

Integrative Learning (ILS) Courses

ILS2003 The American Dream

This course addresses the broad theme and question of "What is the American Dream" and also asks, "Have we achieved it?" "Has it changed?" and "What is the cost of pursuing it?" We explore this topic through various themes, including "Manifest Destiny," "The Immigrant Experience," "Civil Rights," "Gender Rights," "The Pursuit of Happiness," "Work and Business," and "Class and Culture." While this course is primarily a literature course, it uses a multidisciplinary approach to explore this topic from various perspectives, including history, economics, ethics, culture, psychology and political science. Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2010 Modern Identities: 20th Century Literature and Beyond

This integrative learning course explores the relationship between modern world literature and its historical, social and/or political contexts through the study of the 20th century literary works. Fiction, poetry, drama and/or the essay are used as vehicles for exploring major movements, trends and events of the 20th century. Themes of racial, ethnic and gender identity, political oppression and/or war are explored. Emphases vary.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2090 The Working Life

This course focuses on the important and complicated role of work for individuals and societies. One of the most common everyday questions is, "What do you do for a living?" That question, when thoroughly examined, reveals a great deal about how people view themselves and each other, and how much work shapes the human experience. Through the lenses of history, sociology and literature, students examine how working lives have changed over time, the experience of the worker in various contexts and how work shapes identity.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2123 City as Text

This course focuses on the city as a "text," a living environment that reveals itself and its inhabitants through an exploration of its history, economics, politics, culture and art. The city serves as an experiential case study which affords students an opportunity to investigate, reflect, and critically analyze the city and its inhabitants (including themselves) as a living and evolving system/organism. Through a series of visits to various organizations, businesses, and institutions of art, culture, government and education, students explore the nature and meaning of community and civic and professional life. Avenues of discovery in this course include art and architecture, communication and literature, history, economics, sociology, psychology and political science.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte
3 Semester Credits

ILS2140 History of Science

This course explores human thought about the natural world from the earliest civilizations to the present. Students investigate a central question: From where did our ideas about the scientific process arise? At the heart of this course is the idea that science and technology are not isolated from the rest of society. Rather, they are shaped by historical and societal forces even as they influence civilization. In this course, students discuss the evolution of great scientific ideas of the past and the effects of religious, political, economic and social contexts on the development of scientific principles. Through close reading, analysis, discussion and integration of primary and secondary source materials, students make connections among the disciplines of history, theology, philosophy and science.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2150 Introduction to American Studies

This course introduces students to the major themes in American culture, both past and emerging. Students are given a sense of the tensions running through the identity and image of Americans here and around the world. As an integrative learning seminar, this course also serves as an introduction to the idea and practice of interdisciplinary scholarship. This course gives students a wide range of tools to make sense of what America is, has been and can be. Topics include traditional disciplines that help illuminate American culture. Focus is on art, music, literature, history and anthropology. Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2180 Sexuality: Science/Culture/Law

Sex. It is a seemingly simple term. Whether your birth certificate reads "F" or "M" conjures up a host of assumptions and expectations: acceptable sexual partners, appropriate physical presentation, acceptance of societal norms attached to your designation, and generally how you "fit" in society. One's designated sex at birth was also synonymous with one's gender. Are we beginning to understand, however, that this binary construct, and all its implications, is wrongly limited? Historically, there have been multiple revolutions in the way sex is conceptualized. In biology, evidence has mounted that biological sex and sexual orientation are not synonymous, nor is the notion of a binary gender construct. There is genetic and physiological support for the existence of multiple biological sexes, and that sexual orientation is hardwired rather than a choice or preference. Literature and popular culture have moved from portraying members of the LGBTQI community as a joke to treating it as a serious topic of personal liberation. The law has moved from criminalizing homosexual acts to granting same-sex marriage licenses to extending Civil Rights protection to the transgender community under Title VII. This course explores the links, or lack thereof, between these different developments. Is law more open to sexual variety because of the findings of brain science? Is popular culture more inclusive because of the increased economic clout of the LGBTQIA community? Or did these things occur independently? How do we relate these developments to the post-structural analysis of sexuality, gender and identity?.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2213 The Earth in Peril: A Literary and Scientific Analysis

This course examines environmental issues created by unrealistic views about the earth's capabilities. Relationships among people, environments and natural resources are analyzed through literature and scientific writings. Students examine why and how world views affect the natural world's destruction and preservation.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2240 Knowledge and Evidence

