## Liberal Studies Electives (Degree Level)
### Course Descriptions – WINTER 2022

### Lower-Level Liberal Arts & Humanities (LHUM)

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**LHUM 1201 / IAC 190 – The Evolution of Filmmaking**
This film studies course deals with the evolution of film in terms of its historical and cultural development, critical film analysis, and technical aspects of filmmaking. The course is divided into five parts, each of which examines a major time period in the development of film in a historical, social, cultural, critical, and technical context.

**LHUM 1202 / PHC 183 – Monotheistic Religions**
Religious beliefs, expressions, and practices have shaped and reflected how people have interpreted the key questions of existence and how people have marked key events in their lives. This course introduces the religious beliefs, expressions of religious experience, religious practices, and worldviews of the three major monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Background to the origin and development of each religion as well as an examination of contemporary issues linked to the religions are included. In contemporary society, the question of negotiating traditional interpretations with current situations has become one of the driving forces behind the study of religion. This course will offer students the opportunity to explore and analyze how key religious beliefs, expressions, and practices from the major western monotheistic traditions influence current public thought.

**LHUM 1203 / PHC 180 – The Pleasure of Inquiry**
This course aims to develop the skills of inquiry and argumentation in a time of ‘fake news’ and destabilized truth by introducing you to the practice of philosophy and approaches to key philosophic questions in a lively, accessible way. It uses ordinary examples such as learning a martial art, detergents, dreaming, films like The Matrix, making money, the rise of artificial intelligence, and everyday consciousness to inquire into ongoing questions regarding knowledge, justice, reality, God, and the human condition, and to consider provocative responses to these questions.

**LHUM 1216 / EGC 182 – The Art of the Short Story**
Students are introduced to the rich world of story and its artistic expression in literature. Brief, yet profound and supple, the short-story genre offers a unique perspective on human experience. Students read a variety of works by writers who are established or new, Canadian and international, ethnic majority and minority, contemporary and historical, and female and male, in order to explore cultural differences as well as shared human experiences. They examine the stories’ form and style (e.g. setting, plot, action, characterization, symbolism, narration) to gain insight into content. The study of selected literary terms and critical theories, including theories specifically on the short story, allow students to develop a deeper understanding of the genre and the individual stories.

**LHUM 1226 / PHC 192 – Global Ancient Thought**
Great thinkers have existed around the world and across time. Their ideas have been an integral part of social, economic, cultural, and political life. Their philosophical and literary contribution has not simply been the isolated speculation of a few remarkable individuals but has extended much further: they have shaped their communities and continue to shape our global society today. This course takes a cross-cultural historical look at some of the most influential philosophical and literary traditions, such as the ancient Greek, the ancient Chinese, and ancient Indian traditions as well as others. In each tradition the course will examine various original writings on the following questions: How should we organize our social, economic, cultural, and political life? What is the place of humans in the grand cosmological scheme of things? And how should one live one’s life? Some of the writings that we will
review to answer the above questions are those of Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Sun Tzu, the Brahmanical tradition, and the Buddha.

**LHUM 1233 – Fact or Fake: Finding Truth(s) in the Era of Fake News**
How do we know if news, video, or photos are fake or real? Do we have the time and knowledge to check? Do we want to check? Why should we care? Manufactured and so-called fake news posted on social media have become part of a dangerous new reality. Information spread through social networks is often accepted over traditional more reliable fact-checked news. These manipulations have become powerful tools for politicians, conspiracy theorists, corporations, and ordinary people. The effects can be felt in many fields such as science, the environment, politics, and culture. This online course will explore the impact of fake news on traditional fact-checked news media and, in turn, its influence on society. Media from a variety of sources will be evaluated for reliability and validity. Students will learn how to deconstruct media in order to distinguish what is fact vs what is fiction.

**Lower-Level Liberal Science & Technology (LSCI)**

**LSCI 1204 / IAC 192 – Preserving the Planet**
A personal computer running 24 hours per day adds about two tonnes of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere each year. When you consider the explosion of computer ownership alone, you can appreciate the growing impact people have on our planet. Preserving the Planet is a natural science course emphasizing awareness, conservation, and sustainability of ecological systems. This course will provide students with an understanding of the major principles in the biological and physical sciences. Students will also learn how technology and schools of thought can have both negative and positive impacts on biodiversity. With this information, students will gain an understanding of problems and solutions to maintaining natural systems. Students will learn the role of scientific inquiry in ecological studies and apply analysis and critical thinking to issues learned in class and their own research.

**Lower-Level Liberal Social Science (LSSC)**

**LSSC 1202 / SYC 180 – Working in the 21st Century**
The 21st Century has seen revolutionary changes in the world of work. Increasing precarity, the growth of artificial intelligence in the workplace, and the creation of the gig economy have all contributed to a working environment that has little in common with that experienced by previous generations. This interdisciplinary social science course will explore the history of work in Canada, and the workplace as it now exists, in order to understand how work has evolved and changed and how society is grappling with the issues revealed by these new workplace challenges.

