



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT CHARLOTTE

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
Fall 2015

AMST 2050 – 001 (CRN#13896)
TBA

Religious History of the United States
MW 3:30-4:45

AMST 2050-002 (CRN#15536)
Obie-Nelson, K.

The History of Sports
F 12:30-3:15

This course will examine the historical origins and development of various sports in America, and explore major political, cultural, social, economic, and intellectual concepts throughout the chronological history of sport. Major emphasis will focus on the history of three sports: Baseball, Football, and Basketball, with minor emphasis on other sporting games. Students will also take an in-depth look at such topics as race, gender, commercialization, the economy, and the media; learn how these topics impact, disrupt, and/or distinguish sports throughout history; and understand how sports became essential institutions in America and worldwide. Through this course, students will have a better understanding of how sports have shaped American history and American culture.

AMST 2050-003 (CRN#15537)
Hicks, C.

African-American Music: History and Culture
TR 11:00-12:15

This course examines the history and scholarship of African American music from enslavement to the present. Focusing on African American sacred and secular music, we will investigate how different musical genres-including spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel, rhythm and blues as well as, hip hop-reflected African Americans' social, political, and economic experiences.

AMST 2050-004 (CRN#17499)
Oates, C.

Early American Law
TR 12:30-1:45

This discussion-oriented course will examine the early history of law and jurisprudence in America. Beginning with the Colonial period, we will look at English origins of the law and follow its development through the 19th century. Our study will include an in depth look at the Marshall Court and its influence on 19th century law. Substantive areas of study will include property law, corporations and contract law, slavery, the law of married women and labor law.

AMST 2050-005 (CRN#15540)
Mixon, G.

African-American History 1400-1860
T 6:30-9:15

Cross-listed as AFRS 2160. Explores the events and circumstances that brought Africans to the Americas and the experience of these peoples during the time that slavery persisted in the South. Emphasis will be upon the economic and cultural systems that created and maintained slavery in the South and constrained freedom in the North and on the responses and struggles of Africans to these systems.

AMST 2050-090 (CRN#14944)
May, J.

Historic Archaeology
T 6:30-9:15

Theories, methods, and data of the archaeology of the post-1492 world; integration of archaeological and documentary research; globalization through material culture; emphasis on North America.

AMST 3000-001 (CRN#16462)
Bauerle, S.

Coastal Culture of the American South (W,O)
WF 12:30-1:45

This course will examine the distinctive culture of coastal areas in the Southern United States including the cities of New Orleans, Savannah, Wilmington, and Charleston. Throughout the semester we will explore the history, folklore, religious beliefs, language, and communities of these diverse regions. Note: This course meets the writing intensive and oral communication goals for general education.

AMST 3000 – 003 (CRN#12481)**Vanier, J.****The Catawba: River of Life****W 2:00-4:45**

From the highlands of the Southern Appalachian Mountains, through the rolling Piedmont of the Carolinas, to the flat swamps of the south, the Catawba River has a rich history of Native American culture and life. This course will study the Catawba River, from its source to its termination in the Atlantic Ocean, and will include the history and culture of the Catawba (Iswa) Nation, beginning with their first mention by Spanish explorers in the 1500s to the present day Catawba Reservation near Rock Hill, South Carolina. Our study of this river of life will also examine its use today by private and corporate citizens. Note: This course meets the writing intensive and oral communication goals for general education.

