

General Studies

General Studies courses are courses that fall outside of the major disciplines. Some are included in the core curriculum offering, others are based on a faculty member's interest in the topic. Most are only offered during Winter Term, but may not be offered every Winter Term. Some are offered during the Fall or Spring terms. In most cases, these courses count for elective credit only.

Courses

GS 102 Paper Making: 3 semester hours

There is something special about the beauty and quality of handmade paper. In this course the student will discover that making paper is both enjoyable and rewarding. Processes that were similar to those started over 2,000 years ago by the Chinese will be used. Students will learn how to beat pulp, make a screen consisting of a cold and deckle, size and press paper. Students will have the opportunity to make paper for albums, portfolios, diaries and notepapers. Experimental approaches will be introduced such as laminating, shaping, embossing and casting. Reference will be made to historical examples throughout the course. A field trip to a paper-making facility is planned. Also a guest artist will demonstrate processes and provide "hands-on" experiences. No prerequisites.

GS 105 Advanced Spreadsheet Applications I: 3 semester hours

Computer spreadsheet programs have many applications across numerous disciplines. This course explores the many features of Microsoft Excel in detail. Included will be a review of basic spreadsheet techniques along with an in-depth study of planning and formatting spreadsheets, database and charting functions included in spreadsheet software and macros which are "mini" programs that make spreadsheets easier to use. Students will be required to participate in a scheduled computer lab in which they will work on various required assignments. Class will be held in the computer classroom. This course may not be applied to any major or minor. It is recommended that students taking this course have a basic understanding of math, accounting or finance. This course is not recommended for freshmen.

GS 107 Personal Investing for Non-Business Majors: 3 semester hours

All people make investments, but most people do not really know if their investment choices are appropriate. Hence, many people invest way too conservatively while others blindly follow the advice of investment professionals who may be more concerned with their commissions than their customers' well-being. This course will help individuals choosing an overall investment portfolio to meet various long-term and short-term goals. Various investments will be examined, including: CD's, savings bonds, treasury issues, corporate bonds, real estate, preferred stock, common stock and mutual funds. The risks and returns of each type of investment will be discussed in terms of specific goals and time frames. This course may be taken by marketing, management or accounting majors by petition only.

GS 109 Health Care Dilemmas: 3 semester hours

The purpose of this course is to heighten the student's awareness of some current health care dilemmas confronting our society. Using the case study approach, this course will explore the ethical aspects of these dilemmas that result from our modern medical technology, a technology that makes almost anything possible today in terms of health care. With this kind of possibility, the dilemma soon arises: what should we do when there is very little we can not do? Further complicating this issue today is the growing concern over health care costs and attempts to keep these costs down through various managed care plans. The dilemmas explored in this course include: 1) quality versus quantity of life, 2) care of the hopelessly ill and the right to die, 3) mercy killing/euthanasia and assisted suicide, 4) health care costs and accessibility and 5) the impact of technology on our health care delivery and options. The purpose of the course is to provide the student a framework within which to analyze these issues based on ethical theories, principles and rules. These are issues which individuals and society must address. Audiovisuals and guest speakers will be used. No prerequisites.

GS 112 Corporal & Spiritual Acts Of Mercy: 3 semester hours

The purpose of this course is to enhance spiritual development. Students also are invited to explore how God works through the "poorest of the poor" to strengthen faith and offer opportunities for grace. While exploring the corporal and spiritual acts of mercy as modeled by Jesus Christ, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and others, students will have opportunities to perform such acts, gain a deeper understanding of personal abilities and beliefs, and explore how society treats the poor. During a week-long travel experience, students will assist indigent persons from various cultural backgrounds within an urban environment, such as inner-city Chicago.

GS 114 Women In the Third World: 3 semester hours

This course will explore socio-political analysis of women's role in the developing world. The course primarily deals with issues like gender equality political and social participation, role of the women in traditional and modern settings, and how the social change has altered the role and responsibilities of the women in the developing world.

GS 115 Women's Health: 3 semester hours

Women's health and health issues are a concern of women and health care providers. Women are living longer and want to remain healthy over their lifetimes. For healthy aging, a woman must develop good life-style habits while young. Some of the topics included are: healthy living, sexuality (puberty, family planning, sexually transmitted infections, childbearing, and menopause), mental health, eating disorders, violence, and cancer.

GS 119 Healthy Lifestyle: 3 semester hours

This course will help students recognize personal health habits and explore methods to establish healthy lifestyles. Strategies for improving overall health and physical fitness will be utilized. The classroom component addresses a variety of topics related to emotional physical health. An aerobic exercise component to this class is included.

