Possible Electives in Foreign Languages 2018-2019

The English Major allows TWO*
The English Minor allows ONE*

*Elective course requirement: Two elective courses may be courses in British or American literature or creative-writing courses at any level, EN142, or foreign literature in the original language or in translation. CL133 and RE117 are always possible electives.

**Fall 2018**

FR238 Introduction to the Francophone World: Africa
Four credit hours. L. Niang
What does the term "Francophone" mean? Is it free from polemics? What is its history? Introduction to Africa from the 19th to the 21st century surveys many of the multifaceted cultural identities and histories of the former French-speaking colonies on the continent. Topics include colonization, politics, gender, language, the fight for independence, modernity and tradition, and the major literary movements in Francophone Africa. Course materials will include film, music, art, folktales, poetry, maps, newspaper articles, literary works, excerpts from scholarly texts, and films. Prerequisite: French 128, 131, or 233D.

GM237 The German Fairy Tale in Popular Culture (in English)
Four credit hours. L. Bradley
Fairy tales permeate our culture on every level. Examines the role of the fairy tale (folktales, romantic variations, and Disney versions alike) in the construction of culture along with their adaptations in the media, comics, literature, art, and film. In analyzing the historical and social development of fairy tales as a genre, students are introduced to methods of literary analysis and cultural criticism. Counts toward the German major or minor. Open to first-year students. Conducted in English.

IT297 Nature in Italian Literature and Film (in English)
Four credit hours. L. Ferrando
What is the relationship between nature and literature? Can literature have a concrete impact on territory and urban topographies? Who have the most influential nature writers, poets, and filmmakers been in Italy and the United States? In this environmental humanities course, we will read a variety of literary and visual texts ecocritically: analyzing the relationship and mutual influence between the written word/images and their surrounding physical environment. We will discuss forms of nature writing and film since the mid-19th century and read the discourse that has emerged and shaped our view of the natural world since the 1950s. Includes a digital humanities component.

RE297 Religion and the American Lyric: Poetry and Popular Music
Four credit hours. L. Harper
Is the music of Bob Dylan or Chance the Rapper "religious?" Or "spiritual?" Did Allen Ginsberg compose sacred texts? In what sense was Adrienne Rich a "Jewish writer?" We explore the poetry and music produced in the United States from the early 20th century to the present day, attending especially to those pieces that engage religious traditions and spiritual themes. Students will develop and apply critical interpretive skills as they pertain to written, spoken, and sung texts and will gain a sense of the wide breadth of the American musical and poetic landscape—covering songs and poems that span racial, regional, and religious boundaries.

**Spring 2019**

FR252
GM362
GM298A
IT356
RU232
RU428
SP398A
SP398B

JanPlan 2019

**Fall 2018**

GM237
IT297
RE297
RE312
RE397
RU237

SP253
SP273
RE397
SP398A

SP398B
Explores South Asians in their diasporic and transnational context. What contributions are Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Jews, and Sikhs from the South Asian subcontinent making to contemporary global literature, film, art, and environmentalism? How do tradition and modernity intersect in their works? How do they negotiate religion, gender, sexuality, race, class, environmentalism, medicine, and globalization? Includes writings by Salman Rushdie, Jhumpa Lahiri, Hanif Kureishi, Shashi Tharoor; films by Mira Nair and Deepa Mehta; art by Siona Benjamin, Anish Kapoor, M.F. Husain, Arpana Caur, Singh Twins; and the environmentalist works of Vandana Shiva and Maneka Gandhi.

**RE397 The Gendered Bible**  
*Four credit hours.* Emanuel  
A course about the Bible and bodies and, more specifically, about examining the portrayal of gender and gendered bodies in the Bible and extra-biblical literature. How are women (re)presented in the biblical canons? How are men (re)presented? What is the relationship between sex, gender, and identity in these texts/contexts? In entertaining these questions, we will engage the interdisciplinary field of gender studies with views to feminist and womanist criticisms, masculinity studies, and queer studies. We will also consider how our readings might impact various communities (i.e., bodies) of storytellers and story-listeners, both in antiquity and today.

**RU237 Devils and Inquisitors: Narrative and Self in the Russian Empire**  
*Four credit hours.* L. Parker  
Privileged and pampered, deprived and oppressed, insulted and injured. Only one is a real Dostoevsky novel; but 19th-century Russian authors really did agonize and revel in equal measure. They took advantage of the hand they had been dealt; renounced their wealth; reviled their fate; or contemplated suicide. Some did all four. From the Caucasus to the Steppe, from enchanted forests to somber bogs, educated Russians sought the self in encounters with the Other. We read the most pungent explorations of the individual: Lermontov, Turgenev, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov. Warning: Contains duels, seduction, murder, betrayal, madness, and some drinking. Readings in English.

