

STPEC COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – FALL 2018

SOCIAL THEORY PRE-REQUISITE

STPEC 101: Introduction to STPEC – TBA

Tues/Thurs 11:30-12:45

3 credits, graded

Schedule # 80288

This course will familiarize new students with the program and its vision. STPEC is a rigorous, democratically run, interdisciplinary academic program. STPEC is also a community of students, staff, instructors, alumni, and friends that will help you navigate your time at UMass. Ideally this course will also familiarize us with each other.

The content of this course is organized around concepts students will encounter in their other STPEC requirements, as well as in the STPEC community and the greater world. It will provide an introduction to social theory, political economy, race and ethnicity, gender, masculinities and femininities, globalization and inequality in the Global North and the Global South. Assignments facilitate exploration of these and related topics. Students will have the opportunity to learn the value of social theory and how to make an argument; communicate for effective dialogue, and how to begin to identify social justice issues.

STPEC 101, like STPEC's core classes, is seminar-style. This means small groups with an emphasis on discussion and reflection. This class is open to STPEC majors only.

STPEC 189: Introduction to Radical Social Theory in Historical Context – Graciela Monteagudo

Wednesdays 4:00-6:30 pm

4 credits, graded

Schedule # 80290

This is an introductory course to radical social theory. Our focus is the history of social thought in the West, and the postcolonial critiques of some of these ideas. In this course, students will learn that "radical" means "at the root," and radical social theory is theory that explains the roots of social inequalities and proposes ways of transforming society to achieve justice. As a General Education course, our goal is for students to have the opportunity to discuss key societal issues through a variety of disciplines, including philosophy, anthropology, history, economy, African-American, Native American and gender and sexuality studies. Through analysis of readings and films, we will explore the connection between cultural processes and power in the West and the implications for non-Western people on a global scale and on different times and places.

This course fulfills the History and Global Gen Ed requirements.

Graciela Monteagudo is the STPEC Associate Director.

JUNIOR WRITING COURSE

STPEC 320: Writing for Critical Consciousness – TBA

TuTh 11:30 am – 12:45 pm

3 credits, graded

Schedule #80286

The STPEC Junior Writing Seminar focuses on individual development of voice. We will weave this theme through standard essay assignments, weekly response papers, cover letters and resumes, and a student-driven class project of your choosing. Since you and your classmates will be struggling together to find your voices, we'll focus on peer-editing and tutoring techniques at the beginning of the semester. As we discuss peer-editing, we may consider issues of language and dialect, Black English, Standard Written English and feminism. The second half of the semester will focus on political, environmental, educational, cultural, and philosophical texts. Throughout all assignments I expect to see cultivation of your voice and communication of your own creative ideas. I encourage integration of ideas from your other courses and experiences. Be prepared to think critically and examine texts carefully. We will be sharing our writing with each other – be ready to give and receive constructive feedback. This course meets only once a week; do not plan to miss any classes.

Enrollment is limited to 20 students. STPEC majors only. Prerequisite: College Writing or equivalent.

STPEC COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – FALL 2018

STPEC CORE SEMINARS

STPEC 391H: STPEC Core Seminar I – Graciela Monteagudo

TuTh 2:30-3:45PM

4 credits, graded

Schedule #80716

STPEC Core Seminar I focuses on major theoretical currents in political theory and the historical circumstances that gave rise to those theories-in particular Liberalism, Marxism, Anarchism, Postcolonial, and Poststructural theories. As this is an interdisciplinary class, we will be bringing in analytic tools from various disciplines paying attention to the historical construction and reception of ideas.

This is a four credit honors course. Enrollment is limited to 20 students. STPEC majors only.

PREREQUISITES: One Intro to Social Theory course and one Intro to Political Economy Course chosen from the STPEC Recommended Course List.

Graciela Monteagudo is the STPEC Associate Director.

