Humanities

Director of undergraduate studies: Norma Thompson, Whitney Humanities Center, 53 Wall St., 432-1313, norma.thompson@yale.edu; chair: Bryan Garsten, 53 Wall St., 432-0670, bryan.garsten@yale.edu; humanities.yale.edu/

The undergraduate program in Humanities provides students the opportunity to integrate courses from across the humanistic disciplines into intellectually coherent and personally meaningful courses of study. Works of literature, music, history, philosophy, and the visual arts are brought into conversation with one another and with the history of ideas.

The major in Humanities asks students to begin with broad surveys of foundational works in at least two different cultural traditions, including at least one course on classical Western European texts. All majors take two specially-commissioned core seminars, each co-taught by two faculty members from different, but complementary fields of study. After taking these core seminars, students in the major share a broad grounding in several cultural traditions, the experience of having grappled with the question of what "modernity" is, and the experience of having spent a term interpreting a single work (or small corpus of works) in great depth. Students then craft an area of concentration according to their interests and with the help of appropriate faculty members. The major offers breadth and interdisciplinary scope even as it encourages depth and intellectual coherence.

COURSES FOR NONMAJORS

Students in all classes can find options in the varied course offerings, from special seminars for first-year students to the Franke and Shulman Seminars for seniors. Many courses are open to nonmajors.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Fourteen term courses are required for the major, including three “foundational works” surveys, two core seminars, one course in each of four areas of study in the humanities (which may include the Franke and Shulman Seminars), four additional electives selected to complement the student’s area of concentration (with approval of the director of undergraduate studies), and a one- or two-term senior essay. Majors in Humanities are strongly encouraged to enroll in at least one term course in literature in a foreign language.

Foundations

Three broad surveys of foundational works in any cultural tradition are required, such as HIST 280, EALL 200, or RLST 189. One or two foundations courses must be in the classical tradition of Western Europe, such as Directed Studies, or ENGL 129 or CLCV 256.

Core seminars

The major requires two core seminars, one in "Modernities" and one in "Interpretations." Each core seminar is taught by a pair of faculty members from complementary disciplines. The two broad themes of the seminars remain consistent from year to year, but the material studied and the faculty members teaching change, allowing each class of students to explore the themes in different ways.

Areas of study in the humanities

One course is required in each of four areas: literature; visual, musical, or dramatic arts; science in the humanities; and intellectual history and historical analysis. Courses may be drawn from any department or program in Yale College, with the approval of the director of undergraduate studies.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

A one- or two-term senior essay is required of each Humanities major.

ADVISING

Students are expected to declare their intent to major in Humanities in a meeting with the director of undergraduate studies before their junior year.

UNIQUE TO THE MAJOR

The Franke Seminar and the Shulman Seminar

Sponsored by the Whitney Humanities Center and designed to speak across disciplinary lines to broad public and intellectual issues, the Franke Seminar and the Shulman Seminar each include a series of coordinated public lectures. The seminars are for enrolled students; the lecture series are open to the Yale and local communities. Humanities majors may enroll in a Franke or a Shulman Seminar with permission of the director of undergraduate studies and the instructor.

Summer program in Rome

Humanities majors who take the spring-term course HUMS 444, The City of Rome, (or its equivalent, with instructor approval) and develop individual research topics to be pursued in Rome may apply for enrollment in a two-credit summer course offered by Yale Summer Session. Museums, archaeological sites, churches, piazzas, libraries, and the city itself are part of the classroom for the summer course. Further information is available on the Humanities program website and the Yale Summer Session Website.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Prerequisites None
Number of courses 14 term courses (incl senior essay)
Distribution of courses 3 foundations courses; 2 core sems, as specified; 1 course in each of 4 disciplinary areas; 4 electives in concentration
Senior requirement  Senior essay (HUMS 491)

FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF HUMANITIES

Professors  Jeffrey Alexander (Sociology), R. Howard Bloch (French), Harold Bloom (Humanities), Leslie Brisman (English), David Bromwich (English), Rüdiger Campe (German), Francesco Casetti (Humanities), Stephen Davis (Religious Studies, History), Wai Chee Dimock (English), Carlos Eire (History, Religious Studies), Benjamin Foster (Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations), Paul Freedman (History), Kirk Freudenburg (Classics), Paul Fry (English), Bryan Garsten (Political Science), Marie-Helen Girard (French), Phyllis Granoff (Religious Studies), Emily Greenwood (Classics), Frank Griffel (Religious Studies), Karsten Harries (Philosophy), Christine Hayes (Religious Studies, Judaic Studies), Carol Jacobs (German), Edward Kamens (East Asian Languages & Literatures), Alice Kaplan (French), Anthony Kronman (School of Law), Tina Lu (East Asian Languages & Literatures), Ivan Marcus (History, Religious Studies), Stefanie Markovits (English), Giuseppe Mazzotta (Italian), Paul North (German), Brigitte Peucker (German), Steven Pincus (History), Joseph Roach (English, Theater Studies), Maurice Samuels (French), William Sledge (Psychiatry), Steven Smith (Political Science, Philosophy), Gary Tomlinson (Music, Humanities), Shawkat Toorawa (Professor of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations), Francesca Trivellato (History), Katie Trumpener (Comparative Literature), Jing Tse (East Asian Languages & Literatures), Miroslav Volf (Divinity School), Anders Winroth (History), Ruth Yeazell (English)

Associate Professors  Paola Bertucci (History, History of Science, Medicine, and Public Health), Toni Dorfman (Adjunct) (Theater Studies), Crystal Feinster (African American Studies), Moira Fradinger (Comparative Literature), Milette Gaifman (History of Art and Classics), Martin Hägglund (Comparative Literature, Humanities), Jacqueline Jung (History of Art), Pauline LeVen (Classics), Karuna Mantena (Political Science), Marci Shore (History), Kirk Wetters (German)

Assistant Professors  Rebekah Ahrendt (Music), Lucas Bender (East Asian Languages and Literatures, Humanities), Marijeta Bozovic (Slavic Languages & Literatures), Molly Brunson (Slavic Languages & Literatures), Thomas C. Connolly (French), Henry Cowles (History of Science, Medicine, and Public Health, History), Emily Erikson (Sociology), Marta Figlerowicz (Comparative Literature, English), Joseph Fischel (Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies), Bella Grigoryan (Slavic Languages & Literatures), Seth Jacobowitz (East Asian Languages and Literatures), Isaac Nakhimovsky (History), Joseph North (English), Christiana Purdy Moudarres (Italian), Ayesha Ramachandran (Comparative Literature), Dixa Ramirez (American Studies), Christopher Semk (French)

Senior Lecturers  Peter Cole (Judaic Studies), Charles Hill (Humanities), Maryam Sanjabi (French), Stuart Semmel (History, Humanities), Kathryn Slanski (Humanities, Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations), Norma Thompson (Humanities)

Lecturers  Karla Britton (Divinity School), Drew Collins (Divinity School), Matthew Croasmun (Divinity School), Sarah Farmer (Divinity School), Karen Foster (Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations), Angela Gorrell (Divinity School), Virginia Jewiss (Humanities), Camille Lizarribar (Humanities), Daniel Luban (Humanities), Judith Malafra (Music), Giulia Oskian (Humanities), Terence Renaud (Humanities), Karin Roffman (Humanities, English), George Syrimis (Hellenic Studies)

Seminars for Freshmen

* HUMS 065a, Education and the Life Worth Living  Matthew Croasmun
Consideration of education and what it has to do with real life—not just any life, but a life worth living. Engagement with three visions of different traditions of imagining the good life and of imagining education: Confucianism, Christianity, and Modernism. Students will be asked to challenge the fundamental question of the good life and to put that question at the heart of their college education. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.  HU

* HUMS 071a, Intellectual Circles  Charles Hill
Study of the creative interactions produced by informal associations of innovative minds in literature, philosophy, politics, science, psychology, the arts, war, and law. Courtiers, advisors, disciples, and disputers around Confucius, Socrates, Lincoln, Freud, Wittgenstein, and Niebuhr are among the circles considered. Groups include American Founders, quantum physicists, computer scientists, Gertrude Stein’s “Lost Generation” of Americans in Paris, “The Georgetown Set” of Cold War friends and rivals, and the Supreme Court.  HU

* HUMS 078b, Shakespeare and Music  Judith Malafra
The use of music in Shakespeare’s plays, from the original stagings and seventeenth-century adaptations to modern productions. Consideration of operatic versions of the plays from the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. Includes a field trip to New York City. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.  HU

* HUMS 080a, Transforming Literature into Opera  Judith Malafra
Examination of ten operatic masterpieces and their literary source material, with consideration of the roles of the composer and the librettist in fashioning poems, short stories, and plays into operatic works. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.  HU
Core Seminars

* HUMS 404b / ENGL 271b / FREN 383b, Modernities: Literature in the Era of Tyrannies 1919-1960  
  Alice Kaplan and David Bromwich
Political writing of the mid-20th century with emphasis on ideologies, including communism, fascism and democracy. Emphasis on British, French, and American authors such as Orwell, Camus, Sartre, Greene, Duras, and Arendt. Students must be in sophomore, junior, or senior year.

