

SPRING 2027

SPECIAL TOPICS COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

COMM-150-01 (3 credits) Topics in Comm – Analyzing Disney

Instructor: Nancy Bressler

Because the Disney corporation reaches such an immense audience, the media products that they produce have a major impact on our conceptualization of cultural norms. The movies and television shows produced by Disney are often deemed “safe” programming for children to watch, but there are still prevalent stereotypes that are presented in these representations. Ideas including conformity, hierarchy, hegemonic power structures, and othering all communicate cultural norms about race, gender, class, disabilities, and more. This course will examine Disney films (both original and contemporary remakes), Disney Channel, Disney music, and the Disney theme parks to better understand the influential messages that this powerful media conglomerate has on our perspectives.

Satisfies Foundational Humanities & Liberal Arts

CSCI-388-01 Game Development (3 credits)

Instructor: Jon Benjamin

This course explores advanced concepts in video game design. Utilizing industry-standard tools such as Unreal Engine, students will document, design, prototype, and refine original games from concept to playtested build. Coursework examines game mechanics, level design, as well as game design theory, history, and emerging industry trends.

CYBS-388-01 Cryptography (3 credits)

Instructor: Don Tobin

Cryptography is the science behind writing and breaking secret codes. This course provides an overview of classical cryptographic systems, their inner workings, and how to correctly use them in real-world applications. Topics include the history of cryptography, single-key encryption, block ciphers, stream ciphers, public key cryptosystems, key exchange, electronic signatures, and blockchain technology basics.

Prerequisites: Math 110, CSCI 210

DANC-188/288 Hip Hop I & II (1 credit)

Instructor: Haylee Shires

No prior dance experience necessary. This fun, energetic class will focus on the basics of popping, locking, and groove. We will learn fad dances from the late 1970s through today.

PHIL-288-01 Philosophy of Aesthetics (3 credits)

Instructor: Crystal Brown

This course explores philosophical, critical, and artistic/creative thinking through in-depth readings of various philosophers’ works in dialogue with topics such as aesthetics, existence, knowledge, and ethics as understood through the lens of fear.

Lens: AEXP

RELG-288-01 A Brief History of Hell (3 credits)

Instructor: Franklin Capps

A historical survey of the ways that religious and nonreligious communities in Ancient Near Eastern, Eastern, Western, and North Atlantic societies have conceived of “Hell,” or “Hölle,” “the covered or hidden place”—the place of the damned. It explores the doctrinal, political, and social aspects of the concept, particularly as it pertains to the distinction between the redeemed and the cursed. Beginning with ancient texts, moving to medieval and Renaissance visual art and literature, then ending with modern global depictions of Hell in literature, visual art, and film, this course aims to uncover the development of a religious concept that remains persistent and powerful in contemporary social and political discourse, as well as in popular culture.

THRE-288-01 Intro to Theatrical Design (3 credits)

Instructor: Boyd Wolz

This course introduces the fundamental elements of theatrical design, including sets, lighting, costumes, and sound. Students learn the complete design process—from script reading and research to conceptual development, sketches, models, and rendering. Hands-on assignments cover scene painting, fabric selection, lighting instruments, and sound operation, emphasizing collaboration with other theatre professionals. The course explores how each design component contributes to the overall production and mood, fostering creative thinking and practical skills essential for theatre artists.

THRE-288-02 Intro to Acting (3 credits)

Instructor: Emily Grimany

An on-your-feet introductory course in acting fundamentals such as Meisner and Stanislavsky techniques as a vehicle to explore empathy. Students will practice physical and vocal use of the actor’s instrument, connection with partners, collaborative artistic decision-making, and giving peer feedback. Actors will analyze and perform scenes from contemporary American theater.

NOTE: Replaces THRE-105 & THRE-130