

Division I Learning Collaborative (LC)

Seminars

Fall 2025

This document contains all of the key information about the Division I LC Seminars. All Division I students are required to take one (and only one) of these courses in their first semester at Hampshire. These courses are multidisciplinary so be sure to read through the descriptions to determine if you're interested in that particular seminar. If you have questions, reach out to the Center for Academic Advising (CASA) at advising@hampshire.edu.

All seminars meet at the same time: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30-11:50.

LCSEM-0102 Black Nature: Survey of Black and brown Environmental Writing

Professor: Nathan McClain

Learning Collaborative: Environments and Change

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: Creative writing, Nature writing, Eco-poetics, Ecocriticism, Environmental justice

Description: The late poet and essayist, Reginald Shepherd, in his thought-provoking essay, "The Other's Other," writes "I am just as much a black person when I write about spring snow and narcissus blooms as when I write about the South Bronx or the slave trade, and I am as much not." Poet, essayist, and editor, Camille Dungy, adds, "To bring more voices into the conversation about human interactions with the natural world, we must change the parameters of the conversation." For centuries, our writing about the living world has been defined by Anglo-American perspectives, though Black and brown poets and writers have offered unique perspectives on American social and literary history to broaden our concept of ecocriticism and eco-poetics. In this course, students will consider and examine the literature of nature from the lens of these poets and writers as well as explore their own unique relationships to the living, natural world through original poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, and hybrid forms. Students may read and consider the work of Aimee Nezhukumatathil, Jericho Brown, Lucille Clifton, Jennifer Chang, and Ed Roberson, among others.

LCSEM-0103 Science of Stress

Professor: CJ Gill

Learning Collaborative: In/Justice

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: Biology, psychology, health, medicine, neuroscience

Description: Stress is a daily part of our lives that has become an intense subject of interest among scientists and the medical community. The body's responses to stress are linked to multiple health problems, but stress can also be overused as an explanation. In this course, we will examine the scientific evidence for the links between stress and human health issues such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and depression. This will include readings of primary scientific research papers and coverage of basic physiological mechanisms in humans and other animals. Students will learn techniques to measure stress and stress hormones.

LCSEM-0104 What Is Trans?: What does it mean to be trans?

Professor: Reuven Goldberg

Learning Collaborative: Art and Politics

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: trans, literature, poetry, film, theory

Description: What are the archives we might study to understand how trans has been named, theorized, and expressed in the United States? Considering the trans cultural production from theory to literature to film to art and music we will critically study representations of trans in the U.S. and how these representations are informed, inflected, and challenged by structures of power, care, and change. We will pay special attention to trans as it is inflected by racial formation, marginalization, class, disability, and systems of exclusion, while attending to the various ways trans cultural producers have resisted and challenged systemic injustice.

LCSEM-0105 The Queer-Coded Canon: Reading 20th Century American Literature Against the Grain

Professor: Caoimhe Harlock

Learning Collaborative: Art and Politics

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: literature, 20th century, trans, queer, novel

Description: In 1993, Eve Sedgwick famously described queer reading practices as running "against the grain" of the popular understanding of literature, finding hidden within stories a "charged surplus" with which the marginalized reader might identify. In this course, we'll apply this method of reading to several canonical works of 20th century literature from authors such as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Nella Larsen, Carson McCullers, Ernest Hemingway, James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, and Cheryl Dunye, excavating the queer and trans lifeblood that has always resided within canonical texts that, for some, have gained the reputation of dusty, outmoded classics. In so doing, students will build a foundation for critical analysis, including how to use literary theory and archival research to develop their own practice of literary analysis that "runs against the grain." Please note this seminar will require reading multiple full-length novels.

LCSEM-0106 Human Flourishing

Professor: Jina Fast

Learning Collaborative: In/Justice

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: Philosophy, Human Well-Being, Women's and Gender Studies, Queer Theory, Intersectionality

Description: Human Flourishing: Explores, examines, and analyzes the concept of human flourishing (i.e., eudaemonia) through philosophical and transdisciplinary inquiry. In a seminar format, students engage in the study of, the definitions of, concepts of, and theories that surround human flourishing and how they have changed over time and across cultures, the components that comprise it, and, the principles/theories/strategies offered by research, literature, poets, philosophers, and others as to how it can be attained. Focus will also be given as to how philosophical inquiry into what constitutes and promotes human flourishing can be applied to the specific challenges inherent in the current sociopolitical climate as well as how scholarship on human flourishing connects to justice movements and practices locally and globally. The books *Emergent Strategy* by adrienne maree brown and *Sex and Social Justice* by Martha Nussbaum will be used for this course.

