science, Governance, and the Crisis of Liberalism. 100 Units.
In the era of "post-truth" it has become common to link a crisis of scientific authority with a crisis of liberalism. Democracies around the world are under threat, this reasoning goes, in part because of an attack on scientific truth. But what does liberalism - as political culture and as a form of governance - need (or want) from science? Depending where you look, the answer might appear to be facts, truth, a model 'public sphere,' an ethic of objectivity, tactics for managing risk and uncertainty, or technologies of population management (to name a few).
In addition to exploring the complex historical relationship between science and liberalism in the modern era, this course will critically assess how the history of science and the history of political thought have theorized truth and governance. We will examine what models of "coproduction" and "social construction" - nearly ubiquitous in the historiography of modern science - fail to capture about the histories of science and state power. We will also think about how political and intellectual historians’ theories of truth and mendacity in politics might be enriched by more attention to scientific knowledge in both its technical and epistemological forms. This course focuses on 19th- and 20th-century Europe and the United States in global perspective, and readings will draw from political theory, history, economic thought, the natural and human sciences, and critical theory.
Instructor(s): Isabel Gabel Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 28308, KNOW 32204, HIPS 22204, HIST 38308

CHSS 32708. Planetary Britain, 1600-1900. 100 Units.
What were the causes behind Britain’s Industrial Revolution? In the vast scholarship on this problem, one particularly heated debate has focused on the imperial origins of industrialization. How much did colonial resources and markets contribute to economic growth and technological innovation in the metropole? The second part of the course will consider the global effects of British industrialization. To what extent can we trace anthropogenic climate change and other planetary crises back to the environmental transformation wrought by the British Empire? Topics include ecological imperialism, metabolic rift, the sugar revolution, the slave trade, naval construction and forestry, the East India Company, free trade and agriculture, energy use and climate change.
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 22708, KNOW 32808, HIPS 22708, HIST 22708, HIST 32708, ENST 22708

CHSS 32709. Introduction to Philosophy of Quantum Mechanics. 100 Units.
In this class we examine some of the conceptual problems associated with quantum mechanics. We will critically discuss some common interpretations of quantum mechanics, such as the Copenhagen interpretation, the many-worlds interpretation and Bohmian mechanics. We will also examine some implications of results in the foundations of quantum theory concerning non-locality, contextuality and realism. (B) (II)
Instructor(s): Thomas Pashby Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Prior knowledge of quantum mechanics is not required since we begin with an introduction to the formalism. Only familiarity with high school geometry is presupposed but expect to be introduced to other mathematical tools as needed.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 22709, HIPS 22709, PHIL 32709, KNOW 22709

CHSS 32900. History of Statistics. 100 Units.
This course covers topics in the history of statistics, from the eleventh century to the middle of the twentieth century. We focus on the period from 1650 to 1950, with an emphasis on the mathematical developments in the theory of probability and how they came to be used in the sciences. Our goals are both to quantify uncertainty in observational data and to develop a conceptual framework for scientific theories. This course includes broad views of the development of the subject and closer looks at specific people and investigations, including reanalyses of historical data.
Instructor(s): S. Stigler Terms Offered: Not offered in 2022-2023.
Prerequisite(s): Prior statistics course
Equivalent Course(s): STAT 26700, STAT 36700, HIPS 25600

CHSS 32905. Topics in the History of Attention. 100 Units.
Our data,” said a recent social critic, “is the oil of the twenty-first century." In these infinite reserves, perhaps no data is more "ours" than the data we generate simply by paying attention to some things over other things. This particular feature of how our minds work has become the natural resource supply for the vastly profitable attention economy. But hasn’t it always been thus? In this course we will explore how something every human has always had becomes a new resource and a new problem from one historical moment to another. We will pursue our quarry with zealous particularism and zealous universalism, by tracking discourses of attention across several recurring themes: questions of autonomy and choice; problems of overabundance; forms of collective attention, trained attention, and pathological attention including pathologies of excess, deficiency, and erroneous attention. Throughout the course we will ask what problems of attention say about the cultures and societies that produce them, and how all problems of attention might be different historical attempts to come to terms with human limitation and human potential.
Instructor(s): Huang, Lily Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): MAPS 32905, HIPS 22905

CHSS 33300. Introduction to Philosophy of Science. 100 Units.
We will begin by trying to explicate the manner in which science is a rational response to observational facts. This will involve a discussion of inductivism, Popper’s deductivism, Lakatos and Kuhn. After this, we will briefly
survey some other important topics in the philosophy of science, including underdetermination, theories of evidence, Bayesianism, the problem of induction, explanation, and laws of nature. (B) (II)

Instructor(s): Thomas Pashby
Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 32000, HIPS 22000, HIST 35109, HIST 25109, PHIL 22000, KNOW 32000

CHSS 34200. The Nuclear Age. 100 Units.
This seminar examines the history of nuclear science, technology, and politics since World War II. The invention of atomic weapons transformed the international security landscape in the middle of the last century, yet most nuclear arms have never been deployed in conflict. This course encourages students to consider the roles of ideas, knowledge, culture, and secrecy in the development and deployment of technologies often considered as quintessentially material. It asks how nuclear science and technology both reflected and informed social landscapes, intersecting in crucial, often surprising ways with issues of gender, race, and class. What kinds of people in which places have had access to atomic knowledge, and to what ends? Ranging across national contexts and through social layers that intersect with nuclear industries, we will consider the perspectives of victims / survivors, scientists, workers, environmentalists, miners, diplomats, and other people. Students will encounter a multifaceted approach to the Nuclear Age, including how its promise and peril have been represented and contested, into the present time.

Instructor(s): Benjamin Goossen
Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 38608, KNOW 32200

CHSS 34201. Genetics In Evol Perspective. 100 Units.
TBD

Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 24101, BIOS 29288

CHSS 34921. Darwinism and Literature. 100 Units.
In this course we will explore the notion that literary fiction can contribute to the generation of new knowledge of the human mind, human behavior, and human societies. Some novelists in the late 19th and early 20th century provided fictional portrayals of human nature that were grounded into Darwinian theory. These novelists operated within the conceptual framework of the complementarity of science and literature advanced by Goethe and the other romantics. At a time when novels became highly introspective and psychological, these writers used their literary craftmanship to explore and illustrate universals aspects of human nature. In this course we read the work of several novelists such as George Eliot, HG Wells, Joseph Conrad, Jack London, Yuvgeny Zamyatin, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, Italo Svevo, and Elias Canetti, and discuss how these authors anticipated the discoveries made decades later by cognitive, social, and evolutionary psychology.

Instructor(s): D. Maestripieri
Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Distribution requirements: Undergraduate: A; Graduate: 1

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 24921, KNOW 31418, KNOW 21418, HIPS 24921, HIST 34921, CHDV 27861, CHDV 37861

CHSS 35014. Introduction to Environmental History. 100 Units.
How have humans interacted with the environment over time? This course introduces students to the methods and topics of environmental history by way of classic and recent works in the field: Crosby, Cronon, Worster, Russell, and McNeill, etc. Major topics of investigation include preservationism, ecological imperialism, evolutionary history, forest conservation, organic and industrial agriculture, labor history, the commons and land reform, energy consumption, and climate change. Our scope covers the whole period from 1492 with case studies from European, American, and British imperial history.