* HUMS 405b / CLCV 405b / HSAR 405b, Interpretations: The Parthenon  
  Milette Gaifman and Emily Greenwood
Exploration of the Parthenon in history, including its religious, political, and cultural functions, as well as the history of encountering and interpreting the Parthenon across all media (archaeology, architecture, art, film, literature, photography) from antiquity to hypermodernity.

* HUMS 406a / ENGL 273a, Modernities: The Politics of Emotion and Sensibility  
  Giulia Oskian and Joseph North
An extended inquiry into the political implications of theorizing emotions and sensibilities in different ways. Broad engagement with key thinkers from a number of different traditions, including European philosophy, British literary criticism, and contemporary poetry.

Humanities Electives

HUMS 134b / ENGL 189b / FREN 216b / LITR 194b, The Multicultural Middle Ages  
  Ardis Butterfield
Introduction to medieval English literature and culture in its European and Mediterranean context, before it became monolingual, canonical, or author-bound. Genres include travel writing, epic, dream visions, mysticism, the lyric, and autobiography, from the Crusades to the Hundred Years War, from the troubadours to Dante, from the Chanson de Roland to Chaucer.

* HUMS 138a / LITR 195a, Norse Sagas  
  Johanna Fridriksdottir
Introduction to a wide range of sagas — prose texts similar to novels — written in medieval Iceland, to better understand the customs, ethics, social hierarchies, and values they express as well as their literary style and artistry. Written in a strikingly realistic style, themes encompass exploration and settlement of new lands, blood feud and honor codes, gender roles, and the paranormal.

HUMS 144a / CLCV 206a / HIST 217a, Introduction to Roman History: The Republic  
  Andrew Johnston
The development of the Roman Republic to the end of the Civil Wars in 30 B.C. Readings from ancient sources with emphasis on the means by which history can be written by engaging these texts with the evidence of archaeology, art history, epigraphy, and numismatics. Readings in translation.

* HUMS 149b / ENGL 219b / ITAL 309b / LITR 179b / WGSS 179b, Gender and Genre in Renaissance Love Poetry  
  Ayesha Ramachandran
Introduction to the poetic genres of lyric, epic, and pastoral in the European Renaissance. Focus on questions of desire, love, and gendered subjectivity. The historical contexts and political uses of discourses of eroticism and pleasure in Italy, Spain, France, and England. Written exercises include poetic imitations of Renaissance texts.

* HUMS 151b, Shakespeare and the Canon: Tragedies and Romances  
  Harold Bloom
A reading of Shakespeare’s tragedies and romances, with an emphasis on their originality in regard to tradition: Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, and Antony and Cleopatra, The Winter’s Tale, and The Tempest.

* HUMS 153b, Poetic Influence from Shakespeare to Hart Crane  
  Harold Bloom

* HUMS 178a / THST 388a, Revenge Tragedy and Moral Ambiguity  
  Toni Dorfman
A study of plays and films variously construed as revenge tragedy that raise aesthetic and ethical issues, including genre, retribution, “just wars,” public vs. private justice, and the possibility of resolution. How questions of crime, punishment, and justice have been posed in drama, from classical Greece through the twentieth century.

HUMS 180a / ITAL 310a / LITR 183a, Dante in Translation  
  Giuseppe Mazzotta
A critical reading of Dante’s Divine Comedy and selections from the minor works, with an attempt to place Dante’s work in the intellectual and social context of the late Middle Ages by relating literature to philosophical, theological, and political concerns. One discussion section conducted in Italian.

* HUMS 181b / THST 438b, Production Seminar: War Play  
  Toni Dorfman
A study of plays and films, epic and otherwise, about war, culminating in the production of Bertolt Brecht’s, Mother Courage. Admission by audition in August. Prerequisite: THST 210, and/or permission of the instructor.

