

CHICAGO CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY THEORY

Department Website: <https://ccct.uchicago.edu>

ABOUT THE CHICAGO CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY THEORY

The Chicago Center for Contemporary Theory (<https://ccct.uchicago.edu/>)—known as 3CT—is a space for the critical discussion and reimagination of social, political, and cultural processes in the world today.

The shared query that drives the center is, *How do we theorize the present?* 3CT supports work that interrogates systems of power and value, that proposes methods and frameworks for making sense of recent events and ongoing transformations, and that demands that theory be relevant to the world we live in. In doing so, we foster an interdisciplinary community of scholars, students, and practitioners who produce new forms of theory that help to illuminate both what is and what could be.

Founded in 2004 by seven faculty members from the Divisions of the Social Sciences and the Humanities, our collective has grown to include 21 fellows, enabling imaginative collaborations across the disciplines. Our intellectual activities include ongoing projects, lectures, teach-ins, book salons, conferences, publications, and teaching. 3CT's general programming is open to all students, and fellows regularly engage with undergraduates through collaboration and pedagogy.

Courses taught by 3CT fellows and related to the concerns of the center are signified by our subject code, CCCT. These include undergraduate- and graduate-level courses cross-listed with various departments in the Social Sciences and Humanities. View a full list of current and past 3CT courses (<https://ccct.uchicago.edu/teaching-and-student-engagement/#courses>).

Topics in Critical Theory: 3CT Capstone

3CT's annual capstone courses offer advanced undergraduates the opportunity to think critically about theory and to link classic and recent texts to different domains of contemporary life. Recent capstone courses have included *Atmospherics* (<https://ccct.uchicago.edu/courses/topics-in-critical-theory-atmospherics/>), taught by 3CT fellow Joseph Masco; *Magical Politics* (<https://ccct.uchicago.edu/courses/topics-in-critical-theory-magical-politics-2/>), taught by 3CT fellow William Mazzarella; and *Repurposing "Ideology" for the Present* (<https://ccct.uchicago.edu/courses/topics-in-critical-theory-repurposing-ideology-for-the-present/>), taught by 3CT director Lisa Wedeen.

Paris Center: Contemporary Critical Theory

The College's Contemporary Critical Theory study abroad sequence in Paris is offered in partnership with 3CT. This biennial program, taught by 3CT fellows, explores prevailing themes in contemporary critical theory; for example, the thematic focus in Winter Quarter 2024 was on crisis, empire, and ideology. Independent reading and class discussions are complemented by a series of visiting speakers and group excursions. The next program will run in Winter Quarter 2026. Learn more and apply (<https://study-abroad.uchicago.edu/programs/paris-social-sciences-critical-theory/>).

FUTURE CAFÉ

Future Café is a student-organized discussion series that provides the opportunity and space for undergraduates to collectively imagine utopian possibilities and long-term futures. What sort of ideas appeal in the present moment? What projects are already underway? What is neo-futurism, or futurology? What is the role of imagination in shaping politics, the environment, and social life? How might radical futures be brought into being? Previous topics of conversation include the future of boredom, care, the sacred, speculative design, kinship, and human rights. Future Café events are open to all undergraduate students at the University of Chicago, and no prior knowledge of the topic of discussion is required, nor is there "homework."

Learn more about Future Café and view upcoming events (<https://ccct.uchicago.edu/series/future-cafe/>)

Join the Future Café mailing list (<https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/subscribe/futurecafe/>)

