Board Game Design
Taught by: Kathleen Mercury

A revolution in board gaming has been taking place as games that emphasize player choice and rich thematic worlds become popular, like Catan, Pandemic, Terraforming Mars, and more. But how are these games designed? Learn by doing in this course where you will play a wide variety of games, learn the important elements of board games, then design, playtest, and iterate a game of your own creation. As part of this course, students will learn the Stanford school model of iterative prototype development and design mindsets, which can be applied to any other open-ended design process. This minor class will focus on game designs with more specific parameters. Keeping this project to a narrow focus gives the designers a common purpose and understanding of essential terminology and game structures, so the iterative process can be as fruitful as possible in a smaller time frame.

Breakout!
Taught by: Jennifer Blank

Take the appeal of the escape room, in which a group of people use their wits to break out of a locked room, and turn it inside out. Instead of a locked room, teams must figure out how to get inside a tightly locked breakout box. You are provided with clues to solve each lock, but hurry before the clock counts down to zero! Think you’re already a super sleuth? Become the puzzle master. Step behind the curtain and create your own brain teasers, secret messages, riddles, and locks as we design our own escape. Prepare to baffle in Breakout!

Dip Into Design
Taught by: Steven Senger

In this course, scholars will discuss and experiment with various topics surrounding 2d design. We will talk about visual perception, psychology, art, advertising, politics, and more. Scholars will have the opportunity to create posters, art books, block prints, and more using cutting edge tools, as well as more recent technology. Special emphases will be placed on typography, printing techniques, and propaganda.

Drugs, Politics, Religion, and Smut! Censorship in American Poetry
Taught by: Ben Batzer

According to the American Library Association, 354 books were challenged or banned in 2017. These numbers point to our national wariness about what literature says about religion, sex, politics, and authority. Censorship of any kind challenges the ideals of free expression and open access to information. At the same time, censorship gives more attention and notoriety to the very texts that would be suppressed, which calls into question the whole project of censorship. This class will explore the censorship and surveillance of literature by focusing on poets whose work has been challenged. We will read a variety of controversial poetry, interrogating
censorship and anti-censorship efforts. In doing so, we will confront thorny questions about free speech and public ethics. This course will interest scholars who want to learn more about literature, power, ethics, and American culture.

Full STEAM Ahead!
Taught by: Melissa Mease

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics ... We will use them all in this project-driven class. STEAM challenges that require students to utilize principles from all of the components of STEAM, combined with massive doses of creativity, will lead us to mind-altering results! All of those fun science-y experiments on YouTube, we'll figure out the academics behind them! Creative daily challenges will have your brain on its toes!

How U Kno Dat: Using Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning to Become a Better Arguer
Taught by: Jon Gunasingham

Are vaccines actually dangerous? Is the world really round? And if climate change/global warming exists why did a bunch of us have school canceled because it was too cold outside? More and more the nature of truth is being challenged by alarmingly uninformed scientific positions in our modern world. When addressing skepticism towards scientific facts, today's student needs to equipped to dissect any claim they may encounter. This class will expose students to the Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning framework which they will employ in many lab-based activities. They will then use this framework to address some of the craziest claims we've encountered in our present day.

Introduction to Philosophy: Great Thoughts Worth Thinking
Taught by: Nicholas Kirschman

An abridged version of the major with the same title, this minor will introduce scholars to why it is important to question everything. What are great thoughts? Why are they worth thinking? Should you think about them? What are metaphysics, epistemology, and aesthetics? Philosophy attempts to answer these questions — mainly by providing more questions. Come and question everything you have ever been told. Discussions, seminars, meditations, plays, and journals will be used to reflect on questions we, as human beings, face. We will also attempt to apply these grand thoughts to everyday problems through ethics.
James Bond in Literature and Film
Taught by: Stephanie Hasty

During this course students will explore the world (myth and lore) of James Bond both through the novels and films to learn about 20th/21st century history and modern day literature. The class will be discussion based and your participation through discussion questions is vital as we explore the movies, parodies, books and articles analyzing and interpreting James Bond and his relation to topics covered in class.

Mathematical Mazes for the Mind
Taught by: Ake Takahashi

We will work on very challenging math problems. We will also work on problems through rebuses, math puzzles, Tribond, and Mensa topics to enhance your problem solving skills. You are also introduced to many interesting mathematical topics that are not found in school textbooks. By testing your mettle, you will be pleasantly surprised to discover "the Wonders of Maths".

Math Imitates Art
Taught by: Frank Corley

Or does art imitate math? We see in an area such as architecture that there is important interplay between these two seemingly separate disciplines. But are there really “two cultures”? Or can poetry, music and visual art speak to mathematics? Can the fine arts be approached in a mathematical way? Bring both your left brain and your right brain to class every day, because you never know which you’ll need, probably both!

