

Proposal to the University Curriculum Committee
Freshman Inquiry Course

I. Cover Sheet

Course title	Power and Imagination
Date first offered	Fall 2006
Sections per year	4-5
Statement of theme/topical area	Symbols of power—political, economic, cultural—permeate our lives and shape our sense of individual and group identity. These identities are created in cultures in which roles, hierarchy, and authority are communicated through signs and mechanisms imbedded in our images, myths and stories. Where do these shared signs come from, and how do they shape the ideals, values, and power relationships within society? This course will explore the interwoven relationship between domination, resistance, and empowerment through stories of power represented in art, science, and politics. An examination of historical and contemporary case studies will consider how art and science both form and are in turn shaped by public perception. Special attention will be paid to the role of media and technology in constructing and manipulating common images, defining ideas of the self, and reclaiming misrepresented identities.

Signatures of participating faculty:

Evguenia Davidova
 Name (typed) Signature Date

Alan MacCormack
 Name (typed) Signature Date

Sarah Wolf Newlands
 Name (typed) Signature Date

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II. Course Narrative

A. Statement of theme/topical area (no more than 200 words):

Symbols of power—political, economic, cultural—permeate our lives and shape our sense of individual and group identity. These identities are created in cultures in which roles, hierarchy, and authority are communicated through signs and mechanisms imbedded in our images, myths and stories. Where do these shared signs come from, and how do they shape the ideals, values, and power relationships within society? This course will explore the interwoven relationship between domination, resistance, and empowerment through stories of power represented in art, science, and politics. An examination of historical and contemporary case studies will consider how art and science both form and are in turn shaped by public perception. Special attention will be paid to the role of media and technology in constructing and manipulating common images, defining ideas of the self, and reclaiming misrepresented identities.

B. Learning objectives specific to this theme:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Explain and discuss how perception shapes knowledge, from the neurological understanding of perception to theories on the social construction of reality.
- Identify disciplinary approaches to knowledge in art, science, communication studies, sociology, and other fields as well as how they communicate that knowledge.
- Understand how individual and social group identities shape perception and how these identities are in turn perceived.
- Examine variations in access to power affected by factors such as gender, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual identity, ability, religion, and age.
- Critically assess the production, dissemination, and control of knowledge by powerful societal forces such as the state, corporations, academia, religion, the scientific community, and the media.
- Critically evaluate the pivotal role of media in propaganda and the manipulation of knowledge.
- Explore how individual and group knowledge is affected and transformed throughout history by those in power through perceptions of body, such as sex, sexuality, gender, race/ethnicity, (dis)ability, and body image.
- Explain and discuss historical and contemporary attitudes towards individuals and groups who challenge accepted beliefs and hierarchies of power.
- Understand ethical frameworks that shape or limit the actions of citizens and institutions within power structures.
- Develop possible solutions for social and political issues that personally concern them.
- Present the results of independent and group research to peers through diverse means of communication, especially writing and oral and/or visual presentation.

C. Assessment of student learning (specific to theme):

Assessment of student learning in this theme will be based on regular informal writing assignments such as journals and online dialog papers; graded research projects and essays;

observed development of skills in articulating and mediating different viewpoints; measured evaluation of theme-specific knowledge; assignments requiring analysis, interpretation of quantitative, linguistic, graphic and other subject matter. Students' grades will be apportioned as follows: group projects (including community-based learning) 25%; essays 25%; portfolios 25%; informal assignments and class participation 25%.

D. Description of methods to ensure coherence of theme across participating faculty:

The "Power and Imagination" team will meet weekly during the year to continue course development, exchange ideas and experiences, share new project ideas, materials, and teaching strategies to enrich the ongoing class experience, and collaborate on assignment development. The team will utilize a common core of readings and assignments and each team member will visit the others' classes regularly. In addition to the weekly meetings, a longer meeting will be scheduled at the end of each term to review goals, assess student needs and progress, and integrate the results of this reflection into the next term.

