



Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY
General Education

2023-24

***First Year Seminar
Guidebook***



Course Listing *by category*

History & Society

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<i>No More Stigma? Traveling Las Vegas as a Destination Resort</i>	107 - p. 19

Arts & Expression

<i>Write Your Novel in a Month</i>	107 - p. 8
<i>Moving in the Movies</i>	107 - p. 8
<i>Nature and Photography</i>	107 - p. 8
<i>Journaling to Save the World</i>	107 - p. 8
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<i>Color and Expression in Art</i>	107 - p. 14
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Ideas & Mind

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Self & Identity

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Course Listing *by category*

True Crime

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Science & Environment

<i>Rocking the National Parks</i>	207 - p. 11
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<i>Are WOU the one? Logic and strategy in game and reality shows</i>	207 - p. 19
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Course Listing *by category*

Learning Community Classes

Students must register for BOTH courses

*It's the End of the World as We Know It
(And I Feel Fine)*

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Student Enrichment Program (SEP)

Started from the Bottom, Now We're Here

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Get Woke to Being Broke

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Teacher Prep Student Support Services (TPSSS)

The Future is in Our Hands

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Show Me The Money

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<i>Pet-ology: Our Relationships with our Pets</i>	207 - p. 13

If you are interested in learning more about the **Learning Community Classes** offered in Fall quarter, please see **page 7**

Course Listing *by quarter*

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<i>Notorious Trials</i>	207 - p. 16
<i>Forensic Science: Fact versus Hollywood</i>	207 - p. 17
<i>Physics in Science Fiction and Fantasy</i>	207 - p. 17

Spring 2024

<i>Digital Storytelling and Narratives</i>	107 - p. 18
<i>No More Stigma? Travelling Las Vegas as a Destination Resort</i>	107 - p. 18
<i>Create Your Own Future</i>	107 - p. 18
<i>Are WOU the One? Logic and strategy in game and reality shows</i>	207 - p. 19
<i>Lie, Damn Lies, and Statistics</i>	207 - p. 19
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Want to see the most up-to-date schedule?
Visit wou.edu/gened/fys



Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY
General Education

FALL 2023

LEARNING COMMUNITY COURSES

Do you ever feel like the world is about to end? We will explore the "flood" of information about potential threats to our ways of life. Which disasters should we worry about? What can we control? Is there anything we can do to be ready? Learn to ease your anxiety and take control of your future with practical skills and planning activities. The Willamette Valley might seem like a dangerous place (forest fires and earthquakes anyone?) but it is also one of the best places to be in the event of a catastrophe. We will learn about local facilities and groups working on these issues and take some field trips to see what is being done and how we can participate. Let's get ready!

It's the End of the World as We Know It

Instructor: Rachel Harrington

FYS 207

Offered in Fall only

These two classes are part of a **Learning Community**, meaning that the same students will be in both classes. If you sign up for one class, you must sign up for the other as well. This is a great opportunity to form a group of friends and learn from dedicated faculty who will help you succeed at WOU! **Questions?** Ask your advisor or FYS Coordinator Leanne Merrill (merrill@wou.edu).

(And I Feel Fine)

Instructor: Marie LeJeune

FYS 107

Offered in Fall only

Although we may be surrounded by messages of doom and gloom every day across the news and social media, there are still many reasons to believe in the power of working for positive change. This seminar will examine nonfiction and fiction accounts of resilience, activism, and practical preparation for surviving even the worst of times. Leave inspired by those who work to make the world a better place and add yourself to the list of those capable of making a positive impact.

Write Your Novel in a Month: A NaNoWriMo-centered Approach to Fiction Writing

Instructor: Amy Bowden

Arts & Expression

Are you one of the 81 percent of Americans who want to write a novel someday? Turn someday into today by participating in National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo), an international movement that challenges you to create your first draft in thirty days. Every year, more than one million people around the globe take part in NaNoWriMo. By enrolling in this course, you can join them. This fast-paced, fun course will teach you everything you need to know to plan and write your very own masterpiece. We will review the elements that make a good novel, plan our stories together, write, participate in group critiques, and experiment with creative writing exercises. Experience the camaraderie that comes from writing with your classmates and feel the exhilaration of holding your first draft in your hands.

What do the feel-good song and dance moments in movie musicals tell us about American culture? How do the popular dance forms highlighted in these films reflect and challenge social trends of the last century? In this FYS we will examine a selection of American movie musicals from "Singin' in the Rain" to "Chicago," "In the Heights" to "Hair," and many more. Movie musicals reflect back to us shifting American values and cultural trends in relation to race, gender, economics, class, history, and religion. While tapping our feet and humming along to these iconic films, we will have the opportunity to examine and discuss a distinctly American genre and gain new insights into American history.