GS 120 Complementary Therapy & Wellness: 3 semester hours

Over the past 20 years, American health care has shifted from a biomedical model toward a holistic approach that incorporates physical, emotional, social, environmental, intellectual and spiritual dimensions of wellness. Therapies from non-western medicine (such as acupuncture, herbal supplements, yoga, massage, medication) are used in conjunction with traditional western medicine as "complementary therapies" with the goal of health promotion. As current or potential future users of complementary therapy, college students will benefit from defining various complementary therapy modalities, exploring current research, and evaluating practitioners' qualifications. To enhance cultural sensitivity, healing practices from other cultures and cultural influences on health beliefs and health practices will be addressed.

GS 122 Mental Illness: 3 semester hours

In this course, students are given the opportunity to learn about mental disorders from the perspective of patients, families and professional caregivers as described in popular films and in literary works such as autobiographies and novels, as well as from personal accounts by guest speakers and from case studies.

GS 123 Introduction To Business: 3 semester hours

This is a survey course designed for non-business or undecided majors desiring an understanding of the fundamentals of business. Topics covered in the course will include the current business environment, the functional areas of business, practical business skills, core business terminology and current issues in business. Contemporary business issues to be discussed include business ethics and social responsibility, doing business in a global environment, e-business and customer relationship management. Not recommended for business majors and does not count toward any of the business majors.

GS 127 On Fatherhood: 3 semester hours

A child's relationship with his/her father is one of the most influential in his/her life. Fathers are the first men children ever love, and fathers ultimately teach children what men are. This course is designed to enable students to develop an understanding of a wide range of issues related to fatherhood and the father-child relationship in contemporary America. The course will examine the impact father have on children's development, various styles of fatherhood, father/daughter and father/son relationships, single and divorced fathers, gay fathers and stepfathers. The class will include lecture/discussion, speakers, and films. There will be required readings, a final exam, and a short documented paper. No prerequisite.

GS 128 Strength Training With Weights: 3 semester hours

This course will involve both lectures and weight-training sessions. The lectures will address such topics as free weights versus weight machines, high reps versus low reps, various routines and exercises, diet, dietary supplements like amino acids, potential benefits from aerobic exercise, the dangers of steroids, and what muscles are affected by various exercises. This course is designed for students who are primarily interested in gaining strength rather than doing aerobic exercise. Also it is designed for the beginning to intermediate lifter and not for the advanced lifter. No prerequisites.

GS 132 Cartooning: College Educated Doodling: 3 semester hours

Are you a closet cartoonist? If you have cute or even weird little works of art - better known as doodles - filling the margins of the class notebooks you are using this term, you just may be a closet cartoonist. In a workshop format, this course will explore the basics of how to turn your doodles into finished cartoons. We will discuss and enjoy the humor of published single-panel magazine cartoons, focusing on aspects such as drawing style, facial expressions, effective composition, caption writing, what makes the cartoon work, and many other elements. However, because practice and more practice is the most important element in producing effective cartoons, we will spend a significant amount of time creating and rendering original cartoons. Interspersed with the practice we will view select videos that demonstrate various techniques of cartooning. We will also view several videos where several professional cartoonists discuss their style, their simulations, and other interesting aspects of their professional careers.

GS 136 End Of Life: Caring For the Caregiver: 3 semester hours

This course is designed for students who utilize a range of skills in their work. This course will address the impact of death on the professional, the family members and the patient. Death will be discussed through the life cycle with focus on steps following death of a patient, the grieving process, staying positive in handling emotions, and other topics related to death. The class will utilize panel discussions, field trip to local funeral home, in class discussion, and reflections.

GS 140 Film Noir: 3 semester hours

Flashing neon signs reflecting from the wet pavement of dimly lit streets, shady characters lurking in doorways, cynical anti-heroes and dangerous women - these are the ingredients of film noir, a uniquely American style of movie making first identified by French film critics in the early 1950s. Essentially a "B" picture genre existing at the fringes of mainstream Hollywood during the forties and fifties, film noir nevertheless attracted major directors as diverse as Jogn Huston, Billy Wilder, Orson Welles, and Alfred Hitchcock, artists whose contributions to the genre are counted among the masterpieces of American film. This course will trace, through the screening of 11 films and an examination of two short novels, the history of film noir from its roots in the detective fiction of the twenties and thirties through its influence on present day film directors, who continue to find inspiration in the shadowy world of moral ambiguity tucked away in the dark corners of our collective subconscious.