**LSSC 1203 / POC180 – Introduction to Canadian Politics**
How does politics affect your life and future? Is there a Canadian national identity? This course introduces students to major debates and questions in Canadian politics and society, and the more enduring problems underlying these issues. The aim of the course is to foster the student’s capacity to develop their own interpretation of Canadian politics and society.

**LSSC 1204 Sociological Inquiry**
This course introduces students to the language and practice of sociological inquiry and uses it to understand and challenge their everyday experience of the world and ordinary views of society. By investigating topics such as everyday life rituals, the socialization process, social inequality, media, religion, and the rise of postmodern society, sociological inquiry explores the strange nature of the familiar world students live in.
### LSSC 1206 / IAC 193 – Indigenous Education in the Canadian Context

This course offers an overview of Indigenous Peoples and Education in Canada. The course looks at education in an historical and present-day context, including ways in which Indigenous communities educated their children prior to European contact. It examines the Canadian state’s policies on education of Indigenous peoples and explores education in Indigenous communities today. Specifically, the course provides an understanding of residential schools and their impact on the lives of Indigenous peoples, families, and diverse communities. Additionally, students will look at the various ways in which Indigenous people continue to challenge and resist colonial education and reclaim education for themselves and their communities. The main aim of *Indigenous Education in the Canadian Context* is to provide students with a framework for understanding the historical and contemporary issues surrounding Indigenous Education in Canada. It is hoped that through this course students will gain critical insights into the lives and educational attainment of Indigenous peoples.

### LSSC 1209 – Social Psychology

Why does the presence of others influence the way we behave and think? How do stereotypes develop? Does the way we behave change the way we think? This course provides an overview of research and theory in social psychology examining social influences on an individual's cognition, emotions, and behaviour. Topics include social thinking (the self, social beliefs, attitudes), social influence (persuasion, conformity, group influence), and interpersonal relations (aggression, altruism, prejudice). Students will analyze predominant theories and research in the field of social psychology and their applications.

### LSSC 1220 / SYC 184 – Race and Racism in the Americas and Caribbean

Racism and the categories of race are pervasive phenomena that occur across the world. Many scholars have argued that the very idea of “race” – the notion that human beings can be divided into groups such as “whites”, “blacks”, “Indians”, etc. – was first invented in the Americas. But what are races? Does it mean the same thing to be “white”, “black” or “Asian” in Canada as it does in Brazil or Jamaica? If colour is rooted in assumptions about biology in parts of Canada, does the same hold for the Caribbean? Is race simply a delusion, a cover for political and economic domination? Can we aspire to eliminate the idea of race altogether or is its hold too pervasive, its appeal to the mind too great? This course looks at various stages in the development of racial categories in the Americas and the Caribbean. Our readings include theoretical, ethnographic, and literary works, but also our own experiences, the popular media, and the language we speak and hear around us.
**Upper-Level Liberal Arts and Humanities (LHUM)**

**LHUM 1304 – The Evolution of Mind (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)**
Is the mind distinct from the body? Do only humans have minds? Is there such thing as a ‘collective mind’? What can studies of the brain tell us about the mind and its evolution? Can the evolution of the mind be studied by inquiring into the origins of language and technology? This course responds to such questions by examining the concepts of ‘mind’, ‘body’, ‘soul’, and ‘life’. Then, after reviewing Darwin’s theory of human evolution, students will investigate the evolutionary interplay between the mind, language, technology, society, art, science, morality, and religion. We will end by reconsidering notions of agency, intelligence, and personhood in light of post-colonial and feminist thought. Students can expect to learn from a wide variety of disciplines in the humanities and evolutionary sciences, with the goal of understanding the complexity of the concept of mind and the challenges facing questions of its evolution.

**LHUM 1305 Gothic and Horror Culture: The Need for Fear (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)**
Ghosts, vampires, monsters, haunted houses, and possessed children: why do humans need to scare themselves in so many “gothic” ways? One answer is that the Gothic provides a useful metaphor for the anxieties and traumas of the human condition (Groom, 2012). In other words, scary situations on the page and screen work effectively to provide insight into the anxieties in our daily lives as well as in the life of our culture in various periods. For example, we can read a movie like Carrie as a reaction to the “threat” of 1960s women’s liberation, and Poltergeist as a reaction to the rampant capitalism of the 1980s. Reading literature and watching movies thus helps us understand the society we live in and normalizes the changes that take place within it. We’ll look at some of these changes by investigating classic Gothic concerns such as doubleness/repression; haunted houses and their ghosts; monsters from vampires to werewolves; children, women and horror; and cultural melancholy. To do so we’ll use texts from the past like Edgar A. Poe’s “William Wilson”, Robert L. Stevenson’s Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, as well as contemporary narratives like Angela Carter’s The Bloody Chamber.