Moving in the Movies

Instructor: Corrie Cowart

Arts & Expression

Nature and Photography

Instructor: Daniel Tankersley

Arts & Expression

This course explores how photography shapes our understanding of the natural world -- from 19th-century landscape photos of the American West, to posting pictures of flowers on social media. Images of nature can show who we are, what we value and believe, and how we're impacting our environment. In course projects, students communicate their ideas about nature by creating photographs and combining them with other forms of writing and research.

Play: It's not just for kids

Instructor: Jennifer Taylor

Self & Identity

This first year seminar will explore the role of lifetime play from global to local through multiple lenses - historical, cultural, political, sociological, relational, psychological, and physiological. These perspectives will be framed using Social Ecological Theory, Wellness Model, and Play Theory. The signature assignment will be a letter to your future self.

Higher education means new ways of thinking and problem-solving. This course explores cognitive science focusing on how people think and why, and the biases that get in the way. Learn to identify, engage, and demonstrate thinking skills to get the most out of your education.

Make your brain work for you: Cognition in the college classroom

Instructor: Jay Schwartz

Ideas & Mind

Oregon History Detectives

Instructors: Kim Jensen and Ken Carano

History & Society

Oregon History Detectives introduces students to the tools they need to discover and analyze the lives of diverse Oregonians in our history and teach others about their experiences to build a richer understanding of our past. Methods for students to gain these analytical, comprehension, and teaching skills, including gallery walks with primary source documents, role-playing through literature, comparing and contrasting worldviews through human stories, self-reflection activities, story mapping, and gaining observation, reflection, and questioning skills during field studies. Students will analyze primary and secondary sources through discussion and in writing.

Do you care about something that's happening in the world but feel powerless to change it? You are not powerless. This course begins with journaling about the things you care about and ends with using writing to take action to solve problems. Each student will choose a problem they want to solve and, after guided journaling in class, will design a final project using a method of their choice (letters, personal essays, songs, scripts, cartoons, etc.) to change minds/persuade others to their way of thinking. At the end of the term, the class will produce an anthology of their work to change the world.

Journaling to Save the World

Instructor: Maren Anderson

Arts & Expression

Learn creative thinking strategies used by some of the world's greatest innovators, artists, and inventors. In this studio art course, you will learn to develop a creative mindset that will benefit any major or career. This course will occasionally join together with the other section of the course to complete in-class workshops and art projects. No art experience is necessary: anyone can learn how to "think like an artist"!

The Creative Process: How to Think Like an Artist

Instructors: Jodie Garrison and Gregory Poulin

Arts & Expression

Two sections offered

Serial Killers

Instructor: Miyuki Arimoto

True Crime

This seminar examines different types of serial killers and explores possible reasons behind their killings. By exploring concrete cases, it defines different degrees of homicide and circumstances of homicide in the United States. The diversity in offenders' demographic characteristics and motivations are also discussed.

Join us on a virtual journey through Latin America to learn about the main characteristics of the region, such as its countries, largest cities, landmarks, geography, languages, culture, and identity. At the same time, become familiar with the new types of assignments, readings, and classes that will be part of the true journey that will be your college experience.

Travelers of Latin America

Instructor: Ricardo Pelegrin-Taboada

History & Society

Logic, Language, and Alice

Instructor: Ryan Hickerson

Ideas & Mind

A lesser-known fact is that Alice's Adventures in Wonderland was written by an Oxford logician. It is filled with logical fallacies and whimsically named creatures. In this seminar we will study some logic through examination of some seriously silly arguments, but we will also investigate a serious philosophical question about whether names can have meaning, by reading Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass, alongside Plato and John Stuart Mill.

This course examines the perplexing question of what constitutes the self from a philosophical, psychological, existential, and biological lens. Consideration will progress from a broad theoretical understanding of self to an individually tailored look at one's own identity. Deeper self-understanding leads to better informed decision-making and overall enhanced well-being. Come embark on this pivotal journey.

Me, Myself, & I: Who the Heck am I?

Instructor: Tracy Powell

Self & Identity

Data Detective

Instructor: Breeann Flesch

True Crime

Data is the new detective. It is being used to solve mysteries and answer questions in ever-changing ways. Data can be used to predict movement and settlement of elephants, determine whether border walls deter crime, and even find a decades-old serial killer! In this course we will explore real-life case studies of data solving mysteries.

This course will explore the exciting intersection of dance, coding and flight, culminating in the creation of a drone dance using basic tools from dance choreography, drone flight and coding skills.

