HHUM 205: Modes of Knowing and Doing in the Arts and Humanities

Section 0101: MW 11-12:15, Susquehanna 1107
Section 0301: MW 2-3:15, Francis Scott Key 0119

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Undergraduate TAs: Casey Patterson, John Wambach

Course Description
HHUM 205 is a course on foundational methods of scholarship in the humanities and a workshop in applying them in our own lives. The humanities are most frequently defined as the study of “what it means to be human,” and one of the key characteristics of being human is the inventive diversity of it—including diversity over historical time and at any given moment across different groups of people. This course examines the relation between the humanities and the sciences in studies of human diversity, focusing on developments in this relation over the last 30 years. It explores diversity both as a method of producing knowledge (is diversity necessary or irrelevant to producing accurate knowledge?) and as an object of study (how do the humanities and sciences complement or compete with each other as descriptions and explanations of human diversity?). We conduct this examination with the breadth of a survey and the depth of a seminar: we travel over many disciplines, but our aim is to identify patterns in the most sophisticated ideas that these disciplines offer.

About 70% of our time will focus on the disciplines themselves: the philosophy of science; moral philosophy; history; literary studies; art history and visual culture; cultural studies; and political theory. We will devote the other 30% of our time to how you can make creative use of these modes of knowing and doing in your independent Keystone projects.

Course Objectives
The goals of this course are to enable you to do the following:
1. Accurately describe the evolving relationship between the humanities and sciences as accounts of human cultural invention and variety
2. Recognize methodological and conceptual patterns in the study of human diversity within the humanities and analyze unfamiliar scholarship in relation to them
3. Creatively apply concepts and methods from specific humanities disciplines to contemporary social issues and questions that involve questions of human diversity

Required Materials
All readings, videos, artwork, etc. will be distributed through Canvas. You do not need to purchase any texts for this class.

Recommended Overview Texts
The following texts are not required and will not be assigned for class, but if you are looking for an orientation to the themes and ideas presented in HHUM205, they are good candidates. All are available at the library.

Technology
We will use various forms of technology during class, but not all forms of technology work for learning the kinds of things we’re going to be studying. If you have an e-reader of some kind that you would like to use to access materials during class, you are welcome to do that—provided you have downloaded the materials and have the device’s wireless access disabled. Otherwise, I ask that you silence and put away all technological devices—smartphones, laptops, etc. I realize that means you’ll need to take notes by hand. That’s actually something I’d like you to do, because research suggests that handwriting notes facilitates learning better than typing them. If you have a computer that works with a stylus, I’ll consider that handwriting.

Accommodations
Students who have documented disabilities and who wish to work out accommodations should contact Dr. Carluccio right away to develop a good plan.

Course Challenges to Expect and How to Meet Them
1. **The reading**: You will probably find at least some of the reading for this course challenging. We read original scholarly texts a lot of the time, which are written for other scholars, and some of them lay out counter-intuitive ideas that can be hard at first to grasp. The point of the course is to become more familiar with and better at reading and using such texts. We will provide specific guidelines on how to do so and opportunities to practice doing so. Embrace those guidelines and take advantage of those opportunities. Even with them, however, know that understanding texts like the ones we’ll be studying is a work-in-progress and there is no expectation that they can be fully grasped at one reading. Consider a text like Judith Butler’s *Gender Trouble*, which 25 years after publication continues to raise questions and inspire research and debate. Be patient with our texts and with your own engagement with them. To take the pressure off as we learn, we don’t give reading quizzes.

2. **The relationship of the ideas to our lives**: Advanced scholarship in the humanities can be challenging both intellectually and personally. By nature, it deals with issues that play significant roles in our lives: how we define fairness, how we identify ourselves and others, what rights and obligations we recognize and defend. The point of the course is to learn to approach such issues from new analytical perspectives. The most important thing to remember is that there is a difference between these analytical perspectives and our own daily experience; it is like the difference between what our bodies look like in an MRI machine and what it feels like to live in them on a daily basis. Analysis shows us new things even about what we believe we’re most familiar with and what we have the most at stake in. The results of such analysis can be both empowering and discomforting. The new things analysis reveals may themselves make us uncomfortable, or those new things may make us uncomfortable with things we’ve previously taken for granted. These discomforts are growing pains, an inextricable part of learning.

