

English 114a/115b Course Descriptions, Fall 2016

English 114a, Fall 2016

Section Numbers, Titles, Instructors, and Descriptions		Days Times
1	Digital Childhood Heather Klemann What is childhood for so-called born digital generations? This course explores how developments in technology and communication from toddlers with touchscreens to Pokémon Go! reconfigure cultural constructions of and dearly held beliefs about youth.	MW 11:35-12:50
2	Hollywood, the Dream Factory Jordan Brower How do movies relate to the world from which they emanate? We will grapple with this question as we study the art and industry of Hollywood, ranging from its Classical period to the present day.	MW 11:35-12:50
3	Animals, Animality, and the Human Andrew Brown Animals provide us with food, labor, entertainment, and comfort—but what do we owe them in return? This course examines the boundaries between the animal and the human and explores how these relationships inform diverse social, political, and cultural issues.	TTh 1:00-2:15
4	Sight and Insight Janice Carlisle The world does not come to us through sights that are as fully formed or instantaneously meaningful as we typically think. This course therefore examines the physical, mental, and cultural processes of visual construction that determine what and how we see.	MW 1:00-2:15
5	Gossip, Scandal, and Celebrity Margaret Deli In a society as obsessed with celebrity as ours is today, what does the rise of Instagram, Snapchat, and all things Kardashian tell us about the way we live now? In this class, we'll explore the conception and consumption of fame—and challenge ourselves to explain why certain names, faces, and bodies are elevated above others.	TTh 2:30-3:45
6	Sport and American Culture Michael Gibbons We will engage in a critical analysis of American sport as a means of studying the distribution of power in society. Topics include representation, the commodification of athletes, and the construction of gender, race, and class in American culture.	MW 9:00-10:15
7	Democracy and the Media in the Digital Age Jami Carlacio In a democratic society, the media are expected to create an informed citizenry able to debate issues in the public sphere. Are they doing their job? We will investigate how the media shape public opinion in the digital age.	MW 2:30-3:45
8	Religion in America Briallen Hopper What is the role of religion in American life? How does religion affect American politics, art, and popular culture? We will read and write about answers to these questions from history, sociology, gender studies, film studies, and politics.	TTh 2:30-3:45
9	Peace and Protest Annie Killian Can nonviolent resistance overcome injustice in all political situations? This course explores practices of nonviolence alongside real-world strategies for addressing humanitarian crises and structural violence. Topics include civil disobedience in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, Occupy, and Black Lives Matter.	TTh 1:00-2:15

10	Consumer Culture in the U.S.A. Andrew Willson An investigation into the influence of consumerism and economics on American culture and society. Topics include advertising, technology, art, and societal change. Readings range from academic theory to cultural criticism to <i>The Great Gatsby</i> .	TTh 4:00- 5:15
11	The Trouble with Equality Tim Kreiner The ideal of equality haunts debates concerning the political organization of social life. This course examines key texts that shaped this ideal in order to pose the question of how – or whether – equality opposes inequality today.	TTh 11:35- 12:50
12	Deviance: Insiders and Outsiders Igor de Souza From bodybuilding to cannabis use, from queerness to witchcraft, a number of behaviors have been declared to be “deviant.” What makes them deviant? Who decides? This seminar explores deviance through theoretical approaches and case studies.	WF 1:00- 2:15
13	Fans, Culture, and Society in the Internet Age Bo Li Do you covet a spot on Taylor’s #Squad? Are you a card-carrying member of the Beyhive? Did you scream for a glimpse of Lin at #Ham4Ham? This course looks at the formation, expression, and practices of fan culture in a variety of modern fandoms.	TTh 1:00- 2:15
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15	Beauty, Fashion, and Ethics Katja Lindskog What is beauty? How do we define it? The course will approach beauty with a specific inquiry in mind: what can we learn by looking at what is considered beautiful in a particular time and place?	TTh 9:00- 10:15
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17	Writing Queer Scarlet Luk How did we get queer? And where do we go from here? This course will offer a selection of queer writings, theories, and its discontents.	MW 1:00- 2:15
18	The Burden of Proof: Evidence and Objectivity in Contemporary Culture Yahel Matalon Ideas like proof and evidence often seem simple, but how we understand them is shaped by many factors, from personal experience to social context. This course will examine proof and objectivity from a variety of perspectives, questioning how they shape our reality and vice versa.	MW 2:30- 3:45
19	Travelers and Tourists Pamela Newton Travel shapes the way we see the world and understand our place within it. This course explores what we gain and what we lose by becoming travelers and/or tourists.	MW 1:00- 2:15
20	Basketball and Contemporary Society Jordan Brower This course will investigate some of the most pressing social issues of today – race and activism, gender equality, labor rights, globalization, and more – as they are refracted through the prism of America’s greatest game.	MW 2:30- 3:45

21	How It Ends: Ideas of Apocalypse Shannon Beddingfield Divine intervention, nuclear annihilation, climate change, pandemic. How the world ends is unknown, but central to the stories we tell and our imagined role in the universe. Students will analyze ideas about apocalypse and test their thoughts about the End.	MW 11:35- 12:50
22	Globally Speaking Alexandra Reider From rock and roll and emoji to secret codes and bilingualism, this course looks at the way language creates communities and the way communities, in turn, create and regulate language.	TTh 1:00- 2:15
23	Censorship and the Arts Timothy Robinson What right does any authority have to control expression? This writing seminar will treat legal and critical debates from recent times, as well as various arguments concerning politics, artistic freedom, and religion, ranging from those of Plato to Tipper Gore.	TTh 2:30- 3:45
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25	Soccer and Global Cultures Joseph Stadolnik What does soccer mean to those who play it and watch it around the world? This course delves into the history and politics of soccer from Victorian Britain to its global present.	WF 11:35- 12:50
26	The Real World of Food Barbara Stuart This class will consider why the Farm Bill, an almost invisible piece of legislation for food policy, has such far-reaching implications and whether the industrial agriculture that feeds our nation has failed us. We will discuss how best to effect change in our food system.	TTh 11:35- 12:50
27	A Republic of Science Antonio Templanza What counts as real science? On whose authority? How can non-scientists evaluate political claims expressed in scientific rhetoric? Examining topics like objectivity, culture and ethics, this seminar investigates the role of science in democratic societies.	MW 1:00- 2:15
28	Chivalry, Civility, and Power Emily Ulrich Is chivalry really dead? Should it be? This course explores the power structures underpinning chivalry, investigating its ongoing appeal as well as its role in the marginalization of certain peoples.	TTh 11:35- 12:50
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1	Good Literature Ryan Wepler This seminar explores the kinds of pleasure we experience while reading and tries to figure out what makes a work of literature good. We'll consider whether reading good literature can make you a good person.	MW 11:35- 12:50
2	Literary Liars and Their Lies Gina Hurley There are many ways to tell a lie. More interesting are the reasons people do it. This course will explore lies that range from selfish to self-sacrificing—and many that fall somewhere in between.	TTh 11:35- 12:50
3	Black Life in Anglo-American Literature Tim Kreiner Taking cues from the Black Lives Matter movement, this course asks how black life shapes literary history. At the same time we will ask how literature shapes our sense of antiracist politics today.	MW 2:30- 3:45
4	Through Whose Eyes? Katherine Hindley Seeing is believing—but none of us can see objectively. This course examines literary texts that use multiple perspectives, troubling our understanding of what is true, and challenging us to see the world through someone else's eyes.	TTh 2:30- 3:45