Dancing Drones

Instructor: Darryl Thomas

Arts & Expression

An Ounce of Prevention

Instructor: Eric Wallace

Self & Identity

Do you know how your dream job might affect your health? Every occupation comes with inherent risks to your health and happiness, whether it's typing at a desk, lifting objects, or working late to meet deadlines. All of these activities involve a web of stresses to your physical and mental health that impact your happiness and chance for a long and successful career. By learning to identify these risks you can begin making decisions that diminish them, and find your balance between health, happiness, and success.

America's National Parks and Monuments preserve some of the most iconic landscapes on Earth. The historical reasons of why these places have been set aside will be explored and we will investigate what makes some of them geologically significant. Students will also learn how to use online map and navigation tools for exploring the parks. Challenges to park preservation both now and in the future will also be discussed. Finally, strategies for those seeking employment with the National Park Service will be investigated.

Rocking the National Parks

Instructor: Grant Smith

Science & Environment

#SlayingPublicHealth

Instructor: Loren Wisniewski
Science & Environment

This course showcases all the ways public health impacts living conditions and quality of life around the world, in Oregon, and on our campus. Through hands-on fieldwork, multimedia and guest lectures, students will explore ways to get involved locally and globally to make a positive difference in their communities.

Superheroes are here to save the day and do whatever is necessary to defeat forces of evil. But what if “whatever’s necessary” crosses the line into criminal activity? In this course we examine epic good versus evil battles and analyze the criminal implications of being a superhero.

Superheroes or Supercriminals?

Instructor: Jennifer Moreno
True Crime

A Solar System Odyssey

Instructor: Jeremiah Oxford
Science & Environment

Exploration of the solar system is the first step to understanding our place in the universe. We will take a journey through time and see how our perception of the solar system has evolved over the centuries and how a revolution in astronomy led to the birth of modern science. With a gift for pattern recognition, humans formulated the laws of physics which are essential for predicting the motions and properties of celestial bodies. By analyzing the structure and composition of the solar system, we can discover what this information reveals about the origin and evolution of the solar system. We will explore the surface geology of planets and moons and learn what physical processes have shaped these unique worlds. In addition, we will examine the latest observations acquired from spacecraft, assess the significance of these recent discoveries and what they mean for the future of humankind.

This course engages service-based learning with a focus on environmental restoration of water, land and soil. Students apply basic principles of Earth Science and Permaculture design to hands-on environmental restoration projects in the community. Four hours of active learning and group discussion per week.

WOU Earth Corps: Beginner’s Guide to Environmental Stewardship

Instructor: Steve Taylor
Science & Environment

Pet-ology: Our Relationships with Our Pets

Instructors: Amy Dawson and Jim Dawson

Self & Identity

Our furred, feathered, scaled, and finned pets enrich our lives in so many ways. Our pet companions can be chosen out of fascination with a species, desire for a companion, a popular cultural trend, or simply to rescue an animal. This course will examine the ways in which humans intersect with companion animals. Using a multidisciplinary approach, emphasizing biology, sociology, and anthrozoology, we will examine the mutualist relationship between animals and people and investigate how each participant is affected by the relationship. What is the right match between the person and the pet?



What's Your Story?

Instructors: Alicia Wenzel and
Cindy Ryan

Self & Identity

Get the tools you need to discover and analyze the diverse lives of your friends, family, and yourself. Build a deep understanding of your past through personal reflection, and find how you have overcome adversity to thrive in your own individual narrative. You will learn to communicate using writing and speech, collaborate with your peers, and use media to express the rich diversity of your life and the lives of those around you.

This course focuses on the multiple meanings invoked by its title, "Communicating Animals." The curriculum includes consideration of: the ways humans communicate with and about other (non-human) animals, how animals communicate with members of their own species as well as with other animals and their environments, and how our communication impacts the natural world we inhabit together.

Communicating Animals and Animal Communicators

Instructors: Emily Plec and Gareth
Hopkins

Ideas & Mind

Color and Expression in Art

Instructor: Jodie Garrison

Arts & Expression

A studio art course that explores basic color theory and how color is used in visual communication and expression.

This course examines the histories of people of African descent in Europe, with a focus on Western Europe in the modern era. Through an analysis of primary sources, including memoirs, literature, audio recordings, film, and photographs, we will trace the social, cultural, and political contributions Black people made to European history and the role of Europe in the development of Black Internationalism. We will also examine the forms of daily and structural racism experienced by people of color in Europe.