AMST 3000 – 004 (CRN#13862)**Bruner, M.****From the Sopranos to Breaking Bad:****The Male Anti-Hero in Contemporary Television (W, O)****T 2:00-4:45**

James Gandolfini has been memorialized in countless essays about his greatest role—the role that revolutionized television, the role that paved the way for so many other troubled men who served as microcosms of the American experience for viewers and critics. What do these violent, complicated characters mean, and not just to us—to TV and how we watch it. When *Mad Men* and *Breaking Bad* are over, is the television anti-hero here to stay? The heavy, heavy shows that feature these men—and, yes, they are almost always men—are labeled brilliant because they are able to say something about the American condition through despicable guys who are somehow watchable and also somehow representative. This course will examine the idea of the anti-hero. Beginning with the character of Tony Soprano to Don Draper and Walter White, and, Americans have been enamored with the idea of the flawed hero. When is the line crossed between protagonist/antagonist? Is the anti-hero his/her own worst enemy? Drawing on readings, and the television shows *The Sopranos*, *The Wire*, *Breaking Bad*, and *Mad Men*, we will examine the development of the main characters and the deeper societal issues that fuel their appeal. (DISCLAIMER: THIS COURSE CONTAINS EXTREMELY GRAPHIC MATERIAL, AND MAY BE UNSETTLING). Note: This course meets the writing intensive and oral communication goals for general education.

AMST 3000 – 005 (CRN#14336)**Nooe, E.****Southern Culture Past and Present (W,O)****M 2:00-4:45**

Southern Culture can be viewed as “a fiction of geographically bounded and coherent set of attributes to be set off against a mythical non-South.” Consciously and unconsciously, Americans both in and outside the South have constructed images and expectations of the region that are manifested in what we identify as Southern Culture. Throughout this course, we will take an interdisciplinary approach exploring the South through history, anthropology, literature, and media to examine an array of topics such as Native Americans, slavery, sports, and tourism. We will also examine how incidents associated with these topics reinforce and, at other times, contradict popular conceptions of the South. This course meets both the writing intensive and oral communication goals for general education

AMST 3000 – 006 (CRN#10225)**Obie-Nelson, K.****Race in America (W,O)****F 9:30-12:15**

This course will examine the evolution and impact of race in America. Students will analyze racial ideology and the controversial issues surrounding race throughout history and culture. Students will learn how racial constructs have been and still are perpetuated within American society through such mediums as media, politics, labor, law, and education. This course will evoke critical thinking from students as they examine race in the world in which they live and the impact of racial paradigms and relations from the past, present, and future of American society and culture. This course meets both the writing intensive and oral communication goals for general education.

AMST 3000- 090 (CRN#17493)**McMurray, B.****Motorsports in the South, (W,O)****W 5:00-7:45**

From the gritty, rutted fairground dirt tracks to the gleaming, sleek Super speedways, racing has always been a Southern product. NASCAR stock car racing has grown from its regional roots to become one of the nation’s top sporting attractions. This course will explore the men and machines that raced the tracks of the South, as well as the rules and regulations that every driver has been caught breaking. From the brave moonshine runners of the 40’s to the slick, highly-televised races of today, we will explore why this phenomenon is such a popular sport. Characters such as NASCAR’s Founder, Big Bill France, along with famous drivers Fireball Roberts, Curtis Turner, Dale Earnhardt, Sr., Bobby Allison, Cale Yarborough and others will be featured for their impact on Southern Culture. In addition to the study of racing in films, we will examine contemporary support industries such as marketing, public relations, and souvenir merchandising. Note: This course meets the writing intensive and oral communication goals for general education.

AMST 3020 – 001 (CRN#10227)**Harris, M.**

100% ONLINE course. "A man who couldn't hold a hand in a first-class poker game isn't fit to be President of the United States." So claimed Albert Upton, a literature professor at Whittier College whose most famous student, Richard Milhous Nixon, would go on not only to become the 37th U.S. President, but by many accounts a formidable poker player as well. While many who have held the nation's highest office have enjoyed a game of cards, none ever took poker as seriously or enjoyed as much success at it as did Nixon. In fact, as a Naval officer in the South Pacific during WWII, Nixon earned enough playing poker to help fund his first run for Congress in 1946. Starting with an overview of Nixon's poker playing and the various strategies he developed as a player, this 100% online course will examine in detail the tumultuous three-decade career of one of the century's most polarizing political figures, a career full of bold gambles and stealthy "tricks" that earned him huge wins before concluding with the failed bluff of Watergate and historic fold when resigning the presidency. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

