15F Honors Colloquia

ANFS 390-080
Food, Glorious Food: Challenges for the 21st Century
Rolf Joerger

Will there be enough food to feed the world? What kind of food will be available? As Americans, most of us are more concerned with an overabundance of food and its health effects than with food shortages, but pictures of malnourished people frequently remind us that some parts of the world do not share the same plentiful food supply. Most of us have some thoughts on why famines occur. In one view, first formulated at the end of the 18th century by the political economist Thomas Malthus, food shortages are an inevitable consequence of population growth outpacing food production. In another view, espoused by Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen, famines are caused by political or economical circumstances in a world that is fully capable of feeding everyone. For most of the world, Malthus’ prediction has obviously not come to pass, but can we expect the same outcome for the current century? Can food supplies be maintained or even increased and what kind of foods should be produced are questions that will be addressed in this colloquium. Factors making an impact upon the quantity and quality of food will be examined from biological, technological, economical, social, and ethical perspectives. Through reading and discussions of books and journal articles, students will gain an understanding of current trends in food production, processing and consumption and the forces that influence such trends including: genetic engineering, sustainability, vegetarianism, animal rights, obesity and the view that food is more than just basic nourishment, but is a means to better health. Possible readings may include: Evans, Feeding the Ten Billion; Fox, Deep Vegetarianism; Gard, The Obesity Epidemic: Science, Morality and Ideology; Regan, Animal Rights: Human Wrongs; and Sen, Poverty and Famines.

ARSC 390-080
After Photojournalism?
Jason Hill

Photojournalism has long been the principal visual medium through which we have come to understand important events unfolding beyond our immediate perceptual horizon. Always a very good but imperfect tool, today photojournalism is increasingly in doubt as criticisms of the profession mount and alternative models of journalistic visual communication proliferate. This colloquium will consider the following key question: Are we entering a post-photographic moment in journalistic visual communication, and, if so, how and why? Working toward an answer, we will explore the question through three sequential clusters. First we will consider photojournalism’s rationale, history, and achievements. We will then assess the range of challenges the medium now faces, including both the many criticisms of photojournalism’s ethics and social value, and the ways that new digital and social media technologies have altered visual journalism’s operational landscape by, for example, putting cameras and distribution networks (i.e., smartphones) in the hands of amateur witnesses everywhere. Finally, we look to recent and current strategies undertaken by photographers, cartoonists, filmmakers, artists, and journalists to shape the future of visual journalism, either as a new photojournalism, or, perhaps, as something different altogether—as something “after photojournalism.” Along the way students will study closely in a thematically focused history of art, photography, graphic novels, journalism, new media, and visual culture, and sharpen skills in visual analysis and critical writing around urgent questions of history, culture, and media. Readings and case studies will include primary reporting by such photojournalists as Robert Capa, Gordon Parks, Ron Haviv, and James Nachtwey; graphic novels by Joe Sacco; artworks by Allan Sekula, Alfredo Jaar, Susan Meiselas, Trevor Paglen, and Omer Fast; amateur social media-based reporting by a legion of often anonymous “citizen journalists”; new media projects by Basetrack, Dronestagram, and Immersive Journalism; and critical and historical studies by John Berger, Susan Sontag, Susie Linfield, and Fred Ritchin.
MAKING SHAKESPEARE
Matt Kinservik and Jane Wessel

Today you can buy Shakespeare finger puppets and Shakespearean insult mugs. You can read a choose-your-own-adventure Hamlet and watch Shakespeare’s plays reimagined in works like 10 Things I Hate about You and The Lion King. You can even see the Bard’s plays performed in a reconstructed Globe Theatre, complete with the only thatched roof in modern-day London. But how did Shakespeare become Shakespeare? How did this man transform from a working actor and playwright to the “be-all and the end-all” (to quote the man himself) of the English literary tradition? And what can Shakespeare-mania, or “Bardolatry,” teach us about the ways that we construct a literary canon? To answer these questions, we will study Shakespeare’s changing reputation over the centuries. Beginning with the late 17th century, when Samuel Pepys declared that Romeo and Juliet was the “worst [play] that ever I heard in my life,” we will study the ways that writers “improved” Shakespeare by adding more music, dancing, and (occasionally) flying witches. As we study these textual adaptations, we will also work to reconstruct their performance histories, allowing us to imagine what these plays would have been like to witness. We will move through the 18th century, which saw the publication of new editions of Shakespeare’s plays and first biographies, as well as memorable performances by celebrity actors like David Garrick. During this period, Arthur Murphy declared that Shakespeare had become a “kind of established religion in poetry.” Over the course of the semester, students will write 2-3 papers, analyzing texts and other material objects that memorialize the playwright. The course will culminate in a collaborative project in which students design and curate an exhibit on Shakespeare’s many afterlives.

