WOMEN AND AMERICAN MEDICINE
(Stony Brook Manhattan)

Although it may seem that gender and racial equality are no longer a problem in the field of medicine, this is a very recent development. Until the past few decades, medical school officials denied admission to women because of their sex, and kept the few they admitted out of the field of obstetrics and gynecology. Medical schools excluded men as well, if they belonged to the wrong race or religion. A woman had little choice in how she would give birth: hospitals offered heavy sedation and little else. The presence of a tiny malignant lump in her breast resulted in maiming surgery. A 50-year-long study of African-American males with “bad blood,” causing much unnecessary suffering and death, did not end until 1972.

We will examine the history of women and men as patients and practitioners in American history. The course will include a field trip to the AIDS Service Center of New York City. Students will write one paper, 5-7 pages long, and take one essay examination.

BLACKS IN MOVIES AND FILMS
(Stony Brook Manhattan)

From Birth of a Nation to Avatar, race, ethnicity and gender have played important roles in the history of American film and culture. This course examines the diverse ways in which these constructed identities are represented in American cinema. We will focus on their development alongside the rise of the American film industry; the popular depiction of enduring stereotypes and resistance to these representations through deconstructions, counter-imagery and counter-narratives. Our goal is to enhance media literacy, better understand the ways in which film both “reflect and refract” ideologies of race, ethnicity and gender, and to recognize the impact of these cinematic portrayals on our society.

THE HISTORY OF NEW YORK CITY
(Stony Brook Manhattan)

This course evaluates New York’s ascendency as America’s financial and cultural capital. While the class will quickly discuss New York’s place in American society during the antebellum period, this course will mainly be concerned with Gotham’s tremendous growth following the Civil War, its eventual decline during the late-1960s and 1970s, and its spectacular “comeback” since the late-1980s. The “winners” and “losers” in each of these shifts will be heavily examined. We will discuss New York’s distinctive features as well as analyze the ways in which the Big Apple can be used as a guide to understanding modern urban society. Main topics will include, but not be limited to: immigration, ethnicity and race, Progressivism and bossism, youth culture and gangs, spatial changes, housing and employment, the “Great Migrations,” suburbanization, urban renewal and urban liberalism, community action/activism, urban decline and abandonment, local reclamation, hip hop, the fortress city, privatization and the rise of neo-liberalism, gentrification and the return of the new urban pioneers.