

Conversation Peace: Exploring Identity, Resistance and Social Change through the Music of Stevie Wonder

CRN 85698

Monday 4:00 – 4:50

Dr. Gholneshar Muhammad, World Languages and Cultures

From the 1960s onward, Stevie Wonder has been a prominent voice in music and popular culture, creatively blending musical artistry while bringing awareness to critical social justice issues in society. From the 1960s onward, Stevie Wonder has been a prominent voice in music and popular culture, creatively blending musical artistry while bringing awareness to critical social justice issues in society. Generating interdisciplinary music, over time he has examined intersections of social, cultural and political issues in his lyrics—expressing the importance of community, equity and justice. Threaded through Wonder’s lyrics are multiple ways of knowing and seeing the world. His music helps critical listeners make sense of the sociopolitical context around them.

In this seminar, students will explore the themes of identity, resistance and social change in the musicality and song lyrics of Stevie Wonder, and compare these themes to current events affecting communities across our nation. Students will learn methods of analyzing language and making meaning; they will engage in rich discussion on issues of social justice as they draw upon their own identities, backgrounds, knowledge and experiences. Students will then “read” their own social contexts, which affect their lives, and will identify contemporary issues in need of change. An important part of the course is their opportunity to “write back” to Stevie Wonder’s songs by composing poetry and song lyrics that are akin to Wonder’s lyrics. Toward the conclusion of the course, students will be encouraged to conceptualize ways to improve conditions in society and think through solutions to create a better humanity for all. Students who are interested in music, creative writing, media literacy, and studying social change will particularly find value in taking this provocative class. social, cultural and political issues in his lyrics—expressing the importance of community, equity and justice. Threaded through Wonder’s lyrics are multiple ways of knowing and seeing the world. His music helps critical listeners make sense of the sociopolitical context around them.

Bullsh*t and How to Spot It

CRN 84207

Wednesday 3:00 – 3:50

Dr. Robert Latzman, Psychology

This course provides a brief overview of the importance of critical thinking in today’s fast paced, media intensive world. Critical reading and discussion are important components of the course. Critical Thinking has been defined as: “The use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of a desired outcome. It is used to describe thinking that is purposeful, reasoned, and goal-directed—the kind of thinking involved in solving problems, formulating inferences, calculating likelihoods, and making decisions (Halpern, 2003, p. 6)”. The American Psychological Association (APA) describes these abilities to include the ability to “evaluate the quality of information, including differentiating empirical evidence from speculation,” “use reasoning to recognize, develop, defend, and criticize arguments and other persuasive appeals,” “demonstrate an attitude... of persistence, open-mindedness, tolerance for ambiguity, and intellectual engagement,” and “use scientific principles and evidence to resolve conflicting claims” (APA, 2007, p. 15). This course will help students will become more skilled at:

- Questioning and critically evaluating original source articles and other types of scholarly writing
- Learning on their own from scholarly writings
- Developing and defending with evidence and sound logical arguments their views about intellectual issues

The content of this 1-credit seminar will be derived from weekly readings and class lectures/discussions.

Using Social Media to Bring Awareness to Social Movements

CRN 85701

Monday 12:00 – 12:50

Dr. Tracy McKinney, Educational Psychology, Special Education and Communication Disorders

Social media has changed the manner in which people react to social issues (Gladwell, 2010). In the 1960s, the Woolworth sit-ins grew to seventy thousand protestors across the country without such technology. Imagine the impact, had those four gentlemen had access to technology. In 2001, the people of the Philippines organized a protest of over one million participants via seven million texts over the course of a week (Shirky, 2011).

This course will examine how social media and technology can be used to raise awareness in topics of interest in our communities. We will examine the importance of Internet etiquette and explore the effects of a digital footprint. This course will also use various research articles to provide context as to how social media and technology have served as catalysts in the past. Additionally, this course will highlight the recent ways in which social media has been used for very creative and valuable movements (from 'mailbox' libraries to refrigerators in the park). From there we will work together to research and identify the top three concerns in our own GSU community. We will spend a significant amount of time developing a plan for using social media to bring awareness to our local issue and work to bring about a change.

Behavioral Ethics: Why Good Employees (and students) Make Unethical Decisions

CRN 89277

Tuesday 3:00 – 3:50

Dr. Susan Willey, Risk Management and Insurance

Universities, businesses and other organizations create codes of conduct to define acceptable and responsible behavior within the organization; to articulate shared ethical principles, values and commitments; and to guide decision-making when values conflict. And yet, students and employees sometimes act contrary to these codes, other societal norms and even their own moral standards when they confront an ethical dilemma. Behavioral ethics studies various psychological biases and situational factors, as well as organizational and social pressures to explain why otherwise good people sometimes behave unethically and make bad decisions.