Out of this World
Taught by: Joe Milliano

The universe started with a BANG! and now we’re all here some 14 billion years later. What does it all mean? What exists beyond our planet? What are we really looking at when we look up at the night sky? Is there any life beyond earth? If you are a dreamer that looks up into the night sky and asks yourself these questions, then this is the course for you. You will learn about the stars and the nuclear furnaces that sustain them. Time will be spent discussing the planets as they whirl around our sun. We will study everything from the origins of our universe and the evidence that all galaxies are accelerating away from our Milky Way to black holes and their space-time bending powers.
Playing Human
Taught by: Mike Kersulov

What’s your favorite childhood toy? When was the last time you solved a puzzle? Played a video game? Dusted off your old stuffed animal? All of these toys are vitally important to human development: from teaching us how to use tools, to giving playful spaces to enact wish-fulfillment, to helping us understand and navigate what is real and what is fantasy, to providing venues for us to shape and create our identities. In this course we will explore the historical, social, and cultural implications and impacts of various toys, games, and objects of play. We will investigate multiple theories of learning, child psychology and development, and, of course, theories of play. The class will look at action figures/dolls, games, role playing, toys for building/creating, educational toys, video games, and more. The course will also dovetail into areas of economics, marketing, and engineering - learning about advertising and creating our own toys for real audiences. Furthermore, we will look at cross media connections, examining how toys are connected to books, comics, movies, merchandise, and everyday tools. With all this in mind, we will also consider how toys help us understand our social and cultural values, goals, and even what it might mean to be human.

Recreational Mathematics
Taught by: Joel Jeffries

Mathematics is often done to answer some of the hardest questions our society faces. It is a powerful multifaceted tool that helps push us forward. Mathematics is useful. But that is not what this class is about. Instead, we will be looking at some of the mathematics people have done throughout the ages just because they can. We will explore ideas from snowflake fractals to combinatorial games like Tic-Tac-Toe. We will play with ideas not because they are useful, but because there is joy to be had in the act of thinking. And, along the way, though we may try to avoid it, we may discover some of the amazing usefulness of mathematics anyway.

Social Justice for Muggles
Taught by: Jennifer Fisher

"I'd say that it's one short step from 'Wizards first' to 'Purebloods first,' then to 'Death Eaters'...We're all human, aren't we? Every human life is worth the same, and worth saving." - Kingsley Shacklebolt Have you heard this quote before? Do you know what it means? Do you proudly wear your S.P.E.W. membership badge? Have you often felt that the Centaur Liaison Office is insulting and unnecessary? Do you worry about the state of anti-werewolf legislation? Have you spent hours drawing parallels between social justice issues in both the Muggle and Magical worlds? If you can answer yes to ALL of these questions, this is the minor for you!
The Blues, Jazz and the American Experience: Thriving on a Riff

Taught by: Jordan Henson

"Jazz is not just music, it's a way of life, it's a way of being, a way of thinking." - Nina Simone. The blues and jazz were the first musical forms to emerge exclusively on American soil. Their emergence from the unique cultural blending of late 19th and early 20th century New Orleans mirrors the great “melting pot” of America, and their history is implicitly tied to the history of its country. The blues and jazz quickly jumped out of the musical staff and into literature, art, and even philosophy. Students in this minor will study and listen to the blues and jazz, tracing their history and influences among other artistic disciplines, discussing how they differ from other musical forms, and investigating how jazz performance and improvisation can help one navigate the notes, high, low, blue, and everywhere in between, of life’s grand melody. No prior musical experience required!

The Case of Kirsten K.

Taught by: Stephanie Harman

How did (the fictitious) Kirsten K.’s body wind up at the bottom of a lake, and what do wedding cake ingredients, soil samples, radioactive decay, bone age, blood stains, bullet matching, and drug lab evidence reveal about whodunit? These mysteries are at the core of this minor as scholars will try to determine which of the suspects is most likely responsible. Scholars will use their chemistry knowledge and problem-solving to account for her disappearance based on evidence. This course will appeal most to students who have experience with chemistry, but everyone is welcome to try to solve the Case of Kirsten K.

The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the World Weird Web

Taught by: Dani Eschweiler

Memes are more than just memes: they evolve with and shape popular culture, but they also have the capability to distort the truth. Some memes, although under the guise of simple jokes, have evolved into vehicles for a mass, immediate distribution of factually unsupported ideas. These ideas originate from various places and people on the internet, but certain ones are significantly more prominent in some digital spaces. Together we will examine various internet subcultures and take an in-depth look at their beliefs, rhetoric, and use of memes on digital platforms to advance a certain ideology. Are the ideas in these digital communities contained to their respective forums, or do they have real-world implications regarding the political, social, and cultural norms in our society? Let’s find out.
This Minor is Socially Constructed
Taught by: Doug Valentine

Why do boys like blue and girls like pink? Who determines what counts as low, middle, or upper class? Does race exist? What are the material and social consequences of arbitrary divisions among people? Is science objective? If you have ever wondered about any of these issues, look no further! This minor will critically examine the taken-for-granted categories that make up our world from a sociological perspective. Hannah Arendt once said “there are no dangerous thoughts; thinking itself is a dangerous activity.” Warning: danger ahead.

What Does It Mean To Be Human?
Taught by: Shadi Peterman

Are humans the only species to use complex language? Are we the only ones capable of altruism or empathy? This course explores the question of what it means to be human through an anthropological and sociological lens. The course will begin by looking at the question from the perspective of biological/physical anthropology by studying both ancient human ancestors and our modern primate relatives, looking at both their physiology and behavior to understand what is (and is not) unique to humans. We will then shift to a cultural anthropological/sociological perspective to think about what aspects of human societies seem to be universal and consider why certain types of institutions and social structures are so common among humans.

MSA Choir  *This class meets at a separate time than minor courses
Led by: Austin McWilliams

The MSA Choir is an Academy institution unto itself! All scholars are encouraged to participate, and no singing experience is required. We'll learn a few pieces to perform throughout the Academy, including the MSA anthem "A Chance to Soar." Come take part in this storied MSA tradition!