E. Interdisciplinarity of theme: The "Power and Imagination" team consists of one biologist (MacCormack), one poet (Trimble), one historian (Davidova), and one artist (Newlands). The team is currently looking to add an additional scholar to represent at least one of the following fields: communication, political science, anthropology or sociology.

F. Relation of course to other University Studies offerings (cohesion, ties to future learning): The "Power and Imagination" curriculum is designed to support the intellectual, ethical, and personal growth of entering students. We will explicitly address questions of how individuals and society develop perspectives and ideas that can have a significant impact on communities. Our studies will include examples from the natural sciences, the arts, and the social sciences.

Specific linkages between the theme and Sophomore Inquiries and their Clusters include but are not limited to the following:

The Power and Imagination theme will easily link to a large number of SINQs & Clusters (it would be simpler to list the exceptions). Consideration of the imposition of and resistance to imperialist mythologies and the post-colonial emergence of national identities will lead naturally into the various area clusters (Africa, Asia, Latin America and Middle East, as well as the American and European clusters). Media Studies is an obvious continuation of the theme, and our consideration of the evolution and maintenance of social structures would inform Family, Women's, and Community Studies and the Sexualities SINQ. The critical analysis of media manipulation, scientific reasoning, evidence and bias, and the ethical constraints on advocacy and propaganda (particularly as regards environmental issues) will be highly relevant to the Environmental Sustainability; Freedom, Privacy and Technology; Global Environmental Change; Healthy People/Healthy Places; Knowledge, Rationality and Understanding; Morality; and Science clusters. The close examination of the interdependency of the intellectual community and the greater civic society will inform student understanding of PSU's mission "Let Knowledge Serve the City." Our community-based learning work will start our students on the path toward their Senior Capstone. The close examination of the interdependency of the intellectual community and the greater civic society will inform student understanding of PSU's

mission “Let Knowledge Serve the City.” Our community-based learning work will start our students on the path toward their Senior Capstone.

G. How this theme will address the University Studies Goals:

University Studies Goal	Representative Assignments	Assessment Plan
Communication: Writing	All terms: weekly informal writing assignments (journals, creative and critical exercises); additional individual and group-based written essays and formal reflections. Winter or spring term: one 7-9 page research paper.	UNST writing assessment; theme-specific pre- and post-course evaluations graded according to UNST writing rubric. Students will also incorporate peer evaluation.
Graphics	See Numeracy section; graphical component will be included. Students will also be asked to analyze and convey concepts non-verbally in various projects, incorporating visual manifestations of ideas.	Graphical analysis will be incorporated in the context of the coursework. Ability to create, interpret and articulate graphs, and connect to context and significance.
Oral Communication	All terms: presentations to class of project results; role playing; class discussions; individual creative presentations; group presentations.	Organization, ability to communicate appropriately to a specific audience, articulation of main points, ability to connect course concepts to subject matter.
Numeracy	Fall: Quantitative analysis of language in contemporary political speeches. Winter: Exercise applying numeracy as tool in achieving objective measures to support claim, and how numbers can be manipulated for propaganda.	Numerical analysis will be incorporated in the context of the coursework. Students will be encouraged to include quantitative information in their written work and class presentations, and assessed on their ability to connect to context and significance.
Visual Communication	All terms: group collage projects exploring the dominant themes of the term. Photography project Fall: Presentation analyzing the way power is symbolized in specific artworks. Fall: Symbolic analysis of imagery in political advertising. Winter: Create “advertisements” that communicate, question, or challenge dominant cultural myths.	Effective use of representations in their written and oral presentations. Ability to apply and interpret symbolism, and connect visual images to values, context, and ideological significance.
Group process	All terms: group collage projects exploring the dominant themes of the term to give form to shared perceptions, culminating in a collective end-of-year piece. Fall: group research and presentation	Individual and group written reflection on the following points: collaborative process, design and achievement of common purpose, negotiating controversy with civility, and consciousness of self-

