

The following descriptions are for topics courses that are being offered through the Honors College in the Fall 2015. All other descriptions are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog.

COMMUNICATIONS

Academic Writing

GSW 1110H (3) 9:30-10:20 MWF; Jordan

Course # 76077

In recent years, we have seen an explosion in our visual culture, as computers and digital technology make the number of design choices in print advertisements, commercials, billboards, films, video games, and magazines almost infinite in their complexity and variety. This course is meant to interrogate these design choices and the rhetorical expression of visual culture through two avenues – written reflective writing, and visual/aural/written texts that students will compose.

Academic Writing

GSW 1120H (3) 2:30-3:45 TR ; Rzicznek

Course # 70836

“Relax! It’s No Big Deal. Or Is It?”

What does relaxation mean? How do we foster a state of relaxation in a society that prides itself on multitasking and never stopping—even on the weekends? Think about it. Sundays used to be a day for lounging; now they are a catch-up day—or better yet a work-ahead day—for homework, laundry, cooking, cleaning, yard work, etc. As a class we’ll explore the medical, economical, cultural, and personal benefits of relaxation through rigorous academic and critical research, including scholarly articles, relevant documentaries, and various relaxation techniques—all of which we’ll synthesize and use as support in several argumentative essays.

The majority of sources used throughout the course will come from scholarly journals, well-established magazines and newspapers, and popular books on the subject of relaxation. Also, I plan on incorporating several relaxation techniques so students may use their own first-hand experience with the content as primary source support. My goal is to incorporate all of these different sources to help students experience stress relief beyond the classroom. Ideally, I want this class to encourage students to question their values, and it’s my hope that they will apply what we learn in class to their daily lives in order to reduce their stress levels and experience the benefits of relaxation.

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Forensic Neuroscience

PSYC 4400H (3) section 1001, 12:30-1:20 MWF; Cromwell

Course # 77804

Current legal operations already rely on psychological research and science in both criminal and civil litigation. For example, intent is a prerequisite of criminal responsibility, motive is used to identify likely suspects, and mental illness or cognitive/emotional ability can be a defense to crime or a mitigating factor in a death penalty determination as well as a reason to deny a parent custody of a child. In the recent past, there has been substantial progress in behavioral neuroscience; a development not lost on the legal system. Brain imaging techniques—for example functional and structural Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Positron Emission Tomography--have become part of all phases of legal proceedings and have forced courts to reconsider the use of behavioral science and the role of juries in courtroom decision-making. The goal of this course is to enable students to understand current and the potential future influence of behavioral neuroscience evidence in legal operations. The introductory part of the course will provide students with a very basic introduction to the judicial system and courtroom evidence and to behavioral neuroscience concepts and methods that are crucial to legal operations, such as motivation, aggression, empathy, deception and morality. Students will then be asked to critically evaluate the use of brain imaging and other quantitative neuroscience

techniques as evidence in representative legal cases. Basic neuroscience readings will be initially used to examine the relationship between neuroimaging and psychological functions such as motivation, intent or deceit. The course will also involve an examination of the potential or past uses of neuroscience information in the judicial system and evaluate these as case studies. Students will be expected to make presentations related to the basic science research and the case studies. Presentations will be followed by class and instructor comments. Performance evaluation will be based on students' oral presentations (40%) and the written term paper (60%) developed from their presentations. Through this course, students will learn the basic concepts in behavioral neuroscience, medical imaging and scientific legal evidence, and will develop the ability to critically evaluate neuroscience data in forensic and legal settings. This course is open to all undergraduate students and will be of particular interest to students with interest in law, neuroscience, criminology and psychology. Background in science or biology is helpful but is not required.

Evolutionary Psychology

PSYC 4400H (3) section 1003, 11:30-12:45 TR; Gordon

Course # 77534

The theories of natural and sexual selection have become increasingly valuable models within psychology for understanding, explaining, and predicting human cognition, emotion, and behavior. Evolutionary psychology is a way of thinking about any topic within psychology. In this course, we will examine how the adaptive problems faced by our hunter-gatherer ancestors interact with cultural and situational input to shape the current psychological landscape of humans. Topics to be covered include: (a) status and dominance, (b) conflict, aggression, and war, (c) mating strategies, mate preferences, and mating conflict, (d) helping, cooperation, and punishment, (e) the function of emotions (e.g., jealousy, anger, depression), and (f) parenting, friendship, and sibling relationships. Sex differences in many of these domains will be discussed. Pre-requisite: PSYC 1010.

SPECIAL SEMINARS

Reading Stephen King in the Digital Age, 2000-present

HNRS 3000 (2) 9:30-11:15 T; Diehl

Course # 77531

This course will examine King's "contributions to the American literary landscape" by focusing on his writings since the turn of the new millennium. Specifically, we will examine the ways in which King has responded to shifts in the publishing industry in the early twenty-first century, both in the form and in the content of his writings. We will look at a variety of types of writing that are unique to the digital age—including an installment novel that was only made available on King's website, as well as a Kindle book about a deadly Kindle device. We also will look at more conventional forms of fiction (from the short story to the novella to novel and the comic book) and consider how new media is changing the landscape of horror fiction (and specifically the work of Stephen King). Over the semester, we will read select works from this period. Each work was selected not only because it is representative in some way of this new era in King's evolution as a writer, but also because it engages the topic of this seminar: "Reading Stephen King in the Digital Age."

Reacting to the Past: America's Founding: The Constitutional Convention

HNRS 3000 (2) 11:30-1:15 T; Schocket

Course # 77533

This course will primarily consist of the preparation for, playing of, and discussion of *America's Founding: The Constitutional Convention*. This is a game in the Reacting to the Past (RTP) curriculum. RTP is a curriculum that introduces students to major ideas and texts through a role-playing format to replicate the historical contexts in which these ideas acquired significance. Students spend several weeks of traditional class time learning the historical context and exploring the relevant primary documents. At that point, students learn by taking on roles, informed by classic texts, in elaborate games set in the past; they learn skills—speaking,

writing, critical thinking, problem solving, leadership, and teamwork—in order to prevail in difficult and complicated situations.

Modern Humans: an Evolutionary Perspective

HNRS 3000 (2) 9:30-10:20am MF; Larsen

Course # 77532

The topic is us – humans as organisms. The purpose is to consider the evolutionary heritage that spawned the collection that is modern humanity; diverse in biology, economy, and culture. This course will begin with the role of climate change in the emergence of modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) as hunter-gatherers and the unique adaptations that allowed them to successfully disperse across the globe. This course will consider the transition to farmers and to city-dwellers – how these lifestyles placed us into environments that we did not evolve in and have only marginally adapted to. Viewed through the lens of evolution, we will consider the implications to health and wellbeing, and the contributions (compensatory and otherwise) of social evolution.