Assignments
Coursework is divided into two portions, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seminar content (70%)</th>
<th>Keystone content (30%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily discussions and activities = 20%</td>
<td>Keystone plan = 5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short analytic essay = 10%</td>
<td>Good progress = 25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course notes = 5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two Thinking in Public posts and 3 comments = 25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visualizing the Modes = 10%</td>
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Seminar Content

Daily Discussions and Activities

This course is more about skills than facts, and those skills can be acquired only through practice. The skill is the ability to grasp, analyze, and apply advanced arguments in the humanities. To help you get the practice, we will run class the way a foreign language classroom or a law school classroom works. Most often, we will pose questions rather than answer them and will ask you to defend and challenge each other’s responses. We will randomly or semi-randomly assign these tasks to you rather than rely on volunteers. We will evaluate your ability to complete these tasks each day. A high evaluation means that you can recall and navigate assigned texts, can give explicit reasons for your analyses of them, and can make and learn from mistakes in your analyses. Mistakes are not penalized; they’re inevitable, and it’s important to learn to make them in a productive way—to look out for them, to correct them, and to learn from them. You get credit for making and learning from mistakes; you get none for avoiding them through silence.

You can indicate on any three days during the semester that you don’t want to be part of that day’s discussion. You don’t have to give me a reason; just tell me at the start of class that you don’t want to participate. It won’t affect your grade.

Epistemology Essay

You’ll conclude the first unit of the course, on epistemology, by writing a 3-page essay analyzing three different arguments about objectivity. Fuller instructions for this assignment will be discussed during the semester.

Course Notes

On one day of the semester, you’ll be responsible for posting a public set of notes over the class discussion to Canvas. Fuller instructions will be provided there.

Blog posts on “Thinking in Public”

You’ll write two approx. 1000-word blog posts during the semester. The first will put at least one text we have considered in dialogue with news coverage of a current event. The second post will revisit someone else’s first blog post based on a later piece of reading. These posts will be submitted to the HHUM blog “Thinking in Public,” and in keeping with the name will indeed be public: you’ll write for each other, not just your instructors. Fuller instructions for these two posts will be discussed during the semester.

YouTube video: Visualizing the Modes

At the end of the semester, you will create a video that visually represents the relationship among the “modes of knowing and doing” that we have studied. The key requirements of this project are that it be visual; that it be about relationships (not a summary of one mode after another); and that it speak to the substance of the modes (as opposed to, for example, comparing their difficulty). Again, fuller guidelines for this assignment will be discussed during the semester.

Keystone Content

You’ll see 5 days of the schedule marked out as Keystone days. We expect you to apply the time you would ordinarily use to prepare for class discussions to working on your Keystone instead—in addition to using the class time itself. We have also minimized class prep on other days before review sessions, and expect you to use that time for your Keystone, as well. In total, doing these things should yield about 34 course hours that you’re devoting to your Keystone projects.

Planning Document (5%)

Your Workshop Group will meet early in the semester. Around the same time, you’ll have a class period in which to write a set of benchmarks (including tasks and timelines) for your Keystone work this
semester. These benchmarks should lead you to create a draft of **approximately 75% of the project** during the semester. Please see the fuller description of this assignment on Canvas.

*Good progress (25%)*
Your advisor will monitor and evaluate your Keystone progress during the semester. She will consider your benchmarks document, your participation in your Workshop Group, and your completion of approximately 75% of a draft. Please see the fuller description of the expectation of steady progress on Canvas.

**Grades**
Written assignments must be follow MLA style or, in the case of Keystone components, another acceptable research style (e.g. APA, ASA, Chicago, etc.) as approved by your advisor. The instructor will evaluate the form and content of oral and written work using the following criteria:
1. Invention: Offers explicit, creative thesis supported by insightful discussion of relevant evidence
2. Arrangement: Offers introduction, carefully constructed sections, and conclusion (not summary)
3. Style: Adopts clear, concise prose that uses rhetorical devices effectively
4. Format: Follows technical expectations, such as bibliographic expectations

**Academic Integrity**
We expect that everyone will behave honorably throughout this course. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism, won’t be ignored. Students who are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty should consult the Student Honor Council Code of Academic Integrity [http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html](http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html).