Tricky Dick: Richard Nixon, Poker, and Politics (W)**100% ONLINE****AMST 3020 – 002 (CRN#16463)****Hoffman, D.**

This film course will explore the evolution of Francis Ford Coppola's restored Vietnam film epic from Joseph Conrad's novella Heart of Darkness, Andre Malraux's existentialist masterpiece La Voie Royale, and journalist Michael Herr's Dispatches, with special attention to the film as a paradigm of the autocratic ethos behind colonialism and auteurism in the postwar film industry. Secondary films will include Herzog's Aguirre, the Wrath of God (1972), Friedkin's Sorcerer (1977), and Cimino's Heaven's Gate (1980), along with Roeg's 1993 television adaptation of Conrad. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

Apocalypse Now: Conrad, Vietnam and the New Hollywood (W)**WF 8:00-9:15****AMST 3020 – 003 (CRN#13226)****Belus, M.**

In this 100% online class we will study the evolving role of teens in American culture. In doing so, we will review classic and contemporary films and various novels, shorts stories, poems and personal experiences. Some of the themes to be overviewed include adolescent girls, gangs, multiculturalism and teen relationships. We will begin our study by exploring teens in Colonial America and continue through contemporary adolescents with the objective to better understand the ever-changing role of the American teenager. Classes will be taught in Moodle with asynchronous modules that explore and interpret the evolution of American adolescence. Students will be expected to participate in on-line discussions and assignments and complete a class project, various reading and writing assignments, quizzes, and the final exam. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

Adolescence in America (W)**100% ONLINE****AMST 3020 – 004 (CRN#13227)****Bruner, M.**

100% ONLINE Class. Americans are a funny lot. We have been known to laugh at just about every aspect of public and private life--political gaffes, personal faults, and the newest viral videos, to name a few. Humor and comedy in this country has been used to uncover and dissect diverse social, cultural and political values, ideas and tensions. Constance Rourke suggests that American humor and comedy began with the close of the American Revolution, when the country "was freed from the worry of self-preservation" and its citizens began to regard themselves as "works of art." This course will use a variety of humor and comedy that has permeated American culture both historically and contemporarily. We will start by examining theories and functions of laughter and humor, and then explore the proliferation and types of comedy and humor in literature, media and performance by tracing the evolution of a nascent American "work of art" to what we now consider a distinctly American sense of humor based on national character(s) and experience(s). Note: This course meets the writing intensive goal for general education.

American Humor and Comedy (W)**100% ONLINE****AMST 3020 – 005 (CRN#13328)****Belus, M.**

Food...we need it, we love it, but how does it shape our lives beyond our basic needs for sustenance? How does it impact us culturally? Ethnically? Romantically? In this 100% online course we will study the changing dynamic of food as it connects Americans through our rituals with family and friends, through media and advertising, and through our personal behaviors and relationship with food. Other topics we will cover include critical perspectives on gender and food, modified foods, fad diets, and the influence of the fast food industry on individuals and the nation. Course requirements include numerous reading assignments of books and articles, as well as formal and informal writing assignments. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

Food in America (W)**100% ONLINE**

AMST 3020– 006 (CRN#13739)**McMurray, B.**

100% ONLINE Course. From the gritty, rutted fairground dirt tracks to the gleaming, sleek Super speedways, racing has always been a Southern product. NASCAR stock car racing has grown from its regional roots to become one of the nation's top sporting attractions. In this 100% online course we will explore the men and machines that raced the tracks of the South, as well as the rules and regulations that every driver has been caught breaking. From the brave moonshine runners of the 40's to the slick, highly-televised races of today, we will explore why this phenomenon is such a popular sport. Characters such as NASCAR's Founder, Big Bill France, along with famous drivers Fireball Roberts, Curtis Turner, Dale Earnhardt, Sr., Bobby Allison, Cale Yarborough and Others will be featured for their impact on Southern Culture. In addition to the study of racing in films, we will examine contemporary support industries such as marketing, public relations, and souvenir merchandising. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