	<p>comparing a university major's approach to knowledge with what's valued in a career field and expectations of citizenship.</p> <p>Spring: Community-based learning group project exploring examples of contemporary activism.</p>	<p>commitment and citizenship.</p>
Computer Literacy	<p>All terms: Assignments will sequence towards progression from basic skills training such as Web searches, email, and Excel, to building and incorporating PowerPoint and Web pages into their presentations. Winter and spring terms will incorporate the electronic portfolio.</p>	<p>Effective use and relevance of technology in class presentations. In addition to the UNST rubrics, portfolio assessment includes understanding balancing the designer's vision with audience needs in functionality, readability, and fulfillment of content expectations.</p>
Inquiry and Critical Thinking	<p>Fall: Comparative analysis of national myths and facts surrounding immigration. Fall: Critical analysis of how media shapes perception of contemporary political issues. Winter: Inquiry and analysis comparing and contrasting historical propaganda to possible contemporary issues. Winter: written analysis of historical revisionism in Japan, former USSR, Germany, USA. Spring: Analyze, for accuracy and misrepresentation, the representation of a political issue as presented by opposing parties.</p>	<p>Responding critically to peer writing on rough drafts; demonstration of ability to differentiate between perception, opinion and reasoned inquiry in writing and discussion (UNST critical thinking rubric).</p>
Diversity and Human Experience	<p>Fall: Reflection on different approaches to education in other cultures. Winter: Research project comparing symbols of power across cultures. Winter: analysis paper examining representations of gender, race, and other constructions that impact status. Research paper: deconstructing a myth.</p>	<p>Oral presentations, written assignments, and written reflections to assess student understanding of different perspectives and values, what constructs their own perspective, and how difference is perceived, constructed, or manipulated by the dominant culture.</p>
Ethics and Social Responsibility	<p>Winter: Written research project examining societies' assumptions of moral authority to define the welfare of other groups. Spring: Community-based learning group project exploring examples of contemporary activism. Spring: Debate Google's decision to censor in other countries.</p>	<p>Written reflection, oral presentations, group papers, and in-class discussions demonstrating understanding of personal responsibility to and impact of actions on individuals, communities, and larger society.</p>

III. Course Schedule and Topics

Term	Topical Outline	Faculty
First Term	<p>Term theme: “The Power of Perception”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Freire’s “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” moves us to explore how ideas and personal experience shape one’s perception of education •How institutions categorize knowledge, which represent dominant values. Case study: compare how the university’s categorizing of knowledge compares with what’s valued in a career field and expectations of citizenship. •Plato’s Allegory of the Cave as philosophical conception of what it means to perceive and to know. •Neurological basis of perception and how the mind interprets its subject: the accuracy of eyewitness. •How technology impacts/changes one’s perception of the subject •How perception (individual and social) shapes knowledge, and is embodied in art and science (as beginning examples). •Analysis and method: How science attempts objectivity in a subjective context. Case study: Primatology and the introduction of women in the field as example of perception’s impact on scientific objectivity. •Peter Berger’s theory of the social construction of reality. •John Berger’s discrepancy between perception of words and images. •How metaphor and symbols convey cultural perceptions. •Comparing uses of perspective in painting and visual media. •Perception of images: How artists convey subjective perceptions/interpretation in a social context. Student projects will include taking on differing perspectives and points of view on the same subject. 	All
Second Term	<p>Term theme: “The Power of Manipulation”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Societies’ explanations of world view and order: Political, biological, and theological explanations for human hierarchy. • Individual and social images and manipulations of the body as reflections of power myths: the social construction of gender, race, ability, class, and other identity frameworks. • Examples of the power of these mythologies: The use and misuse of scientific knowledge in the political realm. Explore historical example of Social Darwinism and inquire into contemporary examples. • Founding mythology and the construction of national images. • Propaganda and technology in totalitarian regimes and democratic societies. • Imperialism as exportation and enforcement of national images, including its imposing images of Other. (E.g. Orientalism) • The medium is the message: how media shapes the content of communication. • Revisionism: rewriting history to reflect national images, and the resulting silencing of the conquered. Case study: compare the rewriting of historical texts to contemporary texts. • Comparison of scientific understanding of nature (ecology) to cultural mythologies of nature (anthropocentric). • Ecological imperialism & contemporary politics of environment. 	All