Instructor(s): F. Albritton Jonsson
Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): CEGU 25014, HIPS 25014, HIST 35014, ENST 25014, HIST 25014

CHSS 35121. The Brazil-Argentina Nuclear Cooperation Agreement and Thermoelectric Transition in Brazil. 100 Units.
In this course we present a history of Brazil-Argentina nuclear cooperation and how Brazil is planning the transition of its electric matrix from predominantly hydraulic towards a mix with increased share of nuclear power. Proliferation risks are a main concern of international community when nuclear programs expansion is considered. The Brazilian-Argetinian Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, created in 1991, has been fundamental in assuring the international community (via the International Atomic Energy Agency) that the nuclear materials and facilities of both countries are being used for peaceful purposes. Domestically, the debate has been environmental in nature, and concerns topics ranging from mining to power generation, and from radioactive materials disposal to radiation effects in living organisms and major accidents. These diplomatic, environmental, social and political issues are in turn dependent on technical details of the thermoelectric generating process, and this nexus of issues provides the topics for the course.

Instructor(s): Ramos, Alexandre
Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Tinker Visiting Professor Autumn 2018

Equivalent Course(s): LACS 35121, LACS 25121, PPHA 39921, HIPS 25121

CHSS 35202. We Other Victorians. 100 Units.
This course examines the construction of otherness, difference, and belonging in England during the long Nineteenth Century from a historical perspective. Each week students will study a different “other” by drawing on a variety of primary sources, including novels, autobiographies, government reports, legal documents, private correspondence, newspapers, and scientific publications. Special attention will be paid to how and
why emerging social sciences such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology both contributed to and were themselves informed by, (1) broader discussions about cultural ethnicity, biological race, national identity, and modern society; as well as (2) changing conceptions of class, gender, race, religion, and illness. By working historically, students in this course will also develop a conceptual framework for studying otherness that transcends geographic and temporal boundaries. Students will learn about the socio-political, cultural, legal, scientific, and ideological construction of otherness in Victorian Britain while also developing a conceptual framework for studying otherness that transcends geographic and temporal boundaries. This course relies almost entirely on primary sources and is designed to help students develop the skills needed to complete an original research project independently.

Instructor(s): Kristine Palmieri
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 32201, HIST 31103, HIPS 22202

CHSS 35205. The Scientific Image. 100 Units.
This course explores the broad field of scientific image-making, focusing in particular on problems of formalism, abstraction, and realism. What makes a "good" scientific image? What kind of work do scientific images do? What philosophical, ideological, and political constraints underwrite attempts to render the complexity of events and entities in the world in stylized visual vocabularies? And how might we approach the work of aesthetics and style in image-making? We will examine these questions through a survey of several contemporary scholarly frameworks used for thinking about problems of representation in scientific practice, and will attend to such image-making practices as graphing, diagramming, modeling, doodling, illustrating, sculpting, and photographing, among other methods.

Instructor(s): M. Rossi
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 25205, HIST 35205, HIST 25205

CHSS 35301. Global Science. 100 Units.
Is all science global, and if so, how did it get that way? Are some sciences more global than others? What has been at stake historically in describing scientific activity as variously local, transnational, international, or global, and how have these constructions influenced the historiography of the field? In this graduate colloquium, we will explore different approaches to writing and examining scientific knowledge production as a global phenomenon, as well as considering different historiographic attempts at grappling with science’s simultaneously local and global qualities, poly-vocal nature, and historical coproduction with global political and economic power.

Instructor(s): E. Kern
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 35206, HIST 25206, HIPS 25316

CHSS 35302. Intro to History of Science. 100 Units.
This course provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary study of science, medicine, and technology. Beginning early in the twentieth century, sociologists, historians, philosophers, and anthropologists engaged in a consistent set of inquiries posing original, interesting, and consequential questions about the sciences. Their works drew on and responded to each other, and, taken together, their various approaches constituted a field, which in the 1970s came to be called "science studies." This course furnishes an initial guide to this field. Students will not only encounter some of its principal concepts, approaches, and findings, and see how they have developed over time and in context. They will also get a chance to apply science-studies perspectives themselves, by performing a fieldwork project. Among the topics we will examine include: the sociology of scientific knowledge and its applications; actor-network theories of science; constructivism and the history of science; and efforts to apply science-studies approaches beyond the sciences themselves.

Instructor(s): Michael Paul Rossi
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 35303

CHSS 35421. Renaissance Book History: Censorship and the Print Revolution. 100 Units.
Collaborative research seminar on the history of censorship and information control, with a focus on the history of books and information technologies. The class will meet in Special Collections, and students will work with rare books and archival materials. Half the course will focus on censorship in early modern Europe, including the Inquisition, the spread of the printing press, and clandestine literature in the Renaissance and Enlightenment, with a special focus on the effects of censorship on classical literature, both newly rediscovered works like Lucretius and lost books of Plato, and authors like Pliny the Elder and Seneca who had been available in the Middle Ages but became newly controversial in the Renaissance. The other half of the course will look at modern and contemporary censorship issues, from wartime censorship, to the censorship of comic books, to digital-rights management, to free speech on our own campus.

Instructor(s): A. Palmer
Note(s): Assignments: short and long papers, alternative assignments
Equivalent Course(s): SIGN 26010, HIST 25421, RLST 22121, HIST 35421, HIPS 25421, HREL 34309, CLAS 35417, CLCV 25417, KNOW 31403, KNOW 21403

CHSS 35605. Life and A Life. 100 Units.
This course is about the aims of human life. We address the question through two contrasting conceptions of life: 1) life in the sense of an ongoing activity-and its associated values of pleasure, enlightenment, and happiness, and 2) life in the sense of a biographical story-and its associated values of achievement, glory, meaning, and purpose. We will attempt to understand how these two conceptions of life are compatible, and if one or the other
is prior. Readings include: Aristotle, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, William James, Bernard Williams, Iris Murdoch, and Jonathan Lear. (A)

Instructor(s): Arnold Brooks Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 35605, HIPS 25605, PHIL 25605

CHSS 35994. Epistemic Virtues. 100 Units.
Epistemic virtues are to the pursuit of scientific and scholarly truth what moral virtues are to the pursuit of the ethically good: personal qualities more likely (though never certain) to advance these goals and therefore ones instilled and praised by the communities dedicated to such pursuits. In both the contemporary humanities and the sciences, epistemic virtues include rigor, precision, objectivity, and productivity; in past epochs, certainty ranked high. As in the case of moral virtues, various epistemic virtues can not only coexist with or even support but also come into conflict with one another, raising the question: how to adjudicate their competing claims? Using historical and contemporary case studies, this seminar will explore a range of epistemic virtues in both the humanities and sciences. The aim is to reflect on commonalities and differences across the disciplines and on the ways in which ethics and epistemology converge. (Co-teaching with Lorraine Daston.)

