English 101H: Introduction to Academic Writing: A Language-Based Approach  
Jane Christensen

This course seeks to introduce students to academic discourse through writing. A focus on language awareness reacquaints students with the various ways we use language. We will study not only the elements of academic writing but also seek topics of current cultural contexts on which to base these writings. In order to become better writers it is essential to read good writing, and in order to become better readers it is essential to develop critical reading skills to better understand what we read.

Language culture is all around us every day—print, television, internet/social media—media in general. Most, if not all, of the pieces we’ll read in Language Awareness reflect current contexts, many of which are found in American popular culture, and these will spark ideas upon which students may then write their own analytical reflections based on personal experience and also the language-using culture at large. Categories for each discussion are: the power of language; making sense of the world through language; propaganda and doublespeak; the language of discrimination and hate; the language of gender; and technology and language. The emphasis is on discussion not lecture. Final grades are 100% writing-based, and include approximately 8000 words throughout the semester.

English 102H: Academic Writing and Research: Semiotics: Examining American Popular Culture  
Jane Christensen

As suggested by the title of this course, the focus will be on written exposure of ideas within the context of semiotic analysis of American Popular Culture. Presumably through intense and careful examination of the elements and phenomena of American popular culture we can learn more about different levels of our culture and what the popularity of certain elements says about us as a culture. Readings from Signs of Life in the U.S.A.: Readings on Popular Culture for Writers include topics such as consumer behavior, advertising, television, film, and iconic figures real and imagined. Semiotics is a particularly effective methodology for analyzing popular culture—semiotics is the study of signs and symbols, and of locating meaning in any sort of text: print, images, and other media. Students will share their writing in discussion and in peer revision. Language development as well as writing practice by critical analysis with research is the focus of this course with emphasis on discussion. Emphasis is on discussion. Final grades are 100% writing-based, and comprise approximately 8000 words throughout the semester.
English 280H: The Literature of Romantic Love
Dr. Rebecca Umland

When and where do our modern conceptions of romantic love begin? What assumptions about love have remained consistent across the boundaries of western history and culture? This course examines romantic love as it is portrayed in some of its important imaginative works. We will begin with classics from the ancient world (Euripides’ Hippolytus, Ovid’s The Art of Love, and one or two Old Testament selections) to see how ideas of love in these texts contrast with the rise of the courtly love tradition in the Middle Ages (The Romance of Tristan and Iseult, Dante’s La Vita Nuova, Andreas Capellanus’ The Art of Courtly Love), where modern notions of love begin. Later works, including Romeo and Juliet, Jane Eyre, and Far From the Madding Crowd, and one or two contemporary texts, will help us determine which ideas of love have persisted.

This course emphasizes close reading and discussion of primary texts. Written assignments, including regular short critical response papers and a longer final essay, along with two essay exams, will determine most of the grade (85%). The remaining 15% will be in the form of short presentations.

Philosophy 388H: Philosophy of Culture
Dr. Thomas Martin

Course objectives:
The goal of this course will be to get clear on the aims, the methods and the good(s) of the concept and study of culture using a sociological and philosophical methodology. We will examine the concept of "culture" by looking at various definitions of culture as well as some primary works in the Hindi, Chinese, Greek and Christian cultures. The class will be centered around the discussion of a variety of questions: What is a culture? What does it mean to be a member of a culture? How is the individual formed by the group? How does the group or class influence the individual? How do a people form a religion? How does a religion form a people? Why do cultures clash? Can there be a rise and fall of a culture? What is a barbarian? What does it mean to be cultured? etc.

We will read:

Folkways, Graham Sumner
The Bhagavad-Gita
Analects, Confucius
Five Dialogues of Plato
Leisure, The Basis of Culture, Pieper

It will be writing intensive using primary sources.
Speech 100H: Fundamentals of Speech Communication
Dr. Fletcher Ziwoya

This course will introduce you to the art and concepts of public speaking. Accordingly, this class is as much a theory as it is a performance class. In our journey through various theories related to public communication we will explore opportunities for applying those theories in the professional context and in our own classroom. Through various assignments, students will learn the principles of researching for, developing, organizing, and delivering different types of speeches. Upon completion of this course, you should have accomplished the following objectives:

1. Define and explain basic communication terms and principles that serve as a basis for competent public communication.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of concepts related to public communication, including listening, analytical reasoning, verbal communication, nonverbal communication, audience analysis, and research skills.
3. Research, prepare, and deliver well-organized informative and persuasive presentations that contain effective supporting materials and conform to audience’s needs and/or expectations.
4. Analyze and critically evaluate public communication attempts including speeches delivered by others as well as mass mediated messages.
5. Apply principles of diversity to public communication situations and demonstrate competent communication practices that respect diverse perspectives.
PSCI 280H: Environmental Politics  
Dr. Peter Longo

This course is a hybrid online and in-person experiential opportunity. It combines some online assignments with field experiences throughout Nebraska. Site visits include camping or staying in park lodges. The class will address environmental issues, including those associated with water, land ownership, and Nebraska environmental political culture. It will count as an Honors General Studies class, or you can make an arrangement with the department of Political Science to count as an elective. The course will use both primary readings and writing intensive aspects of the critical thinking pedagogy.

There are costs associated with this course due to the field experiences. Students will need to pay tuition, as well as $150 to defray some of the logistical costs. The Honors Program will subsidize the transportation expenses.

You will be able to register for this class during regular summer enrollment. The class size is limited to 9 people. This course will start on-line on May 6. Travel will occur the week of May 13 through May 17. We will return to Kearney for the weekend of May 18 and 19, and travel will resume May 20 – May 23. The remainder of the course will be completed on-line.