

New Course Descriptions—2010-11 August 18, 2010

Biol 431 Molecular Biology of the Gene

One-half course for one semester. Discussion of contemporary molecular research on gene structure, function, and regulation.

Chem 401 Topics in Biochemistry

One-half course for one semester. An examination of current topics relating to structural biochemistry with an emphasis on the primary literature. Weekly writing assignments will support group discussion sessions. Participants will prepare a term paper and oral presentation. Co-requisite: Chemistry 391. Conference.

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Courses

LBST 507 Jewish Atlantic World

Full course for one semester. Jews in the Atlantic World (1620-1820) didn't stay put for long: one year they were in Amsterdam, the next in London, New York, Newport, Curacao, Jamaica, Barbados, or Suriname. These wanderers, referred to as "Port Jews," were primarily merchants who resided in and traveled between port towns during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Often Port Jews were descendents of *conversos*—Jews forced to convert to Catholicism under the Inquisition and who may have practiced Judaism in secret for generations before they escaped the Iberian Peninsula. Raised in two worlds, Port Jews commonly saw their ties to the "Jewish collectivity" as voluntary and yet saw Jewish (re)education as a must. Many were quite wealthy and had at least indirect ties to the slave trade. They created and sponsored a rich visual and literary culture that trod the line between devotion and heresy. They were deeply messianic, and their belief permeated their shared visual and religious ethos. The course examines this world through close reading of material culture and literary and religious texts. Authors include Isaac de Matatia Aboab, Menasseh ben Israel, Jacob Judah Leon de Templo, Chaim Moshe Luzzato, David Nassy, Isaac Nieto, Isaac de Pinto, and Haim Isaac Karigal. Material culture includes portraits, ritual baths, synagogues, houses, gravestones, and artifacts related to slavery.

Lit 535 The Metropolitan Experience as Spatiality

One-half course for one semester. Since the advent of the twentieth century, the metropolitan city has occasioned a rethinking of the trajectories of time and space as it emerged as a new network of signification. We will explore the transcription of the city as a novel site of knowledge in experimental literary and theoretical narratives. The course takes as its point of departure the prevailing current interest in urban space in the humanities and social sciences. This cross-disciplinary engagement in spatiality, called "the special turn," explores human experiences on the individual and social scale by way of spatializing them, instead of employing primarily historical methods of inquiry. We will examine the narratives of the city through texts from such diverse disciplines as urban studies, literature and literary criticism, sociology, and anthropology. Our aim is to investigate the aesthetic and critical premises of spatial thinking and map out the vocabularies through which space is represented. The connections between spatiality and temporality; city space and identity; city and the body; cities and utopias; and urban enclaves as sites of difference will be addressed. The postcolonial and the global city constitute a further thematic cluster. Texts include early twentieth-century readings of the city in the Central European context (Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, Benjamin Berlin *Chronicle* and *Arcades Project*, essays by Simmel and Krakauer), twentieth-century theories of social space (Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, Foucault, selected essays); contemporary studies of space in European and North American scholarship (Harvey, *Spaces of Hope*, Huyssen, *Present Pasts*, Jameson, *Postmodernism*); and postcolonial fiction.