Motorsports in the South, (W)**100% ONLINE****AMST 3020 – 007 (CRN#13863)****Bernard, M.**

100% ONLINE Class. "Cult movie" is a term that many of us have probably heard in reference to a particular film. However, if asked to define what exactly a cult movie is, we may be able to list some titles, but still struggle for a precise definition. This course will attempt to answer the deceptively simple question of what we mean when we say cult movie. In exploring this issue, we will examine different disciplinary approaches to studying cult movies. We will analyze how cult movies relate to topics such as: censorship and controversy, film directors and actors, freakery, gender and sexuality, drugs, and music. We will also look at a brief history of exploitation films and B movies and discuss cult genres like horror and science fiction. This course is 100% online, and to participate in the course, student must be able to view films on Netflix Instant, Amazon Instant Video, and YouTube. Some films screened for this course may contain extreme material that is not appropriate for all audiences. Films screened and discussed will/may include: Freaks (1932), Plan 9 from Outer Space (1959), The Trip (1967), The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975), This Is Spinal Tap (1984), Dirty Dancing (1987), Hellraiser (1987), and Donnie Darko (2002). Note: This course meets the writing intensive goal for general education.

Seminar in AMST: Cult Movies:**At the Edge of Hollywood, the Mainstream, and Good Taste (W)****100% ONLINE****AMST 3020 – 008 (CRN#10228)****Bernard, M.**

100% ONLINE Class. This course is designed to introduce you to the American horror film and how it reflects cultural issues in American society. We will begin by examining some basic frameworks for studying horror films. We will then look at various tropes and hallmarks of the horror film, like sexual repression, frame narratives, supernatural monsters, and human monsters. About midway through the semester, we will begin focusing on how the horror film embodies societal debates about feminism, discrimination, racial prejudice, and homophobia. We will conclude by thinking about meta-horror, that is, horror films about horror films. This course will familiarize you with the horror film themes and tropes, give you a general knowledge of the history and development of the horror film genre, and look the ways in which horror films reflect wider societal beliefs and/or prejudices about sex, gender, race, class, and other identity markers. This course is 100% online, and to participate in the course, student must be able to view films on Netflix Instant, Amazon Instant Video, and YouTube. Some films screened for this course may contain extreme material that is not appropriate for all audiences. Note: This course meets the writing intensive goal for general education.

The American Nightmare: Horror Film and American Culture, (W)**100% ONLINE****AMST 3020 – 009 (CRN#15800)****Gardner, S.**

Probably the history and literature of no other ethnicity in the contemporary US has been so "over-written" by the mainstream culture. White writers have predominantly controlled how Am. Indian children are represented. Focusing on YA novels and biographical reflections on the YA experience by Am. Indian writers, we will explore their differences from the stereotypes that had (and, to some extent, still do) prevailed. We will also explore the forced confinement of Am. Indian children in federally and church-run boarding schools during the 19th and 20th centuries, which aimed to strip them of their culture: an "education for extinction," as one scholar has described it. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

American Indians in Children's Literature (W)**WF 11:00-12:15****AMST 3020 – 011 (CRN#17395)****Nooe, E.**

This course is 100% ONLINE. Southern Culture can be viewed as "a fiction of geographically bounded and coherent set of attributes to be set off against a mythical non-South." Consciously and unconsciously, Americans both in and outside the South have constructed images and expectations of the region that are manifested in what we identify as Southern Culture. Throughout this course, we will take an interdisciplinary approach exploring the South through history, anthropology, literature, and media to examine an array of topics such as Native Americans, slavery, sports, and tourism. We will also examine how incidents associated with these topics reinforce and, at other times, contradict popular conceptions of the South. This course meets both the writing intensive goal for general education.

Southern Culture Past and Present (W)**100% ONLINE**

AMST 3020 – 012 (CRN#17454)
Hoffman, D.

