Dear Students,

Are you tired of getting lost in the crowd?

Small seminars in the humanities provide opportunities to:

- engage in deep, interactive inquiry through focused discussion;
- explore other cultures and others’ lives;
- get to know faculty members on an individual level;
- meet students from a wide range of backgrounds.

The purpose of this guide is to draw your attention to Fall 2019 courses in the small seminar format, courses you might not hear about otherwise. Most of the courses listed here are conducted entirely in English, although the second section includes courses taught in several other languages.

General course registration for Fall 2019 is open for graduate and undergraduate students daily in Sage between Wednesday, July 17, 2019 and Wednesday, September 11, 2019.

If you have questions about a course, please contact either the instructor or the department offering it. We hope you find something that excites you.

Please share this booklet with friends!

Warm wishes for a brand new school year,

The Brandeis Humanities Faculty
Small humanities seminars offered in Fall 2019:

Courses Taught in English

AAAS/ENG 80A 1: Black Looks: The Promise and Perils of Photography
COML 100A 1: Introduction to Global Literature
COML 171A 1: Literary Translation in Theory and in Practice
ECS 100A 1: European Modernism
ENG 10B 1: Poetry: A Basic Course
ENG 109A 1: Poetry Workshop
ENG 123A 1: Violence and the Body in Early Modern Drama
ENG 138A 1: Race, Region, and Religion in the Twentieth-Century South
ENG 167B 1: Writing the Nation: James Baldwin, Richard Wright, Toni Morrison
JAPN 150A 1: Greed and Morality in Edo Period Novels
JAPN 165A 1: The Tale of Genji
NEJS 3A 1: Religions of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity, Islam
NEJS 5A 1: The History of Judaism
NEJS 111A 1: The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
NEJS 123A 1: Maps, Graphs and Timelines: Technology and Design in Historical Research
NEJS 155A 1: Maimonides: A Jewish Thinker in the Islamic World
NEJS 159A 1: Modern Jewish Philosophy
NEJS 176B 1: Jewish Graphic Novels
NEJS 193A 1: Pirates, Mystics and Scholars: Travel Literature from the Islamic World
PHIL 161A 1: Plato
RECS 135A 1: Russian Short Fictions: The Art of Narrative
RECS/THA 148A 1: Russian Drama: Text and Performance
Small humanities seminars offered in Fall 2019, continued:

Courses Taught in a Language Other than English

CHIN 105A 2: Advanced Conversation and Composition I
FREN 105A 1: France Today: French Conversation
FREN 134B 1: Masculine/Feminine
FREN 159B 1: Wordplay: Humor in Francophone Texts
FREN 161A 1: The Enigma of Being Oneself: From Du Bellay to Laferrière
GER 105B: Survey of German Literature from Its Beginnings to the Present
GER 109B: Meisterwerke Deutscher Kurzprosa
ITAL 106A 1: Storia e storie d’Italia: Advanced Italian through Narrative, Film, and Other Media
ITAL 110A 1: Introduction to Italian Literature: Love, Intrigues and Politics from Dante to Goldoni
RUS 105A 1: Russia Today: Advanced Language Skills through Contemporary Culture
AAAS/ENG 80A 1
Black Looks: The Promise and Perils of Photography

Faith Smith (fsmith@brandeis.edu)
T, F 12:30 PM–1:50 PM (Block J)

Explores photography and Africans, African-Americans and Caribbean people, from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. This course will examine fiction that refers to the photograph; various photographic archives; and theorists on photography and looking. Usually offered every third year.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; wi; deis-us; djw
How can we meaningfully compare texts, genres and themes across cultures? Across languages? Across historical periods? What is literature, anyway? This course explores the theory and practice of comparative literary study using a wide range of materials drawn from all over the world.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; oc; dl

Core Course in Russian Studies; IGS Elective in Media, Culture, and The Arts; ECS Comparative Literature Seminars; IGS Global Focus Course; Cross-Listed in German Language and Literature
Approaching literary translation from several angles at once, this course combines readings in the history and theory of translation with a practical translation workshop. Students will experience first-hand the challenges of literary translation and, with the help of the theoretical readings, reflect on what the process teaches us about linguistic, literary, and cultural difference.

