American Studies
Summer 2015 Course Offerings

Undergraduate

AMST 1070 D01 – The American Cinema
James Deutsch
First Session 05/18/15-06/27/15
ONLINE
CRN: 30964
History and criticism of movies in the United States with a focus on films of the 1960s. Students will also develop their skills for analyzing and appreciating cinematic techniques, visual styles, and film genres. Because this is an online course, all interaction is via Blackboard (GW’s online course software), with lectures communicated via iTunesU. Written assignments will include journal entries, discussion forums, and a final research paper. Students will need regular access to a PC with high-speed Internet connection, as well as a system for viewing films on DVD or online. For more information about online learning, see http://www.gwu.edu/learn/onlinelearning

AMST/HIST/WSTU 3352W.D80 – Women in the United States to 1865
Teresa Murphy
First Session 05/18/15-06/27/15
ONLINE
CRN: 32365
This course will examine the history of women in the United States from pre-Columbian settlement until Reconstruction. We will pay particular attention to scholarship on the ways in which gender has been an important component in the construction of power relationships; the ways in which issues of race and class have affected the relationships among women; and the ways in which ideas about gender have evolved during the past several centuries. This course is fully online. Lectures, office hours, and written submissions will all take place via the internet. Students will read and post responses to readings once or twice a week. Students will also respond to each other’s postings in order to facilitate discussion. Finally, students will write four short papers and revise two of those papers (in lieu of a final). Through these assignments, students will develop confidence in their analyses of the scholarship in women’s history. It is absolutely critical that students keep up with even the small assignments if they want to succeed in this class. This course will satisfy a WID requirement.

AMST 3950.D10 - Disposable People
Calvin Warren
First Session 05/18/15-06/27/15
ONLINE
CRN: 32219
This course will provide an overview of contemporary theoretical approaches to violence, subjection, human rights, and valuation. In particular, the course will pursue the following questions: what are the conditions that produce devalued life? How do race, gender, sexuality, and class structure our system of life-valuation? Does all life matter? Are there “unlivable” lives? To explore these inquiries, the course will consider the concepts of human waste, precarious lives, slow death, terror, social death, necro-politics, and horror. The course will combine theoretical readings with concrete instances of devaluation: slavery, colonialism, genocide, the prison...
We will engage photographs, films, reality television, and social media to think about devaluation and humanity.

**AMST 3950.D80- Science, Politics & Society in Modern America**
Jamie Cohen-Cole
Second Session 07/06/15-08/15/15
ONLINE
CRN: 32504
This course examines the history of science and technology and their role in political and social life from the late nineteenth century to the present as well as the ways in which the science depended on historical developments. Using materials from newspaper articles to science fiction movies and secondary texts we will consider such questions as: How has society, culture, and politics developed and changed because of technical developments ranging from electricity to the automobile, the internet, and biotechnology? What difference did technologies like nuclear weapons and computers make to the Cold War? How has social science work from SAT tests to economic modeling shaped political culture and defined meritocracy? How have new scientific conceptions of the environment, of race and gender, of the market, and of modernity been impacted by new meanings of citizenship, democracy, and the nation state? How have struggles over science from evolution to global warming shaped our political culture?

**AMST/ANTH 3835.80- Historical Archaeology Field Program**
Pamela Cressey
05/18/2015-05/22/2015 MTWRF 9:00-4:00 pm
05/26/15-05/30/15 TWRFS 9:00-4:00 pm
CRN: 31974
This two-week intensive field school offers the opportunity for hands-on experience in excavation and laboratory study of an archaeological site just across the Potomac River from GWU in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. The city has several historic districts and developed the first community archaeology program in America. It is the perfect place to investigate the Shuter’s Hill plantation site, near the King Street Metro Station, and to learn about artifact identification and analysis at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. This summer’s institute focuses on the excavation and study of an area of the site associated with enslaved African Americans. Working with the City of Alexandria’s Archaeologists, students will also discuss public heritage values and issues resulting in a public interpretive tour.
Graduate

AMST 6190.10 – Post 9/11 Popular Culture
Libby Anker
First Session 05/18/15-06/27/15
TR 6:10-8:20 pm P 201
CRN: 31163
This course will critically examine how films, literature, television, cultural theory, public discourse, and news media interpret the dramatic shifts in American public life after 9/11. Together we will question how important events are represented and refigured in American cultural material, and also analyze what this material can show us about US politics and culture. Throughout the course we will examine how various cultural products have investigated, and perhaps contributed to, a national climate of fear, uncertainty, and violence. The objects for cultural analysis in this course will include films, novels, public memorials, news media, museum exhibitions, public speeches, and critical theory.

AMST 6190.80–Making America Modern 1880-1920
Kip Kosek
First Session 05/18/15-06/27/15
MW 6:10-8:20 pm P 201
CRN: 30416
This graduate seminar asks how the United States became “modern” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. That astonishing era saw a burgeoning consumer culture, a massive influx of immigrants, radical artistic innovations, new ideologies of race and gender, an unprecedented movement from the countryside to towns and cities, and revolutions in science and technology. This course is especially focused on culture and the ways that it affected, and was shaped by, political, economic, and social transformation.

AMST 6190.D20-Transnational America
Melani McAlister
Second Session 07/06/15-08/15/15
ONLINE
CRN: 32572
This course examines how literature and film have imagined community and identity within and across the borders of the state, focusing on the years since 1989. We will explore how authors and filmmakers have presented the nation-state itself in the years after the Cold War and the Sept. 11 attacks, as we also analyze the many forms of transnational connection these texts posit. Reading literature and watching film from both the United States and abroad, and examining a range of scholarship on nations and transnationalism, we will explore the cultural imaginaries that have shaped national and transnational moral geographies. Science fiction and fantasy, as much as realist fiction & film, have been central to these imagined connections.

AMST 6190.20- Transnational Black Cultures
Sandra Heard
Second Session 07/06/15-08/15/15
TR 6:10-8:00PM PHIL 640
CRN: 32856
This course takes students on a lyrical journey through Africa, the Americas, Europe, Asia and the Middle East to explore how black political and expressive cultures have been forged by resistance, negotiation, appropriation and exchange. We also examine how black cultures have been used to redefine race, gender, and class, and to shore up discriminatory policies and regimes. Students will likely read Paul Gilroy’s *Black Atlantic*, Samantha Pinto’s *Difficult Diasporas*, Kevin Gaines’s *American Africans in Ghana*, Ulrich Adelt’s *Blues Music in the*
Sixties, Ian Condry’s *Hip-Hop Japan*, and Robin Wright’s *Rock the Casbah*. Some of the questions tackled in discussions, short responses, and the final essay include: How has black internationalism been represented politically? In what ways has diaspora been a place of disorder, difference and unfamiliarity? What role have global technologies, bureaucracies and consumer culture played in reproducing and restricting black cultures?

**AMST/ANTH 6835.80- Historical Archaeology Field Program**

Pamela Cressey  
05/18/2015-05/22/2015 MTWRF 9:00-4:00 pm  
05/26/15-05/30/15 TWRFS 9:00-4:00 pm  
CRN: 31976

This two-week intensive field school offers the opportunity for hands-on experience in excavation and laboratory study of an archaeological site just across the Potomac River from GWU in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. The city has several historic districts and developed the first community archaeology program in America. It is the perfect place to investigate the Shuter’s Hill plantation site, near the King Street Metro Station, and to learn about artifact identification and analysis at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. This summer’s institute focuses on the excavation and study of an area of the site associated with enslaved African Americans. Working with the City of Alexandria’s Archaeologists, students will also discuss public heritage values and issues resulting in a public interpretive tour.