

INQ Course Descriptions – Fall 2026 Offerings

INQ 110

INQ-110-A1	Criminology Goes to the Movies	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Ball, Daisy Barbara
INQ-110-A2	Criminology Goes to the Movies	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	Ball, Daisy Barbara
<p>Crime stories surround us. How do crime films both reflect our ideas about social issues, and shape the ways we think about these issues? In this course, students will learn to critically analyze crime films through the lens of criminological theory. The course will begin with an introduction to classical and contemporary criminological theory, followed by a discussion of the role of film in popular culture. Once a foundation for the course has been established, students will screen a range of crime films that correspond to specific criminological theories. Through their analyses of these films, students will explore the dynamic interplay between art and life. Throughout the semester, students will write and lead discussions about the films they are viewing; the course will culminate with an individual research paper and presentation.</p>			
INQ-110-B	American Film	TTH 02:50PM-04:20PM	Sides, Colin Kielcheski
<p>Have you ever wondered what makes a film a classic? Who decides what is the “best movie of all time?” How is that decision made? By examining American Film from a literary, technical and commercial perspective, we will attempt to answer these questions. We will examine film as literary texts and visual art. You will learn to analyze the formal aspects of films—including scenes, shot selection, and dialogue—and will be introduced to genre and theoretical approaches to film study. You will learn to discuss films from a thoughtful and informed perspective, and write critically and analytically about how they work and what they accomplish as films.</p>			
INQ-110-C	Finding Ourselves in Folktales	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Kambach, Anna Elizabeth
<p>Who are the “folk” in folktales? How are these “folk” constructed by their cultures? Can we, as modern people, relate to any of the issues facing these “folks” from long ago? How has culture constructed us? How has it impacted the decisions we make in our daily lives? As we read folktales from a variety of cultures and critical materials that help students engage the primary texts, we will use class discussion, writing assignments, and research projects to meet our course goals: 1) to use the knowledge of cultural perspective gained through analysis of select folktales to evaluate how our own lives are impacted by culture; 2) to assess how our cultural perspectives may impact our daily decision-making.</p>			
INQ-110-D	Sport, Not Just a Game	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	Maina, Michael P
<p>This course is designed to equip you with a social scientific understanding of sport. We will examine the history of sport in North America and the role it plays in our lives. Whether by participating in sport, attending sporting events, or watching sports on TV, sport teaches children and adults a culture’s norms and values. We also find in sport many of the same issues we see in society in general, both the good (teamwork, leadership, and cooperation) and the bad (violence, substance abuse, sexism, and racism). We will examine how sport is organized, from youth, high school, college, to professional sport, and the ways sport is connected to a society’s social institutions</p>			
INQ-110-F1	Democracy: What is it Good For	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	de Castro Quaglia, Laura
INQ-110-F2	Democracy: What is it Good For	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	de Castro Quaglia, Laura
<p>Early in the 21st Century, many democracies around the world are experiencing varying degrees of political, economic, cultural, and social turmoil. This may prompt some political observers to ask, “What is democracy good for, anyway?” In this course, we will learn how to critically think, reason, and write</p>			