Prerequisite: Excellent reading knowledge of any language other than English. Students will be asked to demonstrate proficiency before receiving consent to enroll in the course.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Elective Course in Language and Linguistics; Elective Course in Russian Studies
ECS 100A 1
European Modernism

Stephen Dowden (dowden@brandeis.edu)
M, W 2:00 PM–3:20 PM (Block K)

This seminar introduces students to the concept of modernism in fiction, poetry, drama, music, and film. It includes works by Samuel Beckett, Bertolt Brecht, Osip Mandelstam, Thomas Mann, Federico Fellini, Virginia Woolf, Stravinsky, Artaud and others.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; oc

Elective Course in History of Ideas (HOID); Cross-listed in English; Comparative Literature and Culture (COML); European Cultural Studies (ECS); German Studies; French; Music/Cultural Studies Track
ENG 10B 1
Poetry: A Basic Course

Paul Morrison (pmorriso@brandeis.edu)
M, W 2:00 PM–3:20 PM (Block K)

Designed as a first course for all persons interested in the subject. It is intended to be basic without being elementary. The subject matter will consist of poems of short and middle length in English from the earliest period to the present.

University requirements course fulfills: hum
ENG 109A 1
Poetry Workshop

Chen Chen (chenchen@brandeis.edu)
W 2:00 PM–4:50 PM (Block S3)

Offered exclusively on a credit/no credit basis. Enrollment is by instructor permission after the submission of a manuscript sample. May be repeated for credit.

A workshop for poets willing to explore and develop their craft through intense reading in current poetry, stylistic explorations of content, and imaginative stretching of forms. Usually offered every year

University requirements course fulfills: hum; wi; oc; dl
ENG 123A 1
Violence and the Body in Early Modern Drama

Thomas King (tking@brandeis.edu)
M, W 2:00 PM–3:20 PM (Block K)

Explores early modern understandings of the body, with particular attention to gender, sexuality, race, and nation. Considers the role of violence in determining who counts as fully human, who can be reduced to a body, and whose bodies can be severed from citizenship, recognition, and value. Explores as well the claims of the body and voice to memorialization and belonging, and the evidence of actors’ bodies on the stage. Usually offered every third year.

May not be taken for credit by students who took ENG 23a in prior years.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in Theater Arts, European Cultural Studies (ECS), Medieval and Renaissance Studies
ENG 138A 1
Race, Region, and Religion in the Twentieth-Century South

John Burt (burt@brandeis.edu)
M, W, Th 10:00 AM–10:50 AM (Block C)

Twentieth century fiction of the American South. Racial conflict, regional identity, religion, and modernization in fiction from both sides of the racial divide and from both sides of the gender line. Texts by Chestnutt, Faulkner, Warren, O’Connor, Gaines, McCarthy, and Ellison. Usually offered every third year.

May not be taken for credit by students who took ENG 38b in prior years.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; wi; deis-us

Cross-listed in Religious Studies, American Studies
ENG 167B 1
Writing the Nation: James Baldwin, Richard Wright, Toni Morrison

Gabrielle Everett (geverett@brandeis.edu)
T, F 9:30 AM–10:50 AM (Block G)

An in-depth study of three major American authors of the twentieth century. Highlights the contributions of each author to the American literary canon and to its diversity. Explores how these novelists narrate cross-racial, cross-gendered, cross-regional, and cross-cultural contact and conflict in the United States. Usually offered every third year.

May not be taken for credit by students who took ENG 57b in prior years.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in AAAS, American Studies, CAST, History of Ideas, Sexuality and Queer Studies
HISP 196A 1
Topics in Latinx Literature and Culture
Fall 2019 Topic: Latinx Theatre: Politics, Performance, and Social Change

María Durán (mduran@brandeis.edu)
T, Th 2:00 PM–3:20 PM (Block N)

This course examines Latinx theatre as a creative and political force for social change in the United States from the 1960s to the present. We will examine Latinx theatre’s politics, cultural practices, and artistic expressions. We will read representative works by Latinx playwrights while integrating supplementary texts including performance reviews, critical analyses, and theoretical studies. Plays will be studied using various modes of inquiry including linguistic, performance studies, gender studies, and borderlands theory.

Taught in English. May be repeated for credit.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; wi

Cross-Listed in English, Comparative Literature and Culture (COML), Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST), Theater Arts; LALS Electives in Humanities
JAPN 150A 1
Greed and Morality in Edo Period Novels

Motoi Katsumata (motoikatsumata@brandeis.edu)
T, Th 2:00 PM–3:20 PM (Block N)

This class examines the diverse short fiction of Ihara Saikaku, a seventeenth-century merchant writer from Osaka. Saikaku’s novels and short stories insightfully and vividly explore such themes as homosexuality, vengeance, filial piety, jurisprudence, and the nouveau riche. All readings in English.