Instructor(s): Glenn Most & Lorraine Daston Terms Offered: Spring. The course will be taught in Spring 2023
Prerequisite(s): All students require instructors’ permission.
Note(s): The seminar will take place on Monday/Wednesday, 09:30 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.*, during the first five weeks of the term (March 20 – April 19, 2023)
Equivalent Course(s): STCH 35994, PHIL 35994, HIPS 25994, CLCV 23722, CLAS 33722, PHIL 25994, HIST 39505

CHSS 36054. Formation of Knowledge MAPSS Core: Ways of Knowing. 100 Units.
This seminar introduces students to the conditions and processes of knowledge formation that shape our understanding of truth, our theories of social life, and our projections of possible futures. It examines how claims to knowledge emerge out of disciplinary, historical, and political contexts, as well as local cultural factors, both explicit and unspoken: how do institutions, technologies, and other normative structures produce, stabilize, or disrupt knowledge? How do scientists and artists examine and represent the world differently? What makes expertise and why do we trust certain ways of knowing over others? Building upon methods and perspectives in the social sciences and humanistic social sciences, this seminar introduces problems, concepts, and analytical tools that will enable students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds to examine how we know what we know.

“Ways of Knowing” is a required seminar for all students wishing to undertake the Formation of Knowledge MAPSS track https://sifk.uchicago.edu/mapss/. It also counts towards a required MAPSS Methods seminar.

Instructor(s): Tal Arbel Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 36054, HIST 35103, HIPS 26054

CHSS 36059. Media, Environment, and Risk. 100 Units.
In 1991, Ulrich Beck wrote that “society is made into a laboratory.” Following the Chernobyl disaster, Beck articulated how modern technology and its potential side-effects—such as radiation or chemical poisoning—had created the novel epistemological category of environmental risk defined by threats that escape human perception and transcend borders. Institutions monitoring ecological conditions gained responsibility for communicating public health. Political conflicts emerged between formations of expert and lay environmental knowledge. The technological application of modern science, and its associated environmental risks, pushed research beyond the laboratory and into the governmental fabric of social order: nuclear reactors had to be constructed and chemicals distributed to populations before their properties and safety could be understood. This seminar reads the debates on risk in environmental sociology alongside the emergence of risk criticism in media studies to interrogate the probabilistic thinking inherent to the communication of ecological threat. Two common traits characteristic of recent environmental catastrophes ranging from Bhopal, Fukushima Daiishi, Deepwater Horizon, Exxon Valdez, Hurricane Katrina, and the varied crises of global climate change, are that each disaster involves the failure or side-effect of an implemented technological project and that the corresponding risks—whether imperceptible or probable—are necessarily communicated to publics by media tools that will enable students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds to examine how we know what we know.

Instructor(s): Arnold Brooks Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 30329, HIPS 26059, ISO 30329, KNOW 36059, CMST 42802, MAAD 26059

CHSS 36065. Classification as World-Making. 100 Units.
To classify,” write Geoffrey Bowker and Susan Star, “is human.” There can be no doubt that classification sits at the heart of almost any form of knowledge production—arguably even thought itself. But what diversity hides under such altruism? This course will explore a set of exemplary fields in order to track genealogies and discontinuities in classificatory. We will begin with two philosophers, Aristotle and Kant, who stand as respective avatars of ancient and modern categorical thought. We will then proceed to sites where classification has flourished: the biological sciences which sought to capture the diversity of the living world; the social sciences—notably anthropology—which challenged the universality of Western cultural categories; and statistics or data science, which seek to understand numerical aggregates as categories. We will conclude by reflecting on the present explosion of digital techniques of classification, from social media algorithms to artificial intelligence, which structure more and more of our lives, often without human oversight. In this sense, classification is perhaps nonhuman as well. Moving between history, epistemology, and practice, this course will furnish students with a rich set of classificatory ideas that they can bring to their own research and disciplinary communities. Above all, it will ask students to account for both the construction and effects of categories, which are too often taken to be a neutral substrate of knowledge or to serve as tools that will enable students from diverse disciplinary backgrounds to examine how we know what we know.

Instructor(s): Alexander Campolo Terms Offered: Spring
CHSS 36069. Scientific Childhood. 100 Units.
The first half of the twentieth century was a period of intensified focus and progressive thinking regarding the rights, development, and well-being of children as interests of utmost importance to all society. This focus was marked, inter alia, by concerted efforts to apply the methods of modern science to the investigation of childhood, efforts that in turn forever changed the way we understand, raise, and educate children. This seminar will revisit the lives of children who had served as subjects of observation and experiment from the 1880s to the 1950s, and whose childhood experiences (their emotions, thoughts, and games; their family lives and institutional realities) had shaped the central dogmas of developmental psychology, as well as our ideas about normality. The course takes a biographical approach to the history of science, but rather than focus on the careers of scientists and doctors, delves into the stories of their objects of study, from the Bostonian first graders who answered G. Stanley Hall’s pioneering survey to the 44 “juvenile thieves” who had informed John Bowlby’s influential attachment theory.

Instructor(s): Anastasia Klimchynskaya Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 36088, CMLT 36088

CHSS 36071. Knowing Animals. 100 Units.
What is an animal, and are we them? In “Knowing Animals,” we will approach this deceptively simple question from multiple angles, exploring the diverse ways that humans come to know and differentiate themselves from other animals and the implications of that labor. How can we understand and write about the lived experience of a bat, an octopus, or a baboon? Who decides which species are essential to experimental science, and which are simply edible? Why do we buy canine pharmaceuticals or construct tiger preserves in Oklahoma? The course will explore how hunting, eating, petkeeping, labor, experimentation, and cohabitation with animals contribute to the formation of knowledge. We will draw on scholarship in history, cultural anthropology, philosophy, and critical theory, as well as novels and films in order to do so. The course is meant to serve in part as an introduction to the topics and methods of animal history and animal studies, so we will read foundational texts as well as recent scholarship on the intersections of animality, capital, disability, gender, and race. Students will leave with core competencies in the field as well as hopefully a deeper sense of what it means to be human.

Instructor(s): Melanie Jeske Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): EDSO 36069, CHDV 36069, KNOW 36069, HLTH 26069

CHSS 36080. Technologies of the Body. 100 Units.
From models and measures to imaging technologies and genomic sequencing, technologies have profoundly shaped how we know and understand human bodies, health, and disease. Drawing on foundational and contemporary science and technology studies scholarship, this class will interrogate technologies of the body: how they are made, the ways in which they have changed understandings of the human condition, their impact on individual and collective identities, and the interests and values built into their very design. Course readings will examine how technologies render bodies knowable and also construct them in particular ways. We will also focus on how technologies incorporate, and reinforce, ideas about human difference. Students will conduct an independent, quarter-long research project analyzing a biomedical technology of their choice. By the end of this course, students will be able to identify and explain the social, political and economic factors that shape the design and production of biomedical technologies, as well as the impact of these technologies on biomedicine and the social world more broadly. This course provides students with an opportunity to conduct a quarter-long research project, using a biomedical technology as a case study. Students will be introduced to foundational and cutting-edge scholarship in science and technology studies, and will use this scholarship to conduct their independent research.