ARSC 390-082
Reading Crucial Texts
Larry Duggan

Learning to read texts accurately and dispassionately is one of the most critical skills which any educated person should cultivate and constantly refine. We will therefore spend the semester reading closely, discussing, and writing about provocative selections from four central, meaty texts: the Bible, Aristotle’s Politics, Thomas More’s Utopia, and the Quran. We will look closely at what these texts (and different translations of those works) say and do not say about creation, women, slavery, politicians, and sacred war, and reflect upon our knee-jerk reactions to certain passages and what our reactions teach us about ourselves and our cultural conditioning.

ARSC 390-083
From Corporate Board Rooms to College Dorm Rooms: Delaware’s Court of Chancery and How it Shapes America
Jonathan Russ

How is it that Delaware became America’s corporate capital, the state in which thousands of firms both large and small are incorporated? In large part, the answer has to do with Delaware’s Court of Chancery, an entity established in 1792 that evolved into the single most important court guiding U.S. business affairs. At first blush, it's something of a peculiar entity; it doesn't utilize a jury in reaching decisions, and it traces its roots to English courts predating the American Revolution by centuries. Its judges base their rulings on the concept of equity that might otherwise be unavailable in more rigid courts of common law. And yet, although the Court specializes in matters affecting corporate America, its rulings have had a profound impact upon the University of Delaware as well. To best study Chancery and its sweeping reach, students will read various case histories from the Court, including Parker v U.D. (the case that desegregated the University,) Gebhart v Belton (which became one of four cases that were combined into Brown v Board of Education in which the U.S. Supreme Court found segregated education to be unconstitutional,) Keegan v U.D. (another case ultimately wending its way to the Supreme Court that established the freedom of religious worship on public college campuses,) and Time v Paramount (the case that dramatically reshaped the relationship between shareholders
and corporate boards, leading to a wave of corporate mergers and acquisitions in the 1980s and ’90s.) In addition to reading landmark cases, students will hear from guest lecturers connected to the Court. Although there will be no exams, students will be expected to participate in class discussions and write several papers.

ARSC 390-084
Engaging the Dramatic Imagination
Leslie Reidel
Why the theatre? What accounts for a form lasting thousands of years? What does it mean to engage the dramatic imagination? What is the unique nature of the dramatic form and how is that form made manifest in the theatre? What distinguishes the theatre from television, film, and other mediated performance forms? Working in collaboration, we will explore these and other questions in depth as we read about theatre, see theatre, make theatre, and speculate about the possibility of the theatre in our media age.

ARSC 390-085
Our Ocean Planet
Carolyn Thoroughgood
The ocean covers nearly three quarters of our planet, provides 70 percent of the oxygen in the atmosphere and houses about 20 percent of the known species on Earth. The ocean regulates climate and weather and provides food and energy resources for humans worldwide. Water in every stream or river on the planet eventually ends up in the ocean, and all life on Earth is dependent upon its health. More than half of all Americans live within 50 miles of the coast, but whether near or far our lives are inextricably linked to the ocean. Society’s increasing demands on marine and coastal resources have placed ocean issues at the forefront of public concern. As a result, there are growing calls for improved governance to promote the wise use of ocean resources. This course will examine both the natural science and human dimensions of such issues as global climate change, ocean pollution and dead zones, dying corals, overfishing, sea level rise, and oceans and human health. Come learn more about “our ocean planet” through discussions of specific ocean processes and how they are intertwined with human survival and quality of life. Topical reports that present overviews of each of these topics will serve as the bases for discussion and students will be evaluated on their ability to think critically and analyze approaches designed to address complex, multiple use demands on ocean resources.

ARSC 390-086
First Amendment Law
Juliet Dee
This honors colloquium will cover major issues in First Amendment law, such as freedom of religion, student speech, national security, time-place-manner restrictions, defamation, invasion of privacy, the reporter’s privilege, commercial speech, incitement and obscenity. It will also cover more recent First Amendment questions involving social networks, cyber-bullying, WikiLeaks, and the Arab Spring. We will spend some time on censorship issues in countries such as China, which does not permit Facebook. There will be one textbook, Thomas Tedford and Dale Herbeck’s Freedom of Speech in the United States, and this will be supplemented with reading actual court cases, academic journal articles and law review articles. Students will write two medium-length papers, and will participate in one debate on a topic such as the reporter’s privilege, national security, or banning pornography.

