

CORE COURSES OFFERED IN AMERICAN STUDIES, SPRING 2016

AMST 310; AMST 410 (two sections)

310 INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN STUDIES DEES

This course offers an introduction to American Studies, an interdisciplinary field that draws on many perspectives and approaches—from literary and historical to anthropological and sociological. We will begin with a history and overview of the field of American Studies before focusing on a few key areas that American Studies scholarship can help to illuminate: ideas about space, time, and identity. Throughout the semester, we will discuss key terms and theories in American studies to think through intersections of culture and history as they help us understand the diverse peoples and places that comprise the United States and North America more broadly.

410 TOPICS IN AMERICAN CULTURE: INVESTIGATING KNOXVILLE HUTTON

This class is a cross-disciplinary exploration of the city of Knoxville and its surroundings. It will draw on American Studies faculty from several departments to study the history and culture of the “scruffy city” and all it entails. What role did our local history play as part of Tennessee? Of Appalachia and the South? Of “America” in an era of globalization? What happened as Euro-American settlers met Cherokees, as a frontier village became a factory town, and as most factories went away? How did the complexities of art, culture, demography, and urban geography shape our region? What can the case of Knoxville teach about our urban and rural futures?

Guest lecturers will also present on a tapestry of subjects, from politics to popular culture; immigration to architecture; and literature to libations. Students will read both fiction and non-fiction in preparation for their own research projects. Field trips will be in the class schedule.

410 TOPICS IN AMERICAN CULTURE: INTERSECTIONALITY WINFORD

This is an advanced, interdisciplinary seminar on intersectionality, a concept rooted in U.S. Black feminist thought that describes how different dimensions of identity, such as race, gender, sexuality, and social class, co-construct experiences of oppression and privilege. A key focus of this course will be to understand how scholars, artists, and activists from a host of disciplines utilize an intersectional framework in their examination of complex social issues, such as gendered racism, reproductive justice, public health, and gentrification. To this end, most class meetings will feature guest lectures from experts on intersectionality who will share their work

with students while students are simultaneously developing their own projects that investigate some aspect of intersecting inequalities. Sample topics include the intersection of religion, race, and gender in the study of Black nuns; intergroup dialogue; and slave law and slave representations. Students will have the opportunity to attend and participate in an intersectionality symposium on campus scheduled for March 24, 2016. More details will be provided in class and on the syllabus.