

Experimental and Topics Course descriptions Spring 17

COMPUTER INFO SYSTEMS

CS 402 Advanced Computing Topics Seminar

PREQ: CS 213 or CS 180

This course will provide an exploration of web design using JavaScript, JQuery, HTML5, and CSS3. Each student will develop a website integrating the features of these tools. In addition, we will discuss responsive design, the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

ENGLISH

CIN 370 001 and 002 Youth Cultures & Global Cinema

This course is a focused study of a general theme: youth cultures and global cities. We approach films not solely in terms of the history of cinema nor only in terms of technical details, or film theory, although students will learn and employ basic vocabulary of film studies and categories of cinema studies. Rather, we study films primarily as documents of youth culture, as explorations of the ways in which youth occupy urban and non-urban spaces, how they experience the local and the global, and how their identities and lives are represented in media, old and “new.” The films will function as case studies enabling discussion of major issues: youth self-fashioning and identities, family, tradition and social change, violence. We explore dimensions of youth culture in cinema, including technology, media, fashion, design, space, limit-testing behavior, music, cars, pets, jewelry, tattoos, and drugs, gang membership, gender and space, class and poverty, coupling, sex, love and marriage, education or attitudes to conventional schooling, rebels and the establishment, employment and the future life prospects or chances for young people.

CIN 376 001 Food and International Film

Combining gastronomic and visual culture, this course offers an analysis of contemporary international film, interpreting the films on a parallel track with other media, particularly literature and cultural theory. The course investigates the power of food to function as an important sustainer of human life and as a source of pleasure. It also emphasizes the power of business connected to the production and distribution of food to shape the way we live in and experience the world. The course also explores the codes of food consumption--how food works in ways that are not directly about maintaining life so much as they have to do with elaborating cultural ideas. Selected films, which students must agree to see in their entirety outside the class and on schedule, will represent many different international cultures and a variety of genres and styles. Along with associated readings, the films will address a range of current debates in fields including sociology, cultural studies and anthropology; in some cases students will do

independent research papers on specific topics. The films and readings will provide the basis for the class to explore issues concerning food production, distribution and consumption, including issues of fair trade, branding, fashion (including dietary fashions and fashions of dieting), anorexia, bulimia, obesity, veganism, and environmentalism (and therefore questions of sustainability and ethical use of consumable nature). Inspired by such contemporary preoccupations, this course investigates the political dimensions of our relationship to food in addition to examining how food binds us to people and places near and far.

The AIMS of the course are to enable us to make some initial conjectures about how youth cultures inhabit the spaces—both urban and non-urban—at the twilight of the 20th century and the dawn of the 21st century. What are the special challenges, problems, and joys of living during the last quarter of a century as expressed in cinema?

LIT 391 001 Post Modern Fiction & Film

Postmodern fiction—spanning from the late 1960s to the turn of the century—experiments with the form and conventional narrative of modern literature, spotlights morally questionable antiheroes, and explores controversial social theories. Students will analyze the purposeful pastiche and playful trends of postmodern literature and film, including historical re-imaginings, metanarratives, creative textual adaptation, autobiographical author integration, among other characteristics of this contentious literary movement. Authors and directors that we'll study include but are not limited to Michael Cunningham, Bret Easton Ellis, Spike Jonze, Rick Moody, Christopher Nolan, Susan Orlean, and Thomas Pynchon. Most of the texts used in this section of LIT 391 will be novels and novellas (as well as short stories, nonfiction essays, and graphic novels) that have been adapted to film, so that we can discuss the visual storytelling and multimedia techniques of these narratives, alongside groundbreaking postmodernist theoretical texts.

LIT 392 001: Topics in Literary Themes: Revisions and Retellings

Our contemporary cultural landscape is littered with “adaptations” of previously told tales. Depending on our geographic, cultural and temporal specificity, we may not even be able to identify the “original” tales that have been reworked for our consumption. We can never, according to arbiters of what counts as a narrative, tell a completely new story, but the question remains “What do we do with these narratives that take up the ‘told already’ to ‘tell again’”? We would perhaps be better served by asking why a particular narrative is taken up and retold in a specific historical moment. Analyzing retellings within contemporary popular culture, this course investigates revisions and reimaginings of previously told tales and asks students to get beyond the question of whether or not there is an original text that should be preserved, but to critically engage with what are not always obvious politics of revision, translation, and adaptation. Be forewarned: This course is not solely about the adaptation of literary texts into film as you will be expected to think across and participate with media

platforms in ways that exceed exegetical frameworks that limit adaptation to text and film. Students will read across multiple genres—folk tales, poetry, novels, films, graphic novels, games, spoken word performance and music as well as familiarize themselves with current debates in “adaptation theory” and move quickly to working with cultural texts. Assessment will be based on critical readings of primary and secondary texts, class participation and a final paper and project.