Instructor(s): Bradley Bolman Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 36071, HIST 35015

CHSS 36088. The Scientist in the Nineteenth-Century Imagination. 100 Units.
The nineteenth century saw both the professionalization of science and the specialization of its practitioners. In this age of “human empire” produced by industrialization, new technologies offered humanity unprecedented dominion over the natural world, and the “scientist,” a term coined in 1834, marked the advent of the idea of a vocation dedicated to that mastery. Moreover, by the end of the century, the natural philosophers and polymaths of earlier ages had given way to chemists, physicists, biologists, and statisticians, whose scope of study was necessarily both deeper and narrower. These developments produced a new social and political positioning for the scientist – an expert, an authority, a wielder of power. This class explores how nineteenth-century fiction writers, from Mary Shelley and Edgar Allan Poe to Jules Verne and Arthur Conan Doyle, engaged with these emerging and transforming conceptualizations of the scientist figure. We will pair our literary explorations with non-fiction readings texts by thinkers and scientists such as Humphry Davy, Karl Pearson, Claude Bernard, William Whewell, and Max Weber (“Science as Vocation”) about what the scientist should be and science should do. Additionally, we’ll consider how this literary genealogy influences both our fictional portrayal of science to this day as well as our perceptions of it - from our contemporary distrust of expertise to our fear of the scientist playing god.

Instructor(s): Anastasia Klimchynskaya Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 36088, CMLT 36088
CHSS 36311. Aspirations of Justice. 100 Units.
This class thinks through questions of what justice means, what justice promises, what justice betrays, and what possibilities for politics are opened by aspirations of justice at moments of radical rupture. It does so through a focus on critical conceptual terms that also become the frameworks for praxis and institutionalization after war/violence/trauma/revolution/colonialism/slavery/casteism: terms such as transition, transformation, restoration, reconstruction, and repair. The readings will be comparative but grounded out of South Africa’s experience of transition from apartheid, a process that remains frictioned, fractured and far from finished. At the core of the class are two concerns. First: how does one think about non-retributive forms of justice, and what aporias of forgiveness lie at their core? Second, how do these imaginaries and forms of justice get constituted and instituted, out of different histories of foundational violence, different transitional processes, at different moments in time? How, in the process, do histories themselves get rewritten through a process of rewriting wrongs?
Instructor(s): Kaushik Sunder Rajan
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 36311, AASR 36311, CCCT 36311, HIPS 26311

CHSS 37015. Graphic Medicine: Comic Creation as Knowledge Formation. 100 Units.
What does the medium of comics contribute to our knowledge and understanding of illness, disability, caregiving, and disease? How can making comics help us form individual and community knowledge about our bodies and health? This is a course designed to introduce students to the basic concepts and practices of the field of graphic medicine. To do this, we will closely engage with the elements and process of making comics as applied to the goals, principles, and applications of graphic medicine in particular, but also in relation to the health humanities. Broadly defined as the “intersection between the medium of comics and the discourse of healthcare,” graphic medicine allows for unique explorations of health, disease, and illness through the use of sequential images and textual elements within a narrative structure. Students will learn about conceptual and practical aspects of the field. Through critical analysis and discussion of key works, they will also be exposed to a variety of styles, genres, and applications that capture the breadth and diversity of graphic medicine. An important component of the class will be exercises through which students will create their own graphic medicine works as a way to explore knowledge formation about health, illness, and one’s body through comics-making. Taught by a nurse cartoonist (and a founding figure in the field) and a physician.
Instructor(s): Brian Callender, MK Czerwiec
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): No prior knowledge or experience of graphic novels, comics, drawing, or medicine required.
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 37015, HIPS 27015, KNOW 27015, HLTH 27015, ENGL 27015

CHSS 37402. History and Philosophy of Biology. 100 Units.
This lecture-discussion course will consider the main figures in the history of biology, from the Hippocratics and Aristotle to Darwin and Mendel. The philosophic issues will be the kinds of explanations appropriate to biology versus the other physical sciences, the status of teleological considerations, and the moral consequences for human beings.
Instructor(s): R. Richards
Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): For students taking PHIL 23405, the course is (B) (II).
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 35104, KNOW 37402, HIST 25104, HIPS 25104, PHIL 33405, PHIL 23405

CHSS 37600. Philosophical Problems in the Biological Sciences. 100 Units.
TBD
Equivalent Course(s): EVOL 32700, PHIL 32700, HIPS 22700

CHSS 37900. Biological and Cultural Evolution. 100 Units.
This course draws on readings in and case studies of language evolution, biological evolution, cognitive development and scaffolding, processes of socialization and formation of groups and institutions, and the history and philosophy of science and technology. We seek primarily to elaborate theory to understand and model processes of cultural evolution, while exploring analogies, differences, and relations to biological evolution. This has been a highly contentious area, and we examine why. We seek to evaluate what such a theory could reasonably cover and what it cannot.
Instructor(s): W. Wimsatt, S. Mufwene
Terms Offered: Not offered in 2022-2023
Prerequisite(s): Third- or fourth-year standing or consent of instructor required; core background in evolution and genetics strongly recommended.
Equivalent Course(s): CHDV 33900, ANTH 28615, ANTH 38615, LING 11100, PHIL 22500, LING 39286, PHIL 32500, HIPS 23900, BPRO 23900, NCDV 27408, CHDV 23900

CHSS 38307. Global Environmental Humanities. 100 Units.
This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of environmental humanities, which calls on us to study the global environment, and the threats posed by globalization and climate change, using the tools of history, cultural studies, philosophy, and literature. Reading texts from these and other disciplines, we will attend to the ways that “environment” registers in political, aesthetic, and social life across the globe. Sample authors: Fernand Braudel, William Cronon, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Amitav Ghosh, Ursula Heise, Joseph Masco, Jed Purdy, Anna Tsing.
Instructor(s): Isabel Gabel
Terms Offered: Autumn. Offered in Autumn 2023
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 38307, CEGU 28307, KNOW 28307, ENST 28307, HIPS 28307, HIST 25422
CHSS 40201. Religion and Reason. 100 Units.
The quarrel between reason and faith has a long history. The birth of Christianity was in the crucible of rationality. The ancient Greeks privileged this human capacity above all others, finding in reason the quality wherein man was closest to the gods, while the early Christians found this viewpoint antithetical to religious humility. As religion and its place in society have evolved throughout history, so have the standing of, and philosophical justification for, non-belief on rational grounds. This course will examine the intellectual and cultural history of arguments against religion in Western thought from antiquity to the present. Along the way, of course, we will also examine the assumptions bound up in the binary terms ‘religion’ and ‘reason.’
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 43011, CLAS 46616, HIST 66606, DVPR 46616, KNOW 40201

CHSS 40203. Biopolitics & Posthumanism. 100 Units.
Much has been written about the possibility (or impossibility) of creating an integrated political schema that incorporates living status, not species boundary, as the salient distinction between person and thing. In this course, we will explore how biopolitical and posthumanistic scholars like Michel Foucault, Hannah Arendt, Giorgio Agamben, Jane Bennett, Cary Wolfe, and Donna Haraway have acknowledged (and advocated transcending) the anthropocentric umwelt, to borrow Jakob von Uexküll’s influential term. In parallel with our theoretical readings, we will explore how actual legal systems have incorporated the nonhuman, with a particular focus on Anglo-American and transnational law. Our goal is to develop our own sense of an applied biopolitics—whether to our own research, to future legislation and jurisprudence, or both.
Instructor(s): Nicolette I. Bruner Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course fulfills part of the KNOW Core Seminar requirement to be eligible to apply for the SIFK Dissertation Research Fellowship. No instructor consent is required, but registration is not final until after the 1st week in order to give Ph.D. students priority.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 40203, KNOW 40203, CMLT 40203

