**Is Democracy Possible Everywhere? (Deborah Boucoyannis)**

The course will introduce students to the broad theoretical traditions underpinning the study and promotion of democracy outside the Western world. The aim will be to question differing beliefs about the possibility of transplanting a political form developed in the West to societies with different social, cultural and economic conditions. Is democracy tied to particular religions? Are, for instance, Islamic or Confucian religions inimical to democratic principles? Or is our understanding of those principles itself culturally determined? The course will thus also consider if “culture” is an inhibiting or enabling factor. At the same time, other theories posit specific domestic conditions, such as economic development and social change, as necessary for democracy adoption and consolidation. Yet the historical record suggests that international factors have also been important in helping spread democracy abroad. What are the implications of these patterns? At the foundation of all these ideas lie some basic assumptions about how democracy prevailed in Europe. We will therefore also offer a critical approach of the conventional wisdom about the preconditions of European democratization, by looking at formative narratives about the emergence of parliaments and the transition to democracy. The course combines readings from political science, history, political theory, sociology and current affairs.

**This Land is Your Land (Deborah Lawrence)**

What will the planet look like in 2050 or 2100? In this seminar we will investigate how the allocation of land among biofuels, food crops and forest conservation alters climate and ultimately, humanity. In a warming world, biofuels will be grown to replace fossil fuels; forests will be grown and conserved to sequester carbon dioxide. Land use choices will occur against a background of feeding 9 billion people. Decisions made by individuals, countries and international bodies will influence the types of land that cover the earth. After a brief examination of how land use alters the carbon cycle and energy balance of the earth and its repercussions for regional and global climate, we will analyze the effects of allocation among food, biofuels and forest on the whole earth system-including the climate, natural and agro-ecosystems, and people. We will use a broadly interdisciplinary lens, assessing the economics, politics, ethical and social implications of the global distribution of environmental services such as food, water, and biodiversity. We hope to understand not just what happens in a future world but what it means to live in that world—for an individual, a society or humanity as a whole. Can we live in such a future? This seminar will draw on research in the Food, Fuel and Forests Program of Distinction and will offer students the chance to engage in research with faculty from five schools and eight departments.

**The Body-Mind Problem (Kevin Lee)**

A cognitive crisis is looming in our society and we are not prepared to meet it. The goals of this Pavilion Seminar are twofold: to understand how the body influences the mind to shape cognitive function, and to identify novel approaches to deal with the societal challenges created by the increasing numbers of individuals with cognitive impairment (Autism, Alzheimer’s disease, etc.). Students of any academic background are encouraged to participate. In fact, a breadth of student backgrounds is essential in order to bring a diversity of perspective to address the biomedical, legal, ethical, and social issues involved. We will complement discussion of these major topics with
on-site discussions at a biotech firm, an institute for autism, a foundation dedicated to accelerating the medical approval process, and a laboratory that has discovered a body-mind link for cognitive impairment in autism. The seminar will have the student bring his/her unique background and skills to bear on the question of how we can develop and optimize prospective plans for managing the looming cognitive crisis in the upcoming decades.

**The iPhone Course (Toluwalogo Odumosu)**
The “Jesus” phone, as the iPhone was affectionately dubbed at its inception, was released in June of 2007 and in various respects marked critical shifts in telephony, computing, internet access and the evolution of global telephony standards. In addition to basically inventing the “smartphone” category of mobile devices the iPhone is also the most successful product in Apple’s history and is in many ways, directly responsible for Apple’s rise and its becoming, literally, the most valuable company in the world. The launch of the iPhone also introduced a new kind of global consumption marked by infinite and raucous lines on launch day and the proliferation of “apps” and app stores. However, the rise and dominance of the iPhone has not being without controversy or challenge—most notably, the Android operating system and its affiliated ecosystem. This course will undertake a critical examination the iPhone as a physical, social, cultural and economic artifact. What does it mean to say that the iPhone is an innovative product? Innovative in what way? What really goes into making an iPhone, and are iPhones sustainable? What about the global politics of iPhone sourcing and manufacturing? Why did it take so long for China to get the iPhone? What can the iPhone teach us about global software development and the making of telephony standards? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, what can a critical study of the iPhone teach us about ourselves and how we consume and make meaning of the world in the 21st century?