**SP253 Medieval Iberian Cultures**  
*Four credit hours.* L., I. Bollo-Panadero  
Offers an introduction to the literatures and cultures of medieval Iberia. In addition to written and visual texts, we will consider the ways in which these texts functioned in society and the ways in which they can be read as a reflection of social and historical concerns. Students will read canonical literary texts alongside other types of writing (i.e., historical documents), and will have the opportunity to consider other artistic evidence alongside the textual record. Texts in languages other than Spanish will be read in Spanish translation. *Prerequisite:* Spanish 135.

**SP273 Contemporary Spanish-American Short Story**  
*Four credit hours.* L. Olivares  

**SPRING 2019**

**FR252 Provocative Texts: A Critical Toolbox**  
*Four credit hours.* L., I. Paliyenko  
How does one approach print and/or visual culture critically? Students engage with a range of "texts," such as poetry, works of art, theater, short stories, novels, and/or film, to acquire the tools and methods of critical interpretation and analysis. Significant writing accompanies close reading of what a particular "text" does and thus how it "speaks" or conveys meaning. Students apply genre-specific vocabulary and take interdisciplinary and analytical approaches to response papers, interpretive essays, and/or multifaceted digital/video projects. *Prerequisite:* French 128, 131, or 233D.
GK362 Sophocles: Ajax
Four credit hours. L. Barrett
Sophocles' Ajax presents the last moments in the life of this heroic figure as he comes to terms with a new world hostile to his most cherished values. Having lost to Odysseus in the contest for the arms of Achilles, Ajax struggles in vain against the machinations of Athena. The end of the heroic age is at hand. Prerequisite: Greek 131 or equivalent.

GM298A Environmental Humanities: Nature Philosophy's Roots
Four credit hours. L. Bradley
In this environmental humanities course, we will consider the roots of contemporary ecological thought in German philosophy and culture. Beginning with the clash of Enlightenment and Romanticism around 1800, we will trace the subterranean legacy of some wild ideas about the relationship between humans and the natural world. Reading philosophical texts alongside literary works, we will consider the echoes of this thought into the present. In conversation with Maine-based organizations and contemporary philosophers, we will discuss phenomenological (Goethean) science and theories of sympoeisis and even do some experiments of our own.

IT356 Introduction to Dante's Divine Comedy (in English)
Four credit hours. L. Rizzo
An introduction to Dante, his times, and his cultural milieu through a critical reading of The Divine Comedy and other selected works. We will investigate Dante's relationship with authority, tradition, and faith, and explore his particular understanding of love as a path to knowledge and of literature as a way to salvation. Students will be challenged to find Dante's lasting influence on contemporary culture in the works of modern authors, both in the Italian-speaking and English-speaking worlds. All lectures and class materials will be in English. One additional weekly hour of discussion in Italian will be open to Italian minors and all who are interested.

RU232 All That is Solid Melts into Air: Modern Russian Literature
Four credit hours. L. Parker
War, revolution, exile, terror. Creativity, fantasy, imagination, freedom. Despite enormous suffering, both in the Soviet Union and in Europe, Russian writers contrived to invent stories that parodied, questioned, undermined, and demythologized the violent workings of history and the state. We read some of the richest fiction of late-Tsarist, Soviet, and émigré literature, which continued the artistic traditions of the 19th century. Includes masterpieces by writers such as Bely, Zamyatin, Olesha, Bulgakov, Nabokov, and Solzhenitsyn. All readings in English.

RU428 The 20th-Century Russian Novel
Four credit hours. L. Monastireva-Ansdell
A seminar that analyzes one major 20th-century Russian novel. In spring 2019: Boris Pasternak's Doctor Zhivago, an epic novel that treats historical events from 1905 through the 1920s and addresses topics of literary and cultural interest. Students present seminar papers in Russian at the Colby Bates Bowdoin Russian Research Symposium. Conducted entirely in Russian. Prerequisite: Russian 425 or 427.

SP398A Imaginary Lines: Immigration, Borders, Movement
Four credit hours. L, U. Martinez-Raguso
Approaches the field of border studies through the concept of movement: of bodies, but also of goods and capital. Considers the before, during, and after of border crossing by studying immigration from Mexico and Central America, testimonies of passage, and the politics of immigration. Combines history, cultural studies, literature, film, and visual art in considering the varied ways in which borders are both crossed and continually inhabited. Readings include work by Jason de León, Joseph Nevins, Ana Castillo, Yuri Herrera, Heriberto Yépez, Luis Alberto Urrea, Sayak Valencia, and Guillermo Gómez-Peña. Prerequisite: A 200-level Spanish literature, culture, or film course.

SP398B In the Shadow of Medieval Spain
Four credit hours. L, I. Savo
Examines some well-known medieval literary depictions of Iberian society by Christian, Jewish, and Muslim authors, considering the ways in which each literary text portrays, critiques, and/or fabricates a social landscape. These readings are juxtaposed with an exploration of how nostalgia for an absent medieval past is used as a literary topos in modern narrative and poetry. Students will interrogate dichotomies of tolerance and persecution, exile and belonging, original and translation, all while exploring how our modern interpretive frameworks shape the construction of knowledge about the past. The Presence of the Past humanities theme course. Prerequisite: A 200-level Spanish literature, culture, or film course.