GS 151 Introduction to Dramatic Art: 3 semester hours

This course is designed to sharpen the lens through which you view a theatrical production or film, with the aim of creating a more deeply satisfying experience as a participant or audience member. Through the reading of plays covering many styles, periods and genres, and guided in-class analysis of these texts, you will learn how the pieces of the play work together to support the overall telling of the story. We will also discuss how the theatre functions as a body, the roles of the designer, director, playwright and actor, and how each individual's artistic contribution works to create an effective piece of dramatic art. Through the completion of this course you will gain a deeper appreciation for the work of the theatre and also a deeper understanding of its role in humanity and its impact on society. This course counts as an expressive arts domain fine arts course.

GS 157 American Food: 3 semester hours

The course will explore the health and sustainability of the American diet. What goes into growing and processing the food we eat? How do food marketers and regulators influence what we choose to consume? How do those choices in turn impact our health? We will look at fast food, organic food, and the global food market as we talk about the impacts on the environment, public health, and personal nutrition. Through lectures, films, and field trips we will see firsthand where our food comes from and we will be able to make informed, purposeful choices about what we decide to eat.

GS 158 Culture And Biology Of Belize: 3 semester hours

This is a travel course that will spend part of the term in Belize. Points of interest will include Mayan ruins, lowland tropical rainforest, how the Mayans use the plant and animals, visits to a Mayan village, snorkeling in coral reefs to study the ecosystem, and other sites in Belize. Prerequisites: permission of the instructor and deposits at appropriate times.

GS 159 Healthcare in the UK: 3 semester hours

This course will allow students to explore, compare, and contrast the healthcare system in the United Kingdom with that of the United States. Students will have an opportunity to explore both the inpatient and outpatient healthcare options in the UK as well as attend classes in healthcare. Additionally, they will visit local hospitals and clinics to explore routines/policies. Students will also visit London and experience cultural exhibits to determine the value these exhibits have on the history of healthcare both in the US and the UK.

GS 160 Scrapbooking: 3 semester hours

Scrapbooking has become a very popular form of documenting one's life utilizing pictures and journaling to pass on to future generations. For many, it is a creative outlet to express themselves, who they are, what is important to them, and their relationships with others. Students will learn about the basic supplies, tools and quality of materials used in scrapbooking as well as be introduced to new tools and techniques available today. Students will also learn to recognize and practice utilizing elements of art (the use of space, color, lines, shapes, texture) and art principles (unity, balance, rhythm, proportion, and point of interest) as they relate to the composition of scrapbook pages. In addition, specific assignments will challenge students to utilize art elements and principles to effectively communicate feelings and emotions in their scrapbook pages. Some examples include pages that express what is important and not important to you, what does family mean to you, what kinds of relationships you have with different people, and how you deal with difficult situations.

GS 164 Fryer Oil to Freeways: Biodiesel: 3 semester hours

Millions of gallons of petroleum diesel fuel are sold annually in Iowa for use in transportation vehicles, agricultural equipment, and as home heating oil. Fossil fuels are nonrenewable and their use contributes to greenhouse gas emissions that are closely linked to the important issue of global warming. A renewable fuel such as biodiesel is a viable alternative. This course will introduce students to this renewable fuel and will examine North American energy consumption, efficiency and how these relate to pollution and climate change. We will also examine the geopolitics of oil and its production limits. The pros and cons of biodiesel will be examined and we will consider feed stocks used for production of biodiesel, including use of waste vegetable oil. The elementary chemistry of biodiesel production will be converted, as will quality control testing of the final product. Students will actually produce a mini batch of biodiesel fuel.

GS 170 Czech Language and Culture: 3 semester hours

This intensive, summer four-week course in the Czech language is taught at Palacky University in the Czech Republic through its Summer School of Slavonic Languages. Classes include a foundation of Czech grammar, and intensive practice in reading and developing conversational skills. Language classes are augmented by lectures and seminars on Czech history, language, and culture, and by excursions to Czech cultural sites such as Prague, national parks, and castles. A final exam and reflective journal are required. The student is responsible for additional costs, including travel to the Czech Republic. Special application and permission of the Office of International Programs is required.

GS 171 Meditation And Its Benefits: 3 semester hours

This course is designed to explore meditation from various disciplines. We will look at meditation to understand its physiologic, socio-psychological and spiritual benefits. The course is open to all interested students. However, research suggests that individuals with psychotic illnesses should not participate in meditation. Students with a history of mental illness should seek advice from their physician prior to enrolling. This course is open to all majors.