* HUMS 187b / ENGL 207b / FREN 214b / LITR 182b, Medieval Romance  
  R. Howard Bloch and Ardis Butterfield
A study of some of the principal forms of Arthurian, chivalric, courtly, and parodic romances of medieval French and English tradition.
* HUMS 205a, Boundaries of the Body in Law and Literature Camille Lizarríbar
The representation of the human body in law and literature. Bodies as physical structures that inhabit multiple realms, including material, cultural, historical, and symbolic. Ways in which humans think about and give meaning to their bodies in relationship to themselves and to others. Additional sources include film, television, and journalism. WR, HU

* HUMS 220b / HIST 289b / HSAR 399b / HSHM 407b, Collecting Nature and Art in the Preindustrial World Paola Bertucci
A history of museums before the emergence of the modern museum. Focus on: cabinets of curiosities and Wunderkammern, anatomical theaters and apothecaries’ shops, alchemical workshops and theaters of machines, collections of monsters, rarities, and exotic specimens. WR, HU TR

HUMS 233a / LITR 178a / MMES 201a / NELC 156a, Classics of the Arabic-Islamic World Shawkat Toorawa
Survey of the literary tradition of the Arabic-Islamic world (West Asia, North Africa, and Muslim Spain), a textual conversation among diverse authors from late antiquity to the Mamluk period. Prose and poetry from the Qur’an to the Arabian Nights; attention to the interdependence of the works and their cultural setting, the agendas authors pursued, and the characters they portrayed. HU

* HUMS 235a / FREN 335a, Orientalism in French Literature and Art Marie-Hélène Girard and Maryam Sanjabi
Examination of Oriental influences in French prose, theater, poetry, travel literature, and art from the seventeenth century to the twentieth. Topics include the problems of Orientalism; encounters with peoples, monuments, and cultures of the Muslim Middle East; social and political critique; and the popular lure of Oriental exoticism. Readings in English. HU

* HUMS 233a / ENGL 346a / RLST 233a, Poetry and Faith Christian Wiman
Issues of faith examined through poetry, with a focus on modern Christian poems from 1850 to the present. Some attention to poems from other faith traditions, as well as to secular and antireligious poetry. HU

HUMS 255a / RSEE 312a / RUSS 312a, Tolstoy’s War and Peace Edyta Bojanowska
A study of Leo Tolstoy’s masterpiece War and Peace (1865-1869) about Napoleon’s 1812 invasion of Russia, in philosophical, historical, and political contexts. All readings and class discussions in English. WR, HU TR

* HUMS 257a / FREN 227a / LITR 310a, Love in the Western World R. Howard Bloch
Consideration and definition of the varieties of love by which we still live and which came into being in late Antiquity and the High Middle Ages. HU

* HUMS 259a / PLSC 289a, Tocqueville Bryan Garsten
A close reading of Alexis de Tocqueville’s Democracy in America, along with major influences, such as Rousseau, Pascal, and Montesquieu, and near contemporaries, including Constant, Guizot, and Marx. one course in political theory, philosophy, or intellectual history. HU, SO

* HUMS 261a / EP&E 487a / GMAN 212a / PHIL 417a, Critical Theory and the Frankfurt School Asaf Angermann
Introduction to the thought and writings of the philosophers known as the Frankfurt School, who founded and developed the idea of Critical Theory. The method of Critical Theory as a way of thinking about the complex relations between philosophy and society, culture and politics, and philosophical concepts and social reality. The meaning of concepts such as critique, history, freedom, individuality, emancipation, and aesthetic experience. HU

* HUMS 262a / ENGL 260a / LITR 204a, Modernism and Domesticity Katie Trumpener
Exploration of turn-of-the-century European attempts to craft modernist lives: how new ideas of women’s roles, childhood, and the family shaped modernist literature and art—even as modernist designers tried to change people’s experience of daily surroundings. Topics include a range of New Woman novels, modernist design, fashion, and stage sets, exemplary artists’ houses (Carl and Karen Larson, Vanessa and Duncan Grant), reform fashions, portraits and family portraits, experimental fiction, memoirs (Andrzej Bely, Walter Benjamin, Joyce, Woolf), and children’s books as designs for living. Students will have the opportunity to research in modernist periodicals or contribute to the upcoming Beinecke Text/Textile exhibit. WR, HU

