Faculty Lectures

REUNION I/COMMENCEMENT WEEKEND
May 14 – 17, 2015

Friday, May 15
9 – 10 a.m.

Mapping Paris at Smith: How do we Teach with New Technologies?
Hélène Visentin, Professor and Department Chair, French Studies

How new technologies transform the way we teach at Smith? How can new technologies enhance the learning experience? We will explore these questions by using a digital mapping interface to reconstruct the multiple layers of Paris: how the city of Light changed across time and in space?

About Hélène Visentin
Hélène Visentin holds both Canadian and French citizenship. She earned a B.A. and an M.A. from the Université de Montréal and holds the title of Docteur de l’Université de Paris-Sorbonne (Paris 4). Professor Visentin’s research focuses on the history and the aesthetics of the performing arts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly urban and courtly spectacles. She recently has developed a keen interest in the field of Digital Humanities by creating a GIS mapping project on Paris to explore and study the complex and multilayered urban space of the City of Light in her course FRN 230: "Paris, a Multi-Layered City." Visentin is also involved in various online and blended learning initiatives at Smith and within the Five Colleges, and she is working on an online platform targeted to students heading to study in Paris.

‘Peace In Our Time?’ Israelis, Palestinians, and Elusive Formula
Justin Cammy, Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and Comparative Literature,
Past-Director, Program in Middle East Studies

About Justin Cammy
Justin Cammy is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and Comparative Literature. He is also a member and past director of our program in Middle East Studies. In 2013-14 he spent a year in Israel as the the Webb Family visiting scholar at Tel Aviv University. This past fall he guided a Smith alumnae group on a study tour of Israel, and addressed the failure of the Middle East peace negotiations at a gathering of the Smith Alumnae Club of Paris in April 2014. Between 2011-2013, he served as co-director of our Global Engagement Seminar in Jerusalem, which allowed Smith students to negotiate the religious, cultural, and political complexities of this fascinating city. Cammy’s intellectual interests are reflected at Smith in courses on such varying topics as Yiddish culture, Jewish humor, and Israeli history. In 2006 he was awarded Smith’s Sherrerd Prize for Distinguished Teaching.
Water, Food, and Climate: Leadership for a Sustainable World  
**Andrew J. Guswa**, Director, Center for the Environment, Ecological Design, and Sustainability  
Professor, Picker Engineering Program

Smith educates leaders, and no global issues are deserving of leadership more than environmental design and sustainability. As our world approaches a population of 9 billion, we face challenging questions regarding the provision of clean water, healthy food, and a habitable climate. Guswa will highlight some of these pressing issues and will articulate how a Smith education is preparing our graduates to meet these challenges in the coming decades.

About Andrew Guswa  
Andrew Guswa earned his bachelor of science in engineering from Princeton University, and his master of science and doctoral degree from Stanford University. In 2001, Drew Guswa joined the faculty at Smith College to help launch the Picker Engineering Program—the first engineering program at an all-women’s college. In 2009, he was named as the director of Smith’s new Center for the Environment, Ecological Design, and Sustainability (CEEDS). In this capacity, Guswa is working to provide students with opportunities to integrate knowledge across disciplines in support of environmental decisions and action.

How Poem Means  
**Ellen Doré Watson**, Lecturer, English Language & Literature, and Director of the Poetry Center

What are people writing these days? Why don’t poems rhyme anymore? Why are contemporary poems so “difficult”? I’ll give a quick glimpse of the wide spectrum of contemporary poetic modes, and we’ll look at some poems closely — not as locked boxes to be cracked open, but as little worlds to enter. What kinds of music do they make, as they create shapes of meaning in our heads and hearts? Bring your questions and responses and we’ll have a lively talk!