Akira Kurosawa and American Popular Film
TR 11:00-12:15

This course will examine the Japanese master's innovation of the samurai film as a cinematic homage to the American western, one which in turn has inspired remakes by American studios in the western and science fiction film genres. The course will compare and contrast the relative influence, commercial success, and cultural resonance between such works as Rashomon and The Outrage, Seven Samurai and The Magnificent Seven, and The Hidden Fortress and Star Wars: A New Hope, with special attention to their growing status as modern myths.

AMST 3020 – 090 (CRN#13324)
Shacht, J.

Pop Culture and the American Music Scene (W)
T 6:30-9:15

This course explores the impact of popular music on American culture and vice versa. We'll begin with the earliest mass mediums (radio, acetates, gramophones) and the rise of a national audience, and dissect the birth of rock & roll in terms of race, business, and cultural trends. We'll continue through the youth culture movement of the second-half of the 20th century, including Woodstock, the sexual and drug revolutions, punk, hip-hop, the rise of MTV, and the multi-billion dollar music industry of the 1990s. We'll look at the effect music has had on other mediums, such as film, advertising and television. Finally, we'll examine the impact of the Internet on the American music scene and the declining business model that characterized it for nearly a century. Note: This course meets the writing intensive general education goal.

AMST 3050 – 001 (CRN#13325)
Bishop, N.

Innovation in Modern America
100% ONLINE

This 100% online course explores the role of technological innovation in modern American life. Our concern is not merely with things and processes, but rather with how technologies have interacted with society and culture in complex and important ways. We will explore the lives of the innovators such as Steve Jobs of Apple, Donna Dubinsky of the Palm Pilot, and Otis Boykin whose electronic control devices were used in computers and pacemakers, as well as dissect the impact of innovation on the economy and education. The course material will go behind the disputes over the nature and direction of technical change (and the social changes associated with it) that have persistently been a central part of the American experience, and their outcomes have mattered a great deal to the lives of all Americans.

AMST 3050 – 002 (CRN#13327)
Obie-Nelson, K.

Sports in America: Issues and Controversies
100% ONLINE

This 100% online course explores the relationship between sports, culture, and society. Students will be exposed to the historical, cultural, and sociological aspects of the world of sports. This course will analyze the controversial issues surrounding these aspects as well as evoke critical thinking from the students as they examine sports in their own lives and in the world in which they live. Students will take an in-depth look at such topics as race, gender, commercialization, and the media and how these topics impact, disrupt, and/or distinguish sport society. The course will primarily focus on intercollegiate and professional sports.

AMST 3050 – 003 (CRN#13394)
Schacht, J.

The Rise and Fall of Traditional News Media
TR 2:00-3:15

Timely and important areas relevant to the study of the mass media

AMST 3050 – 004 (CRN#15359)
Dupre, D.

The Coming of the Civil War
TR 12:30-1:45

Why did the South secede to form the Confederate States of America and why did the North go to war to prevent the break-up of the Union? This course will answer those two questions by exploring the roots of the sectional conflict between North and South. We will discuss the leading political figures of the day but we will pay particular attention to the perceptions of ordinary people to the coming crisis, making extensive use of the award-winning web page "The Valley of the Shadow."

AMST 3050 – 005 (CRN#15541)
TBA

Civil War and Reconstruction 1860-1877
MW 2:00-3:15

The American people in war and the postwar adjustment. Emphasis on the political, social and economic conditions of the North and South during the Civil War and Reconstruction period. (Alternate years)

AMST 3050 – 007 (CRN#15543)
Shapiro, A.

U.S. in 20th Century 1932-Present
TR 3:30-4:45

Political, economic, social and intellectual aspects of American democracy from the New Deal to the Great Society. Special emphasis on the New Deal and post-New Deal reform as well as America's role in world affairs.