about democracy as a form of government, including its principles, ideals, and notable benefits as documented by scholars from multiple academic disciplines.			
INQ-110-I	Myths of Musical Genius	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	Pekel, Michael Douglas
<p>What do we mean when we say a composer is a genius, or speak of a musician's genius, or the genius of a singer? How can we say a work such as an opera or Broadway show or record album is a work of musical genius, when it is essentially a collaborative project? This course pursues an inquiry into the notion of musical genius by proposing how popular culture creates musical myths about artists and works held to be "great." The term 'myth' can refer to any abiding story of human action and achievement. This course introduces students to several myths of musical genius--stories about originality in music and musicians across the ages. To complicate these myths of musical greatness, we will consider how the teachers and mentors, collaborators, and the artistic milieu of each artist's epoch actually shaped the "genius" attributed to them and their work. Our goal is to learn the "back-story" of each myth, and to thus learn how our knowledge of music history can inform an understanding all too often framed simply by the myths and legends of popular consciousness.</p>			
INQ-110-K	A Sense of Place	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Traynham, Hanna
<p>We have lifelong interaction with the landscape—we conduct our daily lives in it, we seek both the familiar and the exotic in it, and it holds our memories and reveals our values—yet these relationships often go unexamined. What does it mean to know a place? How can we study or "read" it? Does place shape us or do we shape it? How does place change over time? This course will focus on an inherently interdisciplinary topic, "sense of place," using a variety of methods (verbal, physical, visual, etc.) and approaches (literature, history, geography, visual art, etc.) in an effort to comprehend a difficult but powerful subject. Our critical investigation of place/landscape may include the dynamics of insider/outsider, subjectivity/objectivity, and real/ideal—themes that are both personal and universal. By learning to read the landscape, we will better understand our place in it. Use your eyes, be curious, seek answers.</p>			
INQ-110-L1	Other Peoples Stories	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Mallavarapu, Srikanth
INQ-110-L2	Other Peoples Stories	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	Mallavarapu, Srikanth
<p>In this course you'll read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction about people—in order to think and write about different identities, including your own. Which people can you "identify" with? Which seem too "other"? Why? Which stories "ring true" to you? And which are less compelling? Why? When you look closely at different beings you "relate to," what can you learn about yourself? What can you learn from those who seem too "other"?</p>			
INQ-110-M	Life in the Ancient City	MWF 09:40AM-10:40AM	Warden, Leslie Anne
<p>The history of city life is of particular interest because of the importance of the cities in our own lives as centers of politics, culture and commerce. Scholars agree that the emergence of cities was an integral moment in human history. The urbanized civilizations of the ancient world represent some of the earliest flourishing of the urban form. By engaging with case studies from the ancient world, we will ask: How did city living impact and shape ancient societies? How were cities sustained and constituted socially, economically, and politically? From the start, we will work with the archaeological evidence and the ancient textual sources and learn methods for their analysis. Writing and research assignments will aid us in formulating our own questions and interpretations as we unpack the multi-layered features of the ancient city.</p>			
INQ-110-N	Int Inq:	MW 08:00AM-09:30AM	Wolfe, Katherine J

Topic TBA			
INQ-110-O1	Int Inq:		Deinert, Gregory
INQ-110-O2	Int Inq:		Deinert, Gregory
Topic TBA			
INQ 120			
INQ-120-A	Sport & Ethics	TTH 02:50PM-04:20PM	Maina, Michael P
<p>Should a person be able to ingest a substance to help sport performance? Does it matter if that substance is a soda or a steroid? Is it okay to break a game rule if it helps your team win? Are athletes obligated to be role models? In our society, sports can fascinate through playing, watching, or talking about the games. Sports also have an impact on nearly every life, positively and negatively, of both the passionate fan and the uninterested person who cannot tell the difference between a touchdown and a touchback. This course will inquire some of the sociological and ethical considerations of sport and life, and illuminate some of these complex issues. The course goal is for each student to consider how sport can impact life, and to contemplate and question the many perspectives in which sporting endeavors can be viewed.</p>			
INQ-120-C	Science & The Good Life	MWF 12:00PM-01:00PM	Robb, Daniel T
<p>Many key issues facing us as a society have important scientific or quantitative components. This leads one to ask: In what ways is scientific and quantitative literacy necessary to leading a good and ethical life in the 21st century? As science progresses, technological developments in biology and nanotechnology are enabling us to alter the capabilities of organisms in novel ways. How should our ethical thinking be adapted as these capabilities continue to develop? As we educate ourselves about the science behind these topics, we will engage with various ethical thinkers in an effort to clarify the relevance of scientific and quantitative literacy, and technological progress, to the good and ethical life in the 21st century.</p>			
INQ-120-D1	Ethics in Public Policymaking	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	Daniel, Tyler Blake
INQ-120-D2	Ethics in Public Policymaking	TTH 02:50PM-04:20PM	Daniel, Tyler Blake
<p>What are the major ethical dilemmas in U.S. public policymaking? What role should government play in improving the lives of its citizens? Whether one examines the policy process at the national, state, or local levels, the policymakers are often faced with a range of difficult issues that involve the choices about ethics. Given the state of partisan polarization in American politics, and the apparent lack of civility in political news media, perhaps it is more important than ever to consider the ethical dilemmas faced by policymakers of all partisan and ideological dispositions. The focus of inquiry in this course will be to utilize the works of several political scientists to examine various ethical dilemmas across a range of salient policy issues. To that end, this course will also focus on how to develop, write, and present arguments about some of the most contentious ethical issues in contemporary American public policy.</p>			
INQ-120-F	Other People's Stories	MWF 08:30AM-09:30AM	Willingham, Robert A
Description TBA			
INQ-120-I	Law and Morality	MWF 01:10PM-02:10PM	Capaldo, Stephen F
<p>Must the law always be moral? Is it ever acceptable to create laws that are immoral? This course is organized around a semester-long inquiry into how our American legal system has developed alongside our collective sense of what is good and right behavior, as compared to behavior that is bad and wrong. Students will learn how to explain, apply, and evaluate general notions of law and morality, along with</p>			