Special one-time offering.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; nw

Cross-listed in East Asian Studies (EAS)
JAPN 165A 1
The Tale of Genji

Matthew Fraleigh (fraleigh@brandeis.edu)
M, W 3:30PM–4:50PM (Block L)

Often called “the world’s first novel,” The Tale of Genji has captivated readers with its narrative of love, rivalry, friendship, and loss for centuries. This class explores what has given the text its prominent place in Japanese and world literature.

New course for 2019!

University requirements course fulfills: hum; nw; oc

East Asian Studies (EAS) Elective Humanities Course; Cross-listed in Comparative Literature
NEJS 3A 1
Religions of Abraham: Judaism, Christianity, Islam

Jonathan Decter (decter@brandeis.edu)
T, F 9:30AM–10:50AM (Block G)

An introduction to the three major religions originating in the Near East: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Areas of focus include historical development, sacred texts, rituals, and interpretive traditions.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, Religious Studies
NEJS 5A 1
The History of Judaism

Reuven Kimelman (kimelman@brandeis.edu)
T, F 11:00 AM–12:20 PM (Block H)

A survey of the Jewish experience and thought, focusing on the varieties of historical Judaism, including its classical forms, its medieval patterns and transformations, and its modern options.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in Religious Studies
NEJS 111A 1
The Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Nathaniel Greene (negreene@brandeis.edu)
T, Th 2:00PM–3:20PM (Block N)

A survey of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). Biblical books will be examined from various perspectives and compared to other ancient Near Eastern compositions. No knowledge of Hebrew is presumed.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in European Cultural Studies; Religious Studies
NEJS 122B 1
Biblical Narrative Texts: The Historical Tradition

Nathaniel Greene (negreene@brandeis.edu)
T, Th 5:00PM–6:20PM (Block V)

A close reading of biblical “historical” texts focusing on the Book of Samuel. The basic tools for biblical research and the literary study of the Bible will be explored. The newer methods of analyzing biblical “historical” texts will be discussed.

Prerequisite: NEJS 10a or a strong knowledge of Biblical Hebrew is required.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

ECS Related Electives
NEJS 123A 1
Maps, Graphs and Timelines: Technology and Design in Historical Research

Aexander Kaye (alexanderkaye@brandeis.edu)
M, W 3:30PM–4:50PM (Block L)

Learn the practical skills to represent data digitally as graphs, maps, timelines and other models. Students will develop their own research projects in topics of their interest and learn to think critically about the opportunities and pitfalls that digital methods pose, for scholarship, inclusion and for social justice. The course will include extensive practical instruction.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; oc; dl

Cross-listed in Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies
NEJS 155A 1
Maimonides: A Jewish Thinker in the Islamic World

Jonathan Decter (decter@brandeis.edu)
T, F 11:00AM–12:20PM (Block H)

A study of the life, world, and thought of Moses Maimonides, the most significant Jewish intellectual of the Islamic world. This course traces his intellectual output in philosophy and Judaism, from its beginning in Islamic Spain to the mature works produced in Morocco and Egypt, in the context of the Arabic-Islamic milieu. Half of the course is dedicated to studying his Guide of the Perplexed, a Judeo-Arabic work that engages the demands of revealed religion and philosophical rationalism.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in History of Ideas (HOID), Medieval and Renaissance Studies (MERL)
NEJS 159A 1
Modern Jewish Philosophy

Eugene Sheppard (sheppard@brandeis.edu)
T, F 9:30AM–10:50AM (Block G)

Surveys the contours of modern Jewish philosophy by engaging some of its most important themes and voices, competing Jewish inflections of and responses to rationalism, romanticism, idealism, existentialism, and nihilism. This provides the conceptual road signs of the course as we traverse the winding byways of Jewish philosophy from Baruch Spinoza to Emanuel Levinas.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in European Cultural Studies (ECS), German Studies (GER), History of Ideas (HOID), Philosophy (PHIL), Religious Studies (RELS)
Examines the complex genre of the Jewish graphic novel. Explores Jewish artists’ use of graphic narratives to grapple with issues of acculturation, trauma, and identity. Special focus on the reconfiguration of Jewish gender identities. Structured around primary texts. Secondary readings provide historical context and theoretical analysis.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGS), English (ENG)
NEJS 193A 1
Pirates, Mystics and Scholars: Travel Literature from the Islamic World

Suleyman Dost (dost@brandeis.edu)
M, W 3:30PM–4:50PM (Block L)

Studies medieval and early modern travelogues from the Islamic world in English translation. These works provide us with a candid view of the Muslim Mediterranean including things like urban topography, social life, orthodox and subversive religious practices, status of minorities, conditions and limits of hospitality and so on.

