WAYS of Beginning—The Potsdam First-Year Experience

WAYS 101: Critical Thinking Seminar (3 cr.)  (SUNY Critical Thinking, SUNY Info Management)
WAYS 101 will be a “Big Ideas” course focusing on “wicked problems” which the teaching faculty is passionately involved with and the contexts in which those problems occur. WAYS 101 courses include explicit instruction in critical thinking -- the ability to think clearly and rationally about what to do and what to believe – and require oral and written applications of those abilities. Einstein reputedly characterized critical thinking as “…the awakening of the intellect to the study of itself.” This is important, as it implies a high degree of self-consciousness about and reflection on one’s thinking processes. Wicked problems seminars are specifically designed to introduce students to a rigorous and demanding liberal arts curriculum, provide the opportunity for students to work closely with a faculty mentor, and establish a sense of community among participants.

Sections – Fall 2018 (detailed descriptions on page 2)
Dr. Kim Bouchard (Theatre): “Don’t read/look/listen/say that!: Censorship and Social Control”
Dr. Mike Rygel (Geology): “Burning Down the House: Energy, Carbon, and Climate”
Dr. Christine Doran (English & Communication): “Dystopian Anime, or What Color is Your Psycho Pass?”
Dr. David Curry (Philosophy): “Natural Selection or Intelligent Design?: Darwin and his detractors, 1862-64”
Dr. Laura Brown (Education): “It Only Takes One Mistake: The Problem with Making Everything Public”
Dr. Sheila McIntyre (History): “Satan in Salem, 1692”
Dr. Kelly Bonnar (Public Health & Human Performance): “Why Doesn’t She Leave?”
Dr. Hadley Kruczek-Aaron (Archeology): “When Monuments Fall: Public Memory and the Politics of the Past”

WAYS 102: College Writing Seminar (3 cr.)  (SUNY Basic Communication/SUNY Info Management)
WAYS 102 introduces students to the specialized nature of writing for different purposes and discourses, and helps students develop skills as critical readers, thoughtful writers, and participants in the academic community. Students read and discuss university-level texts, identifying underlying assumptions and points of view, distinguishing fact from opinion, drawing inferences, and reaching independent conclusions. The course emphasizes the composing process (inventing, planning, writing, revising, editing), rhetorical concerns (audience, purpose, tone, organization, development, coherence), and mechanics (punctuation, grammar, usage). This course is designed to help students write effectively in other university courses, develop critical thinking and writing fluency, and find and critically evaluate source materials.

WAYS 103: Talking about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (3 cr.)  (SUNY Basic Communication)
WAYS 103 exposes students to concepts necessary to live, work and create in the diverse populations and social identities that characterize the U.S., including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, disability status, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, gender identity and expression, and age. In doing so, students will explore personal and societal assumptions about differences, and examine systemic cultural, political, and economic imbalances. This course focuses on developing public speaking skills. Students will model civil and respectful discussions about difficult topics and charged issues.

WAYS 101 Working Group Members/Pilot Faculty:
Kelly Bonnar (Community Health), Laura Brown (Education), Kim Bouchard (Drama), David Curry (Philosophy), Christine Doran (English), Hadley Kruczek –Aaron (Archeology), Sheila McIntyre (History), Mike Rygel (Geology), Michael Schaff (Music)

WAYS 102 Working Group Members/Pilot Faculty:
Carrie Bates (English & Communication/Office of Assessment), Lynn Hall (Literacy Education), Nancy Lewis (Sociology), Sheila McIntyre (History), Liberty Stanavage (English & Communication)
-Pilot Faculty: TBD in Fall 2018.

WAYS 103 Working Group Members/Pilot Faculty:
“Connecting with Others” working group: Kelly Bonnar (Public Health & Human Performance), Heather Wheeler (Crane), Savita Hanspal (Business Administration), Lynn Hall (Education)
Speaking/Listening SLOs drafted by English & Communication
-Pilot Faculty: TBD in May 2018. RFP will be distributed in early April, 2018. Courses to be offered SP19.

WAYS 101: Critical Thinking Seminar Pilot Sections Fall 2018

“Why Doesn’t She Just Leave?”—Dr. Kelly Bonnar (Public Health & Human Performance)
“Why doesn’t she just leave” is as complex a question as “Why does he hit?”. Women’s decisions to stay with a batterer are determined and complicated by factors such as SES, gender equity, patriarchal attitudes/beliefs, geography, and the availability of community resources. Public health efforts to find battered women safety and security target these social determinants through coordinated responses, including the availability of resources from social services, criminal justice, victim’s assistance programs, healthcare providers, and local community programs such as safe dwellings and support groups. But these efforts are not always effective and many women choose to stay with a batterer, perpetuating the cycle of violence, and often doing more harm than good. In this course, students will explore this wicked problem, by analyzing (a) who the victims are (demographically), (b) the risk factors for victimization, and (c) the data about primary prevention program effectiveness.