CHSS 40205. Ecological Thinking. 100 Units.
What is the environment, anyway? Is it a collection of resources? An entity in need of protection? An autonomous state of being? In this course, we will engage with writers and thinkers who have grappled with what it means to think ecologically. We will examine how environmental concerns have reached across borders to shape law, culture, and theories of knowledge on a global scale. Course themes will include environmental justice, the energy humanities, postcolonial environmentalisms, ecocriticism, ecofeminism, queer ecologies, and critical life studies. Readings will include works by Rachel Carson, William Cronon, Lawrence Buell, Helena Maria Viramontes, Christopher Stone, Rob Nixon, Tamara Giles-Vernick, Timothy Morton, and others.
Instructor(s): Nicolette I. Bruner Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 40205

CHSS 40206. Assaulting the Paradigm: Franz Boas and His Contemporaries. 100 Units.
How do ideas succeed? What challenges do those who voice new ideas face as they try to gain adherents, and how do they rise to influence against the odds? This course examines how the unexpected, the unconventional, and the radically original can dethrone accepted truths. We will investigate this question through a case study of the anthropologist Franz Boas and his contemporaries, who assaulted the paradigm of race at the turn of the twentieth century. In addition to reading Boas, we will study the works of John Dewey, W. E. B. Du Bois, Sigmund Freud, Zora Neale Hurston, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Margaret Mead, and Thorstein Veblen. By tracing the mutual influence between Boas and thinkers in fields from psychology to philosophy, we can examine how knowledge is contested and propagated—including the challenges those who frame ideas face as they break away from the pack, the role of social networks in the success of concepts that go “against the grain” of conventional wisdom, and the special agency of multidisciplinary collaboration in the periods of ferment produced when authority is tested and new ideas are demanded.
Instructor(s): Isaiah Lorado Wilner Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 44810, KNOW 40206

CHSS 40207. Human Rights and Humanitarianism in the Modern World. 100 Units.
The related concepts of human rights and humanitarianism form the basis of contemporary ethical and political thought. Acting in the name of “humanity” is seen as unequivocally noble, and very few of us would ever claim to be anti-humanitarian or anti-human rights. Yet the moral consensus surrounding these terms obscures a contested and often disturbing history. Rather than uncritically accepting a triumphalist story of the progressive victory of human rights and humanitarianism, this course will explore how these concepts were constructed over time, paying special attention to how they were used in practice, what kind of rhetorical work they accomplished, and whose interests they served. The course will consider the origins of modern concepts of humanity, rights, citizenship, and social responsibility during the enlightenment and trace how they developed over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries. We will study the role of human rights and humanitarianism in the transformative events and processes of modern history, including the rise of nation-states, the trans-Atlantic slave trade and its abolition, imperial expansion and decolonization, the world wars, and twentieth-century genocides. Students will leave the course with an understanding of how human rights and humanitarianism can be applied to their own research interests.
Instructor(s): Yan Slobodkin Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 40207, HMRT 40207
CHSS 40208. Man and/as Machine. 100 Units.
Recently, Amazon employees fighting for better working conditions united under the slogan "We are not robots!" Recalling Karl Capek’s R.U.R., which coined the word robot (from the Czech word for slave), the slogan suggests the importance of the machine as an object and a concept in relation to which human identity has been - and continues to be - defined. Throughout the history of human thought, the machine has existed as both something that we are like (for example, Descartes comparing the brain to a machine) but also as an opposition to humanity (as in the aforementioned slogan). This course will trace this tension between the machine as an 'Other' and as a metaphor for our human self from the early modern period to the present. Beginning with theoretical and philosophical writings on the importance of oppositions and binaries to human identity and language, it will trace the history of the idea of the machine as it relates to the human in texts by Rene Descartes, La Mettrie, Emile Zola, Karl Capek, Alan Turing, and Donna Haraway, among others. In addition to confronting the complexity and ambiguity of a concept that ubiquitously shapes our lives today, students in this course will also wrestle with broader humanistic questions regarding the nature of the Self, the boundaries between self and other, and the relationship between human identity and technology.
Instructor(s): Anastasia Klimchynskaya Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 40208

This course critically examines concepts of “nature” and “artifice” in the formation of scientific knowledge, from the Babylonians to the Romantics, and the ways that this history has been written and problematized by both canonical and less canonical works in the history of science from the twentieth century to the present. Our course is guided by three overarching questions, approached with historical texts and historiography, that correspond to three modules of investigation: 1) Nature, 2) Artifice, and 3) Liminal: Neither Natural nor Artificial.
Instructor(s): Margaret Carlyle, Eduardo Escobar, Jennifer P. Daly Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course fulfills part of the KNOW Core Seminar requirement to be eligible to apply for the SIFK Dissertation Research Fellowship. Ph.D. students must register with the KNOW 40304 course number in order for this course to meet the requirement.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 34920, HIPS 40304, GNSE 40304, CRES 40304, KNOW 40304

CHSS 40305. The Archive of Early English Literature: Manuscripts, Books, and Canon. 100 Units.
This course will introduce students to early English literature through manuscript studies and book history. Throughout the course we will reflect on archival research as a critical practice: how do the material histories of early texts invite us to rethink the fundamental categories that organize literary history, like authorship or canonicity? The course will be both a practicum (teaching the basics of paleography, codicology, and textual editing) and an ongoing conversation about the archives of literary history, as sites of interpretation, memory, and erasure. We will meet in the Special Collections Research Center, and use the collections of the University of Chicago. We will first focus on the archives of Chicago’s Chaucer Research Project and its principals, John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert, who tried to establish an authoritative text of the Canterbury Tales in the early twentieth century. The second half of the course will focus on print culture and reading practice, with a focus on Chicago’s collection of early modern commonplace books. Students will propose and pursue a research project in the U of C or Newberry Library collections, on a topic of their choosing. Students will produce a piece of scholarship that reflects both careful research in those collections and thoughtfulness about the place of that research in critical practice.
Instructor(s): J. Stadolnik Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course fulfills part of the KNOW Core Seminar requirement to be eligible to apply for the SIFK Dissertation Research Fellowship. No instructor consent is required, but registration is not final until after the 1st week in order to give Ph.D. students priority.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 40305, KNOW 40305

CHSS 40306. Race, Land, and Empire: History, Intersectionality, and the Meanings of America. 100 Units.
This seminar examines the making and meaning of the United States at the intersections of race, land, and empire. It considers a set of profound historical transformations that shape American and global life today: the conquest and colonization of the vast North American continent; the expansion of slavery and, with it, a system of global capitalism; the growth of opposition to that system of labor, culminating in the Civil War; the origins, as a result of that war, of a modern American nation-state; the ethnic cleansing and resettlement of the West; and the ascension of the United States of America to global eminence as a military power. Rather than framing these events within a national narrative about the idea of Manifest Destiny or an epic struggle toward the ideal of democracy—an approach that ignores most of the continent, divides the West from the North and South, and frames history itself as progress—this course makes use of a global lens to analyze the borders between and border crossings by American communities. Our foci will be the interrelations between regions and peoples; the processes that led to alteration; and the evolution of structures that redistributed social power.
Instructor(s): Isaiah Lorado Wilner Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course fulfills part of the KNOW Core Seminar requirement to be eligible to apply for the SIFK Dissertation Research Fellowship. No instructor consent is required, but registration is not final until after the 1st week in order to give Ph.D. students priority.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 37013, KNOW 40306
CHSS 40307. Seeing and Knowing. 100 Units.
The concept of visuality attends to the ways in which things become seeable, knowable, and governable. Scholars who study optical instruments, architecture, cinema, and media have done much to show us how visual technologies change our ways of seeing. Others in the history of science study how practices of observation transform our understanding of nature—and ourselves. This comparative course analyzes regimes of visuality in different cultural and historical contexts. After a short introduction on the philosophy of visual experience and psychology of visual perception, we will investigate a series of configurations of seeing and knowing. These sites range from the history of disability to contemporary climate science, and students will be asked to contribute visual topics from their own research or disciplines for collective exploration in our seminar.

