

Fall 2017 Course Descriptions

UWYO 1101-01 - The Media, Argumentation, and You

Instructor: Mitzi Hettgar Stewart

On a daily basis, the average American is exposed to approximately 5000 mediated persuasive messages. We're exposed to media everywhere, all the time. Due to this, responsible consumers of media must examine how media is shaped by culture and vice versa. In this class we will start by examining how those persuasive mediated messages work by establishing an understanding of basic argumentation. We'll then look at what our role we, the consumers of those messages, have by examining how media frames and alters our perceptions, opinions and actions. Several different types of mediated messages will be examined such as print ads, editorials, commercials and documentaries.

UWYO 1101-02 - Real Lives of the American College Student: How Media Impact our World

Instructor: Shannon McKinzie

The culture around us influences the way we act, the choices we make, and even the ways we define ourselves in different places. Yet we rarely take time to investigate how we are impacted by media in America—reality TV, social media, and marketing that never stops. Even though shows like The Kardashians, Jersey Shore, or The Bachelor make up reality TV, are these people's identities "real"? How much can you really tell about a person just by looking at their profile? This course will explore how people choose to identify themselves in public and private circles and consider the impact this has on our lives. Students interested in social sciences, humanities, or business fields might be interested in this course that uses critical reading, discussion, and a self-directed research project to get to the bottom of these important questions.

UWYO 1101-03 – Hidden Stories: Exploring How Folklore Helped Shape America

Instructor: Josh Sainz

How does a particular story help form culture, and what do we miss when we only pay attention to the most common stories? Folklore is made up of stories that have been hidden or ignored and very often don't make the pages of history books. In this class, we will examine these less-common stories that have shaped the United States' cultural identity. We will explore American Folklore through readings, in-class activities, discussion, and a research project. We will also engage with the campus, community, and those buildings and people that inhabit and create our living cultural identity.

UWYO 1101-04 – It's Just a Movie: Inspecting the Impact of Film and Popular Culture in Life and Society

Instructor: Lori Howe

Very often, people watch TV and movies to enjoy down time or to relax at the end of the day, but what if the things we do in our "down time" actually have profound impact on how our lives and society are shaped? In "It's Just a Movie," we will challenge common ideas about the ways that film and other pop culture artifacts work in our world by reading and discussing credible, accurate, and reliable sources on the topic. Each student will also develop a self-directed research project on the important roles that pop culture can play. If you are interested in film or have thought about majoring in English, History, Sociology, Psychology, or related fields, please consider "It's Just a Movie."

UWYO 1101-05 - Exploring the Functions of Storytelling: Outside of Ordinary

Instructor: Allison Gernant

If you are interested in teaching or helping others as a career (education, social work, psychology), this class will help you see how you can use the power of stories to explore any and all subjects. We will start by looking at the history of storytelling while analyzing some of the ways stories are told – from oral tradition to blogs, from documentaries to graphic novels, from museum exhibits to stand-up comedy – and experiment with these methods in the telling of our own stories. This will lead to a final activity in which you draw on your own strengths, interests, and the essential element of research to create and share, a storytelling project of your own.

UWYO 1101-06 – Speaking as Witnesses: Finding your Academic Voice

Instructor: Krista Howe

Every day when we watch the news or read the newspaper we witness events that shape our society and culture. These events can be of huge historical significance (like 9-11-01) or they can hit closer to home (like a natural disaster or loss of a loved one). In this class, we will read essays and narratives in which writers have thoughtfully engaged with traumatic events in order to break the silence that so often follows. We will think about what it means to be critical readers and writers (a.k.a. witnesses) and what we can do as scholars to perpetuate conversations that would otherwise be silenced and forgotten. We will engage with subjects such as terrorism, genocide, personal loss, abuse, and prejudice. The class will culminate in a critical research project inspired by the events we read about that will continue to save important conversations from silence.

UWYO 1101-07 – What Are you Working For?: Examining Popular Ideas About College and Professional Work

Instructor: Manasseh Franklin

What are your long term goals? How do the things you do each day build toward those goals? Messages about work and success are all around us, so why is it hard for so many people to answer the question, "What are you working for?" In this class, we will test common assumptions about work against credible, accurate, and reliable sources in order to better understand how principles about work and success operate in our lives. We will use critical reading, discussion, and a multi-week research project to examine these questions and build useful skills for the rest of your time at UW and beyond. Students who are career-focused or undecided about a major could get a lot out of this class.

UWYO 1101-08 – Our Place in the Universe

Instructor: Jim Verley

This course will look at issues in science and society through the lens of critical thinking, research, argument from evidence and clear evaluation based on data, vetted sources and replicable experimentation. Misconceptions are more prevalent in society than we might realize and allowing them to propagate without critical examination is a disservice to individuals and society at large. And our place in the universe is often replete with misconceptions and misinformation. Using a scientific point of view we will examine how to get from where we are in our thinking to where we can go. Skills developed in this class will help students develop those skills necessary for continued success in their academic quest.