Instructor: Dr. Kutluğhan Soyubol – kutlughan.soyubol@boun.edu.tr

Course Description: This is an interdisciplinary course designed to interrogate some specific themes and discussions within the history, anthropology, sociology and philosophy of religion and science. During the course, we will try to chart our way through some big picture ideas on science, religion and culture, and focus on a number of specific issues, including but not limited to, the discussions of objectivity, nature, modern medicine, occult, psy-sciences, evolution, biopolitics, ethics, agency, expertise, geography, social construction, and affect. The course aims not to prioritize any specific discipline or period, nor it does follow any chronology. It instead attempts to think across disciplines thematically and intends to encourage students to chart their own ways beyond disciplinary demarcations. The course is open to senior and graduate students only. Consent of the instructor is required.

Course Requirements:

1) Participation: Weekly presentations, attendance, and class participation: 30%
This is a seminar course in which active participation is crucial. Students are thus expected to read the required materials in advance of class meetings and come to the class ready to engage in weekly discussions. Every week a small group of students will be assigned to briefly present hence start the discussion for one of the required readings. The presentations should be approximately ten minutes and address the following questions: What are the author’s main arguments? What is the theoretical framework that these arguments are built on? And the evidence used to support them?

2) Two critical response papers (3-4 pages, double spaced) written on texts presented in class: 20%

3) Final Paper: A literature review paper (12-15 pages, double spaced, including references) on one of the weekly themes of the seminar: 50%

Schedule:

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. Necessary announcements will be made in the classroom.

Week 1: Introduction to the course

Week 2: Demarcations, Conflict, Commensurability


**Week 3: Objectivity, Subjectivity, Social Construction**


**Week 4: Nature, Science, Modernity**


**Week 5: Mapping/Unmapping Science**


**Week 6: Occult, Science, Magic**


**Week 7: Brain, Selfhood, Power**

Fernando Vidal, “Brainhood, Anthropological Figure of Modernity” History of the Human Sciences 22/1 (2009), pp. 5-36.


**Week 8: Islam, Psy-sciences, the “Imaginal”**


**Week 9: Ethics, Morality, Politics**


**Week 10: Biopolitics, Expertise, Turkey**


**Week 11: Evolution, Genesis, Hermeneutics**


Richard Dawkins, Rowan Williams, and Anthony Kenny, “The Nature of Human Beings and Their Ultimate Origin” Debate, Oxford University, 23 February 2012.


Daniel C. Dennett and Alvin Plantinga, *Science and Religion: Are They Compatible?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), chapters 1 and 2 or preferably the whole debate.


**Week 12: Sex, Gender, Sexuality**


**Week 13: Species, Agency, Affect**


**Suggested Readings:** Dipesh Chakrabarty, ”The Climate of History: Four Theses,” *Critical Inquiry* 35/2 (2009), pp. 197-222.


**Week 14: Conclusions**