ARSC 390-087
Climate Conversations
Dana Veron
In the past few years, we have been inundated with information about the Earth’s climate and how it is changing. However, the messages often appear contradictory and leave us uncertain about the nature and importance of the issues. In this course we will explore our understanding of climate change, the impacts of this change, and the approaches being developed to mitigate or adapt to this change through a variety of perspectives and media. In particular, we will focus on how the dialogue shifts depending on who is leading
the discussion. Emphasis will be placed on how the perception and importance of climate change alters as a function of scale and location, looking both internally at the United States and externally to other parts of the world.

**ARSC 390-088**  
**The Global Energy Revolution: Fossil Fuels to Fracking to Renewables**  
**John Madsen**  
In this colloquium, we will explore the on-going global energy revolution involving the transition from fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) to unconventional sources of oil and natural gas via fracking to clean, renewable energy sources. Through a series of problem-based learning investigations, we will examine the geologic setting, exploration and recovery, and human use of fossil-fuels and the various types of renewable energy sources including hydropower, solar, wind, and biomass. In addition, we will discuss how the energy revolution impacts global politics including the 2015 UN Climate Change Conference in Paris, France. Activities to be completed during this seminar will include three group written reports, PowerPoint and poster presentations, two individual essays focused on current global energy issues, and an individual research report on a topic of interest derived from participation in the course. Readings will include the trade book “The Quest: Energy, Security, and the Remaking of the Modern World” by Daniel Yergin and selected materials from energy- and geological-related reports and texts.

**ARSC 390-089**  
**The Impact of Sports on Race and Culture**  
**Ron Whittington**  
This course will focus on moments in history from the 1800s to the present where sports played a major role in forming attitudes and shaping cultures. We will discuss points in time where the very mention of a sports figure could insight a riot, cause youth to spend enormous sums of money to purchase the latest styles or brand names, or lead a government to bid and host Olympic events that will ultimately bankrupt the economy. We will also discuss the impact of sports in the quest for human rights, asking questions related to equality of gender as well as race. An atmosphere of respect will be present at all times, even when there are different points of view presented. Reading include: *The Unlevel Playing Field: A Documentary History of the African American Experience in Sport* by David K. Wiggins and Patrick B. Wiggins, University of Illinois Press Urbana and Chicago (2003). Additional articles, books and films related to class discussion topic will be assigned as needed.

**FLLT 360-080**  
**Japanese Visual Culture**  
**Rachel Hutchinson**  
This course undertakes a critical analysis of media products in contemporary Japan, focusing primarily on anime (animation), manga (Japanese comics) and computer games. We will explore the historical origins and specific narrative features of each medium, and compare them to more ‘traditional’ narrative media such as prose literature and live-action film to find out how storytelling works in different media. We will discuss the dynamics and interplay of text and pictures in manga, while anime study will consider what happens when movement is added to the equation. The relative merits of limited animation, cell animation and CGI will be discussed with particular reference to the works of Oshii Mamoru and Miyazaki Hayao. The importance or relevance of ‘storytelling’ in computer games will be analyzed by comparing different genres, particularly the role-playing game (RPG) as opposed to binary combat structures. Students do not need any previous knowledge of these media or the Japanese language.
With these famous lines, Dante famously set the stage for an epic human journey through the realms of hell, purgatory and paradise. A vast tapestry of medieval learning and culture, populated with figures and events drawn from ancient and medieval history, Dante’s masterpiece, The Divine Comedy, remains a cornerstone of Western literature. Nearly seven hundred years later, we are fascinated by Dante’s poem—perhaps because it addresses the kinds of ethical questions that still resonate today: What does it mean to be a moral person? How do our actions impact the lives of those around us? Is it possible to enact meaningful change in our lives and in the world? What happens to us after we die? Our readings and discussion of Dante’s masterpiece will touch on many topics, from the historical and political context in which Dante worked and the poetic traditions that influenced him, to the influence of non-Christian civilizations on his thought and medieval views on gender and sexuality. In addition to our close readings of selections of Dante’s poem, we will consider the enduring impact of the Divine Comedy on many facets of popular culture. In addition to maintaining our own class log of “Dante sightings” in everyday life, we will examine visual and textual representations of Dante’s poem by modern and contemporary artists and writers: from the nineteenth-century engravings of Gustave Doré and Franz Liszt’s Dante Symphony; to twenty-first-century reinterpretations by Sandow Birk, Neil Gaiman, Dan Brown, and others. Students will hone their critical thinking skills while developing the tools necessary for perceptive literary and cultural analysis.