STPEC 392H: STPEC Core Seminar II – TBA

TuTh 1:00-2:15PM

4 credits, graded

Schedule #80717

STPEC Core Seminar II focuses on a series of interrelated political, social and theoretical movements of the 20th and 21st Century with an emphasis on how political practices and philosophies relate to the successes and catastrophic failures of modernism in complex and contradictory ways. Some of the topics addressed include anti/post-colonialism, the role of identity in political theory/practice and poststructuralism. We will research the connection between race, class, gender, sexuality, able-bodiedness and other axes of oppression resistance under neoliberalism, including violence against women under neoliberalism. A major research paper of the student's choosing will be produced over the course of the semester allowing her/him to more deeply engage with a topic, and to practice applying the critical methodological and theoretical tools developed in the STPEC curriculum.

This is a four credit honors course. Enrollment is limited to 20 students. STPEC majors only.

FOCUS SEMINARS

All seminars are four credit honors courses. Enrollment for each seminar is limited to 15 students. STPEC majors only.

PREREQUISITE FOR ALL FOCUS SEMINARS: Completion of STPEC 391H. (May not be taken concurrently with any Focus Seminar). This restriction will be enforced!

STPEC 491H: The Insurrectionary Imagination: The Politics and Poetics of Anti-Capitalism and Revolution
– Ruth Jennison

Tuesday 4:00-6:30 pm

4 credits, graded

Schedule #80718

How do 20th- and 21st-century poets engage with the political movements and philosophies of their times? How can reading poetry enhance our study of the social and cultural contours of progressive and revolutionary movements? Weekly reading assignments will pair poetry with key primary documents and histories of anti-capitalist, anti-colonial and feminist movements, as well as struggles for gay liberation, Black self-determination, and radical environmental justice. We will pay special attention to the relationship between poetry and direct actions and street insurrections, such as the riot, the swarm, the strike, the boycott, the occupation, the commune, the sit-in, the picket and the mass demonstration. Our guiding questions will be: How does poetry offer ways for its readers to grasp the contours of capitalism as a system structured by racism, sexism, and class struggle? What strategies of resistance do modern and contemporary poets embrace and elaborate in their popular and experimental forms? What is the relationship between politics that take place in the streets and politics that take place on the page? What tensions arise between the poet acting as militant and the poet acting as artist? Most broadly: what is the relationship between art and social movements? Political and historical documents will include works by Marx and Engels, Silvia Federici, The Black Panther Party, Malcolm X, Robin D.G. Kelley, Fred Moten, the Movement for Black Lives, Angela Davis, and Chicago Gay

STPEC COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – FALL 2018

Liberation. Poetry will include works by Langston Hughes, Richard Wright, Muriel Rukeyser, Amiri Baraka, Gwendolyn Brooks, Jimmy Santiago Baca, Diane Di Prima, Juliana Spahr, and Sean Bonney.

STPEC 492H: Land struggles: Local communities' nonviolent resistance and construction of alternatives in the Americas

– Stellan Vinthagen (Sociology, Resistance Studies Initiative) and Joanne Sheehan (activist, educator)
Wednesday 4:00-6:30 pm 4 credits, graded Schedule #80287

This course focuses on how ordinary people struggle for land and housing in the US and Latin America. It brings up the contexts, values, strategies, tactics and mobilization of movements like the Community Land Trusts (CLT) in the US, the landless workers movement in Brazil (MST), and the Indigenous peoples of Chiapas (Zapatistas). This course brings together two teachers that combine their academic and activist backgrounds in a collaboration, making sure the course has both a clear activist perspective and an academic basis. The course gives a necessary political-economic background to land issues and injustices, but focuses on how poor and marginalized communities go to direct action: try to create autonomy, self-governance and build their own constructive programs and resist injustices. Key themes are community based struggles and the combination of resisting injustice with building new societies and alternatives. Seminars will involve students through discussions, which follow up on background lectures, guest visits from researchers and activists, films, literature readings, student projects, etc. Assignments consist mainly of a book review, oral presentations, and a course paper analyzing a chosen case of relevance. Extra credits are offered for excursions to relevant projects in New England. The overall aim with this course is strategy and social change development: to critically assess popular land struggles, and what challenges and possibilities movement activists face when they try to combine resistance with the building of new societies.