*Regarding Course Project Submissions.* In preparing course project submissions, you may employ all standard means of research, deliberation, and creation. However, you must carry out the actual construction of the submission without significant assistance. Multi-authored documents may not be submitted for evaluation without written permission from the instructors significantly in advance of the submission.

**Incompletes**
In this course, the mark of "I" will be granted only to a student who meets both of the following criteria: (1) the student has satisfactorily completed the majority of the work of the course and (2) the student has been unable to complete some small portion of the work of the course because of ill**ness or other circumstances beyond the student's control.** Examples of reasons for the inability to complete course work that will **not** qualify a student for an "I" mark include the following: employment or volunteer commitments, social responsibilities, travel plans, and unexpected difficulty in satisfying course requirements.
Course Calendar
This calendar may be updated with minor changes during the semester.

Introduction to the Course

W 9/3
1. Peter Barry, “Postmodernism,” 78-87
2. Groden et al., “Postmodernism,” 396-400
3. Bloland, “Postmodernism and Higher Education”

M 9/8
Keystone Session

Unit One: Epistemology – Philosophy of Knowledge and the Humanities/Sciences

W 9/10
Analytic Epistemology—justified true beliefs and Gettier problems
1. The Truman Show (1998) (view before class)
2. Sven Bernecker, from Reading Epistemology (2006)

M 9/15
Continental Epistemology—the relation of power to justification and truth
1. Keep The Truman Show in mind
2. Jean Baudrillard, from Simulacra and Simulation
3. Michel Foucault, from The Order of Things (1970)

W 9/17
Two Cultures—the shifting power of the humanities and sciences as epistemologies

M 9/22
Objectivity as an Epistemic Value

W 9/24
Diversity as an Epistemic Value—pragmatist approaches

M 9/29
Diversity as an Epistemic Value—feminist approaches
Group 1: Kimberlé Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex” (choose one of the case studies to read) (1989)
Modes of Knowing and Doing

W 10/1
Review Session

M 10/6
Keystone Session

Unit Two: Knowledge Practices and Diversity in the Contemporary Humanities

Part 1: Moral Philosophy

W 10/8
Modern and Postmodern Approaches—moral reasoning and moral universals
2. Jean Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1977)

M 10/13
Moral Philosophy and the Sciences—empirical ethics and multiculturalism

W 10/15
Keystone Session

Part 2: Historiography

M 10/20
Modern Approaches—grand narratives and teleology

W 10/22
Postmodern Approaches—historiography as local and global activism
2. Walter Benn Michaels, from *The Trouble with Diversity* (2009)

M 10/27
History and the Sciences—developmental systems theory

W 10/29
Review session

M 11/3
Keystone session
Part 3: Theories of Textual Interpretation

**W 11/5**
Modern Approaches—structuralism as system
1. Ferdinand De Saussure, selections from *Course in General Linguistics* (1906-1911)

**M 11/10**
Postmodern Approaches—post-structuralism as account of meaning and identity

**W 11/12**
Literary studies and the Sciences—evolutionary theory

Part 4: Theories of Visual Culture

**M 11/17**
Modern and Postmodern Approaches—hermeneutics and postcolonial theory

**W 11/19**
Art History and the Sciences—digital humanities
1. Software Studies Initiative website—“Cultural Analytics” and “Projects”
2. Franco Moretti, from *Graphs, Maps, Trees*

**M 11/24**
Last day on visual culture or additional day on cultural studies

**W 11/26**
Keystone Session

Part 5: Cultural Studies

**M 12/1**

**W 12/3**
Modern and Postmodern Approaches—the Frankfurt school and agency
1. Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, “The Culture Industry” (1944)
2. Kevin Kelly, “We are the Web” (2005)

**M 12/8**
Cultural Studies and the Sciences—mixed methods research
2. Christina Hanhardt, from *Safe Space* (2013)
W 12/10
Review Session

**Final Exam:** During the final examination time for this course—which will be announced by the University in mid-to-late semester—we will meet and watch together your “Visualizing the Modes” videos.