AMST 3050 – 008 (CRN#17298)
TBA

History of U.S. Constitutional Law
MW 11:00-12:15

Competing interpretations of the Constitution have played a key role in nearly every major U.S. political and social conflict. These issues vexed the country's founders and remain as current as today's headlines. This course will offer an overview of the development of some of the most important areas of U.S. constitutional law, such as the role of federal and state governments, the scope and protection of individual and minority rights, and the regulation of economic activity.

AMST 3050 – 090 (CRN#10229)
Burford, J.

Queer Culture
M 5:30-8:15

Queer is a word that is packed with cultural misconceptions, political discourse, and individual liberation in a time period where what used to be "Gay" is moving forward into new territories. Contemporary Queer Culture will focus on the construction of Queer identity in late 20th and 21st century American culture and how this category helps to eliminate old ideas while it simultaneously makes additional room for others. This class will look at anti-assimilationist, radical Queer activists and activism as a way to open up discussion about new social discourses and space, and as a way to critique the current state of Queer community and politics. Some topics for the course will include: same-sex marriage/Don't Ask Don't Tell, the construction of Queer people in media (film, TV, online), and the effects of religion on sexual communities. We will also spend a considerable amount of time looking at Trans culture in all its forms. This class will use a variety of media and will include autobiography, theory, fiction, and hybrid texts for exploration.

AMST 3090 – 090 (CRN#16464)
Jackson, J.

American Independent Films: Cinema Outside the Mainstream
R 6:30 – 9:15

Although independent films have risen to prominence in recent decades, the movement has traditionally been at odds with mainstream film culture. Independent cinema has been a place to explore ideas about race, class, and gender that are too provocative for Hollywood. Starting with experimental filmmakers from the 1940s, we'll consider the impact of such mavericks as John Cassavetes, John Waters, and Quentin Tarantino. The class will weigh various definitions of independent film while focusing on distinctive artistic visions that define the margins. We will watch, study, and discuss some of the landmark independent films, including Eraserhead, Stranger Than Paradise, Do the Right Thing, and Pulp Fiction.

AMST 3100 – 001 (CRN#10230)
Bruner, M.

"The 1950s"
100% ONLINE

100% ONLINE Class. American Studies is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of a topic or period in American History. In this decade class, focusing on a shorter time period than is possible in a history survey provides the opportunity to look more in depth at the music, popular culture, literature, theater, art, sports, religion, race relations, gender roles, medicine, business, education, etc. of the period. Get ready to slip back in time to a fascinating period of Sputnik and spies, the Red Scare, James Dean and drive-ins, the birth of Rock and Roll, Elvis, Youth Culture, and Marilyn Monroe.

AMST 3100 – 002 (CRN#10231)
McNeil, J.

"The 1980s"
WF 11:00-12:15

With the release of the 52 Iranian hostages and Ronald Reagan's inauguration, the 1980's begin. The birth of MTV would soon follow, as would a full-blown AIDS pandemic, the Iran-Contra hearings, the invasion of Grenada, the rise of hip-hop, and Reaganomics. It was a decade of greed and one in which the term 'yuppie' was coined. The 1980's also saw an explosive growth in media, especially television. In this 100% online class, we will explore the political, social, and artistic landscape of the decade and its impact on American culture today.

AMST 3100 – 003 (CRN#10232)
Belus, M.

"The 1930s"
100% ONLINE

In this 100% online course using Moodle and Second Life, we will examine how diverse social, economic, artistic, literary, philosophical and political forces shaped American society during the 1930s. We will discuss the complex and multifaceted nature of American culture during a tumultuous era that experienced the Great Depression, the Dust Bowl, the demise of the American Dream, the New Deal, and the rise of modern activism. The 1930s powerfully impacted the lives of ordinary people living under extraordinary circumstances. What can we learn from their experiences?

AMST 3100 – 004 (CRN#10233)
McAloon-Kitrick, L.