* HUMS 263a / RLST 123a, Religion and Grief Laura Carlson
Critical and comparative examination of how death, loss, and grief are encountered within a range of religious traditions; how varieties of loss and grief shape contemporary religious and spiritual thought; and how the spiritual claims of ancient and modern literature are challenged and transformed by grief. HU TR

* HUMS 268b, Analyzing Antisemitism Adam Stern
Analysis of the “longest hatred” from a historical as well as theoretical point of view; and the development of antisemitism and key manifestations from the ancient world to the present moment. Topics include how hatred of Jews relates to other forms of bigotry and prejudice; how antisemitism mutates in different times and places; antisemitism before the modern period; why antisemitism exists in countries that have no Jews; why antisemitism is once again on the rise around the world and how it can be combated. HU TR

HUMS 270a / EALL 200a, The Chinese Tradition Tina Lu
An introduction to the literature, culture, and thought of premodern China, from the beginnings of the written record to the turn of the twentieth century. Close study of textual and visual primary sources, with attention to their historical and cultural backdrops. No knowledge of Chinese required. HU TR
* HUMS 272b / EALL 256b / EAST 358b / GLBL 251b / LITR 265b, China in the World  Jing Tsu
Recent headlines about China in the world, deciphered in both modern and historical contexts. Interpretation of new events and diverse texts through transnational connections. Topics include China and Africa, Mandarinization, labor and migration, Chinese America, nationalism and humiliation, and art and counterfeiting. Readings and discussion in English.  HU

* HUMS 273b / FILM 278b, Truth and Media, Information, Disinformation, and Misinformation  Francesco Casetti
Exploration of how "truth" is disseminated in a global media economy, how news can be "fake," and the role of media in constructing truth and falsehood, beginning with Plato's Phaedrus, a classic philosophical text in which writing itself is placed under scrutiny. Further consideration of epistemological certainty and doubt in the history of science, philosophy, literature, and art—each of which presents a theory of knowledge complicating or reifying the distinctions between fact and fiction; and ideological and technological distortions of the truth. A collaboration with the Poynter Fellowship at Yale.  HU

* HUMS 287b / HIST 455J, The Theory and Practice of Resistance  Terence Renaud
Exploration of the histories and theories of resistance in the modern world. How liberation movements, guerrillas, and oppressed groups appeal to Kant, Thoreau, Nietzsche, Luxemburg, Lenin, Gandhi, Fanon, Arendt, Marcuse, Foucault, A. Lorde, Said, and J. Butler. Themes include antifascism to terrorism; violence to nonviolence, the New Left to Black Lives Matter.  HU TR

* HUMS 292a / EALL 213a / PHIL 209a / RLST 211a, Philosophy, Religion, and Literature in Medieval China  Lucas Bender
Exploration of the rich intellectual landscape of the Chinese middle ages, introducing students to seminal works of Chinese civilization and to the history of their debate and interpretation in the first millennium. No previous knowledge of China is assumed. Instead, the course serves as a focused introduction to Chinese philosophy, religion, and literature.  HU TR

* HUMS 294a / EVST 294a / RSEE 355a / RUSS 355a, Ecology and Russian Culture  Molly Brunson
Interdisciplinary study of Russian literature, film, and art from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries, organized into four units—forest, farm, labor, and disaster. Topics include: perception and representation of nature; deforestation and human habitation; politics and culture of land-ownership; leisure, labor, and forced labor; modernity and industrialization; and nuclear technologies and disasters. Analysis of short stories, novels, and supplementary readings on ecocriticism and environmental humanities, as well as films, paintings, and visual materials. Several course meetings take place at the Yale Farm. Readings and discussions in English.  HU

* HUMS 299b, Rhetoric and Political Order  Norma Thompson
A study of rhetoric as an indispensable element of politics. Rhetorical perceptions of the sophist Gorgias and the philosophers Plato and Aristotle; foundations of modern rhetoric in Machiavelli, Jane Austen, and Abraham Lincoln; and contemporary rhetorics of social science, natural science, and the humanities.  HU

* HUMS 300b, Oratory in Statecraft  Charles Hill
A seminar and practicum in oratory, the first tool of leadership. A study of oratory as it provides direction, builds support, and drives action on a strategic agenda. Analysis of speeches in antiquity, the early modern era, and the unique American voice: Edwards to Lincoln to King.  HU

* HUMS 301b, The Crisis of Democracy  Giulia Oskian
A study of the notion of political crisis; a trans-historical comparison between current and 1920s-'30s critiques of liberal democracy; a theoretical reflection on the modalities of political representation, the tension between democratic procedures and constitutional provisions, the role of political parties, and the dynamics of political change.

