SCPS LIBERAL STUDIES (SNC)

SNC 185 | THE BEATLES AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
The Beatles are significant in many ways: they were an unprecedented show business phenomenon; they were leaders of Sixties cultural rebellion; and they stand, for many, as a signal instance of popular entertainment attaining the status of high art. This course will examine the musical craftsmanship of the Beatles, focusing on their work as songwriters and record makers. Recent audio and print releases documenting the group’s performing and recording history provide a unique and detailed glimpse of the Beatles’ creative process. We will utilize these materials to closely trace the development of the group’s work while using other resources to place it in a larger historical and cultural context. The goal is to shed critical light on this recent chapter in cultural history. That discussion will, in turn, highlight questions about creativity in a modern context where commerce vies with art, technology redefines performance and an emerging global village culture transforms concepts of originality and tradition. Arts and Literature.

SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 186 | SPIRITUALITY AND HOMELESSNESS | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course will examine the broad issue of homelessness by providing students the opportunity to reflect upon a service learning experience at a community-based organization that serves the homeless population in Chicago. Students will explore what can be learned about themselves as reflective practitioners, service learners, and spiritual human beings when reflecting upon this experiential learning process. Through the class discussions, assigned readings, invited speakers, and journal assignments, students will reflect on their own beliefs and perceptions of homelessness and analyze the history, causes, and policy associated with this societal problem. Junior Year Experiential Learning.

SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 188 | PROBLEMS AND ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY ETHICS | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
An introduction to moral philosophy with emphasis on the conflict between "moral relativism" (or "subjective" ethics) on the one hand and "moral realism" (or "objective" ethics) on the other. During the course you will be introduced to classic theories and leading figures in the history of ethics, from Plato and Aristotle to Kant and Nietzsche. Course content will focus on issues (e.g., poverty, drug use, capital punishment, sexual behavior, euthanasia, biomedical research, animal rights, political violence) at the center of contemporary ethical debate in the United States and throughout the world. Philosophical Inquiry.

SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 189 | CONTEMPORARY NATIVE AMERICAN/AMERICAN INDIAN ISSUES | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
Native Americans are part of our history and heritage, yet many Americans have little knowledge beyond stereotypes. While invisible to the mainstream, Native American cultures are surviving, striving and in some cases, thriving as we enter the new millennium. This course will explore the complex issues facing Native Americans today through discussions, films, readings, experiential learning activities and Native American news media to enable students to gain a cross-cultural perspective. Students will choose an area of focus on this subject and conduct independent research to present to their classmates. Self, Society and the Modern World.

SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 190 | AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES IN CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This interdisciplinary 19th and 20th century African-American studies course examines the role of protest and resistance, the media, and cultural and artistic expression in African-American history. Vis-a-vis readings, documentaries, and discussion, the course intends to illustrate the multiple ways in which African-Americans have protested and resisted oppression while examining how such efforts have been framed in the media during varying historical eras. It defines ‘media’ broadly and analyzes its role, both via its traditional forms (print, television and radio) but also vis-a-vis other forms of entertainment/infotainment that were particularly unique to 19th century U.S. society (i.e. minstrelsy [1830-1920]). The course concludes with a discussion of the role of art and culture in refashioning thinking and transforming experience. The latter discussion promises to be rich and thought provoking and unearths some of the works of the raw and revolutionary artists of the 1960s while taking a careful look at novel cultural practices that emerged during this period.

SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 191 | ISSUES IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION | 4 quarter hours (Undergraduate)
This course develops students’ understandings of the scientific and religious constructions of self in the modern world (natural and social). The institutions and bodies of knowledge comprising science, religion, and their overlap are critically analyzed. Key historic debates are examined, for example: the Vatican’s trial of Galileo for his teachings of a heliocentric universe; the controversial reception of Darwin’s theory of evolution; and the 2001 U.S. policy on embryonic stem cell research. Through such analyses, the course develops students’ skills in making ethically-informed decisions and thus recognizing their roles in the public debates involving the intersection of science and religion. Self, Society and the Modern World.