"The 1970s"
TR 11:00-12:15

What do the 1970's bring to mind? Disco? Leisure suits? That '70s Show? Once passed, decades tend to be stereotyped and are actually more contradictory and varied than we remember or imagine them to be. While the 1970's saw plenty of dancing and too many dads in polyester, the decade also gave birth to glam, punk, and rap. The colorful 1970's also had a dark side—Watergate, the energy crisis, and continuing outbreaks of violence. The protest movements of the 1960's became increasingly more radical in the 1970's while receiving more

mainstream attention. In addition, new developments in the arts, marketplace, and government that took place in the seventies continue to affect us today. In this course we will examine the politics, technology, and popular culture (including film, literature, music, and television) that made the 1970's an especially complex and dynamic decade.

AMST 3100 – 005 (CRN#13326)

"The 1920s"

Bruner, M.

100% ONLINE

This 100% ONLINE course will cover Flappers, Speak-Easies, The First Radio, and The Jazz Age. This decade's course will take us on a tumultuous ride from Post World War I prosperity up to the Wall Street Crash of 1929. Topics include: Prohibition, The Rise of the Mafia, The President Harding Scandals, The Great Gatsby and more.

AMST 3100 – 090 (CRN#10234)

"The 1960s" (Hybrid)

Rutledge, P.

W 6:30 – 9:15

Note: This class will be taught as a hybrid course (50% online/50% face-to-face). This means that instruction and student participation will be divided between in-class meetings and online activities using Moodle, and classes will meet every two weeks rather than every week. A high-speed Internet connection is strongly recommended. The 1960's brought serious challenges to authority, the status quo, and the traditional institutions that had previously defined American life. In the early part of this explosive decade, the conservative conformity of the 1950's gave way to an increasingly direct and hostile questioning of the American Dream. This course will examine the important cultural, social, and political conflicts that emerged in the 1960's, especially those related to the black civil rights movement, feminism, the Vietnam War, environmentalism, social justice, the youth-base counterculture, and expanding one's consciousness' through drug use. These diverse conflicts ultimately brought significant change in American attitudes, values, institutions, and policies.

AMST 4050 – 001 (CRN#17605)

Religion in the Contemporary United States

McCloud, S.

R 2:00-4:45

What can one say about contemporary American religious cultures? Has American religion changed in the last 70 years? Can one discuss "American religion" as if it were an undifferentiated whole? And, given that the term itself has no stable meaning, can we easily pick out some social formation we call "religion" that can be separately examined as a field apart from "culture," "politics," "economics," or other categories we might construe? There are multiple ways—complementary and contradictory—in which one might describe contemporary American culture and its religious imaginaries. Our class will focus on three characterizations: the consumerist, the haunted, and the therapeutic. While these certainly aren't the only tropes for understanding something out there called "contemporary American culture," they do provide useful monikers for getting at some prominent discourses that permeate contemporary social institutions and individual habits. The class format entails seminar-style discussions, student reading presentations, and writing assignments.

AMST 4050 – 091 (CRN#16898)

American Pragmatism, Evolution, and Ethics

Pearce, T.

W 3:30-6:15

When Darwin's Origin of Species was published in 1859, it changed the world. Evolution bridged the gap between human and animal, calling into question our eternal or spiritual nature. But even Darwin admitted that "of all the differences between man and the lower animals, the moral sense or conscience is by far the most important." Surely ethics was sacrosanct? In this class, we will explore a series of attempts at reconciling evolution and morality. After a look at the work of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, who together brought the idea of evolution to popular consciousness, we will focus on the American pragmatists—the first philosophers to truly embrace evolutionary ideas. John Dewey, for example, argued that moral principles were merely a set of tools to be applied when the environment demanded it. Outside the university, Jane Addams—a philosopher and social activist —thought about how ethics would need to change following industrialization, urbanization, and mass immigration. In the last part of the class, we will read the works of three recent philosophers inspired by the pragmatists: Philip Kitcher's The Ethical Project, Joshua Greene's Moral Tribes, and Elizabeth Anderson's work on democracy and moral inquiry.