This seminar will first provide you with an opportunity to identify the ethical principles and core values that guide your conduct. Then through readings, short videos, in-class exercises and team presentations on various behavioral ethics concepts, we will examine how blind spots, conflicts of interest, overconfidence, the role we play in a particular situation, and even the way we frame an ethical issue can influence our decisions, leading to conduct contrary to our principles and core values.

Imagining Numbers

CRN 85708

Friday 10:00 – 10:50

Dr. Florian Enescu, Mathematics

We are working with numbers every day of our lives. We easily accept numbers like one, two, three and even negative ones, like minus two. We deal with fractions and more complicated numbers like pi, and we think of them as self-defined entities. Do numbers really exist? If so, what precisely are they? How much are they fiction and how much reality? How did our attitude regarding numbers change over the centuries?

While the Greeks accepted natural numbers, it might be surprising to some to know that their sound mathematical foundation was laid out only in the eighteenth century. However, numbers like the square root of two were not accepted that easily since they cannot be written as the ratio of two whole numbers. A legend says that the Pythagorean who revealed this discovery to members outside the Pythagorean sect was drowned. Eventually humanity expanded their horizons to include all real numbers and later defined imaginary and complex numbers too. Can you imagine what the square root of minus fifteen is? These numbers were discovered in the sixteenth century. How did the people of that era deal with them and why did they find them necessary? Are they all the numbers we need?

This course will discuss the concept of numbers. In the process, we will answer the questions raised above as well as discuss what constitutes a mathematical problem, how was algebra born, the role of analogies in mathematics and how problems about numbers shape mathematics today.

Creativity and Technology

CRN 83067

Wednesday 11:00 – 11:50

Dr. Kevin Hsieh, School of Art and Design

This is a course developed to assist students to explore their potential and creativity in the field of arts and Humanities through technology. This course includes discussions of technologies, videos, interviews, field trips, seminars, workshops, and practices of digital technology in creative ways, such as inter-textual webs, Podcasts, hypertext & hypermedia, blogs, on-line games, apps, and virtual reality. Students will complete two types of assignment: personal video and report on innovative technologies as final project. Students will be introduced to a variety of instructional technologies for their future learning experiences at the GSU and their personal professional development.

Exploring Intercultural Communicative Competence as a 21st Century Skill

CRN 82244

Wednesday 11:00 – 11:50

Dr. Paula Garrett-Rucks, World Languages and Cultures

There is a demand in the workforce for college graduates prepared with 21st century skills to meet the challenges of an increasingly interconnected globalized world. Intercultural communicative competence describes the ability of an individual to communicate effectively and appropriately across cultures, serving as an important 21st century skill. This interdisciplinary Honors seminar uses intercultural films, selected readings, and classroom discussions to explore, develop and assess learners' intercultural communicative competence over the course of the semester. This class is intended for individuals with interests in cultures and languages as a monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual speaker. As a result of this class, individuals will learn how to market their abilities to successfully communicate across cultures while gaining a greater understanding of their own worldviews in U.S. society.

21st Century Leadership

CRN 91982

Monday 9:00 – 9:50

Phillip Ventimiglia, Chief Innovation Officer

Leadership is more important than ever before. The world and the problems we face are more complicated than ever before. Technology innovations have enabled instantaneous communications amongst team thus making the world much smaller. However, there is a void of leaders capable of navigating the complex multi-disciplinary, always-on and globally connected world of the 21st century. Companies and organizations continue to site a lack of leaders as their key talent gap. This class will build upon a foundation of classic leadership principles such as self-awareness with practice-based leadership examples with the context of diverse, socially connected teams. While you will not leave this class immediately ready to be CEO of a Fortune 500 company, you will be able to identify and exercise good leadership characteristics in the context of your academic assignments and other campus activities. This capability, combined with beginning to become self-aware, will allow them to start a life-long journey to develop their own leadership style.

Urban Sustainability

CRN 82461

Tuesday 12:00 – 12:50

Dr. Michael Black, Neuroscience

How sustainable are you? We're looking for students who like to be outdoors, who care about recycling, and want to make a difference. Urban Sustainability focuses on how our choices and the way our social system is designed impact our environment and our lives. Seminar speakers who are leaders in their field will present on different aspects of environmental sustainability in the city. Students will complete one major sustainability project and smaller video and personal journal assignments as part of the class. Come be a part of the change that's coming!

The Science of Sophomores: The WEIRDest People in the World?

CRN 83068

Tuesday 4:00 – 4:50

Ida Martinez, Librarian Assistant Professor, Library Research and Engagement

In 1946, Quinn McNemar, statistician and research methodologist, observed that “the existing science of human behavior is largely the science of sophomores.” In 1986, Slade & Schmitt cited McNemar and noted that “the soundness of behavioral research has regularly been questioned because of its heavy reliance upon college students as experimental subjects.” In 2010, there was concern that “behavioral scientists routinely publish broad claims about human psychology and behavior in the world’s top journals based on samples drawn entirely from Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies” (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan).

