

College of the Humanities

Topic Courses and Seminar Descriptions Fall 2025/Winter 2026

3000 Level

CLCV 3000A: *Intro to Digital Archaeology*

Shawn Graham

Online

Cross-listed with HIST 3000A

Once the excavation is over, what happens to the information created through archaeological research? What about archaeology that does *not* involve digging? How do archaeologists use digital technologies on site, in the lab, or on the web? This course explores the intersection of digital technologies and computing with archaeology. We will explore the ways theory gets embedded into computation; perhaps there is even a theory of digital archaeology? We will explore how digital technologies allow us to ask questions that would otherwise be impossible to ask. We will also look into the ways that computational creativity in archaeology allow for novel engagements with the past, thus moving us into a digital *public* archaeology. This is an online asynchronous course and will require you to head out into your neighborhood to make archaeological observations.

CLCV 3201A: *Greeks and Persians*

Susan Downie

Winter 2026

In person section (campus presence)

Cross-listed with HIST 3009A

Greeks and Persians variously collaborated or clashed since their first meeting in the 6th century BC to the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC. We focus on shifting relations between the Greek city-states and the Achaemenid Persian empire during this time. Problems of sources, warfare and diplomacy, cultural contact and borrowing will be discussed, in addition to the continuing impact interpretations of the “Persian Wars” have had on western civilization.

CLCV 3202A: *Hannibal and the Punic Wars*

Liz Klaassen

Fall 2025

In person section (campus presence)

Cross-listed with HIST 3101A

The wars between Rome and Carthage spread out for over a century and determined who would rule in the Mediterranean circle of lands. We will be

studying all three Punic wars, and focusing on the second, the Hannibalic war, where the threat to Rome was the greatest. Our theme will be the Roman expansion of their hegemony from city-state to world power, and we will examine how the Romans, particularly Livy, wrote this story: How do our sources portray the leadership, the troops, the national identity and motives of each side?

CLCV 3306A: *The Greek Sanctuary*

Susan Downie

Fall 2025

In person section (campus presence)

Cross-listed with ARTH 3102A and RELI 3732A

Every Greek city-state had a sanctuary at its heart: the acropolis of Athens, the oracle of Delphi, ancient Olympia (home of the Olympic Games), and the Eleusinian Mysteries are most famous. We discuss religious ideology and practice at these sites, in addition to history of excavation, religious continuity, architecture of the Greek temple, and the evolution of Greek art evidenced in votives dedicated to the gods. Where relevant, we read and discuss ancient texts (in English).

DIGH 3700A: *Cinema, Gender, and Sexuality*

Laura Horak

Fall 2025

In person section (campus presence)

Cross-listed with FILM 3301A and WGST 3812F

****This course is hosted by the School for Studies in Art and Culture (SSAC)****

How do moving images participate in the production of gender and sexuality? In what ways is this process inflected by race, ethnicity, class, and national identity? This course will investigate the crucial role of normative and “deviant” genders and sexualities in the history of cinema production, distribution, and reception. We will investigate the way audiovisual texts use formal means to make gender visible and the display of gender difference pleasurable. We will also consider the gendered politics of labor in film industries and the ways that genre systems (like the romantic comedy) produce gendered meanings and forms of address. The course will also investigate the ways that feminist, Indigenous, transgender, and queer filmmakers have inventively rethought cinema and video for poetic and political ends. In this course, students will write an accessible, well-researched entry for Wikipedia, bringing information about notable cis women and transgender media workers to a global readership

RELI 3101A: Religions & Body

Ash Geissinger

Winter 2026

Online scheduled with in person assessments.

Gender, Sexuality and Religion: This course examines some of the ways that several religious traditions and communities in contemporary North America construct gender and sexuality. It focuses on bodily practices and beliefs about human bodies, internal community debates about these, and their wider social and political impacts.

RELI 3360A: *Islamic Text and Narrative*

Ash Geissinger

Fall 2025

Online scheduled with in person assessments.

Interpretations of Hadith: This course is an introduction to the Hadith literature, its history, and its complex functions in Muslim communities past and present. Questions we will consider include: What are hadiths? How do we read them in a historical-critical way? What roles have hadiths played in Muslim religious life? In what ways have hadiths been important in Muslim beliefs and debates about the nature of existence, the supernatural, social order, identity, and belonging?

RELI 3360B: *Rumi and the Way of Love*

Mohammed Rustom

Winter 2026

In person section (campus presence)

The Muslim mystic, philosopher, and poet Jalal al-Din Rumi is widely recognized as one of greatest love poets of human civilization. In this course we will attempt to understand why that is the case. We will do so by engaging in an in-depth examination of Rumi's teachings on love, cosmology, use of symbolism, metaphysics, spiritual psychology, and poetic art through a detailed study of his writings (in translation), situating them in their appropriate religious, historical, and cultural contexts.