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in Comparative Literature and Culture (COML); History of Ideas (HOID); Religious Studies (RELS); Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies (IMES)
PHIL 161A 1
Plato

Palle Yourgrau (yourgrau@brandeis.edu)
M, W 2:00 PM–3:20 PM (Block K)

A close examination of key texts of Plato in an attempt to come to grips with the living thought of one of the greatest and most influential thinkers of all time. We’ll explore the relationship of Plato’s thought to Socrates’, as well as Plato’s influence on later thinkers, from Aristotle to Kant, and contemporary philosophers. We will examine Plato’s ideas concerning the good, the best political regime, the nature of love and beauty, and the relationship of reality to perfection.

We will focus, in order, on the following dialogues: The Apology, The Crito, The Euthyphro, The Phaedo, The Symposium, and The Republic. Central themes of the course include the following questions: What is real? What is the good life? What is the Good (itself)? What, if anything, is the relationship between love and the Good? Where do our ultimate obligations lie? (to ourselves? to our families? to the state? to God?)

University requirements course fulfills: hum

Cross-listed in Classical Studies (CLAS); ECS Related Electives
RECS 135A 1
Russian Short Fictions: The Art of Narrative

Robin Feuer Miller (rfmiller@brandeis.edu)
M, W 2:00 PM–3:20 PM (Block K)

Focuses on the great tradition of the short story as practiced by Russian writers and the connection and divisions among them. This genre invites extreme stylistic and narrative experimentation ranging from the comic to the tragic, as well as being a vehicle for striking expressions of complex social, philosophical, and religious themes.

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; oc

ECS Courses in European Literature; Elective Course in Russian and East European Studies; Cross-Listed in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies (NEJS)
RECS/THA 148A 1  
Russian Drama: Text and Performance

David Powelstock (pstock@brandeis.edu)  
T, F 11:00 AM–12:20 PM (Block H)

Examines the rich tradition of Russian drama and theater. Readings include masterpieces of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including those by Chekhov, Pushkin, Gogol, Ostrovsky, Mayakovsky, Erdman, and others.

Open to all students. Conducted in English. Students may choose to do readings either in English translation or in Russian.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; oc

ECS Courses in European Literature; Cross-Listed in Music/History Track
SAS 100A 1
India and Pakistan: Understanding South Asia

Harleen Singh (harleen@brandeis.edu)
T, Th 5:00 PM–6:20 PM (Block V)

An exploration of the history, societies, cultures, religions, and literature of South Asia--India, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Uses perspectives from history, anthropology, literature, and film to examine past and contemporary life in South Asia.

University requirements course fulfills: hum; ss; nw; djw
CHIN 105A 2
Advanced Conversation and Composition I

Yu Feng (yfeng@brandeis.edu)
M, W, Th 1:00 PM–1:50 PM (Block F)

Taught in Chinese. Prerequisite: A grade of C- or higher in CHIN 40b or the equivalent.

Designed for advanced students who wish to enhance and improve their skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing through listening and reading authentic or slightly modified materials, discussing and writing on various topics of Chinese society and culture.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum; wi; oc

East Asian Studies (EAS) Elective Humanities Course
FREN 105A 1
France Today: French Conversation

Gabriela Nenciu (gnenciu@brandeis.edu)
M, W, Th 1:00 PM–1:50 PM (Block F)

Taught in French. Prerequisite: FREN 104b or the equivalent. Students enrolling for the first time in a French and Francophone Studies course at Brandeis should refer to http://www.brandeis.edu/registrar/newstudent/testing.html#frentest.

Need to update your perspective on France? Improve your speaking skills while learning about and discussing socio–cultural issues that distinguish the French view of the world from that of Americans. Students will focus on expressing themselves better orally while continuing their work on reading, listening, and writing.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum
FREN 134B 1
Masculine/Feminine

Martine Voiret (voiret@brandeis.edu)
M, W, Th 1:00 PM–1:50 PM (Block F)

Taught in French. Prerequisite: FREN 106B or the equivalent, or permission of the instructor.

Examines diverse representations of masculinity and femininity in French texts today and in the past with special emphasis on historical and cultural aspects. Readings include Edward Louis, *En finir avec Eddie Bellegueule*, Duras, *L’amant*, excerpts from Rousseau and Beauvoir and films like *l’Esquive* et *La loi du marché* (on working class and minority conceptions of gender).