Third Term	<p>Term theme: "Empowerment"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical thinking and inquiry as means to recognizing and unwrapping mythologies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How alternative information sources can bypass manufactured information but can also perpetuate misinformation. Case study: World Wide Web. • Technology's role as a tool of both repression and liberation. Compare historical examples with contemporary. • Unwrapping mythologies: nation, imperialism, and European/Euro-American dominance. Case study: Jared Diamond's "Guns, germs and steel" argument. • How marginalized or subordinate peoples reclaim identity from images projected by dominant society. Example: post-colonial literatures. • How diverse perspectives in different fields can expose, resist, and change mythologies. Case studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science as a means for calling manipulation to task: fact checking, methodology, common "language" across nations. • Art as witness to truth, and as reclamer of identity: political art, poetry, and song. • Political/social movements' role in reclaiming identity: student movements, civil rights movements. • Interdependence of these categories: e.g. John Trudell and the American Indian Movement; American Civil Rights movement and cultural revolution; modern resistance movements. • Ethical advocacy: the ethical boundaries in promoting one's perspective. (Rhetoric, civil disobedience, terrorism) • Grassroots vs. Top-Down: The role of the self, community, conformity, rebellion. 	All
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NOTE: This topical outline will change with the addition of new faculty.

IV. Preliminary Reading List: selections from the following may be assigned

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. New York: Random House, 1992.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London and New York: Verso, 1983.

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. New York/London: Penguin Books, 1977.

Bordo, Susan. *The Male Body: A New Look at Men in Public and Private*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999.

Bordo, Susan *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

Boorstin, Daniel. *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*. New York: Harper & Row, 1964.

Buck, Pem Davidson. "Constructing Race, Creating White Privilege." *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*. 6th ed. Ed. Paula S. Rothenburg. New York: Worth Publishers, 2004. 31-35.

Cash, Johnny. "Song of the Patriot." *The Essential Johnny Cash*. Sony/Columbia, 2002.

Conniff, Richard. "Rethinking Primate Aggression." *Smithsonian*. August 2003. 60-67.

Cronon, William, ed. *Uncommon Nature: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1996.

De Waal, Frans. *Chimpanzee Politics: Power and Sex Among the Apes* (revised edition). Baltimore/London: John Hopkins University Press, 1998.

De Waal, Frans. "Silent Invasion: Imanishi's primatology and cultural bias in science." The first Imanishi-Itani Memorial Lecture of Primatology, Kyoto, 18 February 2002. Springer-Verlag 2003. EBSCOhost 3 May 2006.

Diamond, Jared. *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. DVD. National Geographic Society, 2005.

Dirks, Nicholas, Geoff Eley, Sherry B. Ortner eds. *Culture, Power, History. A Reader in Contemporary Social History*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994.

Forche, Carolyn, ed. *Against Forgetting: Twentieth Century Poetry of Witness*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1993.

Foucault, Michel. "Docile Bodies." *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977.

Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.

Gans, Herbert. "Deconstructing the Underclass." *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*. 5th ed. Ed. Paula S. Rothenburg. New York: Worth Publishers, 2001. 80-85.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 2000.

Ginsberg, Alan. *Selected Poems*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.

Goffman, Erving. "Stigma and Social Identity." *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963.

Gould, Stephen Jay. "The Golden Rule – A Proper Scale for Our Environmental Crisis." *Environmental Ethics: Divergence and Convergence*, ed. Susan J. Armstrong & Richard G. Botzler. New York: McGraw Hill, 1993.

Gregory, R.L. "from *The Intelligent Eye*." *Reclaiming the Imagination*. Ed. Ann E. Berthoff. Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook Publishers, 1984.