specific issues within the modern American legal system that raise particular questions of the conflict between law and morality.

INQ-120-J	Communication & Leadership	TTH 08:30AM-10:00AM	Lauder, Tracy Day
<p>An investigation of the traits and behaviors of effective, ethical leadership and exploration of how one can inspire a values-based organization with different channels of communication (verbal, non-verbal, written, public, and private). In this sense, an organization is a “social unit of people, systematically arranged to meet a need or to pursue a goal.” The theories of leadership and ethics will be explored, and practical applications (teamwork, oral presentations, writing persuasively) will be utilized to enhance communication and leadership skill development. All topics discussed have a strong underlying ethical component. To accentuate this, ethical leadership will be further analyzed through a unique collection of essays by philosophers, leadership scholars and management theorists. Students will analyze how an increased understanding of communication enhances their confidence and self-image as effective leaders.</p>			

INQ-120-K	Humanitarianism in Africa	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Bucher, Jesse Walter
<p>This course considers the ideas of ‘the good life’ by examining the topic of humanitarianism, a term that refers broadly to an ethical sense of kindness, philanthropy, and sympathy. To explore the ethics of humanitarianism, we will trace a variety of humanitarian movements dedicated to working in and on the African continent that emerged over the last 200 years. Central to the course are the following questions: Is it possible to create ‘the good life’ for other people? Is ‘the good life’ possible when it is imposed?</p>			

INQ 240

INQ-240-A1	Free Will and the Internet	MWF 09:40AM-10:40AM	Lee, Christopher R
INQ-240-A2	Free Will and the Internet	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Lee, Christopher R

As we surf the web, are we really exercising free will? Whether it be reading, shopping, or interacting socially, we’d like to think that we are in control of our choices. The reality is that web designers and marketers use conclusions drawn from vast amounts of data to carefully craft and control our web experiences and actions. This course provides an inquiry-focused introduction to the statistical methodologies necessary to successfully explore and answer this question. Along the way students will develop an understanding of how data is collected and used in relation to virtually everything we do on the internet.

INQ-240-B1	Here's to Your Health	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Robbins, Hannah
INQ-240-B2	Here's to Your Health	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	Robbins, Hannah
INQ-240-B3	Here's to Your Health	MWF 02:20PM-03:20PM	Staff, SHSS
INQ-240-B4	Here's to Your Health	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Staff, SHSS

Newspapers, magazines, television, and websites frequently announce the latest health findings regarding nutrition, lifestyle, diseases, disorders, syndromes, treatments, medications, exercise, weight control... the list goes on and on. We do not lack for health information, but is the information presented to us good information? When reports are contradictory, what can we reasonably believe? We will learn the methodologies of modern statistics to address these questions. In the face of uncertainty, we must recognize the importance of basing decisions on evidence (data) rather than anecdote. Care must be taken to construct studies that produce enough meaningful data from which results can be trusted.