HUMS 305b / EALL 308b / PHIL 410b, Sages of the Ancient World  Michael Hunter
Comparative survey of ancient discourses about wisdom from China, India, the Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Topics include teaching, scheming, and dying.  HU

* HUMS 308b, The French Revolution in Political Thought  Daniel Luban
Political thought of and about the French Revolution. Key political texts from the revolution itself, responses from contemporaries across the globe, and later interpretations of the revolution. Authors include Sieyès, Robespierre, Burke, Paine, Wollstonecraft, de Maistre, Tocqueville, Arendt, and C.L.R. James.  HU, SO

* HUMS 314a / GMAN 211a / LITR 441a / PHIL 412a, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud  Rüdiger Campe
The revolutionary ways in which Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud redefined the ends of freedom. Key works of the three authors on agency in politics, economics, epistemology, social life, and sexuality. Agency as individual or collective, as autonomous or heteronomous, and as a case of liberation or subversion. Additional readings from Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Weber.  HU

* HUMS 316b, World Order in Liberal Arts  Charles Hill
International peace and security as humanity’s primary philosophical problem, reflected in works beyond policy methodologies. Confucius to the Elizabethan "world picture," to Kant, Grass, Calasso, Wittgenstein, and Samuel Beckett. Early writings of Kissinger and his diplomatic papers now at the Yale University Library provide modern case studies.  HU

* HUMS 326b / PLSC 399b, The Political Philosophy of Rousseau  Steven Smith
Close reading of some of the major works of Rousseau, concentrating on his political theory, his writings on education and the family, and his conception of the philosophic life. Consideration of interpretations of Rousseau from the past century. Prerequisites: Directed Studies, previous courses in political philosophy or intellectual history, or permission of instructor.  HU, SO
* HUMS 336b / E&EB 336b / HSHM 453b, Culture and Human Evolution  Gary Tomlinson
Examination of the origins of human modernity in the light of evolutionary and archaeological evidence. Understanding, through a merger of evolutionary reasoning with humanistic theory, the impact of human culture on natural selection across the last 250,000 years. HU, SC

* HUMS 351a / PLSC 314a, The American Imagination: From the Puritans to the Civil War  Bryan Garsten and Steven Smith
Interdisciplinary examination of the uniqueness of the American experience from the time of the Puritans to the Civil War. Readings draw on major works of political theory, theology, and literature. HU

* HUMS 352b / HIST 105b, American Imagination: From the Gilded Age to the Cold War  David Bromwich and Anthony Kronman
Survey of major ideas, writings, and cultural movements that have shaped American life and thought from 1880 to 1990. Assignments encompass works of fiction, philosophy, social and political thought, and film. HU RP

HUMS 381b / HIST 211b, The Birth of Europe, 1000–1500  Paul Freedman
Europe during the central and late Middle Ages, from the feudal revolution to the age of discoveries. Europe as it came to be defined in terms of national states and international empires. The rise and decline of papal power, church reform movements, the Crusades, contacts with Asia, the commercial revolution, and the culture of chivalry. HU

HUMS 402a / ENGL 230a / ER&M 225a / LITR 319a / WGSS 269a, Selfhood, Race, Class, and Gender  Ayesha Ramachandran and Marta Figlerowicz
Examination of the fundamental notion of "the self" through categories of race, class, and gender as dimensions for understanding personhood. Introduction to major philosophical frameworks for thinking about "the self" from antiquity to the present; case studies from across the world and in different media, placing contemporary debates about these issues in historical perspective. HU

* HUMS 411b, Life Worth Living  Staff
Comparative exploration of the shape of the life advocated by several of the world’s normative traditions, both religious and nonreligious. Concrete instantiations of these traditions explored through contemporary exemplars drawn from outside the professional religious or philosophical spheres. Readings from the founding texts of Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Marxism, and utilitarianism. HU

* HUMS 427b / ENGL 456b / JDST 316b / LITR 348b, The Practice of Literary Translation  Peter Cole and Robyn Creswell
Intensive readings in the history and theory of translation paired with practice in translating. Case studies from ancient languages (the Bible, Greek and Latin classics), medieval languages (classical Arabic literature), and modern languages (poetic texts). HU