Knowledge and Evidence provides students with a holistic understanding of the concept of "truth," along with an effectively developed skillset for thinking critically, and acting creatively, with respect to this concept. The course achieves this by illustrating the intimate connection between data and truth, showing the ways in which one can lead to the other, and also pointing out the fallacies and pitfalls that often obstruct the connection. In part, the course is an introduction to the field of epistemology, addressing the question "How do we know what we know?" The course provides a historical overview of many critical epistemological questions, with examples drawn from the writings of thinkers from classical Greece up through the modern era. It also draws critical connections between these epistemological theories and the scientific method and explains what is necessary for proper experimental design. These concepts are illustrated most vividly through the study of a variety of famous experiments. Experiments are chosen from the fields of psychology, physics, chemistry, sociology, computer science and philosophy. Students are taught to identify the dominant theories of truth in their chosen professions and to think critically about the dominant paradigms they encounter.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte
3 Semester Credits

ILS2280 Science and Civilization

This course explores the social, political and historic contexts and implications of several scientific and technological developments through a variety of genres, including textbooks, newspapers and magazine articles, film, music, art, literature and the internet. The goal of this course is to raise student awareness of the global impacts, positive and negative, associated with specific scientific and technological developments, with emphasis on discerning the interconnectedness of those impacts. Through inquiry, research and debate, students develop a better understanding of the unique historical, social, political and cultural contexts in which these scientific and technological developments evolved and the influence these contexts had upon the form of these developments. In addition, students gain a deeper appreciation of the implications of these developments on the present and future.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2305 Honors Seminar: Behavioral Economics

Behavioral Economics is a field of research in the social sciences that brings together the disciplines of economics and psychology. This Honors-level integrated learning seminar utilizes this approach to better understand human behavior. By drawing on both disciplines, students better understand why people frequently make irrational economic decisions and how certain choice contexts can lead to predictably irrational behavior. Students analyze through systematic investigation and experimentation a variety of biases and shortcomings people regularly display in making rational economic choices. Prerequisite(s): ECON1001 or ECON1002, ENG0001 or placement, ENG1024, honors status, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2320 Economics of Law and Order

This course examines legal institutions through the lens of economics. Emphasis is placed on how changing laws influence outcomes at a societal level. In each lesson, students will focus on the relevant economic background and institutional structure and then deduce how this in turn informed choices made by participants in the economy. The economic order that is generated by the interaction of countless individuals and firms is mediated through the legal system. If one wishes to understand this extended order, one must understand the legal institutions in which it operates.

Prerequisite(s): ECON1001 or ECON1002, ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, LAW2001, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte
3 Semester Credits

ILS2325 Economics of Sin

This course integrates economic, sociological and psychological principles to examine price gouging, cheating, illegal drugs, sex and gambling. Emphasis is on examining these "sinful" behaviors in the context of moral development and theories of motivation. Students also examine how government seeks to change and penalize such behavior and the consequences of these interventions.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2330 The Good Life

This course challenges students to create personal and professional lives of meaning and purpose. The course explores the underlying values and structure of a life well-led, and proactive dispositions and strategies to create such a life. Emphasis is placed on social science and humanity's ways of thinking, specifically aspects of agency, the human condition and literary criticism. The course examines how the American Dream influences perceptions of success, particularly the ethos of prosperity and social mobility. Students read excerpts from fiction and biography that examine convention, invention and achievement. This course concludes with an exploration of change and chance, and strategies for leading a good life.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online
3 Semester Credits

ILS2385 Visual Literacy and the Sociology of Perception

This course studies human perception of the social world from both a communications and sociological perspective. Elements of picture-based media as a means of molding cultural perceptions, social biases and personal views of reality are studied. Through a series of exercises, students critically examine images in art, still photographs, television, advertising, film and documentaries to determine their sociological messages. Using the language of visual literacy and an understanding of perception, students test assumptions about their world.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2390 The XX Factor

The XX Factor takes an integrative learning approach to gender role development that foregrounds psychology and literature. This approach provides multiple lenses through which to examine current and historical concepts of women's psychological and social development. It prioritizes close textual analysis of gender identity and sexuality as figured in literature across a broad spectrum. The course considers both conformity and resistance to societal biases, stereotyping, and the imposition of gender and sexual norms. In doing so, it promotes critical thinking about the diverse possibilities for women's identities.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2435 Leonardo da Vinci: Culture, Art and Math

This course covers a portion of the movement in Europe known as the Renaissance. It explores the works of one particular man, Leonardo da Vinci, and how his insatiable hunger for understanding impacted the culture of Florence and Milan, Italy. The course begins by examining da Vinci himself and his place in society, then moves on to examine some of his works of art and writings on architectural design and war machines culturally, historically and mathematically.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, MATH1002 (or higher), sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence
3 Semester Credits

ILS2450 The Mathematics of Art

This course examines the use and appearance of mathematical principles and structures in art, architecture, sculpture and music throughout the history of the Western world. Topics include the Golden Ratio, the Fibonacci Sequence, linear perspective, two- and three-dimensional geometry, and the arithmetic behind music and music composition.