Kelly Bonnar has been actively engaged in public health efforts to prevent domestic violence. She is published in the area of domestic and sexual violence policies, including in the American Journal of Public Health. Dr. Bonnar has also earned the following certifications: Duluth Model Facilitator (a batter intervention program), Rape Crisis Counselor/Advocate, and is a foster parent working with children exposed to violence. She has attended over 40 workshops, trainings, and conferences about the impact of domestic violence on communities, women, and children.

Satan in Salem, 1692—Dr. Sheila McIntyre (History)
How did witch beliefs, Satan, gender, economics, politics, law, speech, and one misguided (and money-hungry) Godly minister all collide in 1692 to create a witchcraft crisis of unprecedented proportions in the Massachusetts Bay colony? We will explore witchcraft through many lenses, paying special attention to the social, religious, and gendered contexts of witchcraft and to the legal and cultural dimensions of witch-hunting. Using copies of original documents, primary & secondary sources, fiction, drama, and film, we will question why historians are so drawn to witchcraft history and we will debate which interpretations work best to explain the enduring power of witchcraft accusation and witch-hunting. We may even decide what really happened in Salem in 1692...

Sheila McIntyre is a historian of early America who specializes in 17th century New England letter-writing and early newspapers. McIntyre has taught the history of witchcraft to undergraduates for nearly twenty years. Her love of impossible handwriting led her to take on huge documentary editing projects, which led to her first book: The Correspondence of John Cotton Jr. She is now finishing up a documentary collection of the writings of Puritan bad-boy Roger Williams, founder of Rhode Island & early proponent of the separation of church and state. No one has published a one-volume version of his collected writings since 1953... probably because his prose is impenetrable. The students in her Wicked Problems Seminar will also tackle some
original manuscripts, impossible handwriting, and impenetrable prose... but McIntyre promises to help...

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**Natural Selection or Intelligent Design?: Darwin & his detractors, 1862-64—Dr. David Curry (Philosophy)**

In 1859 Charles Darwin published his groundbreaking *On the Origin of Species*. It shook the scientific and religious establishments to the bone. It was not only his conclusions which were controversial, but his evidence and even the basic form of his argument. In this class we will familiarize ourselves with Darwin’s evidence, and his modes of argument, and we will examine those arguments, as well as those of his detractors, in some detail. The class will culminate in the debate in the Royal Society, the premier scientific society of the day, over whether or not to award Darwin the prestigious Copley Medal given for "outstanding achievements in research in any branch of science." Each student will be assigned a role as a defender of Darwin’s theory, a detractor, or of one of the many uncommitted. They will then engage in disputes over the scientific and, inseparably, the most pressing religious and social issues of the day.

David Curry is a historian of philosophy whose scholarly work has focused on Plato, the value of the liberal arts and the teaching of philosophy. He regularly teaches a course in the philosophy of religion in which examining design arguments for the existence of God play an important role. As far as he knows, he is the first to use the role-playing games of the Reacting to the Past pedagogy at SUNY Potsdam. A lifelong gamer, adopting this pedagogy came quite naturally. This course draws on a number of areas of his expertise – in the close reading of primary texts, the teaching of critical thinking, in design arguments for the existence of God and in gaming.

**Dystopian Anime, or What Color is Your Psycho Pass?—Dr. Christine Doran (English & Communication)**

What is your idea of the perfect world? One in which all people are housed and fed, educated and employed equally? What other social and personal institutions are necessary for your utopia? This course examines anime which present seemingly perfect worlds that all, inevitably, seem to have huge central world-breaking flaws that they are hiding. Utopias and dystopias are a significant and provocative category of anime. There is something about the visual form that lends itself well to the representation of these complex, imaginary worlds. Anime also tends to allow for interestingly ambiguous ethical questions about good and bad, heroes and villains, and individual and collective. We will analyze such texts as *Psycho Pass, Puella Magi Madoka Magica, Baccano, Death Note, Trigun, Shin Sekai Yori, Akira, No. 6,* and *Princess Mononoke*.

Christine Doran has been watching and teaching anime for about ten years. Proudly *otaku*, she has also presented academic work on teaching anime at the Southwest Popular Culture Association conference. She attended the Freeman Summer Institute on Japan Studies which where she learned most of the Japanese phrases she knows. Speaking Japanese is not a requirement for the course but may be a bonus learning experience, at least the important “please,” “thank you,” and “I’m sorry” phrases.