INQ-240-C1	Statistics and Sports	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Staff, SHSS
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INQ-240-C2	Statistics and Sports	MWF 12:00PM-01:00PM	Staff, SHSS
<p>The sports industry is a multibillion dollar entity that generates some extremely interesting questions about quality assessment, business, ethics, and health issues. Some of the questions we will ask are: What type data are necessary to assess the quality of a player and how can we use that data to determine the value of a player? What are the long term health risks associated with playing full contact sports and how do we determine the prevalence of these injuries and their impact on the player's lives. The key to answering these questions is putting aside preconceived opinions and emotion and using statistical analysis to see what the data say. Under the broad umbrella of statistics, this course will use an abundance of rich data sets to uncover the enormous impact that statistical analysis has on the sports industry.</p>			
INQ 241			
INQ-241-A	Efficiency and Optimization	MWF 12:00PM-01:00PM	Staff, SHSS
<p>What is the best way to deliver the mail? Deliver packages? Assign jobs to employees? Predict stable marriages? A variety of real world optimization problems will be analyzed using the methodology of graph theory and mathematics, especially in terms of how well the "solution" algorithms perform. We will discuss techniques for framing these and other questions in terms of graph structures and the algorithms used to find solutions. Special attention will be paid to efficient routes for goods and people, assigning tasks based on qualifications, and networks designed to reduce cost.</p>			
INQ 250			
INQ-250AS-A	Astronomy Controversies	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Le, Truong Van
INQ-250ASL-1	Astronomy Controversies Lab	TH 01:10PM-04:10PM	Le, Truong Van
<p>What creates and propagates controversy within the Sciences? How do the scientific processes of observation, measurement, and theorizing help to create and resolve controversy? Is it healthy to maintain controversy regarding theories and models in the Sciences; i.e., do the Sciences thrive on controversy? How is controversy received and interpreted by the larger society and culture? By examining four well-known controversies within the astronomical sciences, students will explore both the quantitative arguments and the historical contexts in answering the above questions. Since physics is the proper background for astronomical studies, the course will also focus on the physical concepts and processes associated with astronomical objects. Students will also take measurements, observe astronomical objects with telescopes, and interpret graphically-presented data through a required weekly night lab.</p>			
INQ-250CH-A	Chemistry & Crime	MWF 12:00PM-01:00PM	Anderson, Kelly E.
INQ-250CH-B	Chemistry & Crime	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Livingston, Stephanie
INQ-250CHL-1	Chemistry & Crime Lab	W 02:20PM-05:20PM	Hollis, Gary
INQ-250CHL-2	Chemistry & Crime Lab	TH 08:30AM-11:30AM	Livingston, Stephanie
<p>How can chemistry contribute to the investigation of crime? The evening news, the primetime TV lineup, and the local bookstore are all filled with examples of the work of forensic scientists. This course will emphasize fundamental chemical principles that allow us to understand the techniques used to analyze evidence from a crime scene. From bloodstains to drug identification to DNA fingerprinting, commonly employed techniques of the forensic scientist will be studied. In the laboratory, students will perform some of these same analyses used by professional criminologists to solve simulated crimes. Students will also use general chemistry principles to design their own analysis methods.</p>			