FINANCE

FI 399 001 and 002 Equity Research

PREQ: FI 320 or FI 306

This course teaches students to value companies and equity securities, utilizing the top-down, fundamental valuation approach. The emphasis of the course is on the practical application and integration of finance and accounting concepts to valuing equity securities. The course requires extensive use of financial media, resources available in the Trading Room, and databases available through Bentley Library website. This course is designed for students with no previous work experience in equity valuation.

GLOBAL STUDIES

GLS 240 001 Politics of Risk

This course provides an introduction to the governance of public risks, large-scale hazards and disasters impacting a broad cross-section of society. We will survey the policies and practices used to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the damage done by emerging diseases, natural disasters, terrorist attacks, environmental hazards, and even technological incidents. We will address these topics from a comparative and international perspective. This course will help you understand how nations, international institutions, non-governmental entities, and even private organizations work to identify and, subsequently, manage risks and hazards. Special attention is paid to the tension between preparing for emerging problems and responding to disaster events, and we will “unpack” and empirically investigate the various barriers to effective crisis management. In fact, we will design and implement our own research project examining the individual and political impediments to government planning and preparedness for large-scale disasters.

GLS 242 001 Terrorism and National Security Policy

This course introduces the student to contemporary terrorism and the strategic challenges posed for national security policy. Among key issues explored are the causal factors of terrorism; terrorist ideology; categorization of terror groups both international and domestic; an analysis of how terrorist groups affect the development of a national counter-terror policy. The primary focus will be on modern terror groups though we will analyze causal factors of historical terror group demands to analyze modern strategic policy

GLS 405 001 Money & Politics

This course examines the role of money in elections and on public policy in the United States. Specific topics covered are the origins of Super PACs and evolution of campaign finance law, how campaigns are financed, the impact of negative advertising, the impact of campaign expenditures on presidential and congressional elections, and the impact of campaign donations on how members of Congress vote on issues such as the environment, health care, taxes, trade, immigration, and national security.

LAW, TAXATION AND FINANCIAL PLANNING

LA 298 001 Social Justice Law

Social justice is defined as "... promoting a just society by challenging injustice and valuing diversity." It exists when "all people share a common humanity and therefore have a right to equitable treatment, support for their human rights, and a fair allocation of community resources." In conditions of social justice, people are "not to be discriminated against, nor their welfare and well-being constrained or prejudiced on the basis of gender, sexuality, religion, political affiliations, age, race, belief, disability, location, social class, socioeconomic circumstances, or other characteristic of background or group membership" (Toowoomba Catholic Education, 2006). This course will take a critical look at the laws that developed this notion of social justice. Specifically looking at the past, present and future of human right law in the United States and internationally. We will consider the historical development of human rights in this country, focusing on one of the biggest human rights movements, the Civil Rights Movement. Additionally, we will look at the historical and contemporary issues and laws around women's rights, Immigration rights, LGBT Rights, fighting sexual violence, Genocide prevention and National Security. As a part of their studies students will travel to Atlanta, Georgia during spring break to enrich their understanding of Social justice laws and issues.

MLCH 402 Chinese for Cinema

Chinese for Cinema is designed for students whose Chinese proficiency is beyond intermediate levels. Six Chinese movies in different categories will be introduced in class. There will be a group discussion on the Chinese culture, history and philosophy that are related to the movie. The discussions will be conducted in Chinese. The goals of the class include the development in students' skills in using authentic Chinese and the enhancement of students' awareness of the Chinese culture, history, and perspectives compared to those of the students. Moreover, having the discussions in Chinese provides the students with opportunities to improve their fluency and organization of thoughts.

Mathematics

MA402: Machine Learning

Prerequisite(s): MA347 or Instructors Permission

Also requires the assumption of working Familiarity with R/Python and willingness to understand the Mathematics involved and the algorithms used.