* HUMS 434a / CLCV 113a / NELC 230a, Mesopotamia's Literary Legacy  Kathryn Slanski
Major works of ancient Near Eastern literature; relationships with literary traditions in the Hebrew Bible and ancient Greece. Readings include myths, epics, wisdom literature, love poetry, and humorous stories. HU

* HUMS 443a / HIST 232a / JDST 270a / MMES 342a / RLST 201a, Medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims In Conversation  Ivan Marcus
How members of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities thought of and interacted with members of the other two cultures during the Middle Ages. Cultural grids and expectations each imposed on the other; the rhetoric of otherness—humans or devils, purity or impurity, and animal imagery; and models of religious community and power in dealing with the other when confronted with cultural differences. Counts toward either European or Middle Eastern distributional credit within the History major, upon application to the director of undergraduate studies. WR, HU RP

* HUMS 444b, The City of Rome  Virginia Jewiss
An interdisciplinary study of Rome from its legendary origins through its evolving presence at the crossroads of Europe and the world. Exploration of the city’s rich interweaving of history, theology, literature, philosophy, and the arts in significant moments of Roman and world history. HU

* HUMS 455a / PHYS 115a / THST 115a, The Physics of Dance  Sarah Demers Konezny and Emily Coates
Critical investigation of introductory concepts in physics through the lens of dance. Topics in physics include the normal force, friction, Newton’s laws, projectile motion, potential and kinetic energy, and conservation of energy. Topics in dance include aspects of dance history, contemporary artists who engage with science, and the development of movement studies. Class meetings include movement exercises. Prerequisite: basic trigonometry and algebra. Prior dance experience is not required. Q8, HU, SC

The Franke Seminar

* HUMS 460b / AFAM 450b / WGSS 468b, New Orleans in the American Imaginary  Joseph Fischel and Crystal Feinster
Exploration of historical and contemporary New Orleans through the city’s literature, scholarship, theater, music, and food. New Orleans as both outlier and representative case of United States neoliberal economic reforms, racialized policing, casino capitalism, and hedonism. WR, HU
The Shulman Seminar

* HUMS 459a / GMAN 421a, Reports from Non-Human Worlds  Paul North
Contemporary and historical concepts of the nonhuman milieu, nature. Philosophical texts by Lucretius, Spinoza, and Schelling; literary
texts by Wordsworth, Kafka, and Philip K. Dick; scientific texts by Galileo, Lyell, Darwin; and texts in the new science of the nonhuman
by Donna Haraway, Karen Barad, and Timothy Morton.  

Individual Research and Senior Essay Courses

* HUMS 470a and HUMS 471b, Special Studies in the Humanities  Norma Thompson
For students who wish to pursue a topic in Humanities not otherwise covered. May be used for research or for directed reading under
the guidance of one or more faculty advisers. In either case a term paper or its equivalent is required, as are regular meetings with the
adviser or advisers. To apply, a student should present a prospectus and a bibliography signed by the adviser or advisers to the director of
undergraduate studies. Enrollment limited to juniors and seniors majoring in Humanities.

* HUMS 471b, Special Studies in the Humanities  Norma Thompson
For students who wish to pursue a topic in Humanities not otherwise covered. May be used for research or for directed reading under
the guidance of one or more faculty advisers. In either case a term paper or its equivalent is required, as are regular meetings with the
adviser or advisers. To apply, a student should present a prospectus and a bibliography signed by the adviser or advisers to the director of
undergraduate studies. Enrollment limited to juniors and seniors majoring in Humanities.

* HUMS 491a or b, The Senior Essay  Norma Thompson
Independent library-based research under faculty supervision. To register, students must consult the director of undergraduate studies
no later than the end of registration period in the previous term. A written plan of study approved by a faculty adviser must be submitted
to the director of undergraduate studies by November 17, 2017, if the essay is to be submitted during the spring term, by May 2, 2018, for
yearlong or fall-term essays. A rough draft of the essay is due at noon on March 23, 2018 for spring-term essays or on October 27, 2017 for
fall-term essays. The final essay is due at noon on April 13, 2018 for spring-term essays or on December 1, 2017 for fall-term essays; late
essays will be penalized by a lower grade.  
RP