This course introduces graduate students to the scholarship in U.S. intellectual and cultural history. Our syllabus includes both classic and cutting-edge studies in U.S. thought and culture, which will provide students a foundation in the diverse subjects, competing theories, and contested modes of interpretation that have defined the field for well over a half century. We will investigate what many regard as the inherent interdisciplinarity of the field, examining how developments in philosophy, anthropology, political theory, and cultural studies have influenced the ways in which historians of thought and culture have understood their own enterprise.

Because intellectual historians like to think about thinking, this course will have its fair share of theory. However, all of the readings, both theoretical and historical, will raise questions of general concern: How to understand the agency of historical actors, ideas, and ideologies? How to measure intellectual and cultural influence? How to access the felt experience and the moral world views of people from the past? How to apprehend the meanings of particular cultural discourses in their own time and place? By asking questions about the creation, transmission, power, and influence of ideas, beliefs, and cultural sensibilities, we will address issues that not only have defined the field, but also have broader applicability to the discipline as a whole.

**Assignments and Grading:**
Reading assignments will include books, book chapters, and articles. Grading will be based on class participation, weekly paragraph-length questions, critical essays, and a final annotated syllabus.

Each week, you will be expected to write paragraph-length questions based on the assigned texts (a book and a complementary article/essay or two). Writing your weekly questions is a very useful strategy for synthesizing the reading, distilling authors' arguments into economical and clear prose, and focusing your thoughts before coming to class. Paragraph-length questions are to be posted to our Learn@UW course webpage no later than 8 p.m. Wednesday night (as in, the night before class). (You are encouraged to read through and be prepared to comment on your classmates’ paragraphs.)

Critical essays are due at the beginning of class meetings. You will exchange your first critical essay with two of your classmates for their comments on Sept. 18 before revising them and submitting them to me a week later on Sept. 25.

Attendance is mandatory. Punctuality is also mandatory. If for any reason you are unable to come to class, please email me in advance to let me know.

**Course requirements:**
1. Participation. Informed and engaged contribution to weekly class discussion. 20%
2. Weekly Questions. Paragraph-length questions based on the weekly readings. 20%
3. Critical Essays. Three (3 page) analytical essays, each based on the reading for a week of your choosing. (first essay = 10%, the second two essays =15% each) 35% total
4. Annotated syllabus. A syllabus for your teaching portfolio on a subject in your area of expertise, which is informed by the course readings and discussions. 25%

**Readings:**
We will be reading a number of books, all of which are available for purchase at the University bookstore:

David Brion Davis, Thomas Haskell, and Thomas Bender (ed.), *The Antislavery Debate: Capitalism and Abolitionism as a Problem in Historical Interpretation* (1992)
Edward Purcell, Jr., *The Crisis of Democratic Theory: Scientific Naturalism and the Problem of Value* (1973)

Readings found on electronic reserve are marked {R}. Readings which can be found electronically through a library database (like JSTOR or Project Muse) are noted with a {*}.

All books are also available on 3-hour reserve at the College Library.
Course Outline:

Week 1 (Sept. 4): Introduction
or

Further Reading:

U.S. Intellectual and Cultural History Starter Kit
Mary Kupiec Cayton and Peter Williams, eds. *Encyclopedia of American Cultural and Intellectual History* (2001)

Survey and Synthesis
Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind: An Interpretation in Thought and Character Since the 1880s* (1950)
Twayne’s Thought and Culture Series:

Reviews of and Debates within the Field of Intellectual History
John Higham and Paul Conkin, eds., *New Directions in American Intellectual History* (1979)

**Intellectual Production, Transmission, and Reception**

Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (1980)
Michel Foucault, *Archeology of Knowledge & the Discourse on Language* (1972)
Thomas Kuhn, *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962)
Arthur Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (1936)
Week 2 (Sept. 11) Republicanism, Equality, and Difference in Comparative Perspective

**Complementary Reading:**

**Further Reading:**

**Late Eighteenth-Century Anglo-American Thought and Culture**
Donald Meyer, *Democratic Enlightenment* (1976)
Richard Sher and Jeffrey Smitten, eds., *Scotland and America in the Age of the Enlightenment* (1990)
Week 3 (Sept. 18) Women and Gender in Nineteenth-Century Thought and Culture

