

Foundations Course Descriptions (as of 1/24/2024)

Agriculture: A Confluence of Food, Fiber, and Economics –

This course will focus on the connections between sustainable agriculture food and fiber production, genetically modified crops and food, environmental impacts, and career opportunities in Agriculture. The student will learn principles of food crop production, nutrient management to make agriculture sustainable and investigate the economic impacts of these practices. The student will also learn how genetically modified crops are created and learn techniques to test for foods that have been genetically modified. Among the economic impacts, you will also investigate how modern agriculture practices have changed and what impacts can be associated with current environmental situations.

Are You What You Eat? –

By studying three academic fields that shed insights into American food systems, this course encourages consideration of food consumption, body image, and marketing.

Becoming a Jedi –

Explore what it is to be a Jedi, through religion, culture, language, and movement. In this course, we will study the religious and philosophical backgrounds that inspired George Lucas in the creation of the Jedi Order; the language and cultural contexts used in the development of Yoda and other characters; and the martial arts, meditation, movement, therapeutic paradigms, and philosophies rooted in these contexts. The entire creation of the Star Wars Universe was deeply rooted in many actual cultures and people in existence today and some that have been around for millennia. Come explore what it means to be a Jedi and learn how these lessons can be applied to your own life.

Being Human –

This GE Foundations course is focused on what it means to be human through three disciplines: Biology, Philosophy, and Dance. As a critical thinking course, this class explores an understanding of how people engineer their lives, the way we process our perceptions of the world (Science of the senses), how we interpret and process that information (Philosophy of perception), and then how we embody that knowledge through physical expression (Dance). In this course, you will come to understand how our biology, our ways of thinking, and our bodies shape, limit, and may even expand our understanding of the world and our own humanity.

Coding My Story –

Coding My Story explores the transmission of information in the form of DNA, narratives, and software. The coding in these areas creates powerful stories of who we are and what we do.

Comedy: A Class about Nothing –

This course examines humor and comedy through the lenses of Sociolinguistics, Rhetoric and Philosophy, and Human Development. What are the purposes of comedy? How has comedy contributed to American culture? How has comedy changed over time and what factors contribute to its evolution?

Engineering Beauty –

In this course, we explore different ways people make beautiful things in commerce, music, and landscape, as well as how beauty functions in the natural world. Students also explore creating beauty in their personal image/brand and in their life stories.

Facets of Food –

This online course explores the biological, cultural, and psychological dimensions of food in our everyday lives. The course pursues a broader understanding of food's ever-present nature in society, all-the-while encouraging the development and honing of skills necessary to becoming an intentional, goal-oriented learner.

Fear –

Fear is a natural, guiding part of life. Fear is something that most people think of as negative. However, fear has useful purposes as well. Some fears may be natural, and others may be engineered. We will explore how fear impacts individuals, society, businesses, and even explore the likelihoods of different fears. In this class the concept of fear will be explored from three distinct perspectives. Each discipline will provide a way of seeing fear as not only restricting behavior, but as a guiding force in our lives. Ultimately students will come to understand how to better manage fear within their own lives, and therefore leverage the emotion to their benefit.

Flow with Peace –

Flow with Peace focuses on the blending of energies and resolving of conflict through martial arts, movement, mathematics, and physics. The class explores different ways we can fit into and flow with our environments spatially, physically, socially, intellectually, and spiritually.

Gender Stereotypes in Education –

This course will explore the theme of gender stereotypes. Students will learn how the search for truth in each of three disciplines can either be advanced, or limited by, our ideas of inherent gender traits, and our own self-understanding.

How Do I Live a Good Life? –

In this course, students will explore what the fields of history and business teach us about how to be happier, how to feel less stressed, and how to thrive in college and beyond.

How to Make Something out of Nothing –

This GE Foundations course examines the idea of spontaneity through the point of view of three disciplines: dance (solo improvisation, contact improvisation, mindful movement, sensory explorations), music (chance theory, instrument making and playing, group harmony) and theatre (improv games, imaginary situations, verbal and non-verbal communication). More specifically, the class explores different ways we can spontaneously relate to each other and to our environments while also respecting personal boundaries and the safety of others. Students will develop skills to improve the results of situations that come upon them in the random, normal, and everyday experiences of life.

Just Do It – A Lifetime of Health and Wellness –

The current American way of life does not provide humans with sufficient physical activity to maintain good health and improve quality of life. Actually, our way of life is such a serious threat to our health that it increases the deterioration of the human body and leads to premature illness and mortality. Physical inactivity is a worldwide problem and has become a serious health epidemic. The overall health and fitness environment in America are “toxic” and we are so habituated to this modern toxic environment that we miss the subtle ways in which it influences our behaviors, personal lifestyle and wellbeing. Topics include: body composition, eating disorders, nutrition, stress, basic anatomy, heart physiology, types of exercises, emotional/human behavior, healthy relationships and addiction.