Using current and popular topics in human behavior research, students will search scholarly databases for experiments that used college students as subjects. Students will critically analyze articles on their methodologies and findings. In-class exercises will facilitate the discovery of articles for analysis and discussion. We will also cover advanced features of database searching, plagiarism, and APA in-text citation. The final project will be an annotated bibliography in APA style on 8 articles that were discovered during the semester. Students will be given the option to participate in a study conducted by the GSU Psychology Department.

The Business of Law

CRN 83868

Monday 11:00 –11:50

Dr. Ryan Grelecki, Risk Management and Insurance

If it’s true that it’s not what you know, but who you know, how do you make sure the people you need to know *actually* know you? The answer is often networking, but what does that mean and how do you do it? This course will help you discover what it means to network and how to do so in a more effective and authentic way. Utilizing your individual profile created through the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument® (behavior science methodology employing an easy-to-understand four-quadrant model of the brain), you will learn to appreciate and leverage your own personal thinking style and innate communication preferences for the purposes of establishing and developing meaningful professional relationships through in-person and online networking.

Your Brain and Mental Health: When Things Go Awry

CRN 84668

Thursday 12:00 – 12:50

Dr. Anne Murphy, Neuroscience

Mental disorders are defined as health conditions characterized by impaired thinking, mood, and/or behavior. They can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, race, or income, and are among the most common causes of disability. Indeed, in any given year, an estimated 13 million American adults (approximately 1 in 17) are diagnosed with a seriously debilitating mental illness. Mental disorders contribute to a host of problems, including loss of family and employment, pain and suffering, or even death.

Most people do not understand mental illness, resulting in the development of myths, stigmas and stereotypes. This course will help dispel many of these myths and allow the students to develop an understanding regarding the biological, psychological and social factors that contribute to mental illness. Each week, a mental health-related topic (eg. autism, depression, schizophrenia, PTSD) will be presented, with a focus on the basic mechanisms underlying the disease, and how organismic variables (sex/gender/age) can impact the etiology, diagnosis, progression and treatment. Students will read scientific literature on the topic and, working in small groups, present their findings to the class.

The Environment and Your Lungs: Every Breath Counts

CRN 82671

Friday 9:00 – 9:50

Dr. Lynda Goodfellow, School of Nursing and Health Professions

The objective is to introduce students to important and emerging topics related to the environment and lung health. Topics to be covered include asthma, lung cancer, the effects of vapors and gases, asbestos, dust, and other related lung health issues. An emphasis will be placed on highlighting and discussing lung health in the U.S with the primary focus of how our environment impacts our lung health. Finally, new and ongoing initiatives that seek to address the environment and lung health will also be discussed. Students will be evaluated on their participation and contribution to the discussion of the material each week, their completion of a weekly short writing assignment, group discussions, other assignments related to the weekly topic discussed in class. Reading assignments are from weekly news sources such as newspapers, on-line media, and journals.

Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation

CRN 89470

Tuesday 3:00 – 3:50

Dr. Chris Markl, Visiting Instructor of Social Entrepreneurship

Today's global problems require innovative solutions from individuals, nonprofits, businesses, and governments. This course introduces students to global problems and the strategies and processes of social innovation as a means to address them. The course describes how each sector of the economy can contribute to solving global problems; however, its focus is the social enterprise as a vehicle for positive social change. Social entrepreneurship is a growing movement in the nonprofit and business sectors. It couples the resources generated by business activities with the social ambitions of nonprofit organizations. Students in the class will be exposed to the skills and knowledge necessary to work in and build either a for-profit business with a social benefit or a nonprofit organization with a revenue-generating social venture.

Disease and Injury in the Great Outdoors

CRN 84251

Monday 3:00 – 3:50

Dr. Chip Zimmerman, Respiratory Therapy

This course centers around the science associated with the myriad of ways a human being can experience trauma and disease while engaging in outdoor activities. Topics such as hypothermia, hypothermia, poisonous bites/stings, and high-altitude pulmonary and cerebral edema would be addressed, with focus on the physiology associated with each process. *Last Breath: Cautionary Tales from the Limits of Human Endurance* by Peter Stark will be used as an accompanying text.

What is a Good Political Leader?