Complementary Reading:
Michel de Certeau, “Reading as Poaching,” from The Practice of Everyday Life (1984), 165-76. {R}

Barbara Sicherman, “Reading and Ambition: M. Carey Thomas and Female Heroism,” American Quarterly, 45 (Mar. 1993), 73-103. {*}


Two copies of your first critical essay due today at the beginning of class. (Sept. 18)

Further Reading:
Theorizing Gender and Gender History
Judith Butler, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (1989)
________, “Second Thoughts on Gender and Women’s History,” American Studies, 36 (Spring 1995), 93-104.
Thomas Laquer, Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud (1991)
Mary Ryan, Mysteries of Sex: Tracing Women and Men through American History (2006)
Joan Wallach Scott, Gender and the Politics of History (1998)

Gender in Nineteenth-Century Intellectual and Cultural Life
Mark Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds. Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America (1990)
Ellen Dubois, Feminism and Suffrage: The Emergence of an Independent Women’s Movement in America, 1848-1869 (1999)
Elliot Gorn, The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America (1986)
Rosalind Rosenberg, Beyond Separate Spheres: Intellectual Roots of Modern Feminism (1982)
Helene Silverberg, ed., Gender and American Social Science: The Formative Years (1998)
Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America (1985)

**Week 4 (Sept. 25) Historicizing Morality, Responsibilities, and Rights**

David Brion Davis, Thomas Haskell, and Thomas Bender (ed.), *The Antislavery Debate: Capitalism and Abolitionism as a Problem in Historical Interpretation* (1992) [Chapters 4, 5, 6, 8, and 10]

**Complementary Reading:**


**Revised version of your first critical essay due today at the beginning of class (Sept. 25)**

**Further Reading:**

**History as Moral Inquiry/Historicizing Morality**


**Rights**


Daniel Rodgers, “Prologue” and “Natural Rights” from *Contested Truths: Keywords in American Politics Since Independence* (1987)

**Week 5 (Oct. 2): Victorian Thought and Culture**


**Complementary Reading:**
Ellis Hanson, “Introduction,” “Perfect Wagnerites,” “In Praise of Shame,” and “Christ for Christ’s Sake,” from *Decadence and Catholicism* (1997), 1-43, 85-107, 229-241. {R}


**Further Reading:**

**Victorian Intellectual Life**
Paul Boyer, *Purity in Print: The Vice Society Movement and Book Censorship in America* (1968)
Paul Carter, *The Spiritual Crisis of the Gilded Age* (1971)
Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (1955)
Alexandra Oleson and John Voss (eds.), *The Organization of Knowledge in Modern America* (1979)
Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (1982)

**Transnational Intellectual and Cultural History**


**Week 6 (Oct. 9) [Yom Kippur]: Meanings of Modernity**


**Complementary Reading:**


**Further Reading:**

*Whither “Modern” in Modern Culture?; Or, Studies in the Transformation of American Culture at the Turn of the Last Century*


Special Issue: “Modernist Culture in America,” *American Quarterly*, 39:1 (Spring, 1987)


Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age* (1982)

Morton White, *Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism* (1949)


**Modernity: Conceptualization and Periodization**


Week 7 (Oct. 16) Philosophy and Political/Social Thought  
Edward Purcell, Jr., *The Crisis of Democratic Theory: Scientific Naturalism and the Problem of Value* (1973)

**Complementary Reading:**  

Neil Jumonville and Kevin Mattson, eds., *Liberalism for a New Century* (2007), any two essays of your choice [LFNC is on reserve at the College Library]

**Further Reading:**  
**Political Thought and Culture, 1890s-1920s**  
Richard Hofstadter, *Age of Reform* (1960)  
Jean Quandt, *From the Small Town to the Great Community: The Social Thought of Progressive Intellectuals* (1970)  
Week 8 (Oct. 23) Pragmatism
Louis Menand, Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America (2001)

Complementary Reading:

Further Reading:
Pragmatism in Historical Perspective
Carrie Tirado Bramen, from The Uses of Variety: Modern Americanism and the Quest for National Distinctiveness (2000)
George Cotkin, William James: Public Philosopher (1990)
John Patrick Diggins, The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority (1994)
Gerald Myers, William James (1986)
________, Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity (1989)
R. Jackson Wilson, In Quest of Community: Social Philosophy in the United States, 1860-1920 (1968)