Through comparative study, we will work to develop new categories or relationships for linking perception and knowledge.

Instructor(s): Alex Campolo
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 40311, CMST 47007, KNOW 40307

CHSS 40308. Political Theologies of Slavery and Freedom in the Atlantic World. 100 Units.
This seminar examines the interdisciplinary form of knowledge known as “political theology” in the context of Atlantic slavery. The course will trace two major developments. First, we will explore how Christian metaphysics facilitated colonialism and slavery, focusing on the emergence of race as a theological (rather than a biological) concept and on the self-fulfilling providentialism that structured fantasies of Euro-Christian world dominance. Second, we will explore how indigenous and African cosmologies and Christianities informed enslaved resistance and abolitionism. Our readings will range from works of political theology (Augustine, Calvin, Hobbes) to early American writings (Las Casas, Lignon, Jefferson) to Black Atlantic anti-slavery texts (Wheatley, Walker, Turner). We will consider the explorer George Best’s rewriting of the biblical Curse of Ham, Francis Bacon’s claim that Europe’s superior technology evidenced its Chosen status, and the ideology of “hereditary heathenism” that forestalled early efforts to convert slaves to Christianity. Likewise, we’ll consider the role of obeah in the Haitian Revolution, the competing attitudes toward Christian slave revolt found in fiction by Douglass and Stowe, and the continued contestation of what W. E. B. Du Bois called “the new religion of whiteness.” Secondary authors may include Charles Taylor, Talal Asad, Max Weber, Colin Kidd, Rebecca Goetz, Jared Hickman, Katharine Gerbner, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, and J. Kameron Carter.

Instructor(s): Alex Mazzaferro
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 40308, SCTR 40308, CRES 30308

CHSS 40410. Technology and Aesthetics. 100 Units.
New technologies regularly enable new mediums, styles, genres, and narrative forms as they offer us new ways to record the world, express ourselves, and tell stories. But the advent of each new artistic and literary form raises anew fundamental theoretical questions: what is the difference between an objective record of the world and an artistic rendition of it? Is what makes something art the creator’s intent or the viewer’s perception of it as art? That is, can something be experienced as art if it is not intended as such? What, even, is a narrative, given our minds’ tendency to resolve any random pattern into a coherent series of cause and effect? And, finally, as new technologies offer endless new creative possibilities, how can we continuously recalibrate how we define art and engage with it? This class will span the 19th through the 21st centuries to explore how technological innovation has produced new literary and aesthetic forms while addressing the above questions. Its aim is two-fold: to offer a deeper understanding of literary and artistic movements and (often-canonical) texts by relating them to technoscientific concerns and contexts, and to strengthen students' foundation in literary and aesthetic theory. Thus, we will read key works of fiction that represent new aesthetic paradigms alongside scholarship that puts them into context and theoretical texts, including those of Walter Benjamin, Michael Saler, Catherine Gallagher, and Henry Jenkins.

Instructor(s): Anastasia Klimchynskaya
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 40311, KNOW 40310, ARTV 40310

CHSS 41920. The Evolution of Language. 100 Units.
This course is designed to review critically some of the literature on the phylogenetic emergence of Language, in order to determine which questions have been central to the subject matter, which ones have recurred the most, and to what extent the answers to these are now better informed. The class will also review new questions such as the following: What is the probable time of the emergence of modern language(s)? Should we speak of the emergence of Language or of languages, in the plural? How have human and other living creatures and nature served as reference points, exemplars, even counter examples for interpreting divine creation and the enhancement (or diminishment) of life? Explorations will include traditional theological themes of human creatures as the imago Dei and of nature as a mirror of God’s providence and majesty, as well as philosophical and literary texts on human and animal nature, the moral sense of nature, and cultivation and devastation.

Instructor(s): Kristine Culp
Terms Offered: Spring

CHSS 44806. Creation and Human Creatures: Theological Explorations. 100 Units.
This course will explore the intersection between theological symbols (doctrines) of creation and human creatures. How are macrocosm and microcosm drawn into theological reflection and construction? How have human and other living creatures and nature served as reference points, exemplars, even counter examples for interpreting divine creation and the enhancement (or diminishment) of life? Explorations will include traditional theological themes of human creatures as the imago Dei and of nature as a mirror of God’s providence and majesty, as well as philosophical and literary texts on human and animal nature, the moral sense of nature, and cultivation and devastation.

Instructor(s): Kristine Culp
Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): THEO 44806, RLST 24806

CHSS 45125. Seminar: Anthropology of the Body. 100 Units.
Drawing on a wide and interdisciplinary range of texts, both classic and more recent, this seminar will variously examine the theoretical debates of the body as a subject of anthropological, historical, psychological, medical and literary inquiry. The seminar will explore specific themes, for example, the persistence of the mind/body dualism, experiences of embodiment/ alienation, phenomenology of the body, Foucauldian notions of bio-politics, biopower, queering the body, and the medicalized, gendered, and racialized body, among other salient themes.
Instructor(s): P. Sean Brotherton Terms Offered: TBD. Not offered in 2020-21
Equivalent Course(s): CHDV 45100, ANTH 45125, GNSE 45112

CHSS 47000. Reading And Research: CHSS. 100 Units.
Readings and Research for working on their PhD

CHSS 47015. Scientific and Humanistic Contributions to Knowledge Formation. 100 Units.
In this course, we will explore whether the sciences and the humanities can make complementary contributions to the formation of knowledge, thus leading to the integration and unification of human knowledge. In the first part of the course we will take a historical approach to the issue; we will discuss how art and science were considered complementary for much of the 18th and 19th century (for example, in the views and work of Wolfgang Goethe), how they became separate (the two cultures) in the middle of the 20th century with the compartmentalization of academic disciplines, and how some attempts have recently been made at a reunification under the concept of ‘consilience’. In the second part of the course, we will focus on conceptual issues such as the cognitive value of literature, the role of ideas in knowledge formation in science and literature, the role of creativity in scientific and literary production, and how scientific and philosophical ideas have been incorporated into literary fiction in the genre known as ‘the novel of ideas’. As an example of the latter, we will read the novel ‘One, No One, and 100,000’ (1926) by Luigi Pirandello and discuss how this author elaborated and articulated a view of the human persona (including issues of identity and personality) from French philosophers and psychologists such as Henri Bergson and Alfred Binet.
Instructor(s): D. Maestripieri Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Satisfies CHD graduate distribution (1)
Equivalent Course(s): HIPS 27515, CHDV 27015, KNOW 47015, SCTH 47015, CHDV 47015