Black Europe

Instructor: Patricia
Goldsworthy-Bishop

History & Society

Fairy Tales: From the Brothers Grimm to Disney

Instructor: Kristen Klay

Arts & Expression

Talking mirrors, glass slippers, and the Big Bad Wolf are all elements found in Grimms' Fairy Tales. Collected in Germany in the early 1800s by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, these stories have enduring appeal and are a vital part of Western literary tradition. And yet, in the British-occupied sector of Germany following World War II, Grimms' Fairy Tales were banned because they were deemed to be feeding "a bloodthirsty German imagination." In this course we will analyze literary fairy tales from continental Europe and trace the history of the fairy tale from oral tradition to print and film. Although our focus will be on literary tales, we will also have an opportunity to look at fairy tale illustrations and to compare some of these stories to modern Disney film versions.

Did you know that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was an actor and comedian before he became the wartime leader of Ukraine? In fact, he named his real-life political party – "Servant of the People" – after the name of the 2015 television program that he produced and starred in to challenge the corruption and abuses that had shaped Ukrainian politics. This First Year Seminar explores how playwrights, poets, students, workers, novelists, filmmakers and pacifists also challenged the authoritarian political systems of Communist Central Europe after 1945. In this seminar, students will engage in a study of this recent history through a critical analysis of primary source materials such as poetry, music, art, & film that shaped these transformations in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, East Germany – and of course Ukraine.

Poets, Playwrights & Revolutionaries: Lessons From the Soviet Bloc

Instructors: David Doellinger

History & Society

Exploring Natural Disasters: A Bad Day on Planet Earth

Instructors: Grant Smith

Science & Environment

Course focuses on natural disasters and how these normal processes of the Earth concentrate their energies and deal heavy blows to humans as well as have severe environment and health impacts for many years after the event. This course is concerned with how the natural world operates and, in so doing, kills and maims humans and destroys their works. The course will discuss the connections between both physical (e.g. processes of nature) content and biological (e.g. health issues related to aftermath of disasters).

Who gets credit for the important stuff in history? You may have noticed that some voices and identities show up more than others. Do you wonder what everyone else was doing? In this class, we'll explore the contributions of people that history forgot, who helped shape the evolution of society, and how their exclusion shapes where we are today.

Well-Behaved Women (and a lot of other folks) Rarely Make History

Instructor: Becka Morgan

History & Society

Protecting the Living World and its Inhabitants

Instructor: Bryan Dutton

Self & Identity

This course will explore the reasons for protecting biological diversity along with particular places where biodiversity is found. The course will introduce important concepts through consideration of several ongoing conservation efforts while exploring the why and how behind these efforts.

Crimes that shocked the nation: bizarre defendants, strange case details, unbelievable defenses. In this course we examine the crimes that made headlines and how the trials became almost as notorious as the crimes.

Notorious Trials - How Shocking Crimes Became Shocking Administrations of Justice

Instructor: Jennifer Moreno

True Crime

Forensic Science: Fact vs. Hollywood

Instructor: Graham Rankin

True Crime

Crime shows, like CSI, have significantly increased public interest in forensic science over the last several decades and more. However, these shows present forensic science as though it were an almost magical solution to all problems and that results come back during the commercial break. Some prosecutors have even claimed juries expect a mountain of forensic evidence in every trial, the "CSI Effect". In this course, we will review what is presented in movies and TV shows versus how forensic science is actually performed. The field of forensic science has evolved over the decades with new and more reliable tests being developed. We will cover some examples where new methods have been used to overturn convictions based on earlier and less accurate methods.

Ever wondered how a Star-Trek transporter would work? Or if it could work? How about Harry Potter's magic? Interstellar light-speed travel? Me, too. Let's find out how many of these tropes are real, and how many are actually "handwavium" and "baloneyum." We'll be using speculative literature as an entry point into explaining real math and physics.

Physics in Science Fiction and Fantasy

Instructor: Maren Anderson

Science & Environment

Digital Storytelling and Narratives

Instructors: Tiara Good

Arts & Expression

Digital Storytelling and Narratives explores what is at the heart of our human experience--stories and ways we share those stories. Exploring various disciplines takes on digital storytelling, narrative, and technology to share them, this course gives students theoretical and application of digital storytelling and narratives through readings, case studies, and crafting digital storytelling projects of their own. The course will also provide hands-on technology experience and exploration of real-life issues, questions, and narratives true to their life experiences.

Have you ever been to Las Vegas with your friends or family, or wanted to go? Vegas has become home to a new type of travel destination: the integrated resort (IR). These resorts combine casinos, fine dining, entertainment, hotels, shopping malls, arts, and more, appealing to families as an all-in-one destination. This course will study the business and entertainment aspects integrated resorts and how they have changed from the casino industry to hospitality industry, leading to de-stigmatization of gaming overall.