4000 Level

CLCV 4210B: *Cicero against Catiline*

Jaclyn Neel

Winter 2026

In-person section (Campus presence)

Cross listed with HIST 4210A

In 63 BCE, the consul Cicero executed 10 Roman citizens without trial, accusing them of conspiring with the disgraced patrician Lucius Sergius Catilina (Catiline). Textbooks depict this event as a moment of triumph for the Republic, yet we know that opposition to Cicero arose almost immediately and soon derailed his political career. In this course, we dive into this famous episode of Roman history to better understand the political, cultural, and social background of Catiline's rebellion. We will then spend several weeks as Roman senators, debating the issues around Cicero's actions with *Reacting to the Past*.

CLCV 4800B: *The Limits of the Human*

Yukai Li

Fall 2025

In-person section (Campus presence)

In this seminar, we examine ancient and modern ways of conceiving what is “human” and the situations that reveal its limits. Through readings of ancient Greek epic and tragedy alongside modern theoretical and philosophical reflections on the ancient texts, students will explore the notion of the human in terms of language, politics, and knowledge, and consider the human in relation to nature, time, and the divine. Students will produce a final paper on a related topic of their choice, and will have the opportunity to present, develop, and refine their ideas among their peers.

HUMS 4902B: *Tudor Queens: Sex, Power, and Writing in the Lives of Katherine Parr, Mary Tudor, and Elizabeth*

Micheline White

Winter 2026

In-person section (Campus presence)

Cross-listed with ENGL 4301B and 5303W. **This course is hosted by the English Dept.**

Renaissance queens have long fascinated the reading public, but their political power and literary writings have only recently become the objects of academic study. In this seminar, students will develop an in-depth understanding of three Renaissance queens who made the most of their unusual social status and made lasting contributions to English culture. In this course, we will explore early modern attitudes towards the concepts of a “queen consort,” a “queen regent,” a “queen regnant” and a “dowager queen,” and we will focus on three English queens’ textual and visual productions including speeches, published prose works, diplomatic letters, poetry, translations, and portraits. Students will be introduced to early modern paleography and book history. Those who wish can also explore digital versions of manuscript writing. We will also consider the depictions of these queens in recent films and TV programs.

Katherine Parr (1512-1548) was the final wife of Henry VIII. Although she is often depicted in popular culture as the woman who nursed Henry in his old age, she was actually a literary powerhouse and one of the most influential religious activists of the 1540s. We will examine her three published literary texts, her narrow escape from being arrested and executed, and her scandalous marriage to Thomas Seymour after Henry’s death.

Mary Tudor (1516-1558) was the daughter of Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon. After acceding to the throne in 1553 as queen regnant, she restored England to Catholicism and became famous for overseeing the burning of three hundred Protestants. For centuries she has been vilified as “bloody Mary” and as an incompetent ruler, but current scholars are offering new accounts of her political skills and successes.

Elizabeth I (1533-1603) was Parr’s step-daughter and Mary’s half-sister, and she is one of the most famous British monarchs. As a queen regnant, Elizabeth obviously wielded extraordinary agency and yet her status as an unmarried woman was an on-going concern throughout her reign. Through an examination of her public speeches, private letters, portraits, proclamations, poems and prayers we will consider how she managed her image and how she contributed to important political, social, and literary developments. Recent movies will be addressed.

HUMS 4903A: *Nietzsche & Zarathustra*

Geoffrey Kellow

Fall 2025

In-person section (Campus presence)

Cross-listed with PHIL 4005A and PHIL 5600A

This seminar will explore three of Friedrich Nietzsche's later works, *Twilight of the Idols*, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *Beyond Good & Evil*.

RELI 4850A: *Adam, Eve & Their Interpreters*

Shawna Dolansky

Winter 2026

Hybrid of online and in person classes, with in person assessments.

Cross-listed with RELI 5850A

This course focuses on the idea of sacred scripture and the social and political forces that shape and maintain holy writ among Abrahamic traditions. The opening chapters of the Hebrew Bible have been interpreted and reinterpreted for 2500 years, serving to legitimize and enforce diverse gender and other roles and hierarchies, as well as to challenge them. As we tour through the history of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scriptural interpretation, the story of Adam and Eve will be our ongoing case study in exploring the role religion plays in defining and shaping human identity.

RELI 4850B: *From Moses to Malcolm X*

Zeba Crook

Fall 2025

In-person section (Campus presence)

Cross-listed with RELI 5850T

The primary aim of this course is to think deeply about how we construct the past. The over-arching theoretical framework therefore is historiographical: what is history, what is evidence, what are historical data, how do we get to the past, what are the investments, limitations, and aspirations of historical investigation? Our thinking on these questions will be facilitated first by engaging collectively and rigorously on a number of theoretical approaches that inform how we answer the above questions (among others), including Historiography itself in addition to Memory Theory, Hagiography, Labelling, Orientalism, Gender, and Social Scientific Criticism;; and secondly, by writing a short piece of historical fiction on a religious founder figure, rather than a traditional essay.