**LHUM 1306 – Global Classical and Medieval Literature (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)**
This course introduces students to literature and thought from several major traditions across the globe, spanning roughly the 4th through the 14th centuries. The main theme of the course is a cross-cultural comparison of how the emotional lives of individuals are expressed, communicated, and shared in and through language. This will require introducing students to basic religious, political, and cultural contexts of each area of the world. The course balances an appreciation for each literary tradition on its own terms with an understanding of how religious ideas, moral values, role-models, histories, and fantasies spread across cultures via the oral and written word. Along the way students will be introduced to various literary forms, such as the allegory, the poem, and the frame-tale narrative, along with the reflections of writers from around the world on the nature and purpose of literature.

**LHUM 1307 – Understanding the Middle East (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)**
The phrase “Middle East” appears on various media in relation to topics ranging from the politics of oil to the price of gas, terrorism, war, women’s rights, Islam, or the trials and triumphs of democracy. Meanwhile, there is generally little understanding of the region beyond its representation in headlines or in pop culture. Covering the history of the region from the advent of Islam to the present day, this course provides a basic historical understanding of this diverse and complex region and the global influences which have shaped, and continue to shape, what is known as the “Middle East” today. Through a survey of the region’s history, culture, and involvement in international politics, participants will gain a better understanding of this intricate and fascinating region and its vital place within the global community.
LHUM 1310 Existentialism (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)
What is worth living for? If we have an answer – say, love, happiness, justice, or eternal life – where did we get this answer from? Are religion, social norms, political, and economic ideologies credible sources? If not, are we free to create any value and meaning we want for our own lives? And if we are completely free, what sort of responsibility do we have to other people, if any? In this course we will be exploring these perplexing but fundamental questions about human existence through an examination of philosophical essays, film, literature, and theatre from a movement of thinkers and artists known as the existentialists.

LHUM 1320 – History of Canadian Business (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)
This course examines the history of Canadian Business. History provides a framework to help us solve current problems; it gives us context for many of our current issues, as well as similar problems that have occurred a number of times in the past. Understanding what has occurred in the past can help us make better decisions for our future. The course is both a practical and theoretical course. Topics covered include the parameters of studies in history, the origins of many aspects of business, and how we can use these to solve current problems, the greatest being sustainability, inequality, and economic development. The course covers individual topics in Canadian business rather than being a timeline of the development of Canadian business.

Upper-Level Liberal Science and Technology (LSCI)

LSCI 1301 Troubled Waters: Our Future and the Global Ocean (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)
The global ocean is our life-support system. Covering nearly three-quarters of Earth’s surface, the oceans produce half of the oxygen in our atmosphere, regulate temperature and climate, and govern nutrient and chemical cycles that sustain all living things, including you. The oceans, however, are in distress. Pollution and unsustainable seafood harvesting are causing fundamental changes throughout the ocean system that will result in dire consequences unless our habits change substantially. Students investigate what is happening to our oceans and the ecological consequences of human-influenced changes in ocean temperature, oxygen, acidity, and biodiversity. Through readings, videos, and class discussion, students learn about human impacts on the ocean and how ocean change will affect not only us but life in general. Students learn the importance of scientific study of the world’s oceans and apply analysis and critical thinking to issues learned in class and through independent research.

LSCI 1304 The Story of Food: Growth of the Modern Meal (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)
Unlike nature’s other eaters, humans have developed enormous control over their food chains. Through the use of various technologies, such as agriculture, synthetic fertilizers, and food processing, we have profoundly modified our food chains and, as a result, created entirely new eating possibilities for ourselves. Today our food is abundant and comes from all over the world. Much of what is consumed in the modern world is heavily processed, making it easy to store, quick to prepare, and convenient to eat. This industrialization of food production has given rise to a new type of consumer – the industrial eater. What implications does eating industrially have for our health and for the health of our environment? In this course, students investigate changes in human food chains from the hunter-gatherers to present-day industrialized agriculture and learn about the impacts of modern food production on people, ecosystems, and biodiversity. The critical role of biodiversity within and beyond human food chains is emphasized. Students analyze and think critically about issues explored in class and through independent research.
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<td><strong>LSSC 1319 Global Justice (Prerequisite: One lower-level Liberal Studies course)</strong></td>
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<td>The onset of globalization has coincided with the emergence of a variety of calls for “global justice”, reform and alternative forms of globalization. The desire for global justice and alternative globalizations emerges from economic, cultural, ecological and political trends. This course is interdisciplinary in nature, combining perspectives from history, sociology, anthropology, political science, economics, philosophy and civil society to explore the meanings of global justice and alternative globalization, their central policy proposals, institutional structures and the new forms of social experience that are producing the desire for greater transnational and international equality. The course focuses on the intersection between appeals for economic redistribution, cultural recognition, environmental sustainability, and political representation. It pays close attention to the relationship between various forms of social inequality such as racism, sexism, classism and sexuality. Further issues to be explored include the role that corporations, cultural producers, civil society, states and Canadian writers and organizations are having in shaping calls for global justice.</td>
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