Prerequisite(s): ENG0001 or placement, ENG1020 or ENG1024, MATH1002 (or higher), sophomore status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4070 Nostalgia, Memory and Hybrid Identity

This course examines diasporic literature in the context of cultural theory, history, psychology, philosophy and popular culture (such as music, film and art) to better understand the associated cultural negotiations. Students explore the way diasporic literature of the last century has significantly transformed the literary, theoretical and cultural landscape of the U.S, and raised a range of complex issues relating to identity, language, border crossings (geographical, linguistic and gender, etc.) hybridity, and acculturation and resistance. Readings range across such genres as memoir, fiction, essay, drama and poetry to consider how issues of identity and tradition are represented and contested by immigrant writers in the context of displacement and diaspora.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4115 Contemporary Approaches to Classical and World Mythology

This course introduces students to classical and world mythology in order to understand the eternal, timeless nature of universal archetypes and themes while also exploring how they acquire new, contemporary meanings. Students learn to interpret myth using elements of literature as well as through the theories of myth interpretation. From Homer to Harry Potter, emphasis is placed upon analysis of primary readings as well as their interpretations within the context of a variety of disciplines. Class discussions and student writing encourage critical thinking, synthesis and application of the terminology of the study of mythology.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4120 Disease and Culture

This course addresses the question of what constitutes a disease from the perspectives of science and the humanities. Topics include the origins of disease and the effect that disease has had on political events, art and culture, warfare, and the economy of societies both historically and in today's world, and how societies throughout time have attempted, either successfully or unsuccessfully, to address the problem of disease. Students explore the cultural interpretations given to various diseases. Through the examination and analysis of various medical case studies, historical readings and literary pieces, students learn to think critically about how disease has helped to shape the world that we live in and what disease means to them.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4133 How to Change the World

This course explores social entrepreneurs as a force of transformative change. What are the motivations and methods of those who seek to solve social problems on a large scale? What needs changing in the world and what do art and literature have to say about being an agent of change? How might your ambition, abilities and persistence make others believe in the possibility of achieving very difficult tasks? How might you distort reality for good? The course gives students a broad avenue to align what they care about, what they are good at, and what they enjoy with how they might have real impact in the world.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte

3 Semester Credits

ILS4140 The Legal Imagination

This course introduces students to the textual nature of the law. Through intensive study of literary, persuasive and legal texts, students explore the commonalities between what we call "literature" and what we call "law." Students begin to see the "constitutive rhetoric" of those texts through which an author creates a social and political community with words.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, one LAW-designated course, (one LIT-designated course or MCST2030 or ILS2010 or ILS2015 or ILS2090 or ILS2127 or ILS2150 or ILS2180), senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4170 Passion, Power and Principle: Lessons at Play in Shakespeare

This course employs the still-relevant insights of the Shakespearean canon as a means of understanding and resolving contemporary ethical dilemmas, social tensions and the conflicting demands of citizenship in today's world. Focus is on the resolution of moral dilemmas involving divisions of power, the use of authority, familial obligations and conflicting loyalties. This course takes an integrative learning approach that draws on literature, philosophy (ethics) and history to promote analysis and meaningful comparisons between the problems confronted in the world of Shakespeare's plays (and the society they reflect) and those faced by us today.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4176 Sports in Film and Literature

This interdisciplinary course focuses on the significant inspiration of athletic endeavors upon the literary and cinematic imagination. Writers of fiction and nonfiction, prose writers and poets have discovered in the athletic experience a useful metaphor to express the purpose and meaning of life. Modern film explores both the realism and romanticism of sports in popular culture. This course is designed to acquaint the student with the essence of games as myth and metaphor and develop an appreciation of the historical context in which the stories are constructed and heard. The interdisciplinary considerations of history and culture allow for a richer understanding and appreciation of sports and sports literature.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4180 Things That Go Bump In the Night: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Supernatural

This course explores the deeper meanings of supernatural creatures in works of film and literature from the perspectives of history, science, philosophy, literature and film. The course addresses the question of why certain supernatural creatures (e.g., vampires, zombies, werewolves, ghosts, the demonically possessed, Frankenstein's monster and extraterrestrial creatures) have featured so prominently in human thought, human fears and works of literature and film from antiquity to the present day. In doing so, the course addresses the historical context in which such beliefs have arisen and how they have changed. Students are encouraged to apply interpretive skills to an analysis of supernatural creatures with which they are familiar and to draw connections between the monsters of the 21st century and societal changes and hidden conflicts in the contemporary world.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4190 The Problem With Evil