Course Description: In the course we further investigate the topics of learning from and predicting with data MA 347 or MA 402 Data Science. The course starts with the topics of regularization and dimensionality reduction (linear discriminant analysis and principal component analysis) which are methods to reduce feature space complexity. We will cover a selection from the following topics as time permits: support vector machines, neural networks, Bayesian methods, genetic algorithms, spectral clustering and self-organizing maps. In addition, we will learn to use distributed data mining techniques on very large datasets. The course will assume a working familiarity with either of the R or Python languages and a higher level of mathematical maturity than required in the prerequisites.

NATURAL AND APPLIED SCIENCE

NASE 399 001 Nanotechnology & Society

The term “nanotechnology”, while well known, is not well understood. Nanoscale materials, which are typically tens of thousands of times smaller than the width of a single human hair, possess very unique electronic, chemical, and mechanical properties that make them ideal candidates for revolutionary technologies. This course introduces students to the principles, applications, and societal implications of nanotechnology. Students will characterize the types of nanotechnologies and the strategies for fabricating and characterizing nanoscale materials. In addition, students will generate and characterize simple nanomaterials in a research laboratory. Students will also evaluate the current applications of nanotechnologies in electronics, healthcare, consumer products, and the environment. Finally, students will evaluate the risks, ethical concerns, business implications, and regulatory issues of nanotechnology.

PHILOSOPHY

PH 135 Human rights as Global Conscience

One of the most remarkable global phenomena since the Second World War is the expansion and sophistication of the human rights discourse and the international human rights legal system. Although the genesis of the human rights discourse goes back only to 1948 with the UN adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the human rights discourse is now widely considered as representative of the global human conscience.

Topics covered in this course are wide-ranging (see the schedule), but special emphasis will be placed on the question of how human rights ought to be conceptualized in

order to serve as a truly universal set of standards for global governance. Although both theory and practice of human rights are examined, the emphasis will be on theory, as understanding the contemporary practice of human rights requires a firm understanding of its theoretical basis.

The aim of the course is to help Bentley students learn about various aspects of the human rights discourse and its legal system and think about them critically, reflectively, and deeply. Since critical thinking (or the philosophical method) is the method by which students are required to engage with these issues, some portion of the course will be devoted to explicating various elements of critical thinking (or the philosophical method).

Although I will provide a brief overview of the main points of articles and their intersections with one another, the class will be primarily discussion based following the philosophical method. Students are expected to have done the reading for each class, so that class discussions are informed and focused. To ensure that everyone is prepared for each class, students are required to complete pre-class assignments before the start of class and to prepare a couple of questions to address the entire class. Preparing yourself for class in this way requires self-discipline, hard work, persistence, and perseverance. The hope is that completing the coursework successfully will help you develop these essential character traits for success in life.

SOCIOLOGY

SO 298 001 Human Trafficking & Global Slavery

This class will investigate human trafficking and slavery from a number of perspectives including historic, economic, gender, race, religious and political. Students will explore the human factors of exploitation, objectification, alienation, and violence associated with human trafficking. Students will be asked to create and implement awareness and action plans to inform the campus of the scope and daily impact of human trafficking and slavery.

SO 299 001 Criminal and Social Justice

The issue of crime, punishment, and justice are fundamental topics of our daily lives. Discussions of crime pervade our news, entertainment, public policy, and civil discourse. We live in an era of criminalization and mass incarceration, where the US prison population dwarfs that of any other country. Likewise, discussions of justice are linked to our perception of crime and its causes. As our views on crime shifts, so do our beliefs about what to do about it. This course will examine the topics of crime, punishment and justice from a critical perspective. We will question our assumptions about what causes crime, what constitute criminal behavior, and our contemporary approaches to dealing with it. This will include cross-country comparisons and discussions of radical approaches. As a result, students will have a greater understanding and awareness of the complexities of criminal and social justice, and their relationship to both.

SO 402 Sociology of Gender

Introduces the student to sociological perspectives on gender and gender relations. The course provides an overview of the guiding sociological theories of gender, with the goal of developing an understanding for how our historical and current constructions of gender produce and reproduce inequalities. One aspect of the course involves the exploration of how social institutions affect gender, using an intersectional approach toward understanding the complexities of gender. Although the course primarily focuses on the United States, international examples will also be used to demonstrate the pervasiveness of gender as a social construction. The goal is to develop in the student an appreciation of the social forces that shape, organize and constitute gender relations. Gender as it relates to the workforce, organizational culture, and business practices is a critical component of the course.