

PUBLIC HUMANITIES (PUBHM-GA)

PUBHM-GA 1001 Introduction to the Public Humanities (4 Credits)

This course is organized around some of the foundational concepts and histories of what has come to be called the Public Humanities, as well as its constitutive limitations. Throughout the semester we will consider major U.S. and Euro-centric institutions and discourses through which texts and objects are produced and circulated, and generate critical analysis and creative imaginings, by and for the public. We will seek to understand the central concepts that have given meaning to the dominant liberal construction of the public, including notions of the public sphere, representation and universality. At the same time, we will pursue Boaventura de Sousa Santos' question, does the global South need a concept of the public sphere? This course takes up Sousa Santos' question, while specifying it through the limits to the public sphere and to the Public Humanities revealed by the question of Palestine. Along with the limit case of Palestine, we will take up a series of other concepts and histories offered by the global South, open borders, transformative justice, abolition, anti-colonial and autonomous media production, and radical labor organizing that offer alternative approaches to collaborative research and study. In understanding the public as a specific (even colonialist) category rather than general or universal category, we will also be able to reflect on many other forms of agency, identity, organizing, and histories that may provide a different approach to the transformation and the future of the humanities. Some framing questions of this course will include: How might our traditional definition of the humanities as reflective and interpretive inquiry create conditions under which Palestine and other non-sovereign or non-statist peoples do not appear to exist? What might an anti-disciplinary humanities rooted in anti-colonial histories look like? What names might it go by? Readings, authors and artists will likely include: Daedalus Summer 2022 issue, Mary L. Mullen, Kathleen Woodward, documents from the BDS movement, Saree Makdisi, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Nancy Fraser, Judith Butler, Sophia Azeb, Fred Moten, Jeffrey Sacks, Abdaljawad Omar, Nur Masalha, Diana Allan, Denise Ferriera da Silva, Larissa Sansour, Basel Abbas and Ruanne Abou-Rahme, Vivian Sansour as well as anonymous graffiti on separation walls.

Grading: GSAS Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

PUBHM-GA 1101 Case Studies in the Public Humanities (4 Credits)

This course aims to provide depth and a durational engagement with site specific projects in the public humanities and to introduce students best-practices for developing sustainable projects and reciprocal community-engagement. Students will analyze and engage with specific sites or cases in order to understand the different temporalities and outcome expectations, the ethics of community relationship building that guard against extractivism, and other challenges faced by academic and non-academic collaborations. When possible, the option of centering new or ongoing student work as one of the site-specific case studies is encouraged. When appropriate, examples that take students out of the classroom should be a part of the course.

Grading: GSAS Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No