GS 172 Materialism In Modern America: 3 semester hours

This course is an examination of the concept of materialism. This includes a reflection and analysis of how contemporary culture and consumerism affects overall life satisfaction and health. Students will learn what the empirical literature suggests regarding the effects of a preoccupation with material, rather than intellectual and spiritual pursuits.

GS 179 Psychology Of Eating: 3 semester hours

This course focuses on understanding the psychological processes underlying eating behavior. Topics studied will include: food choice, the development of food preferences, motivation to eat, cultural influences on eating patterns, weight regulation and the relationship between eating and mental health. Students will have the opportunity to modify their own eating behavior during the course. Prerequisite: PS 101.

GS 190 Championship Habits: 3 semester hours

Winning, losing, success, and failure all reveal their own set of characteristics. The big decision we make in life is which traits we choose to embrace and make our own. In this class students study the habits of people who are champions at the game of life and learn how to model those winning traits. If you want to become more effective, get more focused in you academic work, experience lower levels of stress, and set yourself on a path toward personal success, then this class is for you. Students are required to 1) exhibit knowledge of modeling a performance task, 2) catch and correct negative self-talk, 3) build positive self-talk, 4) develop sound routines for their most important work, and 5) develop a context-based model of success as a culminating activity.

GS 195 Men's Health: 3 semester hours

Men's health and health issues are a concern of men and health care providers. Men are living longer and want to remain healthy over their lifetimes. For healthy aging, a man must develop good life-style habits while young. Some of the topics include healthy living, sexuality (puberty, sexually transmitted infections, infertility, fatherhood, healthy relationships and mental health, cancers, cardiovascular wellness, and the mid-life crisis.

GS 205 Advanced Spreadsheet Applications II: 3 semester hours

Computer spreadsheet programs have many applications across numerous disciplines. This course is a continuation of GS 105, Advanced Spreadsheet Applications I. Included will be a review of spreadsheet techniques covered in GS 105 along with an in-depth study of the more advanced features of excel, including application development, designing custom forms, and using pivot tables. Students will be required to participate in a scheduled computer lab in which they will work on various required assignments. Class will be held in the computer classroom. The course may not be applied to any major or minor. Prerequisite: GS 105, or permission of instructor.

GS 230 Foundations of Servant Leadership: 3 semester hours

Foundations of Servant Leadership will introduce students to the concept of Servant Leadership as originally described by Robert Greenleaf in his seminal work, *The Servant as Leader* (1970). Servant Leadership begins with an altruistic calling, and while along the path of self-discovery, a conscious choice to lead others in order to achieve results by bringing out the best in people to contribute to the greater good of our society with their time, talent and treasure. Servant Leadership is an emergent leadership style that has spawned academic research and inspired practical application across industry to improve organizations and communities. Students will begin to examine current Servant Leadership literature, explore their own leadership values/style and engage with the Critical Concerns outlined by the Sisters of Mercy. Students will participate in service, followed by service learning which will lead to Servant Leadership.

GS 233 The Religion, Art And Culture of Nepal: 3 semester hours

This is a travel/study course to Nepal, a predominantly Hindu and Buddhist country. There, religion, art, architecture and culture are intertwined. On our way to Nepal we will spend several days in Delhi, India, where the historical mix of Hindu and Muslim cultures is everywhere. We will visit some of the major religious sites valued by these cultures and study the visual manifestations (art) that make these beliefs come alive for practices. Other excursions will give students a more complete sense of the daily life of Nepalese and Indians. Assignments include readings, daily reflective journals, and an end-of-term public presentation. Please contact the professors for travel and financial requirements. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing preferred.

GS 250 Business Etiquette: 3 semester hours

Although technical skills are important for career success, the total image projected by candidates can often overshadow even the best of skills. This course is designed to prepare students for success in today's business environment. Learning how to navigate the corporate culture that will enhance interpersonal relationships.

GS 260 European Union: Culture, Politics & Economics: 3 semester hours

This travel course will provide students the opportunity to experience other cultures by visiting countries within the European Union. The course will include visits to businesses, governmental institutions and artistic centers. Assignments will include the role of the European Union in the current political and economic arenas.

GS 350 Directed Study Abroad: 12 semester hours

This course is for students enrolled in an approved J-term, summer, semester, or academic year study abroad program, including study through Mount Mercy's exchange partnerships, through a study abroad provider, or through a foreign institution. A required pre-departure orientation is included in the course. Credit hours will be adjusted based on completed work and transferred from the host institution abroad.