INQ-250PH-A	How Things Work	MWF 08:30AM-10:30AM	Sarker, Avijit
<p>The focus of this scientific reasoning course is to understand the way things work in our natural world. To that effect, fundamental questions that will be addressed are “why study motion, what factors contribute to the motion of an object and how do these contributing factors produce the observed motion of a sky diver and a deep sea diver”. The basics laws of physics applicable to sky diving and deep sea diving will be understood through a suite of laboratory experiments that are exploratory in nature. In this course, the focus will be on the process of science as it is motivated through measurements and inquiry. Cooperative learning groups, computer-assisted activities, and exploratory worksheets will facilitate the conceptual understanding process. Two group projects will provide opportunities for further scientific investigations into each of these topics.</p>			
INQ 251			
INQ-251-A1	Science,Pseudoscience,Nonsense	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Grant, Richard G
INQ-251-A2	Science,Pseudoscience,Nonsense	MWF 08:30AM-09:30AM	Vuddandam, Rajesh Babu
<p>In modern society we are inundated with all kinds of information: the Internet, TV, the radio, the newspaper, magazines and books, and in our daily contact with others. Unfortunately, much of this information is incomplete, biased or just outright false, and since we base many of our actions on what we learn from these sources, it is important to have skills to critically evaluate this information. We will discuss and apply the main kinds of deductive and inductive arguments, and be able to recognize them as they are used to influence all of us every day. Students will also understand the role of evidence in rational inquiry and be knowledgeable of the many pitfalls of human “common sense” intuition, as well as the proper interpretations of probabilities, in the evaluation of such evidence. We will utilize and explore many popular mysteries, such as ESP, Astrology, the Bermuda Triangle, visitation by extraterrestrial beings (UFOs), etc. in our discussions.</p>			
INQ-251-B	Bugs in the System	MWF 09:40AM-10:40AM	Wise, Michael J
<p>By all reasonable accounts, insects are the most successful group of animals on Earth. As human populations have expanded to cover the globe, we now interact with insects more than ever before. As we intrude upon a planet that insects have dominated for many millions of years, we ignore them at our own peril! In this course, students will learn to recognize the diversity of insects that share our environment. Insects’ fascinating adaptations allow the opportunity for in-depth study within a variety of biological disciplines, including genetics, development, behavior, and ecology. Following the specific interests of students, we will explore topics regarding the roles insects have played and continue to play in human affairs by asking questions like the following: How have insects affected the course of human history (e.g., outcomes of wars)? How can insects cause diseases? How have insects been used to treat diseases? How do insects affect global economies and food supplies? And what roles have insects played in human culture and religion?</p>			
INQ 260			
INQ-260EC-A	Economics and Crisis	MW 02:20PM-03:50PM	Sides, Colin Kielcheski
<p>Crises take many forms: natural disaster, disease, poverty, war. How do economists address these big issues? Where do they turn for information and data? How are their findings used to frame policy? This course takes students through the research process of social science inquiry from the perspective of an economist.</p>			
INQ-260ED-A	How People Learn	MWF 08:30AM-09:30AM	Schlegel, Julie Ann

<p>How do people learn? What is the relationship between learner, learning and instruction? Are there environments in which people learn best? How do we assess learning? What are the societal implications? These essential questions are the framework for this course and will engage students through an inquiry-focused social science approach to researching, analyzing and presenting findings.</p>			
INQ-260ED-B	Analysis of Human Movement	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Maina, Michael P
<p>How do teachers, coaches and athletes evaluate human movement? Why is skill-based competency and body awareness critical to movement success? This course requires students to examine fundamental biomechanical principles, critically analyze movement through case studies, and illustrate how biomechanics principles can be used in evidence-based practice to modify movement and human performance.</p>			
INQ-260PH-A	Puff, Sip & Toke	MW 02:20PM-03:50PM	Garza, Kimberly Parish
<p>This course examines adolescent use of vaping, alcohol, energy drinks, and cannabis, along with the associated health risks from a public health perspective. Despite numerous interventions and communication campaigns, adolescents are still using alcohol and tobacco at significant rates. Energy drink consumption and cannabis use, which many adolescents mistakenly view as harmless is of concern as research highlights significant mental and physical health risks from the use of these products. The course covers the history of each of these substances within adolescent populations, the positive and negative effects on individuals, families, and social life, the ways that substance use can impact critical brain development, and how substance abuse may increase the risk of involvement in the justice system.</p>			
INQ-260PS-A	Who Governs America's Schools?	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Carneal, Karin Louise
<p>Who governs public schools in the United States? This course will explore public attitudes about education in the U.S. and how certain beliefs and ideologies shape educational policy. Students will learn how education and public policy researchers study the philosophies of education, public attitudes about education, and the determinants of educational policy decisions in the United States. By engaging in critical thinking, writing, and oral communication, students will explain and use methods of social science to analyze contemporary issues in U.S. education policy.</p>			
INQ-260PY-A	Neuroscience and Free Will	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Cate, Anthony D
<p>We make choices every day to negotiate our world. Does this require free will? We feel in control of our actions. But what forces, both within ourselves and in our environment, impact our choices? We interact with other people based on a shared understanding of the same kind of conscious experience. What are the consequences when someone's consciousness changes, and how can we know that it has? Our choices, feelings, and consciousness are grounded in neural activity in our brains, and scientific experiments are required to elucidate how and where. These questions and others will be addressed in this class in relation to neuroscience and psychological science.</p>			
INQ-260PY-B	Psychology in the Media	MWF 09:40AM-10:40AM	Kane, Katherine D
INQ-260PY-C	Psychology in the Media	MWF 08:30AM-09:30AM	Garcia, Mandy Lee
<p>How accurately do popular media portray current psychological knowledge? Movies, sitcoms, newspapers, magazines, and blogs often report findings from psychological science. How often do they get it right, and how often do they get it wrong? Do they manipulate findings in order to make their points? This course explores the core methodologies of psychological science by comparing and contrasting popular vs. scientific treatments of current and perennial topics within psychology. Topics will vary, but may include amnesia, school shootings, effects of Facebook use, antidepressant effectiveness, Dissociative Identity Disorder, ADHD prevalence, and self-esteem.</p>			
INQ-260SO-A	Women in Politics	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Berntson, Marit A