This course takes an interdisciplinary approach to the examination of evil as a concept that has fascinated and horrified humans throughout history. Through religions, social norms, philosophies and literatures, people have attempted to define evil in order to explain, and make meaningful, aspects of life that seem otherwise incomprehensible or unbearably senseless. The course explores the construction and uses of evil as a defining term, and its impact on nations, communities and individuals. Students read a wide range of texts across broad historical and cultural spectrums, looking for the answers to this question that continues to perplex and captivate us.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4210 Colors

This course explores the role and importance of colors in the natural world, astronomy, geology, human society, culture, psychology, art and many other disciplines. Topics include the physics of color and its perception by animals and the color of the ocean, rocks, minerals, stars and galaxies. In addition, the various uses of color by plants is examined, including the utilization of colored pigments by plants for light absorption in photosynthesis. The various ways that animals use color are also explored, including how colors are used by both predators and prey and how they are used to attract mates. Additional topics include the affect of colors on humans, including mood, language, musical expression, and as a symbol of national or group identity in politics and religion. Colors have a profound influence in artistic expression and in the food and fashion industries. The importance of colors in all of these different disciplines are examined. With the knowledge and skills learned in this course, students are able to explore the use and application of colors in their own chosen field of interest.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any BIO, CHM, PHY or SCI-designated course, any ILS2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4302 Abuse of Power: Corruption in Contemporary Society

This course examines how (in the hands of certain individuals and groups and under "favorable" social, political, historical and economic conditions) the abuse of power and corruption impacts lives in all social strata. Students analyze this question and propose research-based recommendations for transforming dysfunctional systems into sustainable and productive models.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Online, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4320 (De)Constructing Race and Color

This course addresses the racialization processes involved in the social construction of the color of race — White, Yellow, Brown, Red and Black — through interdisciplinary studies including the arts, humanities, social sciences, biology, law and education. The course identifies the key parameters of the racialization process (historical subjugation through involuntary immigration and migration, voluntary immigration, prejudice, stereotypes, scientific racism, cultural racism, and systemic) of institutional racism and how various groups in the United States were raced into a color. Students are tasked with thinking about why race matters within educational, economic, political and social institutions. The course involves intentional discourse on the complexity of the color of race through scientific interrogation, analysis and interpretation of the course materials to understand the social construction of the color of race and how race can be deconstructed in the 21st century.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4330 Economic Explorations in American History

This course seeks to explain American history through the lens of economics. Emphasis is placed on how changing economic modes of production influenced outcomes at the societal level. In each episode, students focus on the relevant economic background and institutional structure and then deduce how this in turn informed historical change in activities ranging from agriculture, household production, industrialization, social movements, political response and the new information economy.

Prerequisite(s): ECON1001 or ECON1002, ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte

3 Semester Credits

ILS4340 Global Food Security and Leading Change Locally

This interdisciplinary course critically assesses the global challenges of food security and how leadership in a local community organization addresses food access. Food is explored from a cultural, nutritional, ecological and ethical context while analyzing issues of food production, causes of insufficient supply, nutritional and health implications, and effects on quality of life. Evaluation of political, environmental, technological and economic factors that contribute to the perpetual issue of food insecurity and the social consequences also occurs. The critical issue of the course examines whether access to food is a basic human right and whose responsibility it is to provide societal members with the nourishment needed to be productive. These perspectives are explored theoretically, on the global scale, and experientially, in the local community. Additionally the student utilizes his/her leadership skills to engage 40 hours of community service in an organization of his/her choosing, preferably nonprofit or with professor approval a for-profit socially responsible organization. The student completes a substantial agency-based project, in conjunction with his/her site supervisor that serves as a tangible contribution to the overall organization and its ability to address food security locally.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS2000-level course, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4430 Explorations in Symmetry

The course introduces the student to the basic concept of symmetry and its important role as a unifying agent in the understanding of mathematics, nature, art, architecture and music. Topics covered include an introduction to group theory, the mathematical language of symmetry, transformations, general symmetry principles and applications.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, MATH1040 or MATH2001 or MATH2010 or MATH2020, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits

ILS4490 Statistics of Popular Culture

This course is designed to give students a unique look at statistics topics applied outside the classroom, specifically in the world of popular culture. Examples of popular culture include but are not limited to movies, television, books, music, sports and video games. These topics are analyzed through a unique guise of combining statistics with sociology. Students should be able to practice what they have learned in basic statistics course(s) to further prepare them to use research design outside of academics.

Prerequisite(s): ENG1021 or ENG1027, any ILS 2000-level course, MATH2001 or MATH2010, senior status.

Offered at Charlotte, Providence

3 Semester Credits