CHSS 47700. Reading and Research. 100 Units.
TBD

CHSS 47701. AdvRdgs: Science Studies. 100 Units.
TBD
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 55956

CHSS 50100. Sem: Making Things Public. 100 Units.
TBD
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 51015

CHSS 50755. Race/Capital/Extraction. 100 Units.
In the concluding chapters of Capital, Vol. 1, Karl Marx describes the origins of capitalism as an enterprise “written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire.” This process that Marx christened as “so-called primitive accumulation” rests fundamentally on the extraction of raw materials through colonial regimes of enclosure and the brutal exploitation of racialized labor. Nonetheless, the relationship between race and capital is not sufficiently elaborated in Marx’s oeuvre. In turn, this course will reconsider Marxist concepts and categories through a critical evaluation of the analytical domains of “race,” “capital,” and “extraction.” Moreover, students will consider the extent to which these domains productively modify each other: Does capitalism as an economic system depend on race as its ideological substrate? Can race be understood as an extractive project founded the violent enslavement and mercantile transit of racialized laboring subjects? How are the production of race and the accumulation of capital transformed by extractive economies of fossil fuels and metallic ores? To this end, students will consult the writings of Sylvia Wynter, W.E.B. Du Bois, C.L.R. James, Claudia Jones, Walter Rodney, and Octavia Butler.
Instructor(s): Ryan Jobson Terms Offered: Winter. Winter 2022
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 50755, ANTH 50755

CHSS 51310. Images and Science. 100 Units.
TBD
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 51310, ARTH 41310

CHSS 51609. Concepts in Clinical Medical Ethics. 100 Units.
Philosophical concepts are rife at the hospital bedside. An account of their proper clinical use requires both philosophical analysis and pragmatic judgment. In this seminar we will look closely at such central clinical concepts as paternalism, autonomy, surrogate decision-making, and decisional capacity. We will also examine the ethics of the disputed clinical practices of framing and slow codes. We will finish by asking in what way, in a world of hospital medicine - that is, of stranger medicine -- the concept of patient/physician trust can play a positive role. American clinical medicine uses a moral model that is not much more than a generation old. The
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point of the seminar is to examine and assess the components of that model to see how far and in what ways the
model needs to be changed. (I)
Instructor(s): Dan Brudney Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Permission by Instructor Required.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 51609

CHSS 51725. The Irreducibility of the Mind. 100 Units.
Cognitive science, and much allied work in metaphysics and epistemology, adopts a ‘naturalistic’ orientation
to the mind: they treat thought, perception, reasoning, intentional agency, and so on as phenomena tractable
to natural-scientific explanation. On the other hand, some of the deepest ideas that emerged from 20th century
philosophy stand in apparent opposition to this orientation. In various way, they suggest that a ‘naturalism’ of
the mind does not make sense. In this seminar we will do our best to understand and adjudicate this dispute. (II)
Instructor(s): Jason Bridges Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 51725

CHSS 51802. Climate Ethics. 100 Units.
Anthropogenic climate change is the largest challenge facing human civilization. Its physical and temporal
scale and unprecedented complexity at minimum require extensions of existing ethical systems, if not new
ethical tools. This course will begin by examining natural and social-scientific studies of climate change and
its current and predicted effects (e.g. the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the
Stern Review). Most of the course will examine how religious and philosophical ethical systems respond to
the vast temporal and spatial scales of climate change and its inherent uncertainties. For instance, common
principles of environmental ethics such as justice and responsibility are often reimagined in climate ethics. We
will also explore the degree to which the assumptions of many modern Western ethical systems including linear
causality, an emphasis on individuals, and purely rational decision-making foster or inhibit climate ethics. In the
course, we will take a comparative approach to environmental ethics and may examine perspectives from secular
Western philosophy, Christianity (Catholic and Protestant), Buddhist, and Islamic thought.
Instructor(s): Sarah Fredericks Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. Undergraduates
must petition to enroll.
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 51802, RETH 51802, CEGU 51802

CHSS 51947. Techno-Natures: Anthropology and Science Fiction. 100 Units.
This graduate seminar explores science fiction narratives alongside anthropological theory and ethnographic
practice in an attempt to develop novel theoretical and methodological interventions into questions concerning
environment, governance, the body, and the relationship between humans and machines. In so doing the course
aims to elaborate potential correspondences between anthropology and science fiction, with particular focus on
re-conceptualizing nature in relation to post-apocalyptic narratives and crises of the Anthropocene. Following
science fiction’s speculative process, the course encourages a mode of inquiry that is experimental in order to
explore the ways in which science fiction might operate as ethnographic thought experiment while challenging
received understandings of the nature of empirical evidence. Course material will include science fiction texts as
well as films.
Instructor(s): Michael Fisch Terms Offered: Winter. Winter 2019
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 51947

CHSS 52900. Wksp: Evol Proc: Bio/Lang/Cult. 100 Units.
TBD
Equivalent Course(s): LING 49000, PHIL 52800

CHSS 53001. Frege. 100 Units.
TBD
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 53000

CHSS 53105. Philosophy of Mathematics. 100 Units.
TBD
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 53105

CHSS 53506. Non-Deductive Inference. 100 Units.
This course will examine modern non-Bayesian ways of understanding non-deductive inference. Topics include
the problem of induction, Pierce’s theory of abduction, inference to the best explanation, and the general
connection between explanation and non-deductive inference. (III)
Instructor(s): K. Davey Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 53506

CHSS 53709. Conceptual Change and the a-priori. 100 Units.
(II) and (III)
Instructor(s): K. Davey Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 53709
CHSS 53991. Religion and Psychoanalysis. 100 Units.
Freud postulated that many cultural activities with no apparent connection to sexuality, including religious practice and belief, have their origin in the sexual instincts. Sublimation, which describes the process by which the sexual instincts are diverted to nonsexual aims or objects, plays a crucial role in Freudian metapsychology. And yet Freud never managed to articulate a coherent account of this process, and thus he failed to provide a concept of sublimation as such. In this class we will study the role of sublimation in Freudian metapsychology with specific reference to the theme of religiosity. In examining how sublimation is taken up by others (e.g. Klein, Lacan) we will also consider whether this concept affords a novel understanding of religion.
Instructor(s): Ryan Coyne Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. Undergraduates must petition to enroll.
Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 53991, KNOW 53991, THEO 53991

CHSS 54320. Contagion: Ethics and the Other. 100 Units.
This is a graduate seminar which explores the complex ways that epidemic disease has shaped and been shaped by religion, philosophy, literature, and the emerging sciences of modernity. Contagion has long been a central moral problem in theology and philosophy, the organizing terror of all human civilization because of the sudden, stochastic, and terrifying spread of visible, embodied changes. Contagion is our most intimate companion: Plague as punishment, as test, and as a sign of divine judgement have long been a topic of sacred texts, defining how societies thought about, duties, teles, meaning, and salvation. Contagious diseases raise stark ethical choices as well. The uses of quarantine as a defense, the establishment of isolation, and the fear of the stranger mark the historical responses to plagues. In this course, we will consider both the science behind the plagues that have torn across the course of human history, and the sacred and secular textual responses to them. Plagues leave behind cultural artifacts and traces of the puzzle of human behavior in response to epidemics: compliance, resistance imagination, and innovation. We will explore this theme in all its complexity, focusing on the textual and literary responses to the challenge of contagion.
Instructor(s): Laurie Zoloth Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): KNOW 54320, RETH 54320

