

UNIV 2600 “Gateway” Course

Fall 2021

Monday and Wednesday 3:35 - 4:25 pm, Oak 106

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Introduction

This course is designed to promote the skills that you will need to create and pursue an interdisciplinary major. During the semester you will explore the organization of knowledge, examine differences among disciplines, discuss some strategies for integrating knowledge across disciplinary boundaries, and develop an integrated plan of study and statement of purpose.

Objectives

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Explain the different ways in which academic knowledge can be organized.
- Describe the key characteristics of the disciplines relevant to your major.
- Develop an interdisciplinary approach to understanding a problem.
- Formulate strategies for integrating knowledge across disciplines.
- Develop a plan of study and statement of purpose.

Activities and Evaluation

The activities in this course will include classroom discussions, presentations, peer reviews, two essays and the individualized major proposal. The number of points for each activity is:

- Participation: 10
- Disciplines Essay: 25
- Research Question: 25
- IMJR Proposal: 40

Participation

You will find this course more rewarding if you are fully engaged in the classroom. Participation includes discussion and the presentations. I will evaluate participation based on the following criteria.

- *Engagement*. Did you fully participate in the course activities in the virtual classroom?
- *Insightfulness*. Did your contributions to the course reflect thoughtful consideration of the issues being discussed?
- *Collegiality*. Did you conduct yourself in a cooperative and polite manner?

Academic Integrity

In this course we operate as a community of scholars, with the understanding that academic study is both an intellectual and an ethical enterprise. Building on the work of others is a vital part of academic life, but when we use another’s ideas we must formally acknowledge that debt by signaling it with an academic citation. Neglecting to do this is a *serious* breach of academic integrity. Please see the [Student Code](#) for more detailed information.

Accessibility

Please contact me to discuss academic accommodations that may be needed during the semester due to a documented disability.

If you have a disability for which you wish to request academic accommodations and have not contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD), please do so as soon as possible. The CSD engages in an interactive process with each student and reviews requests for accommodations on an individualized, case-by-case, class-by-class basis. The CSD collaborates with students and their faculty to coordinate approved accommodations and services. The CSD is located in Wilbur Cross, Room 204 and can be reached at (860) 486-2020 or at csd@uconn.edu. Detailed information regarding the process to request accommodations is available on the CSD website at <http://www.csd.uconn.edu>.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is an excellent resource; their staff includes talented graduate and undergraduate students who will work with you at any stage of the writing process. Tutorials run about 45 minutes and are free. You can drop in or make an appointment. For more information, please go to writingcenter.uconn.edu.

Course Schedule

1. Introductions (Aug 30)

Introductions and a review of the syllabus and course schedule.

2. Developing an Individualized Major I (Sep 1)

What makes a good plan of study?

Reading:

- Application Resources

Viewing:

- Plan of Study video

Due:

- Plan of study, Course organization worksheet

3. Developing an Individualized Major II (Sep 8)

What makes a good Statement of Purpose?

Reading:

- “Global Health Promotion” (sample Statement of Purpose)

Viewing:

- Statement of Purpose video

4. The Organization of Knowledge I (Sep 13)

How is knowledge organized in the modern American university?

Reading:

- “Organization of Knowledge”

Viewing:

- Marla Spivak, “Why bees are disappearing,” TED Talk, 2013

5. The Organization of Knowledge II (Sep 15)

How is knowledge organized in the modern American university?

Reading:

- “Research Methodologies”
- “Great Resume, Too Bad About Your Religion”

6. Proposal Review (no class meeting)

Meet with me this week (Sep 20-24) to review your proposal

Due:

- IMJR Proposal draft

7. Disciplines Exploration (Sep 27)

Preparation for the presentations on the disciplines.

8. Experiential Learning (Sep 29)

How do internships, study abroad, and undergraduate research fit into the major?

9. Disciplines Presentations (Oct 4)

Group presentations on the disciplines.

10. Disciplines Presentations (Oct 6)

Group presentations on the disciplines.

11. Thinking across Disciplines I (Oct 11)

A discussion of interdisciplinary work.

Reading:

- Matthew Miller and Veronica Boix-Mansilla, "Thinking Across Perspectives and Disciplines"

Viewing:

- Elizabeth Pisani, "Sex, drugs, and HIV: Let's get rational," TED Talk
- Gary Slutkin, "Let's treat violence like a contagious disease," TED Talk

Due:

- Disciplines Essay

12. Thinking across Disciplines II (Oct 13)

Discussion of the Salem witch trials.

Reading:

- Salem Interdisciplinary Perspectives
- Salem's Secrets

13. Designing a Research Question (Oct 18)

Designing a research question.

Viewing:

- Designing a research question

14. Proposal Review (no class meeting)

Meet with me this week (Oct 25-29) to review your proposal

Due:

- Research Question (Oct 27)

IMJR Application Deadline (Nov 3)

Submit your IMJR proposal.

Due:

- IMJR Proposal (plan of study and statement of purpose)