

Special Topics Course Descriptions
Spring 2026

Undergraduate

CJ 340 ST: Human Factors in Cybersecurity (with Mark Beaudry)

There are cybercrimes committed by individuals or networks of people who prey upon human victims and can be detected and prosecuted by criminal justice personnel. Human decision making plays a substantial role in the course of an offense, the justice response, and policymakers attempts to legislate against these cybercrimes.

SO 299 EL ST: Sex, Identity & Urban Space (with Lihua Wang)

Explore how human sexualities intersect with capitalism, and uncover the social, ethical, political, and economic forces that shape our sexual lives. In this course, we dive into five fascinating areas: the rise of floating free labor and the split between sex for procreation versus pleasure in the 19th century; the creation of “red light districts” and the laws that governed them; the growth of gay bars and the pink economy, which amplified LGBTQ visibility and activism; the commercialization of sex under neoliberalism in post-industrial societies; and the ways neoliberalism continues to reshape gender and sexual relationships today. Using American and European case studies, we will also explore contemporary issues, including the experiences of sex workers and LGBTQ communities during COVID-19, and the emerging impacts of artificial intelligence on sexual and gender diversity.

Graduate

CD 987 E1 ST: Communication, Learning, and Neurodiversity: A Trauma-Informed Framework (with Frances Poteet)

Neurodivergent individuals may have heightened vulnerability to trauma due to communication challenges and sensory overload. They are constantly misunderstood and do not get their needs met. In this course, we will take a closer look at various causes of trauma and their influence on the brain and body. We will also review conditions associated with neurodiversity (e.g., autism, ADHD, dyslexia, etc.), and the ways neurodivergent individuals think, learn, communicate, and perceive the world. Evidence-based tools will be presented to provide trauma-informed care that validates and supports needs and enables individuals to achieve their fullest potential. Strategies from other disciplines will be incorporated.

ED 971 EL ST: Teaching Global Children’s and YA Literature in English Language Arts and Social Studies (with Sara Young)

This is a 3 credit online class that will meet synchronously through zoom on some Wednesdays 6:00-8:30 and asynchronously other weeks. We will read several global children's and Young Adult books and explore strategies to teach them in English Language Arts and Social Studies classrooms. Text selections will be based on grade level teaching and/or interest.

EN 998 ST: Explorations in Rhetoric and Writing Studies (with Matthew Ortoleva)

This course will give you broad disciplinary foundations in the intersecting (often melded) fields of study which are rhetoric and writing studies. The study of rhetoric dates back to Ancient Greek society with Aristotle often credited with its foundation (“But wait! What about the sophists?). Scholars have studied rhetoric throughout

time and into the contemporary, digital age. At the same time, applying principles of rhetoric to the study of writing is a relatively new approach (for most of history, rhetoric was applied to acts of speech). This approach has dominated education over the past century.

We'll examine theories and practices of rhetoric and rhetorical narratology in an effort to better understand how humans persuade each other and their motivations for doing so. We'll seek to apply rhetorical thinking to our own professional and personal lives and seek out questions of relevance for consideration in today's fragmented, digitally-mediated, complex society.

Teachers will find that the examination of rhetoric will open up new pedagogical possibilities, while non-teachers will readily find applications of rhetoric to their daily professional lives (We all try to persuade each other—including ourselves—all of the time).

HI 990 E1 ST: 20th Century Europe (with Erika Briesacher)

Contact instructor for course description

HI 990 EL ST: History of Warfare (with Michael Gesin)

This course examines the global development of warfare from ancient to modern times, focusing on how military ideas, technologies, and institutions moved between societies and shaped history. Rather than studying conflicts in isolation, we explore how cultures adapted to new challenges and innovations through both competition and exchange. Students will analyze key turning points, patterns, and legacies that reveal how warfare has influenced—and been influenced by—human civilization.