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

***COMMUNICATIONS***

**Academic Writing**

**GSW 1120H (3)  11:30am-12:15TR; Rzicznek Course # 15872**

**“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. These essays will culminate to create a portfolio of academic writing.

The class will begin with the reading and evaluating of critical texts centered on the theme of relaxation, which will serve as background into the subject matter. Using these articles students will write an argumentative-based critique. For the next essay, students will synthesize the sources used for the Critique essay with additional scholarly sources in order to craft a multiple-source essay that deals with relaxation. Topics that could be generated from the theme of stress and relaxation could be speculating why Western cultures experience such high levels of stress; speculating why relaxation is difficult in Western cultures; speculating why yoga, meditation and other relaxation techniques have risen in popularity; the value of relaxation and is it economically beneficial; or the validity of Western and Eastern medicines joining forces, such as hospitals offering yoga therapy to cancer patients.

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. I will be introducing several relaxation techniques so students may use their own first-hand experience with the content as primary source support.

**Academic Writing**

**GSW 1120H (3) 1:00-2:15 TR; Zemanski Course # 11437**

**Technology: The Great Equalizer?**

**Course Overview**

This course promotes critical thinking and argumentative writing about the nuances of modern technology and its role as a social and cultural system. This course will focus on the predicament of the democratization of modern technology. Many scholars refer to the democratization of technology to describe the process by which more and more people are gaining access to the many facets of technology. Though the democratization of anything would seem to operate as a leveler, it is important to question the impact of this process: What are the social and cultural implications of a democratization of technology locally, nationally, and globally? In what ways does access to technology and sharing of information through virtual communities provide its users a platform to subvert hegemonic social and cultural norms, to eliminate barriers to education and information, and to empower individuals and groups? Or, does this virtual social system work to reinforce and further spread hegemonic social and cultural constructs? Does it feign a sense of community while deepening physical and emotional isolation? We will investigate these potential ironies and examine the complex ways technology affects lives.

**Essays**

Essay #1: Critiquing a Scholarly Article

Essay #2: The Multiple Source Essay

Essay #3: The Pre-Search Project

Essay #4: The Researched Essay

**Texts and Supplies**

The course will require *Kirszner & Mandell: The Brief Wadsworth Textbook* as a textbook (largely for MLA Format concerns). This course is a laptop section, allowing us to use Canvas and several other technological amenities.

***SPECIAL SEMINARS***

**Jane Austin in Adaptation**

**HNRS 4000 (2) 9:30-11:15 T; Diehl Course # 11884**

Interest in Jane Austen’s work has endured for over 200 years. Her novels and other works have sold in the millions. Her works have inspired a treasure trove of film, television, and print adaptations. Indeed, writing in January 2014, *American Conservative* contributor Micah Mattix suggested: “After Shakespeare, Jane Austin is the most widely recognized literary figure today, and in the past thirty years, there has been a seemingly endless stream of TV adaptations, films, books, and events devoted to the English novelist.” This special topic seminar will examine the topic of Austen in Adaptation. The course will be subdivided into four units, each of which will correspond to one of Austen’s major, canonical novels. Within each unit, we will pair the canonical novel with one or more contemporary (i.e., late twentieth or early twenty-first century) adaptation(s). The adaptations will span from fiction to film and web series and will be primarily American in origin. Our study of Austen in Adaptationalso of necessity will include a consideration of key texts in the field of adaptation studies, including: Linda Hutcheon’s *A Theory of Adaptation*; Christa Albreacht-Crane and Dennis Ray Cutchins’ *Adaptation Studies: New Approaches*; Thomas Leitch’s *Film Adaptation and Its Discontents: From Gone with the Wind to Passion of the Christ*. At the center of our investigation into the enduring literary legacy of Jane Austen will be a series of interrelated questions regarding the politics and poetics of adaptation and the literary and socio-cultural significance of Austen and her work.

**Creativity: Development and Practice**

**HNRS 3000 (1) 4:00-4:50 T; Fasko Course # 16010**

The purpose of this seminar is two-fold: (1) to stimulate an understanding of, and appreciation of various forms of creativity, and (2) to develop creativity and creative thinking skills. The main reading is written by James Kaufman and is entitled *Creativity 101*. This reading will be supplemented by reading research on several supporting topics including the development of creativity. Initially, the concept of creativity, will be introduced, including creative thinking skills and dispositions via specific presentation of research on creativity, with discussion and with hands-on group activities. A presentation about a specific area of interest chosen by the student will be the culminating activity.

**Graphic Storytelling**

**HNRS 4000 (3) 6:00-9:00 W; Williams Course # 16204**

This is a workshop devoted to graphic storytelling. Students are expected to create a graphic story and make significant progress toward getting the story and illustrations on paper. NOTE: No special training in art is necessary. In order to prepare students for creating their graphic stories, I will assign several preliminary exercises, such as creating illustrations for already-existing poems, doing an add-and-pass, and creating zines. Much of the artwork exercises will be done in class. We will practice visual techniques that graphic storytellers use to push a story along. We will read Making Comics: Storytelling Secrets of Comics, Manga and Graphic Novels by Scott McCloud. We will also read and discuss a number of graphic stories, such as Epileptic, Ghost World, Blankets, The Freddie Stories, The Crow, Fun Home, and 32 Stories. Students will need to purchase a sketchbook, pencils, and markers. This is a "hands-on" class, not a computer class. Students may work on a computer if they know how, but no instruction will be given in creating computer art. Once we have a good foundation, we will move on to the workshop part of the class. Students will submit their work to me and to their peers for a critique.