This course will explore the ways that women have worked to increase their power and influence in elections, government, social movements, and public policy. This course will compare the experiences of women in American politics to that of women in other parts of the world. We will study how women become involved in politics and the role they play in policy-making. We will explore whether women form a social or political collective, and if so, what their interests are, what issues are important to them, and whether or how women in power represent such interests and issues.

INQ-260SO-G	Traveling Without Leaving - Global	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	Mehrotra, Meeta
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Why do people take their shoes off when they enter a home in Japan? Why do some Egyptian women choose to wear the veil? Why are many marriages around the world still arranged by parents? These questions focus on practices that most Americans would find unusual. Yet, studying these practices in a meaningful way will help students question their assumptions about others. Students will take a comparative global approach to study topics such as culture, gender relations, and family. This approach will facilitate a critical reflection on the central question this course focuses on: how do social forces shape the lives of individuals? Cross-cultural examinations of similarities and differences will help students investigate the ways in which social practices and institutions influence the trajectory of individual lives. Students will do a service-learning project that requires them to volunteer with an agency in the Roanoke Valley, and reflect on their experiences in course assignments. Service: 15 hrs/sem.

INQ 270

INQ-270-A	Myth, Philosophy, & Nature	MWF 09:40AM-10:40AM	Adkins, Brent A
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This course will look at different ways in which people have approached the natural world, ranging from mythological accounts of the world and its origins to rationalistic attempts to understand natural processes in early Greek philosophy and in the tradition of thought it inspired. We will consider what mythological approaches to the world have in common with more rationalistic approaches developed in the western world, and how they differ, as well as ways in which contemporary understandings of the world differ from views articulated in earlier modes of thought.

INQ-270-B	The Black Death	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Hakkenberg, Michael A
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The cataclysmic plague of 1348-50 was a defining event for the late Middle Ages. The questions of how medieval men and women dealt with the high death tolls, the disruptions to trade and commerce, population dislocations, and the challenges to their faith are still pertinent today, particularly in the light of twenty-first century concerns with the spread of infectious diseases (e.g. AIDS, SARS, Avian Influenza). Using a variety of primary source materials (e.g. archaeological evidence, chronicles, poetry, medical reports, woodcuts), students will examine the following issues: geographical origins of the plague, symptoms and transmission, medical responses, socioeconomic impact, as well as religious, cultural, and artistic responses. With a strong emphasis upon document analysis, this course will introduce students to rigorous inquiry in the liberal arts while developing critical thinking and academic writing skills.

INQ-270-C1	In Search of the Trojan War	TTH 08:30AM-10:00AM	Hawke, Jason
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INQ-270-C2	In Search of the Trojan War	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Hawke, Jason
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For at least three thousand years, the tale of the war between the Greeks and Trojans – and the ultimate destruction of the city of Troy – has captured the imaginations of one generation after another. For the ancients, it was an account of their past; in the Middle Ages, a source of literary tropes; early modern critics regarded it as high literature, but completely fictitious; while modern scholarship has revealed a more complex relationship between history and legend. While no serious person would

argue that Homer’s account exactly reflects factual reality, historians, archaeologists, linguists, and literary analysts have come to appreciate that his poetry echoes a world that collapsed around the same time Troy was destroyed. In this course, we examine not just the content relevant to the legend of the Trojan War, but focus on the modern intellectual quest to understand the world to which the saga of Troy belonged.