Second critical essay due no later than today (Oct. 23)
Week 9 (Oct. 30) Moral Economy of Capitalism

**Complementary Reading:**


**Further Reading:**
**Value and Values: Capitalism in American Thought and Culture**
________, *The Morality of Spending: Attitudes Toward the Consumer Society in America, 1875-1940* (1985)

**History of the Self**
Peter Clecak, *America’s Quest for the Ideal Self: Dissent and Fulfillment in the 60s and 70s* (1983)
Christopher Lasch, *Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (1979)

**Week 10 (Nov. 6) Race in American Intellectual and Cultural Life**


**Complementary Reading:**

**Further Reading:**
- **History of Ideas about Race**

**African-American Thought & Intellectual Life**

- Harold Cruse, *Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (1967)
- David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem was in Vogue* (1989)
- ________, *Golden Age of Black Nationalism, 1850-1925* (1978)

**Week 11 (Nov. 13) Political Thought and Culture**

**Complementary Reading:**
James Schmidt, “The Eclipse of Reason and the End of the Frankfurt School in America,” *New German Critique*, 100 (Winter, 2007), 47-76. {*}

**Further Reading:**

**Political and Social Thought, Interwar-Present**
Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-75* (1989)
Daniel Horowitz, *Betty Friedan and the Making of "The Feminine Mystique": The American Left, the Cold War, and Modern Feminism* (2000)
Richard Pells, *Radical Visions and American Dreams: Culture and Social Thought in the Depression Years* (1973)
________, *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age: American Intellectuals in the 1940s and 1950s* (1985)
Week 12 (Nov. 20): High Thoughts and Popular Audiences

**Complementary Reading:**

**Further Reading:**
*Cultural Stratification in Twentieth-Century American Intellectual Life*

**Intellectuals and their Publics**
Christopher Lasch, *New Radicalism: The Intellectual as a Social Type, 1889-1963* (1965)

Week 13 (Nov. 27) THANKSGIVING (No Class)
Week 14 (Dec. 4) Intellectual Biography

Complementary Reading:


Further Reading:
Intellectual Biography/Study of a Thinker's Ideas
John Ansbro, Jr., Martin Luther King: The Making of a Mind (1982)
Howard Brick, Daniel Bell and the Decline of Intellectual Radicalism: Social Theory and Political Reconciliation in the 1940s (1986)
Richard W. Fox, Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography (1985)
Christoph Frei, Hans J. Morgenthau: An Intellectual Biography (2001)
Elisabeth Griffith, In Her Own Right: The Life of Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1984)
Dean Grodzins, American Heretic: Theodore Parker and Transcendentalism (2006)
James Hoopes, Van Wyck Brooks: In Search of American Culture (1977)
Bruce Kuklick, Josiah Royce: An Intellectual Biography (1985)
Waldo E. Martin, Mind of Frederick Douglass (1983)
Robert Richardson, Jr., Emerson: Mind on Fire (1995)

Postmodernism
Lawrence Cahoone, ed., From Modernism to Postmodernism (1996)
David Harvey, The Condition of Postmodernity (1989)
S. Lotringer and Sande Cohen, eds. French Theory in America (2001)

*Third critical essay due no later than today (Dec. 4)*

**Week 15 (Dec. 11) Academe and Beyond: Social Sciences, Humanities, and American Culture**


**Complementary Reading:**

David Hollinger, ed., *The Humanities and the Dynamics of Inclusion Since WWII* (Johns Hopkins, 2006), any essay of your choice [the entire volume is on reserve at the College Library]

“Intellectual History in an Age of Cultural Studies” (Revisited)

**Further Reading:**

**Social/Natural Sciences and Social/Political Thought**


Thomas Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: the American Social Science Association and the Nineteenth Century Crisis of Authority* (1977)


Peter Kuznick, *Beyond the Laboratory: Scientists as Political Activists in 1930s America* (1987)


Katherine Pandora, *Rebels within the Ranks: Psychologists’ Critique of Scientific Authority and Democratic Realities in New Deal America* (1997)


*Annotated syllabi due in my office by 9 a.m. Friday, December 19th.*