SCPS students cannot register for this class.
SNC 192 | NEW ORLEANS IN SONG, STORY & STRUGGLE | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
The tapestry of New Orleans culture is tremendously rich and varied. This course will concentrate on two strands in that tapestry: music from New Orleans and fiction about it. Students will learn about music forms which originated in the city or its environs and which have gone on to dazzle the world, including jazz, rhythm and blues, zydeco and funk. We will situate these art forms in social and historical context and examine the complex creative processes which have shaped them. We will become familiar with innovators and icons such as Louis Armstrong, Professor Longhair, Clifton Chenier, the Neville Brothers and Dr. John. We will also read works by literary artists who have a background in and/or fascination with New Orleans, including The Awakening by Kate Chopin, A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams, and Mumbo Jumbo by Ishmael Reed. Moreover, we will consider the role played in American history and imagination by New Orleans, as well as the role played by images and fantasies of New Orleans in struggles for social justice at the local and national level. Arts and Literature. SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 194 | CHINA: MONEY, POWER AND THE 21ST CENTURY | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This online course analyzes the dramatic impact of the greatest migration of people in the history of the world, which is occurring right now, in China. Students will become more aware of the relationship between growth in China and the balance of power in the world. Understanding China's two economic systems, one country policy will help learners better understand diverse cultures, inequalities and differing theories about self and society. Theory, current and projected economic and demographic data and academic research will equip students with the skills to analyze the institutions, societies and decisions that will shape the world in the 21st century. SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 197 | ANALYZING AUSTEN’S PRIDE AND PREJUDICE | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Jane Austen must have known something about universal truths. Her novel, Pride and Prejudice, which begins with the sentence quoted above, was first published in 1813. Still in print today, it has also been made into at least eleven movies, four of which were released since 2000, including a Mormon and a Bollywood version. In this class, we will read the novel in the context of the gender and class norms at the time Austen wrote her book and then consider how Austen's exploration of universal truths is reinterpreted in more contemporary film versions of this novel. In exploring Austen's creation and the many reinterpretations of her work, we will use both analytic and creative writing assignments as well as class discussion to examine how context informs creativity and how creativity informs analysis. You most definitely do not need to be a creative writer to take this class. SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 205 | RESISTANCE DURING THE HOLOCAUST AND WORLD WAR II | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course explores the history of the Holocaust in the context of the Second World War (1939-1945) with a central focus on examples of resistance to discrimination, fascism and oppression. We will explore varied forms of opposition including armed resistance, spiritual resistance, resistance through writing and identity preservation. We will read autobiographies, view documentary and dramatic films, and use museum resources to develop our understanding of resistance. Required activities include a visit to the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center (Skokie, IL). We will also consider the implications of this history for making ethical choices in our world today. SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 206 | THE FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS: ONE WOMAN’S CRUSADE | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Helen Prejean is a leading human rights activist in the United States. For the past 30 years, she has helped shape conversation about equal treatment for all within the criminal justice system, especially persons of color and the materially poor. Dead Man Walking, the eyewitness account of her experience accompanying condemned prisoners to execution, has had a major influence on discussion of violence, poverty, civil rights, criminal law, and social justice. In this course, we use her work and interact with her personally to study power inequities across race and class lines that perpetuate injustice and examine her strategies for reform. SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 209 | EXPLORING EARTH’S PHYSICAL FEATURES | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course advances student exploration of earth’s 4.5 billion year geologic record in order to evaluate the planet’s evolution and the interrelationships between humans and landforms. Through the application of scientific reasoning, mathematical inference, and prevailing technologies used by geologists, emphasis is on plate tectonics, geologic time, the rock cycle, weathering, earthquakes, fluvial features, rock structures, volcanoes, mountains, plateaus, plains, glacial features, deserts, caves, and coasts. Students also assess human reliance on landforms, the economics of landforms, and cases of earth pseudoscience. Learning is assessed through labs, fieldtrips, a scientifically-formatted research paper, an exam, and contributions to online discussions. SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 210 | PREHISTORIC LIFE | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course promotes students’ investigation of fossils to interpret the character of 3.5 billion years of biological evolution and ecological change on earth. By way of scientific reasoning, mathematical inference, and applicable technologies, emphasis is on the exploration of the earliest evidence of life, development of multi-celled plants and animals, dinosaur evolution, mass extinction events, mammal diversification, human origins as well as appraisal of the societal reliance on fossil resources and the persistent debate over evolution versus creation. Learning is assessed through labs, a fieldtrip, an exam, video summaries, contributions to online discussions, and a research paper in a scientific format. SCPS students cannot register for this class.
SNC 225 | BIODIVERSITY | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
The science of Biodiversity is the study of life on earth, both past and present. It involves the exploration and measurement of the amount of genetic, species, and ecological variation on earth and is emerging as one humanity's most important and urgent endeavors. Scientific efforts to study earth's biodiversity have intensified because of our growing appreciation of the role human population growth and urbanization play in accelerating the extinction of plant and animal species. This course introduces students to the nature of science and the central issues concerning life on earth including: the current state of biodiversity, valuing life's variations, human dependence on biological diversity, the origin and extinction of species, mass extinction, critical habitats at risk, and policies and approaches to conserve biodiversity.

SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 227 | BRAVE NEW WORLD AND 1984: DIVERGING DYSTOPIAS | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
On January 25, 2017, the New York Times published an article, "George Orwell's '1984' Is Suddenly a Bestseller," which reported that Orwell's classic novel had suddenly seen an enormous spike in sales, as had other dystopian novels, including Brave New World. Indeed, the adjective "Orwellian," a reference to the way language can be twisted into pretzel logic by the powers that be, has become a commonplace of contemporary discourse and, as anyone familiar with The Hunger Games can tell you, dystopian fiction has been big in young adult literature for a number of years. But Nineteen Eighty-Four and Brave New World stand, by a strong consensus, as the definitive dystopian novels of the last hundred-some years. This is at least in part due to the fact that both novels are so well written - such riveting pieces of literary art; but it is also due to the perceived prophetic power the novels seem to share, although each posits a different kind of grim future for humankind. This course will engage closely with these two masterworks (and related texts and subtopics) from the perspectives of artistic genre; fiction and social commentary; politico-historical context; and intertextuality.

SCPS students cannot register for this class.

SNC 221 | EVERYDAY EVIDENCE: HOW SCIENCE SHAPES DECISIONS IN EVERYDAY LIFE | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This is a science course designed for those majoring in non-science disciplines. In this class we will explore the nature of scientific debate by using selected debates that are taking place in our society right now, from ideas about nature and nurture, scientific progress and genetically modified foods, to the more personal issues of our diet, exercise habits, COVID-19 risk assessment and medical care for our kids. The question facing us is how, in the great flood of information available to us, do we decide what is right for us? To answer this, we will examine the natural science behind each of these issues. What constitutes good evidence? How do scientists know what they know? Why does science seem to always be changing, and why is it so hard to get a scientist to just state the facts? Each weekly topic will be used as an example of how science shapes what we know, and how to distinguish good science from sketchy. We will also explore the role media play in shaping the public understanding of science. In addition to the weekly discussions, students will pick a topic of their own choosing to research and will write a short literature review of that topic as their final paper.

SNC 220 | FRANCE AND THE SILVER SCREEN: MODERN HISTORY THROUGH FRENCH CINEMA | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course will explore central issues in the history of modern France through the lens of cinematic representations analyzed in historical context. Students will deepen their knowledge of the events and figures in French history and examine change and continuity in such phenomena as the rise of the politically-conscious urban working-class. We will also consider how French society has confronted gender difference and religious pluralism. This course also includes a focus on representations of war and militarism in film, particularly considering the rise of anti-militarist film in the aftermath of the First World War, and the role of violence in colonialism struggles in Algeria and Vietnam. This course will interpret the ways in which films portray historical events and how films contribute to public understanding of history. No prior knowledge of French language is required; all films will be in French with English subtitles.
SNC 231 | VISIBLE & INVISIBLE CITIES | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course looks at THE CITY through the lenses of four philosophical domains: ontology, epistemology, ethics and aesthetics. Through carefully curated short readings of the most important texts of classical, modern, and contemporary writers, students will be introduced to the big philosophical questions in these four domains as they apply to life in a great city.

SNC 233 | LEGACIES OF SLAVERY AND ABOLITION IN ILLINOIS | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
Understanding our history can empower us to contribute to the present, and even more so when it is the history in our own backyard. This course will unpack the complex history of the presence of slavery in Illinois, including pro-slavery forces in the nineteenth century and the anti-slavery activists who fought against slavery in Illinois and Illinois stops on the Underground Railroad. In the first half of the quarter we will learn about the little-known history of slavery practices, indentured servitude, sundown towns, Black Codes, and even lynching in Illinois history. In the second half of the quarter we will study the rise of abolitionism and anti-slavery voices, with a focus on key figures who led change, including instrumental figures who kept Illinois from becoming a slave state. A focus on how these inherited legacies impact Illinois residents and communities today will be threaded into discussions and assignments throughout the course.

SNC 320 | MAMMALOGY | 4 quarter hours
(Undergraduate)
This course will introduce you to the origins, evolution, ecology, and biodiversity of the class Mammalia. Key topics will include mammalian paleobiology, anatomy, classification, genetics, reproduction, thermoregulation, locomotion, behavior, ecology, and conservation. Special emphasis will be on investigating the connections of mammalian evolutionary biology to human health issues including disease, nutrition, physical activity, injury, and overpopulation. Online learning will incorporate readings, discussions, a science kit for hands-on labs, virtual labs using 3D mammals, and computer simulations. Student will also undertake collaborative experimentation and onsite inquiry of mammals at a zoological park, museum, and/or nature reserve. Prerequisite: None.