**Burning Down the House: Energy, Carbon, and Climate—Dr. Michael Rygel (Geology)**

The nearly eight billion people on our planet are burning through fossil fuel resources almost a million times faster than they are being replenished. Our addiction to hydrocarbons is hurtling us toward a carbon-fueled climate catastrophe. How we got into this predicament is clear, how (and if) we can get out of it is not. In this course we will explore human energy consumption, climate history, the carbon cycle, climate science, and society’s options for moving forward. As we do so, we will critically assess data collection and interpretation, model assumptions and reliability, feedback loops, tipping points, and the complex economic, environmental, societal, and technical considerations associated with climate change.

Michael Rygel is a field geologist who specializes in understanding the Late Paleozoic world. His research projects have examined the paleotropical coalfields of eastern North America, ancient glacial deposits in southeastern Australia and, most recently, shallow marine deposits in southwestern Montana. His teaching
focuses on Earth history, sedimentology and stratigraphy, digital map-making, and field geology. He serves as an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Sedimentary Research*, the *Canadian Journal of Earth Science*, and has written or contributed to 36 peer-reviewed publications and 83 presentations at scientific meetings. Outside of academia, he has worked as a consultant for the energy industry and is a licensed Professional Geologist in New York State.
It Only Takes One Mistake: The Problem with Making Everything Public--Dr. Laura Brown (Secondary Education)

Everyone makes mistakes, but now, through the use of technology and social media, people’s personal transgressions have become public knowledge. No longer can we speak or act without the rest of the world listening and watching, and, in turn, judging. While social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram regularly encourage us to display our photos, our musings, and our daily activities online, they also encourage friends and visitors alike to view and respond to our lives, providing commentary on everything, especially our mistakes. Sometimes these blunders are personally recorded and displayed; others are captured by strangers. Regardless, all of them can follow us forever, with lasting repercussions. Is anything private anymore? In this course, we will explore the use of social media as society’s moral compass and examine the publishing and punishing of people’s errors. Are some mistakes acceptable? Are some unforgiveable? Who determines this and how? Should we refrain from using social media altogether or should people simply mind their own business?

Laura Brown has been a teacher for almost half of her life, and now, as coordinator for the Adolescence English education program, she is actively involved in helping young people to see not only the value in learning but also to see themselves as future teachers. She has co-written two books on young adult authors and the benefits of using of their books in secondary classrooms and is currently researching young adult novels that break boundaries and give voice to issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality.

CENSORED

Don’t read/ look/ listen/ say that!: Censorship and Social Control—Dr. Kimberley Bouchard (Theatre)

Censorship has a long history in human societies and is often used as a means of social, political, religious and economic control over the spread of information and ideas. These ideas often surface as forms of dissent against a ruling group. They take the form of writings and songs, visual imagery and, today, social media. The course will begin by investigating current censorship practices in various parts of the world, including the USA. We will engage in research of historical examples of censorship to discern and discover patterns, similarities and dissimilarities in the use and forms of censorship. We will also ask and discuss the role of censorship in democratic societies versus autocracies. We will ask questions such as: When might censorship be justified? and when and how is it used? and abused? Who decides what gets censored? Where does the authority lie that determines what is and is not censored? What is the relationship between censorship and accepted social taboos? How does censorship affect you? Will we discover differences based on gender, age, race, sexuality? What level of censorship is “acceptable”?

Kimberley Bouchard is a theatre artist and teacher who has encountered various forms of censorship throughout her career. She has directed over 70 productions in professional and educational theatre in the USA, Spain, England, Mexico and while teaching at “Semester at Sea”. She has been fortunate to travel extensively, as an artist and academic, and witnessed first hand a variety of forms of censorship and their effects on social norms and practices. Her creative activity and research work has been concerned with how theatre art engages audiences to ask tough and difficult questions that have urgent importance in our public and private lives.

When Monuments Fall: Public Memory and the Politics of the Past—Dr. Hadley Kruczek-Aaron (Archeology)
In this course, we will explore the many ways that the past is present. We will ask difficult questions about whose interest counts when it comes to the public expression of our shared heritage, and we will explore how monuments, archaeological sites, and museums across the United States have become sites of protest and controversy. We will consider what and who has been remembered in our communities, and we will examine how communities can begin to resolve conflicts relating to commemoration and public memory. And lastly, as part of a final project, we will critically evaluate how one community remembers its past in the present and make recommendations for how it should do so in the future. Though this “wicked problem” is international in scope, our course will limit its focus to case studies from the U.S.

Hadley Kruczek-Aaron is an archaeologist who has been grappling with questions of heritage for more than 25 years. She has excavated sites associated with U.S. presidents, abolitionists, religious radicals, missionaries, farmers, loggers, and the enslaved in order to consider the ways that class, gender, race, and religion have been lived in nineteenth-century America. Her current research focuses on Timbucto, a community of African American farmers who came to the Adirondacks as part of a mid-19th-century reform experiment. Outside of the classroom, Hadley collaborates with stakeholders on heritage issues through her role as a board member of John Brown Lives!, a freedom education initiative focused on promoting conversations about the fight for social justice in the past and present.