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum

European Cultural Studies (ECS) Courses in European Literature
FREN 159B 1
Wordplay: Humor in Francophone Texts

Catherine Theobald (ctheobal@brandeis.edu)
M, W, Th 12:00 PM–12:50 PM (Block E)

Taught in French. Prerequisite: FREN 106B or the equivalent, or permission of the instructor.

Students will analyze the forms and functions of humor in francophone texts (French, Canadian, Caribbean) from the Middle Ages to the present day. Course themes will include farce, comedy of manners, wordplay, and satire. The course will include archival work.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum
FREN 161A 1
The Enigma of Being Oneself: From Du Bellay to Laferrière

Michael Randall (randall@brandeis.edu)
T, Th 3:30 PM–4:50 PM (Block P)

Taught in French. Prerequisite: FREN 106B or the equivalent, or permission of the instructor.

This class explores the relationship of identity formation and modern individualism in texts by writers working in France, Francophone Africa and Canada. Authors range from modern and contemporary writers like Sarah Kofman, Dany Laferrière, Achille Mbembe, Alain Mabanckou, and Edouard Glissant to early-modern writers like Joachim Du Bellay and Michel de Montaigne.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum; wi; djw

IGS Elective in Media, Culture, and The Arts
GER 105B
Survey of German Literature from Its Beginnings to the Present

Kathrin Seidl (kseidlgo@brandeis.edu)
M, W, Th 12:00 PM–12:50 PM (Block E)

Taught in German. Prerequisite: GER 30a.

This course examines the relationship between the individual and their society throughout history on the basis of fictional and nonfictional German texts (poetry, philosophical texts, short prose, and plays), films and artifacts (photographs, paintings, monuments, coins and tools). While this course focuses on the work of German-language writers, it offers also insights into German social history and the socio-political changes accompanying the transformation of a medieval God-given society into a multi-ethnic society of the 20th and 21st century.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum; oc
GER 109B
Meisterwerke Deutscher Kurzprosa

Stephen Dowden (dowden@brandeis.edu)
M, W, Th 11:00 AM–11:50 AM (Block D)

Taught in German.

Tailored to suit the needs of advanced intermediate students, this course explores in detail several short prose masterworks by writers including Martin Buber, Franz Kafka, Friedrich Nietzsche, Thomas Mann, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Arthur Schnitzler.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum

ECS Courses in European Literature
ITAL 106A 1
Storia e storie d’Italia: Advanced Italian through Narrative, Film, and Other Media

Silvia Monteleone (spmw@brandeis.edu)
M, W, Th 12:00 PM–12:50 PM (Block E)

Taught in Italian. Prerequisite: ITAL 30a, ITAL 105a, or the equivalent. Students enrolling for the first time in an Italian Studies course at Brandeis should refer to www.brandeis.edu/registrar/newstudent/testing.html#italtest.

Let’s learn about Italians through their stories and practice reading and communicative skills while learning about the developing of Italian identity from the end of 1800s to the present. In this course, students will analyze and discuss short Italian texts, selected for their relevance and accessible language, as well as videos and films. Proficiency in Italian will be improved through interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational activities.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum; oc

ECS Courses in European Literature
ITAL 110A 1
Introduction to Italian Literature: Love, Intrigues and Politics from Dante to Goldoni

Paola Servino (servino@brandeis.edu)
M, W 3:30 PM–4:50 PM (Block L)

Taught in Italian. Prerequisite: ITAL 105a or 106a or permission of the instructor.

Why Study Dante (and much more!)? Just for the Hell of it! Surveys the masterpieces of Italian literature from Dante’s journey to Goldoni’s stage. Come explore intrigues of love and politics in Italian culture and literature, through dynamic analysis and discussions of primary texts.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum; oc

ECS Courses in European Literature; Elective Course in Medieval & Renaissance Studies
RUS 105A 1
Russia Today: Advanced Language Skills through Contemporary Culture

Irina Dubinina (idubinin@brandeis.edu)
M, W 3:30 PM–4:50 PM (Block L)

Taught in Russian. Prerequisite: RUS 40b with a grade of C- or higher, or the equivalent as determined by placement examination.

For advanced students of Russian language (non-heritage learners) who strive for advanced-level proficiency in all four modalities (listening, reading, speaking and writing). Explores aspects of contemporary Russian society and culture, including such topics as education, social media, religion, gender relations, environment and others.

University requirements course fulfills: fl; hum; dl