No More Stigma? Traveling Las Vegas as a Destination Resort

Instructors: Miyuki Arimoto

History & Society

Create Your Own Future

Instructor: Jennifer Hansen

Self & Identity

Creating your own future can be scary, no one has a crystal ball with all the answers, but this course can help build confidence and tools to make the future a little less scary and maybe even more exciting! This course is designed to provide students with the fundamental tools to find and secure opportunities for bettering one's future. Topics will include getting to know one's own self, job search strategies, resume and cover letter writing, interview skills, and how to network like a pro. Face-to-face engagement with professionals will provide additional insight into these topics from the perspective of employers. Reflection on students' interests, values, and goals will also be integrated into the course.

Are WOU the one? Logic and strategy in game and reality shows

Instructor: Ben Coté

The Numbers Game

Do you love games and puzzles? Become a contestant on popular game shows to challenge yourself, build your strategic thinking, and win big! Uncover strategies and knowledge that will help you out if you ever wind up on Survivor, The Price is Right, or Are You the One?

We are confronted with an astronomical amount of information in the modern era. Much of this information is tied to numbers and statistics, yet often little or no context is offered so people can truly understand what the data shows. Worse yet, there are entities that are purposefully obfuscating the truth by misstating the data or presenting them in a misleading way. This course will focus on how data and statistics are used in the media and modern culture and how to view data through a critical lens to understand what the information means and whether it is being presented in a truthful manner.

Lies, Damn Lies, and Statistics: Cultivating Numerical Media Literacy

Instructor: Maren Anderson

The Numbers Game

How to interpret scientific controversies

Instructor: Melissa Kelley

Science & Environment

What are GMOs and are they dangerous? Are vaccines safe? Is Big Pharma trying to hide cancer cures from the public? How can you learn the truth about these and other controversial topics in science? In a world full of disinformation, what is the actual scientific basis behind some of these controversies, and how can we know what sources to trust? In this class, we will learn about some major scientific topics that cause fear or are controversial. We will learn how to find reliable scientific sources, study historical and current scientific examples, and discover how to read and how to understand scientific sources. This course will include a lecture and group discussion components, as well as readings and coursework designed to increase your understanding of "how we know what we know" in science.

STUDENT ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Classes are for SEP students ONLY

Started from the Bottom, Now We're Here

Instructor: SEP Staff

FYS 107

Offered in Fall, Winter & Spring

In this class, we will research and write about what it means to be first-generation or low-income in the current U.S. educational system. How are members of these populations, traditionally underrepresented at college, impacted by policy and the Higher Ed experience? We will examine what a modern "War on Poverty" would look like and what role education would play. We will explore issues of identity and culture (including gender, race/ethnicity, and class) and potential solutions to the barriers that underrepresented students face.

In this class, we will research and practice what it means to be first-generation or low-income in the current U.S. educational system. What are the financial mechanisms that make Higher Education possible for those coming from low-income backgrounds? What is the financial impact of a college education, positive and negative? Students will calculate these costs and rewards from an individual perspective exploring cost of attendance, impact of financial aid, inflation in both cost of attendance and local economy, and planning for future financial needs.

Get Woke to Being Broke

Instructor: SEP Staff

FYS 207

Offered in Fall, Winter & Spring

Want to learn more about the Student Enrichment Program? Visit wou.edu/sep, email sep@wou.edu, or ask your PACK Connect Advisor!

TEACHER PREP STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Classes are for TPSSS students ONLY

The Future Is In Our Hands

Instructor: TPSSS Staff

FYS 107

Offered in Fall only

In this class we will research and write about what it means to be a first-generation or low-income student pursuing an Education degree in the US. We will explore issues of identity and culture and potential solutions to the barriers that underrepresented students face in the K-12 school system. Example topics may include: inequity of resources in neighborhoods and communities and the impact on k-12 schools or cultural bias in standardized tests.

In this class we will research and write about what it means to be a first-generation or low-income student pursuing an Education degree in the United States. We will explore issues of identity and culture as well as potential solutions to the barriers that underrepresented students face in the K-12 school system. Example topics may include: inequity of resources in communities and the resulting impact on k-12 schools or cultural bias in standardized tests.

Show Me the Money

Instructor: TPSSS Staff

FYS 207

Offered in Winter only

Want to learn more about Teacher Prep Student Support Services? Visit wou.edu/tpsss, email tpsss@wou.edu, or ask your PACK Connect Advisor!