INTEGRATIVE EXPERIENCE

STPEC 494PI: Praxis – TBA

Wednesday 11:15-1:45 3 credits, graded Schedule #80265

This course teaches students to apply social theory to the real-life experience of their required STPEC internship. As an integrative experience (IE) course students are encouraged to draw on knowledge acquired in prior Gen Ed and core STPEC courses to explore connections between theory and practice as they analyze various aspects of the organizations. Class structure and assignments promote group communication, multi-disciplinary dialogue, and critical self-reflection. Course assignments focus on a self-designed project related to the student's internship placement and include multiple peer-edited drafts of a critical analysis of the internship, a self-reflective essay, an oral presentation, and a final cumulative paper.

PRACTICUM

STPEC 498Y: Exploring the Intersection of Theory and Practice – Hoang Phan

(aka “Practicum”) No Class Meetings Schedule #80275

This course fulfills the STPEC internship requirement. Students in this course undertake an internship of 120 hours or more in an organization of their choice, and engage in critical reflection on their experience. Fieldwork placements are identified and arranged by each individual student and must be approved by the instructor. Students are encouraged to use this class as an opportunity to synthesize knowledge gained in the classroom and test its applicability to “real life” situations.

The primary written assignment for the course is a 12-15 page (or longer, depending on credits) final paper emphasizing critical analysis of the student's experience in the organization and/or the organization itself. Analytical themes may include (but are not limited to): the interplay of organizational structure and mission; the strengths and weakness of various means of working for social change; the impacts of economic and/or financial conditions and structures on the organization; and dynamics of race, class, and gender both within the organization and in its interactions with the larger community. All students are required to apply an analysis of race, class, and gender.

STPEC COURSE DESCRIPTIONS – FALL 2018

To enroll, submit a completed STPEC internship contract before the end of add/drop. Note: you must meet with Hoang Phan and get approval of your placement before you turn in your contract. He can be reached at hgphan@english.umass.edu.

ADDITIONAL COURSES AND COLLOQUIA

The following courses do not fulfill any STPEC or University requirements

STPEC 191STPEC1: FYS - The American Nightmare: Police Killings & Incarceration in the U.S. – Graciela Monteagudo

Thursdays 4:00-4:50 pm

Schedule #80306

STPEC First Year Seminar: Open to first-year STPEC students only

This seminar will examine the complex intersection of race, gender, sexuality, mental health, and class to understand the phenomenon of police shootings and high rates of incarceration in the United States. A final paper will allow students to pursue a related topic of their choice. Throughout the semester, students will work in groups and present on different topics connected with the theme of the course. Graciela Monteagudo is the STPEC Associate Director.

STPEC 291X: Executive Committee – Hoang Phan

Student meetings: Time and location TBA by mutual agreement

Schedule #80264

full meetings: Two Fridays during the semester from 3:00-6:00; dates TBA 1 credit, mandatory pass/fail

Enrollment required for students serving as representatives to the STPEC Executive Committee. Requirements for credit include: attending an orientation session and all student representative and full Executive Committee meetings, delivering weekly announcements to designated STPEC courses and, in STPEC courses in which they are enrolled, facilitating a 15-minute forum prior to both full Executive Committee meetings. Interested students may speak to Hoang Gia Phan.

STPEC 291A-Z: Student Taught Colloquiums 1-3 credits

Students may offer a colloq (for 3 credits - graded) or take a student taught colloq (for 1 credit - pass/fail). Any students wishing to offer a colloq for the coming semester should speak with Hoang Gia Phan during pre-registration.

STPEC 298: Practicum (1-12 credits, mandatory pass/fail)

No class meetings

STPEC 398: Practicum (1-12 credits, graded)

No class meetings

These two options are for students doing elective internships (i.e., this course does not fulfill the STPEC internship requirement). The primary differences between the courses are grading (STPEC 298 is pass/fail) and recommended final paper length: students in STPEC 298 write about 2-3 pages per credit, and students in STPEC 398 write about 3-4 pages per credit. Students in these courses receive one credit for every 40 hours of work that they complete in an organization of their choice. They must find a faculty sponsor who is willing to grade their written work and submit a grade. The STPEC Internship Advisor can provide assistance with finding placements and faculty sponsors, but this is ultimately each student's responsibility. To register, speak with Hoang Gia Phan (the interim STPEC Internship Advisor) and complete a STPEC Internship Contract by the end of add/drop.