About Ellen Doré Watson

Ellen Doré Watson is the author of five collections of poems, most recently, Dogged Hearts. Among her honors are a Rona Jaffe Writers Award, fellowships to the MacDowell Colony and to Yaddo, and a National Endowment for the Arts Translation Fellowship. Watson has translated a dozen books from the Brazilian Portuguese, including Ex-Voto, poems by Adélia Prado. She serves as editor of poetry and translation at The Massachusetts Review and core faculty of the Drew University MFA in Poetry & Translation. Here at Smith, she teaches creative writing and directs the Poetry Center.
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Saturday, May 16
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Bringing Leonardo to Life
Rodger Blum, Professor and Department Chair, Dance

About Rodger Blum
Rodger Blum received an MFA in choreography from the University of California, Irvine and a BFA in ballet performance from North Carolina School of the Arts. Before coming to Smith College he was ballet master/soloist for the original Raleigh Dance Theatre (now Carolina Ballet) and chair of the dance program at the Performing Arts School in Louisville, Kentucky where he was given an excellence in teaching award from the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. His choreography has been presented by various companies on the east and west coasts of this country as well as in Belgian, Spain, Portugal and Germany. Active in the field of dance and technology, Rodger’s dance/theatre video “Embrace” was shown at the FAIF International Film Festival in the Mann Chinese Theatres, Hollywood, CA. This fall he received the Sherred Award for Outstanding Teaching at Smith College.
A Brief Architectural Tour of Smith Campus

John Davis, Alice Pratt Brown Professor of Art, Director, Smithsonian Internship Program

John Davis will lead an architectural tour of Smith, discussing some of the influential buildings on campus.

About John Davis

John Davis earned his A.B. from Cornell University and M.A., M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees from Columbia University. John Davis offers courses covering the history of art and architecture in the United States, from the seventeenth through the mid-twentieth centuries, and he also directs Smith College’s Smithsonian Internship Program through the Program in American Studies. He is the author or co-author of four books and museum catalogues, as well as several dozen articles and essays. His most recent book (co-authored with Sarah Burns) is American Art to 1900: A Documentary History (2009), and his co-edited Blackwell Companion to American Art is due out in 2015. Current research interests include American exceptionalism, American artistic connections to Les Vingt, the National Academy of Design's architectural aspirations, William Merritt Chase's exhibition strategies, and the landscapes of Kenyon Cox.

Reshaping the brain to improve your memory

Adam Hall, Professor, Biological Sciences, Neuroscience & Biochemistry

Professor Hall will discuss recent neurobiological research on the mechanisms underlying learning and memory in the human brain. Given the increasing numbers with memory disorders in an aging population, this talk will also explore ways through which memory can be enhanced.

About Adam Hall

Adam Hall is a professor of biological sciences, member of the biochemistry program and former director of the neuroscience program. He received his undergraduate and Master’s degrees in pharmacology at Gonville & Caius College, University of Cambridge, UK and his PhD in Biochemistry at Imperial College, University of London, UK. On the Smith faculty since 2001, he teaches courses in introductory neuroscience molecular neurobiology, and seminars on anesthesia and biochemical bases of neurological disorders. At present, his lab has three anesthetic-related research projects underway: a search for novel and less toxic general anesthetics, an investigation of binding sites for anesthetics on targets in the mammalian brain, and finally research into a potential mechanism for anesthetic neurotoxicity in neonates.
Faculty Lectures

REUNION II
May 21 to 24, 2015

Friday, May 22
9 – 10 a.m.

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Talking about sleep: understanding your need for sleep  
Mary Harrington, Tippit Professor in Life Sciences

Mary Harrington will discuss the history of sleep research and will give a summary of current scientific understanding of your need for sleep. New research will be described that highlights how sleep plays an important role in memory, as well in clearing the brain of toxins. Surprisingly, parts of your brain can fall asleep even while you are awake! This talk will wrap up with hints for getting more sleep, more restorative sleep, and coping better with insomnia.

About Mary Harrington
Mary Harrington is the Tippit Professor in Life Sciences. She is the Director of the Neuroscience Program and teaches in the Psychology Department. Mary received her PhD from Dalhousie University in 1986 and has been teaching at Smith College since 1987. She teaches undergraduate courses in Alzheimer’s Disease, experimental methods in neuroscience, and a seminar “Neuroscience in the Public Eye”. Her research specialty is in the brain regulation of circadian rhythms and sleep. She is researching negative health impacts associated with disruption of circadian rhythms, and the neurobiology of chronic fatigue. Her research is supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.
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About Floyd Cheung
Floyd Cheung earned his B.A. at Whittier College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in English at Tulane University. Floyd Cheung is associate professor of English language and literature and of American studies. He is also a member of the Five College Asian/Pacific/American Studies Certificate Program, for which he served as the founding chair. In 2012, he was awarded with the Kathleen Compton Sherrerd, ’54, and John J. F. Sherrerd Prize for Distinguished Teaching.