**The Doctor (Diane Pappas)**
The role of the doctor in society has always been complex and multi-faceted, constantly adapting to changes in information and technology while at the same time evolving to respond to social changes and perceptions. The mystique of possessing knowledge of the human body and its inner workings coupled with the power of using that knowledge for the care of others has always invited public fascination and interest. Doctors are featured in paintings, books, poetry, television, and the daily news. Doctors have advanced significant changes in our society via improvements in disease management, disease eradication, and overall improvements in health and lifespan in our country, especially over the last century. The role of the doctor raises significant ethical and moral questions about power, autonomy, beneficence, malevolence, self-sacrifice, compassion, scientific research, professionalism, paternalism, service, and empathy. This seminar explores the doctor from a variety of perspectives, including historical, scientific, social, humanistic, professional, artistic, moral, and literary. Readings will range from historical sources to poetry, literature, contemporary reflections, and scientific studies. The course will also include study of visual works of art, including paintings and television. Students in the course will prepare two papers with class presentations.

**Aging (John Portmann)**
The aging seminar aims to examine from several perspectives the process and interpretation of a physical, emotional, and spiritual experience. Each student is able to pursue her / his special
interests within the field by writing on the bioethical or legal implications (or the cinematic or literary expression) of this gradual coda to human existence. The seminar challenges students to deepen their own experience of aging and to understand how they will themselves change over time.

AGING: An interdisciplinary exploration of aging: both its psychological and biological effects and its philosophical, political, and social significance. Attention paid to estate tax legislation; health insurance; the cost of institutionalization; cinematic portrayals of senescence as tragic; plastic surgery; the Alzheimer’s epidemic; and implications for sexual ethics and “family values.” Course includes a field trip to the Martha Jefferson House, a senior retirement living complex, at 1600 Gordon Avenue. Requirements: four five-page papers; one critical presentation on material assigned for the day; informed class participation.

Celebrity & Human Condition (Andrea Press)
Is it “human nature” to idolize industrial moguls, political and military leaders, and literary, film, music, television stars? Is celebrity endemic to the human condition, or specific to consumer capitalism? Is the “cult” of the celebrity a product of the newly prolonged state of adolescence, or has it been created and fueled by a particular phase of commercial media culture? This seminar will examine the phenomenon of celebrity, looking at the earliest known instances of celebrity cults; their transformation in early capitalist literary, political, and economic culture; the transformation of “idols of production” to “idols of consumption” concomitant with the rise of capitalism, and the cultural and economic apparatus of the Hollywood film industry; the cult of the film “star” in Hollywood’s “Golden Age”; postwar U.S. celebrity and the development of the “American Dream”; interconnections between celebrity cults, fandom, and the political civil rights, sexual liberation, student activist and women’s movements; the global nature and enduring importance of celebrity in the age of new media. The course will include case-studies of celebrities beginning with Alexander the Great, and continuing through the twentieth and twenty-first century to include more contemporary examples. Students will analyze their own history during adolescence either adoring particular celebrities or rejecting the cult of celebrity, writing self-histories of their experiences. In addition, students will choose an ongoing or past celebrity cult focused on one figure, living or dead, and chart and analyze activity both online and off used to commemorate and honor a particular celebrity. Textual analyses in this project will be supplemented whenever possible with interview and observational data when possible. A creative component, such as a film or video of celebrity or fan commemorative practices, can be included in this assignment. The course has no pre-requisites and is broadly open to students in the University.

Art as Political Commentary (James Savage)
For several centuries, the visual art forms of painting, graphic art, photography, and sculpture have been used as vehicles for social and political commentary. This Seminar will explore that tradition, with an emphasis on modern art in the 19th and 20th centuries. A major focus will be on the value of art as source material for social, political, and historical inquiry and on its effectiveness in communicating political ideas and criticisms. Artworks from throughout the world, with an emphasis on Europe and the United States, treat such themes as political power, war, revolution, poverty, persecution, alienation, racism, sexism, and political corruption. Weekly writing
assignments and discussions will address these and other themes. Students are expected to do substantial reading about their individual research papers and term projects. The term project requires students to make their own visual presentation to the class on a theme, artist, or group of artists.

**Athletic Education (James Seitz)**

This seminar will explore what we learn from participating in and observing athletics—and from reading and writing about them as well. While athletics are commonly depicted as “extra-curricular,” they often provide a curriculum of their own, one that many students take equally seriously. Unfortunately, much of the talk about athletics in the media tends to repeat clichés about trying one’s hardest and never giving up when in fact athletics provide an occasion for serious reflection on a range of complex experiences and cultural problems. Athletics, that is, offer us an education well worth further scrutiny. What are the benefits and drawbacks of physical competition? How does a player’s perspective differ from a fan’s, and what does each have to learn from the other? In what ways do athletics positively or negatively contribute to identity, community, and culture? Though athletics commonly get positioned in opposition to intellect, this seminar—through weekly writing of various kinds and readings that include autobiography, journalism, ethnography, and scientific analysis—will examine the ways in which athletics can develop our understanding of ourselves and our relationship to the world around us.