CHSS 54833. Engineered Worlds III: Terraformations. 100 Units.
This experimental seminar is part of a larger series of events in 2019-20 organized under the Engineered Worlds theme. It will be linked to activities on several other campuses as well as a spring 2020 conference. It examines the effects of industrial living on the biosphere and considers the multiple ways that people have been involved in terraforming planet earth. Attending to the ways that race, gender, and class inform industrial life, the seminar will explore (via social theory, ethnography, and history) ways of thinking about planetary scale problems that have local intensities that matter. This is an advanced graduate seminar. Registration is by permission of instructor.
Instructor(s): Joseph Masco Terms Offered: Autumn. Autumn 2019
Prerequisite(s): Consent of Instructor
Note(s): Course will involve Skyped in participants from another university.
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 54833

CHSS 55100. The Development of Whitehead’s Philosophy of Nature. 100 Units.
Alfred North Whitehead’s philosophy has seen a resurgence of academic interest in recent years via a line of influence passing through Deleuze and Latour. Meanwhile, Whitehead’s Process and Reality (1929) has gained a reputation, not undeserved, as possibly the most challenging English language text in the philosophical canon; it is seldom read in a department of philosophy. This is a pity, since the striking originality and creative potential of the philosophy contained within is unmatched. This course offers an opportunity for a gradual approach to understanding the “philosophy of organism” of Process and Reality by first taking in the foothills of earlier works. With their help, this course will explore the “philosophy of organism” of Process and Reality with specific reference to the theme of religiosity. In examining how sublimation is taken up by others (e.g. Klein, Lacan) we will also consider whether this concept affords a novel understanding of religion.
Instructor(s): T. Pashby Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. Undergraduates must petition to enroll.
Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 53991, KNOW 53991, THEO 53991

CHSS 56801. Introduction to Environmental History. 100 Units.
We live in an age of planetary emergency. Environmental history offers a powerful lens to explore the historical roots of the present moment. This course introduces graduate students to the history of the field, sampling its methods and toolbox, strengths and weaknesses. Readings include a survey of the classics (Merchant, Cronon and Worster) as well as a number of new voices (Demuth, Barnett, Seow).
Instructor(s): F. Albritton Jonsson Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CEGU 56801, HIST 56801
CHSS 56900. Colloquium: The Scientific Image-Formalism, Abstraction, and Realism. 100 Units.
This course explores the broad field of scientific image-making, focusing in particular on problems of formality, abstraction, and realism. What makes a “good” scientific image? What kind of work do scientific images do? What philosophical, ideological, and political constraints underwrite attempts to render the complexity of events and entities in the world in stylized visual vocabularies? And how might we approach the work of aesthetics and style in image-making? We will examine these questions through a survey of several contemporary scholarly frameworks used for thinking about problems of representation in scientific practice and will attend to such image-making practices as graphing, diagramming, modeling, doodling, illustrating, sculpting, and photographing, among other methods.
Instructor(s): M. Rossi Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor; open to MA and PhD students only.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 56900

CHSS 57200. Colloquium: Infrastructure in History-Theory, Materiality, and Power. 100 Units.
Dams, sewers, railroads, water pipes, power lines, barbed wire, and garbage dumps: long treated as virtually invisible, the study of infrastructure has exploded in recent years. This colloquium will explore different theoretical and methodological approaches to the history of infrastructure. What are the best methodological tools for studying the history of large technological systems? What is the relationship of infrastructure with capitalism, settler and liberal colonialism, and postcolonial development? How should we theorize and write about nonhuman agency, especially in an age of ecological crisis? While reading and critiquing recent historical classics, we will also venture across interdisciplinary boundaries to examine innovative approaches arising out of science and technology studies, anthropology, urban geography, and the environmental humanities.
Instructor(s): E. Chatterjee Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Open to MA and PhD students only.

CHSS 55108. The Philosophy of Howard Stein. 100 Units.
Howard Stein’s impressive body of work is notable for its tight integration of history of science with philosophy of science. Topics include: theories of spacetime structure (Newtonian and relativistic), the conceptual structure of quantum mechanics, the methodology of science in general and the character of scientific knowledge, and the history of physics and mathematics. Readings by Stein will be supplemented by primary historical texts and secondary philosophical literature, including selections from a forthcoming edited collection on Stein. (II)
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 58108

CHSS 60905. Colloquium: Topics in Early Modern Europe. 100 Units.
This colloquium introduces graduate students to important themes in early modern history, providing an opportunity to get to grips with both classic interpretations and new arguments in the field. The subjects addressed will vary from year to year, depending on the faculty member leading the class and the interests of the participants. They will generally include a comparative element, however. Students will be expected to gain experience in interpreting historical evidence while appraising historiographical debates. The course will require historiography essays and may serve as an incubator for research papers.
Instructor(s): A. Johns Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Open to MA and PhD students only.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 60905

CHSS 66900. Colloquium: Reading Marx’s Ecology. 100 Units.
In this course we will read Marx’s own ideas in their historical context and then explore commentaries on them by Paul Burkett, John Bellamy Foster, and others to see what of Marx’s ideas can be productively used in environmental history and in discussions of the Anthropocene.
Instructor(s): F. Albritton Jonsson & D. Chakrabarty Terms Offered: Spring

CHSS 67603. Public History Practicum I. 100 Units.
In this two-quarter course students will engage in the theory and practice of public history in partnership with organizations doing community-oriented work in a variety of areas. In the winter colloquium, we will read and discuss the theory and practice of public history as well as materials relevant to the projects you will pursue in the spring. In the spring practicum, you will work in groups of 3-5 directly with one of the partner organizations. All of the project-based work will be done collaboratively; working with partners means that there will be hard deadlines. Projects and coursework will be designed to be adaptable to current public health conditions. A showcase presentation of the projects is scheduled for the end of the spring quarter, by which time you will have become acquainted with current scholarship on public history and with experience in its actual practice. The final projects will be part of your portfolio and may be listed on your c.v.
Instructor(s): L. Auslander Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent only; email Prof. Auslander by 7th wk of Aut qtr (lausland@uchicago.edu) if interested in taking the course. Partner organizations/projects will be advertised in advance of that deadline; an info session will explain the sequence’s details. The Win qtr counts as a History grad colloquium.
Note(s): Every effort will be made to place students in their first choice of project; contact Prof. Auslander for further information. The course is open to PhD students in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Divinity School at any point in their residency as well as to MA students.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 47603, RDIN 67603, ANTH 54610, HIST 67603, SOCI 50126

CHSS 67604. Public History Practicum II. 100 Units.
See HIST 67603
Instructor(s): A. Green Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): HIST 67603; Students must take Public History Practicum I (HIST 67603) and II in sequence.
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 54611, HIST 67604, ARTH 47604, RDIN 67604, SOCI 50127

CHSS 70000. Advanced Study: Conceptual & Historical Studies of Science. 300.00 Units.
Advanced Study: Conceptual & Historical Studies of Science