LCSEM-0108 Racial Justice Movements in Higher Education

Professor: Gaurav Jashnani

Learning Collaborative: In/Justice

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: Race, Activism, Palestine, Black Lives Matter, Student Organizing

Description: What motivates students of color to challenge and rebel against their institutions? This course explores student racial justice organizing in US colleges and universities, with a focus on several recent movements (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Palestinian solidarity) as well as earlier foundational ones. While examining specific movements, we will also seek to understand the experience of student protest and some of the broader historical dynamics of these movements in the US. Students will not only learn about key movements but also complete independent research on protest movements beyond our primary focus, and will share their findings in succinct, in-class presentations. We will read *The Black Revolution on Campus* by Martha Biondi and *Making All Black Lives Matter* by Barbara Ransby

LCSEM-0109 Microbes of the Farm

Professor: Julie Johnston

Learning Collaborative: Environments and Change

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: Environmental microbiology, Bacteria, archaea fungi

Description: We will contextualize the foundations of environmental microbiology by exploring the microorganisms on the campus farm. We will discuss how microbes grow and thrive in the environment, as well as how they cycle nutrients to plants and within the soil. We will have several lab sessions where we go out and culture some organisms and discuss their individual niche environments. Throughout the course, we will have presentations and dialogues about how environmental microbiology impacts society and ties into social justice. The text for this course is *Brock Biology of Microorganisms, 16th Edition* by Madigan, Bender, Buckley, Sattley, Stahl

LCSEM-0110 The Ethics and Reality of Income Determination: Why do some people make more than others?

Professor: Kenneth Mulder

Learning Collaborative: In/Justice

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: Sociology, Economics, Income Inequality, math

Description: It is a seldom-questioned fact in US society that some jobs and some people make more money than other jobs and other people-often a lot more money! Income inequality is a significant issue that is a major force of instability and injustice, yet very few people believe that everyone should make the same amount of money. In this course, we will explore differences in income from both an ethical perspective as well as from a data-driven empirical perspective. We will seek to answer the question, "Why do some people make more than others, and how do we feel about that?" We will apply our analysis to life at Hampshire, developing a joint ethics for income in our community.

LCSEM-0111 Singing in Japanese: Multisensory Approaches to Japanese Cultures

Professor: Junko Oba

Learning Collaborative: Art and Politics

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: Japanese cultures, Japanese sensibilities, singing

Description: This Division I seminar explores Japanese culture using Japanese songs as literary, musical and sociocultural texts that project distinctive aesthetics, history, and collective memories that Japanese people nurtured. The course examines a broad range of materials, both in terms of musical genres and historical periods. We sing select songs in Japanese in order to familiarize ourselves with the sounds of Japanese language and the correlation between the language and the musical structures; study their lyrics in English translation and discuss their meanings, culture-specific connotations and functions in their contexts. In addition to reading select articles, students conduct a series of mini research on specific songs and topics at several junctures during the course and share their findings in class discussions. This is a CULTURAL STUDIES COURSE but neither a language nor music performance course. No previous musical training or knowledge of Japanese language is required.

LCSEM-0115 Reading the Forest

Profesor: Jenny VanWyk

Learning Collaborative: Environments and Change

This may be a good course for you if you're interested in: Natural history, biology, ecology

Description: What can you learn from a walk in the woods? A forest is more than the trees -it holds stories of past inhabitants, the impacts of storms and fires, the movement of animals in space and time, and the ongoing changes that shape ecosystems. In this course, we will use the forests of Hampshire College as a living laboratory, exploring how natural and human histories are imprinted on the land. Through a combination of indoor and outdoor classroom experiences, students will engage in hands-on fieldwork, learn natural history, and discussions that deepen their understanding of forest dynamics. Students should be prepared to independently navigate unpaved and unmaintained forest trails for up to one hour per day, covering distances of up to one mile. Classes may take place outdoors in all weather conditions. We will read *Reading the Forested Landscape* by Tom Wessels

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