- Haggard, Merle. "Okie from Muskogee." *Okie from Muskogee (live)*. Capitol, 1969.
- Haraway, Donna. *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science*. New York/London: Routledge, 1989.
- Hockney, David and Philip Haas. *A Day on the Grand Canal with the Emperor of China or surface is illusion but so is depth*. VHS. Milestone film and video, 1991.
- Hughes, Langston. *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*. New York: Knopf, 1994.
- Igliori, Paola. *Stickman: John Trudell*. Inanout Press, 1994.
- Johnson, Allan G. *Privilege, Power, and Difference*. Toronto: Mayfield Publishing Co., 2001.
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Loeb, Paul Rogat, ed. *The Impossible Will Take A Little While*. New York: Basic Books, 2004.
- Loftus, Elizabeth F. "Creating False Memories," *Scientific American*, Sept. 97, Vol. 277, Issue 3.
- Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*. Constitution Society. 25 May 2006
<<http://www.constitution.org/mac/prince00.htm>>.
- Malcolm X and Alex Haley. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Ballentine Books, 1994.
- Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media*. Dir. Mark Achbar and Peter Wintonick. With Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman. 1992. DVD. Zeitgeist Video, 2002.
- Matsumoto, David Ricky. "Some General Comments about Cultural Influences on Perception." *People: Psychology from a Cultural Perspective*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishers, 1994.
- McLuhan, Marshall and Quentin Fiore. *The Medium is the Massage*. New York: Bantam Books, 1967.
- Mikhail, Dunya *The War Works Hard*. Trans. Elizabeth Winslow. New York: New Directions Publishing, 2005.
- Miller, Jean Baker. "Domination and Subordination." *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*. 5th ed. Ed. Paula S. Rothenburg. New York: Worth Publishers, 2001. 86-93.
- Moyers, Bill and Joseph Campbell. *The Power of Myth*. Betty Sue Flowers (ed.). New York: Doubleday, 1988.

Olds, Sharon. *The Gold Cell*. New York: Knopf, 1987.

Orwell, George "Politics and the English Language." 25 May 2006.
<<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/orwell46.htm>>.

Orwell, George. *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1949.

Pinker, Steven. *How the Mind Works*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1999.

Plato, *The Republic*

Perkins, Margo V. *Autobiography of Activism: Three Black Women of the Sixties*. Jackson: U Press of Mississippi, 2000.

Ramachandran, V.S. *A Brief Tour of Human Consciousness: From Impostor Poodles to Purple Numbers*. New York: Penguin, 2004.

Rank, Otto. *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero: A Psychological Exploration of Myth*. Trans. by Gregory C. Richter and E. James Lieberman. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

Ryan, William. "Blaming the Victim." *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*. 5th ed. Ed. Paula S. Rothenburg. New York: Worth Publishers, 2001. 572-581.

Sankichi, Toge. "Poems of the Atomic Bomb." *Hiroshima: Three Witnesses*. Ed. Richard H. Minear. New Jersey: Princeton U. Press, 1990.

Schama, Simon. *Landscape and Memory*. New York: A.A. Knopf, 1995.

Scott-Heron, Gil and Brian Jackson. "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised." *The First Minute of a New Day (Original Recording Reissued)*. Tvt, 1998.

Schick, Theodore and Lewis Vaughn. *How to Think About Weird Things: Critical Thinking for a New Age*. Mountainview: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1999.

Smith, Huston. *The World's Religions*. New York: HarperCollins, 1993.

Sontag, Susan. "'The Image World' (from *On Photography*)" *Susan Sontag Reader*, New York: Vintage Books, 1982:349-371.

Sontag, Susan. *Regarding the Pain of Others*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003.

Tucker, Amy. *Visual Literacy: Writing About Art*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2002.

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Delacorte Press, 1994.

Wallace, Ruth A. and Alison Wolf. "Peter Berger: The Social Construction of Reality." *Contemporary Sociological Theory*. 4nd ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1995. 262-269.

Wendell, Susan. *The Rejected Body: Feminist Philosophical Reflections on Disability*. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Zinn, Howard. *A People's History of the United States*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.