Leadership & Human: From Gilgamesh to Guardians of the Galaxy –

Leadership is a subject that has long dominated conversations among humans all around the world. This Foundations course will focus on ideas we can learn about leadership from these very different conversations, including anthropology (with models across cultures from Confucius and The Ramayana to Beowulf, Sundiata, and the Iroquois Confederacy), pedagogy, statistics, and literary and film studies (with test cases drawn from Gilgamesh, The Odyssey, and other works to Star Wars, Harry Potter, The Lord of the Rings, and Marvel films such as Guardians of the Galaxy).

Leadership Dynamics -

All of us play various leadership roles throughout our lives. Because of this, leadership has developed as an academic discipline of its own and there is much to learn academically about leadership styles, traits, and behaviors. Additionally, leadership is by its very nature interdisciplinary. This course will draw on that interdisciplinarity to consider the differences between leadership and management, different leadership theories, communication and growth in leadership, gender and leadership, science and innovation in leadership, and lessons that can be learned from leadership.

Natural Disasters –

This class helps students see the connections between different areas of learning, how they relate and how they affect each other. This specific course explores the connections between geology, business, and literature under the course theme of natural disasters. Students will learn how natural disasters occur (geology), how they impact the economies of devastated nations and communities (business), and the stories people tell about their experiences (literature). The final project for the semester will involve writing a personal narrative describing a natural disaster event. Students will also learn strategies for effective critical learning.

Propaganda –

For your educational best interest; no, for your education's very future, it is imperative that you take this class! March over to your nearest advising office today and do your part! Be a part of a class that is winning the war over your mind! Information is always good; but when combined with a biased and/or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular cause or point of view, we call this PROPAGANDA! In this Foundations course, we will discover what propaganda is, how it is used and what effect that has on the brain.

The Rise of the Antihero –

More and more often, modern storytellers are shifting their attention away from those we consider to be the “good guys” and focusing on the “bad guys,” turning them from simple villains into the heroes of their own dark narratives. As an audience, what attracts us to these characters? How do their stories differ from those of their traditionally heroic counterparts? In this class, we will engage with these questions from the perspective of three separate disciplines.

The Sound of Silence -

To live, to teach, to treat, to love is all about communication and connection. This communication takes place on many levels. It happens verbally and silently. It happens through music, dance, movement, and art. It happens within the body between cells and within them. It happens on a spiritual level and perhaps energetically. It is what allows us to live, and in fact it may be what it means to be alive. “The Sound of Silence” explores the art and science of communication on many levels through language, biology, and movement sciences. Join our exploration on what it means to truly connect and learn a little about your true self along the way.

Voices –

Social Science, Communications, and Business combine to help students consider how the chorus of voices we encounter everyday influences what we think and how we live.

Water Ways –

Water is literally the stuff of life. Our food, our land, our bodies, and our minds are grown of water, shaped by water, composed of water, and attracted to water. Every one of us has stories connecting us to water. It provides a source of peace and meditation, geologic masterpieces, and even the core of conflict. This course examines our deep associations with water from agricultural, geological, and creative perspectives as an element of infinite beauty and inestimable power and force.

The Zombie Apocalypse Survival Guide –

The Zombie apocalypse is going to happen... Will you be ready? This course uses an interdisciplinary approach to introduce key concepts from ethics, international relations, and psychology that may help humanity to survive a zombie infestation and then live in a post-apocalyptic world.

Sections not taught for quite some time:

Accomplishing the Impossible –

Impossible feats can be accomplished, but it takes discipline, and many times even multiple disciplines to reach these lofty heights. This course will explore principles of success, balance, determination, strength, connection, communication, and much more. Develop your own personal plan for success, education, self-mastery, and life-long learning and learn how to modify on the fly.

The American Dream – (not taught since Fall 2022)

This course is subtitled “A Confluence of Agriculture, Genetic Processes, and Business” and explores connections between modern agriculture practices, nutrition management, and upward mobility through entrepreneurship in the United States.

Earth: The Landscape Around Us – (not taught since Spring 2022)

This interdisciplinary course introduces students to the relationship between place and identity, with an emphasis on Utah’s rich geography and cultural history. Through the lenses of Ecology, Literature/Philosophy, and Geology, students explore how different disciplines and great thinkers understand our environment and our place within it. How does the natural environment shape our behavior and, in turn, how do our conceptions and interactions with the natural environment shape the landscape around us? What are our responsibilities to our natural environment and how can conflicting values and practices be reconciled? Students will learn how various disciplines can inform answers to these questions as well as how these disciplines pose further complicated and important questions.

The Great American Pastime – (not taught since Fall 2021)

This class focuses on baseball and uses ethics, rhetoric, and statistics to more deeply examine the culture and development of a national sporting tradition.

I Can’t Breathe – (not taught since Fall 2021)

A country founded on rebellion, the United States has experienced conflict and resistance to authority continually. This course studies the history of key moments in American rebellion, the music associated with those moments, and how language shapes and responds to these movements.

Is Your Pet Just a Pet? – (Not taught since Fall 2021)

This course looks at the human and animal connection. We will explore different ways the media portrays animals, animal psychology, child and human development, and how interacting with animals affects one’s life.