**Power (Vivian Thomson)**

Green Party presidential candidate Marina Silva once predicted that Brazil will become as powerful in the 21st century as the United States was in the 20th century. Energy resources, or the lack thereof, are key determinants of national economic and political success. Brazil, Germany, and the United States, three heavyweights in the global climate change arena, present contrasting energy profiles. To date Brazil has relied heavily on low-carbon sources and is nearly energy independent, Germany is highly energy insecure but is moving aggressively to promote renewables and reduce energy consumption, and the United States, while rich in fossil fuels, has spent trillions of dollars securing foreign oil supplies and has no coherent national energy policy. This seminar will ask, how have patterns of energy consumption, energy policies, and distribution of energy-related benefits (e.g., low market prices) and costs (e.g., greenhouse gases) affected these three nations’ respective levels of power? How might those interrelationships play out in the future for low-carbon and high carbon scenarios?

**Global Islam (Ahmed Al-Rahim)**

This Pavilion Seminar focuses on the following broad questions: How has Islam’s modern encounter with the West contributed to global Muslim identities, establishing the Islamic faith as one of the fastest growing religions in the world today? Which Islamic theological and political concepts are formative to Muslim and Islamic self-definitions in and outside of the West? Is Islamic revivalism, political and religious, unique to the modern Muslim experience or are there comparative religious models to be found in, for example, global evangelical Christianity? And how has political Islam, or Islamism, shaped the events leading up to the “Arab Spring” and its aftermath in and beyond the Middle East? Focusing on a wide selection of foundational texts, including the Koran, the legal, political and social traditions (hadith) ascribed to Muhammad,
Islam’s prophet; the charters of such groups as the Muslim Brotherhood; and the writings of Islamist ideologues like Sayyid Qutb and Khomeini, the seminar will develop the interpretive and analytical skills of students by directly engaging them with the primary sources. Specifically students, working together and individually, will give weekly presentations on themes covered in the readings; these themes include (i) the impact of the medieval Islamic canon on Muslim responses to Western modernity, nationalism, and secularism; (ii) the modes of Islamic political and social activism in the modern Middle East and Indian Subcontinent; (iii) Muslim modernism and the emergence of Islamic discourse on democracy, human rights, and social justice; as well as the competing concepts of jihad (violent, defensive, vs. peaceful), women’s rights, and Shari a-based law in the 20th and early 21st centuries. This seminar also includes a fieldtrip to the U.S. Department of State to meet with policy planning staff members working on the intersection of Islam, and more broadly religion, and politics in the crafting of foreign policy.

The Examined Life (Talbot Brewer)
The term “philosophy” comes to us from a compound Ancient Greek term signifying love of wisdom. Devotees of philosophy in Ancient Greece did not regard it as one subject among others, nor as an optional or adventitious pursuit; they regarded it as a form of reflection about the world, and about life, that is essential to the properly reflective and deliberate conduct of life. The aspiration of this course is to return to, and bring to life, this early notion of philosophy as a lifelong self-transformative activity. This aspiration positively requires a small-group, participatory setting, since students can hardly refine or revolutionize their stance towards life unless they have the opportunity to put their inchoate thoughts into words and see how others respond to them in respectful and sustained conversation. Such conversations could in theory happen at any place and at any time, but in a world where attention is increasingly distracted and sustained face-to-face conversation is giving way to staccato exchanges with strangers, they rarely do. The guiding idea of this seminar is to provide a time and place for such conversation, to structure it by focusing on a series of exemplary writings that are philosophical in the above-mentioned original sense (though some of them are drawn from what would today be considered other fields), and to bring the conversation to bear on some of the peculiar difficulties of contemporary existence (e.g., work, consumerism, and the experience of time). An additional aim is to deepen and personalize the conversation via a series of writing assignments, the results of which will be shared with other students and will become further material for group discussion.

What You’re Up Against (Charles Mathewes)
What are you up against? Well, “life,” in general, and life in its specifics, which includes death: and it’s hard to know what’s most challenging about all that. In the next sixty or so years, if you’re lucky, you will face questions about the meaning of life, the shape of a career or vocation, questions of family, of work/life balance, your relationship to your parents, your relationship to your children, the death of loved ones, the birth of more loved ones, the raising of said loved ones, wounding and being wounded by others, healing, forgiveness, hope, despair, failure, success, flourishing. Purportedly Mr. Jefferson’s University has sought to give you some help in facing those challenges. But actually they have rarely been raised explicitly. So we will do that here, asking a simple question: Can a liberal education help prepare you to live your life, and if so, how? In this seminar we’ll read some classic texts, and look at some contemporary empirical studies on
the shape of life today, and talk with some alumni, in their twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, and older, in order to see something like your future, and to see something of what you’re up against, and to see if others—in the form of books, or in the form of actual people—can offer any useful lessons in facing those challenges.