

SCRIPPS

THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE • CLAREMONT

CORE A

Fall 2026

Histories of the Present

Scripps College has a long and distinguished tradition in teaching in the Humanities. New students must fulfill their general education requirement in the Humanities by taking the Core Curriculum in Interdisciplinary Humanities (Core). The Core is a sequence of two courses designed to encourage increasingly sophisticated and focused interdisciplinary investigation of a broad range of historical and contemporary issues. Core classes are taught by faculty members drawn from each of the college's academic divisions (arts, letters, natural sciences, and social sciences).

During the first semester, all first-year students take Core A, in which students may select from a wide range of topics. Core A courses will be interdisciplinary, and students will be introduced to different kinds of materials and academic discussions of complex topics. Students will also develop skills in academic writing, including constructing, supporting, and revising arguments.

In the second semester of the first year, students choose from a range of Core B courses which will continue to develop skills from Core A. Core B courses will place greater emphasis on research methods and information literacy. All sections will culminate in an end-of-semester project developed over the course of a significant portion of the semester. The culminating work for Core B sections will be showcased in an end of the semester event. Core B courses will be made available during registration for the Spring 2027 semester.

CORE A Sections

Fall 2026



Section 01: Film and Revolution Across the Americas in the Long Sixties

We will study the mobilization of women from the 20th-21st centuries through major literary texts from a historical & theoretical perspective. Focusing on protest lit will also bring to light the political & cultural frameworks structuring discussions of women's rights in the U.S. Our chronological approach considers the concept of the "waves" of feminism: from early fights for education & suffrage to women's lib/reproductive rights protests to the gender equality movement of the virtual age.



Section 02: Tourism: Past and Present

Tourism- a multi-trillion-dollar industry typically comprising over 10% of global GDP-is one of the oldest forms of recreation and globalization. This course begins by examining the current global tourism industry, reflecting on tourists, their motives, and their impacts. We will then investigate pilgrimage, the first type of tourism undertaken by large numbers of people, focusing on the road to Santiago de Compostela. We will then consider the birth of modern tourism before ending our exploration en route to the summit of Mount Everest. We will examine first-person accounts, popular non-fiction, and scholarship from many disciplines. We will also visit the Getty Center, Trip Advisor's top Los Angeles attraction, reflecting on the objects, the visitors themselves, and the ways visitors interact with the objects, the space, and each other. Along the way, you will reflect on your experiences with tourism, conduct an independent research project, and present your work to academic and general audiences.



Section 03: Are you an animal?

Are you an authentic and autonomous human who can engage in critical thinking and make informed choices, or are you an animal body carrying a brain programmed by corporate bots? In this course, you'll explore the animal-human boundary across time and media and in oral, aural, and visual forms. Topics Include animal rhetoric, vegetarianism, PETA, "human nature," athletes, animal sexuality, bioethics, emotional support animals, human variation and discrimination, circuses, and furies.



Section 04: Poder Popular (People's Power) in Latin America: Indigenous and African Roots in Present-day Governance

This course looks at primary sources to understand how poor people have taken power. It speaks from African and Indigenous epistemologies. These reach deep into the centuries of African Diaspora and Indigenous resistance to white power. Most of the course will draw on film texts, mainly documentaries. Justice in a gendered frame, anti-racism, and cultures of resistance will be explored.



Section 05: Lights, Camera, Murder!

This class is a historical approach to the understanding and construction of criminal personality types and crimes from 18th to 21st-century France and the United States. Through fictional and non-fictional narratives, court transcripts, psychological studies, films, and documentaries, it traces the historical and cultural approach of each nation to justice and, ultimately, seeks to bring to light the definition of human nature upon which each legal system is built.



Section 06: Sound, Music & Power

The course begins by interrogating the terms sound, music, and power, and then examines how the practices of sounding and music deploy power, ideology, compliance and coercion by considering specific examples. We will also investigate how shifts in the sociopolitical, cultural, spiritual and technological arenas have influenced the power of music and how we experience sound. Examples include classical, contemporary popular, Muzak and avant garde music, and ecological soundscapes, among others.



Section 07: LA Rock 'n' Roll Communities

This course explores how rock 'n' roll music produced in and about Los Angeles represents LA realities. How and what "local truths" are perceived and communicated by popular music performers in this area? Over four periods of time and four genres, young people in LA created countercultures and communities. Their music provides insights into specific time periods of localities, and how music was integral to creating identity.



Section 08: Home

This course explores issues related to housing in the US, with particular attention to the reality and perception of homeownership. We will cover questions such as: How did homeownership become associated with the 'American Dream'? How do housing policies contribute to segregation? Does homeownership truly offer a path to prosperity?



Section 09: Schools of Magic

The politics and pedagogy of magic schools, examined through lenses of genre, educational theory, and ethics. From individual tutoring to studying in traditional academies with learned faculties to apprenticing with master-practitioners to undergoing unsupervised deadly ordeals, young adult fantasy fiction explores the gaining and wielding of occult power. We identify contrasting theories of education with reference to students' own real-life experiences in liberal education.