CRN 85699

Tuesday 3:00 – 3:50

Dr. Mario Feit, Political Science

Political thinkers have been arguing about how to construct an ideal political community since ancient Greece. While it is clear that good institutions contribute to good governance, the character of political leaders makes a key difference. What makes for good political leaders? What character traits do they possess? What should be their moral compass? This seminar will examine a wide range of Western political thinkers ranging from Plato to Martin Luther King, Jr. While not all of the readings favor democratic leadership, the hope is that they can nevertheless teach us something about the kinds of leaders we should turn to in democratic politics. Readings will include Sophocles' *Antigone*, Plato's *Republic*, Christine de Pizan's *Book of the City of Ladies*, Machiavelli's *Prince*, W.E.B. DuBois's *Souls of Black Folk*, as well as DuBois's essay on "The Talented Tenth," and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham City Jail." All course readings will be available for free – either from online sources or from library reserves. Two essay exams considering competing views on political leadership discussed in the seminar will be required, and perhaps a visit to either the King Center or the Carter Center might substitute for one class meetings.

Animal Mind Reading

CRN 82459

Wednesday 10:00 – 10:50

Dr. David Washburn, Psychology

Animals can appear curious, playful, sad, or contemplative. They can learn and remember, communicate, solve problems, and show other evidence of cleverness. But can we ever know what (if anything!) animals are really thinking? In this seminar, we will use critical-thinking skills and the tools of science to explore what is known about animal minds, and what questions remain to be answered. The skills of interpretation, analysis, evaluation and explanation developed in this class are applicable to every major. However, the topic should be particularly engaging for any student who is interested in understanding why animals—from the pets that provide us with companionship, to the animals in nature that share our ecosystem, to the research animals that are studied in laboratories—behave the ways they do, and upon what basis we can make inferences about the animals' thoughts and feelings. Students will learn about the history, methods, challenges, ethics, questions, findings, and issues of animal-minds research. A wide range of species will be discussed, but with particular attention to the monkeys and language-trained apes studied at Georgia State University's Language Research Center. Critical analysis of the ways that animal minds are portrayed by the media (e.g., television, movies, comics, online) will also be used to highlight misconceptions in the ways that nonhuman animals are similar to, or markedly different from, humans. The class will also work together on a service project designed to improve the physical and psychological wellbeing of animals (e.g., at a shelter or zoo).

Schools in the City: Urban Teaching and Learning

CRN 82458

Tuesday 10:00 – 10:50

Dr. Caroline Sullivan, Middle and Secondary Education

This seminar will examine historical and contemporary understandings of urban education and the analysis of critical sociocultural and policy-related factors in conjunction with teaching and learning in urban contexts. Students will undertake an interdisciplinary approach to defining, analyzing, and evaluating topics relevant to urban school systems and its teachers, students, and administration. Students will further consider their position and participation in education not only as students but also as citizens of a community where education is central to democratic ideals, economic development, and personal/professional fulfillment.

Language, Race and Power in the U.S.A.

CRN 82457

Tuesday 1:00 – 1:50

Dr. Catherine Amanti, Early Childhood and Elementary Education

The old adage referenced in the title of this course would have us believe that language exerts power over us only when we allow it to; that “words will never harm me” if I simply ignore them. But applied linguists, sociolinguists, and linguistic anthropologists have demonstrated that language has material aspects. It shapes the way we think and behave. Nowhere is this more evident than in language-based discrimination, which takes place not only at the personal level but also at the institutional level. On a personal level, bias and stereotypes about the correct or “appropriate” way to speak run rampant and are reinforced in the media and everyday social interactions. On an institutional level, employers, judges, juries and even educators can and do discriminate against individuals based on their “accent” and other linguistic traits. In this seminar, students will have the opportunity to explore the role language myths and ideologies play in reinforcing social inequality; in particular in the manner in which ideologies about race and language intersect. This will be done through an examination of the linguistic practices of Barack Obama, 44th President of the United States and first Black person to hold the office of president. Students will also have the opportunity to apply ethnographic methods to the study of language variation. In addition, as part of this seminar, students will explore in depth a topic of interest to them that is related to race, language, and power.

Free Speech on Campus

CRN 83849

Monday 3:00 – 3:50

Dr. Rob Baker, History

Free speech is a cornerstone of American democracy. University campuses are supposed to be places where ideas about polity and society range freely. So why do some conservative pundits claim that universities stifle free speech? Why have liberals claimed that their political freedom on campus is under attack? This course will explore the history of free speech on campus by looking at specific calls for speech restriction. We will look at First Amendment jurisprudence, distinguish college from high school campuses, and establish a framework for how speech claims are weighed against other rights. No right, whether to political speech, to the free exercise of religion, or to the ownership of guns, exists in a vacuum, and the limits established on these rights at law all have a history. But the question of free speech goes much further than the law. American thinkers from Thomas Jefferson to W.E.B. DuBois to Christopher Hitchens have all, at one point or another, commented on the “sacred” right of free speech but also the real world conditions under which speech exists. We will end with the final question: how should speech be regulated on Georgia State University’s campus?