

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH  
Graduate Program for Cultural Studies  
SPRING 2011 OFFERINGS

; PLEASE NOTE THIS BULLETIN IS TWO PAGES LONG !

**CLST 2050: CULTURAL STUDIES COMMON SEMINAR**

*A Brief History of Imagination and Common Sense*

RA Judy

Thursdays 4:00-7:00

CL 237

In numerous works, Ibn Sina (Avicenna) renders the Greek phrase *aisthesis koine*, which translates in Latin as *sensus communis*, and we call common sense, as “*al-has al-mushtarak*” and “*bantâsiya*.” The latter of the two being an Arabic transliteration of what Aristotle termed *phantasia*, designating imagination. The identification of *sensus communis* with imagination is already suggested in Aristotle’s *De Anima*, although in a cursory manner that has generated considerable speculation about the significance of the Stagirite’s concept of the mind, especially so in the past two decades among theorists in cognitive sciences. Yet, Ibn Sina’s handling of the connection occurs in a tradition of substantial elaboration by Arabic-language thinkers that was already more than a century old when he entered the field, in which common sense/imagination played both a constitutive and a reflective role in what we today would call social formation, but which they designated as *umma*, in the sense of an extensive continuum that included political institutions. This sense of common sense as socio-political becomes a key concept in modern Western thinking, a crucial example of which is Giambattista Vico’s use of *sensus communis* in both his *Universal Law* and *New Science of the Common Nature of the Nations* to designate social sense, a sense of propriety in dealing with our fellows, what the French call *savoir faire*, driving all forms of human civilization. In this seminar, we will begin to excavate the genealogy of this notion of common sense, with a particular focus on its relationship to the elaboration over time of theories of imagery and mind, as well as aesthetics in order to begin some careful consideration of formation of the human emergent now a day. Among the texts to be engaged are the works of Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd (Averroes) Aquinas, Machiavelli, Spinoza, Hobbes, Shaftesbury, Hume, Vico, Kant, Coleridge, Benjamin, Arendt, and McLuhan.

Category A:	Category B:	Category C:	Category D:
<i>Text and Theory</i>	<i>Disciplines &amp; Intellectual Movements</i>	<i>Cultural Antagonisms &amp; Cultural Crises</i>	<i>Designated Courses</i>
<b>COMMRC 2220</b> Readings in Critical Theory: Culture and Technology  Olga Kuchinskaya	<b>CLST 2008</b> <b>(2 credits)</b> Special Topics in Cultural Studies: Successful Societies  Jonathan Arac	<b>FRENCH 2600</b> Revolution Not Yet: French Political Philosophy after 1968  Giuseppina Mecchia	<b>ENGLIT 2649</b> LITERATURE OF ADOPTION  Marianne Novy
<b>GER 3814</b> Literary and Cultural Modernism: Parables of Modernity  Robert Buch	<b>COMMRC 2226</b> Media & Cultural Studies: Popular Media btwn Political Economy & Representation  Brent Malin	<b>HIST 2773</b> Scientific Racism  Seymour Drescher & Alejandro de la Fuente	<b>FRENCH 2106</b> Christine de Pizan: Poetry, Prose, and Politics  Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski
	<b>ENGFLM 2483</b> SURREALISM AND CINEMA  Adam Lowenstein		

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<b>RELGST 3370</b> Death and the Afterlife in Buddhist Cultures  Linda Penkower	<b>ENGLIT 2650</b> Literature, Landscape, and Architecture  John Twynning	<b>MUSIC 2990 (1 credit)</b> Independent Study—Music, Race, and Place  George Lipsitz & Andrew Weintraub	<b>GER 2144/3144</b> Intellectual History: Lessing to Freud  John Lyon
<b>RUSS 2113</b> Bakhtin's Aesthetics  Johnathan Platt	<b>HAA 2400</b> Special Topics: Modern Supernatural: Art, Photography, and Gender in the Late 19 <sup>th</sup> & Early 20 <sup>th</sup> Centuries  Elizabeth Otto	<b>RUSS 2642</b> Russian Cinema: Perestroika and Beyond  Nancy Condee	<b>GER 2887/3887</b> CONTEMPORARY GERMAN FILM: (Un)popular Culture  Randall Halle
<b>RUSS 2306</b> Dostoevsky: The Major Novels  Vladimir Padunov	<b>HAA 2401</b> Special Topics in Contemporary Art: Theories of Contemporaneity  Terry Smith	<b>SOC 3398</b> Topics in Social Movements: Social Movement Communities and Coalitions  Suzanne Staggenborg	<b>SPAN 2444</b> Genetic Criticism & Latin American Texts  Daniel Balderston
	<b>ENGLIT 2591</b> British Cultural Studies  Jane Feuer	<b>SPAN 2462</b> Latin American 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Topics: "Women Writing" Between Law and Nature  Áurea María Sotomayor-Miletti	
<b>ENGLIT 2066</b> Interrogating Canonicity  Colin MacCabe	<b>WOMNST 2400 (1 credit)</b> Gender Theory Today  Judith Halberstam & Todd Reeser	<b>COMMRC 2203</b> Philosophy and Rhetoric  Lynn Clarke	

**Requirements for PhD certificate in Cultural Studies:**

- Common Seminar
- One course from each of categories A, B, C
- One D course in the student's home department
- One D course *outside* the student's home department
- Foreign-language proficiency (as required by the home department or in consultation with the Program)

**Requirements for MA Certificate in Cultural Studies:**

- Common Seminar
- One course from category A or B
- One D course in the student's home department
- One D course *outside* the student's home department or from category C
- Foreign-language proficiency (as required by the home department or in consultation with the Program)

For detailed information on the Cultural Studies MA and PhD certificates, please see [www.pitt.edu/~cultural](http://www.pitt.edu/~cultural) or write to  
 Giuseppina Mecchia, Director, Graduate Program for Cultural Studies ([mecchia@pitt.edu](mailto:mecchia@pitt.edu))

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