Section 10: 2=3

This course uses Ecclesiastes, the Tao Te Ching, and Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* as lenses to read works that explore the nature of truth, conventions, power, and language itself. It asks how paradigms are established, defended and replaced, and if models of science and wisdom can ever last. Additional texts include Yukio Mishima's *The Sailor Who Fell With Grace From the Sea* and *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed.



Section 11: Forgotten Los Angeles



This course will have a particular focus on the Greater Los Angeles metropolitan region including geographies such as Southern California's Inland Empire. We will examine unknown histories with a focus on racial dynamics, political-economy, and demographic and political shifts across the region.



Section 12: Politics of Belonging

How do human beings make sense of belonging in the modern world? How do political phenomena like nations, states, documentation and migration change the way we experience belonging, and how does the need for belonging shape politics? Through historical, philosophical, literary, audiovisual, and social scientific texts, we will explore different intellectual lenses through which to address these questions, and reflect on what belonging means in Southern California.





Section 13: Stranger Than Fiction



We live in a bewilderingly quick changing world, and it can be hard to make sense of it all. In many ways, reality today seems stranger than fiction. Nonfiction cinema was born in times like these. At the turn of the 19th century, new technologies (including the invention of the moving pictures), new ideas, and new forms of art radically changed the way people lived and saw their world. Ever since the Lumieres' first films in 1895, nonfiction cinema has responded to our need to understand these transformations by observing, representing, and questioning reality. In the words of Wim Wenders, "The most political decision you make is where you direct people's eyes." But nonfiction filmmakers have been doing something even more important: they have constantly invented new ways of seeing, and this course will show you how.



Section 14: Not Your Sunday School Christianity



This course explores aspects of ancient Christianities that largely remain hidden, forgotten, or poorly-known, including Christian slavery abolitionist movements, same-sex "marriages," the celebration of transgender and non-binary saints, matriarchal and matrilineal Christian societies, extensive women's rights developed by Christians, etc. The course challenges contemporary ab/mis/uses of Christian tradition by highlighting how its diversity and complexity can aid constructive projects today.



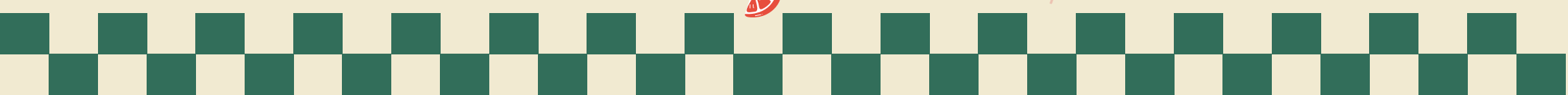
Section 15: Communicating Climate Change

This course will examine science communication with a heavy focus revolving around climate change. Using the reading and films, we will be exploring their roles on how information gets communicated to the wider audience and analyze how they worked on both sides of the debate. Throughout this course, we will be on a journey through the good, the bad, and finally end on the hopeful.



Section 16: Shakespeare Then and Now

We will study Shakespeare's plays by pushing against the common wisdom that they are inaccessible and obsolete. We will read closely to add historical perspective to themes introduced in Core, and imagine how his dramas might come to life in our time. We will consider how these old plays script ideas and questions that we live with today, such as Twelfth Night's festive yet skeptical presentation of gender and love, Henry V's exploration of the strange and bloody pull of nationalism, Othello's treatment of race relations and rhetorical power, Macbeth's raw account of political terror and psychological trauma, and Lear's astonishing, anguished vision of relentless cruelty, abjection, and suffering. (The exact reading list will vary each year.) Secondary readings will be drawn from literary criticism, history, psychology, and philosophy.





Section 17: Drug Policy, Ethics & Innovation

This course provides students with an in-depth perspective into the pharmaceutical industry, particularly the process by which a drug candidate transitions from the laboratory to patient. Discussions will also focus on public policy and ethical debates surrounding the pharmaceutical industry and the commercialization of science.



Section 18: Queer History in Popular Music

The study of Western popular music as a social and cultural system. Focus is on how queer identity intersects with popular music. Lecture, reading and listening assignments aim to examine how queer perspectives in and around popular music in the last 100 years challenge dominant cultural narratives and heteronormative assumptions.



Section 19: Performance, Dance, Social Justice

This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of dance as a vehicle for social change. Dance has long served as a locus for social change work in the United States in times past and is increasingly the case locally, nationally, and globally. This course will bring together students with an interest in investigating and investing in social change work through dance and cross-disciplinary scholarship. Students will engage in discussion, reflection, written work, and strategic choreography based on readings, video viewings, lecture, and from interactions with local choreographers and leaders of social justice movements.



Section 20: After the End of the World

Catastrophes such as natural disasters and invasions have often been taken as signs the end of the world is imminent even as human beings keep surviving to imagine new futures from their aftermaths. This course explores art, literature, and film emerging from such "world-ending" events. We discuss what such works teach us about how life and community are sustained amidst disaster. We also consider how refusing narratives of the world's end might generate more livable presents.