INQ-270-G1	The Maya Word-Global	TTH 08:30AM-10:00AM	Flores-Silva, Dolores
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The Classic Maya (250 AD-800 AD) had a perception of social structures, the relationship of humans to nature, time measurement, astronomy, mathematics, and writing that differs distinctly from our own. This course attempts to synthesize the many known elements of the society into a cohesive world view and to draw conclusions that help explain the Maya collapse. The primary tools of the course include hieroglyphic texts, Maya calendrics, and the history of relations among the mega-sites (Kalakmul, Palenque, Tikal, and Copan).

INQ-270-G2	War & Peace in Asia-Global	TTH 08:30AM-10:00AM	Xu, Stella Yingzi
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INQ-270-G3	War & Peace in Asia-Global	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Xu, Stella Yingzi
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How did war and peace interact in history? How did people try to avoid war and sustain peace? This course is designed to examine three major stages of violent interactions among East Asian countries, first around the seventh century, second around the thirteenth, and third around the fifteenth century. Despite relatively long periods of peaceful interactions, wars played important roles in the formation and reconfiguration of the East Asian world order throughout history. This course will examine the historical and political background of three crucial stages with focus on four historical figures, namely Emperor Yangdi of Sui Dynasty China, Genghis Khan of the Mongol Empire, Toyotomi Hideyoshi of Japan, and Admiral Yi Sunsin of Choson Korea, as well as their respective impact on the political and cultural spheres during the most turbulent eras in premodern East Asia.

INQ 271

INQ-271-A	Living With the Past	MWF 10:50AM-11:50AM	Gibbs, Gary G
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How do historical forces continue to shape our own lives? Our ancestors point to a series of potential answers. This course begins with each student constructing their family tree, but also explores how family history intersects with the fields of micro- and macro-history. This approach will demonstrate the many ways historical forces have influenced contemporary lives. By the end of the semester, a student will know ca. five generations of their family tree, some greater historical context for at least one branch of their family, and knowledge of how significant historical forces have shaped their own destinies.

INQ-271-B1	Why Hitler?	TTH 08:30AM-10:00AM	Willingham, Robert A
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INQ-271-B3	Why Hitler?		Willingham, Robert A
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This course will ask the question: Why Hitler? Why did one of the most sophisticated nations in Europe follow one of the most murderous and hateful leaders in world history? German history, the legacies of the First World War, and the biography of the dictator himself will be examined to help students begin to form an answer to this question.

INQ-271-D	The American Musical: American Politics through Musical Theatre	MWF 01:10PM-02:10PM	Barre, Nelson
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Although musicals have often been dismissed as pure pop culture, many musical plays engage larger cultural contexts and speak to the time in which they are written and beyond. In this course, students will examine the issues raised by composers and playwrights ranging from before the Golden Age of

Musicals to contemporary works, and they will reflect on how those debates connect to our present. In particular, what makes this uniquely American form particularly nationalistic or critical of the national discourse? Non-dramatic readings will also be used to provide social and political context for the musicals under consideration. American identity will be presented as a contested term, either reflected or refuted by popular musicals of various eras.			
INQ-271-G1	Cultural Difference (Global)	MWF 08:30AM-09:30AM	Hancock-Parmer, Michael F
This section of INQ 271 explores the representation of difference in ethnography (a branch of anthropology dealing with the study and description of specific cultures) and fiction. How does one attempt to understand and represent people from different cultures around the globe? This is a question that fiction writers and anthropologists grapple with in different ways. In this course, we will examine how difference is performed in a variety of 20th century texts ranging from ethnographic studies to science fiction. By juxtaposing fiction with ethnography, we will examine the claims that different texts make to represent reality and the "Other." We will also explore how these claims are linked to writing styles.			
INQ 300			
INQ-300-A	Silent Crisis of Mental Health	TTH 01:10PM-02:40PM	Schlegel, Julie Ann
According to the National Institutes of Mental Health, one in five people suffer from some type of mental illness in the United States. The number of people being diagnosed has significantly increased in the last several years. Two categories are used to describe mental illness: any mental illness (AMI) and serious mental illness (SMI) Young adults aged 18-25 years have the highest prevalence of AMI and SMI compared to adults aged 26 or older these numbers are expected to continue to increase. Why are we seeing this increase and what can be done? Through reading, research, writing and presenting students will work independently and in groups to answer the question and propose potential solutions to the mental health crisis.			
INQ-300-B	What Should We Eat?	MWF 08:30AM-09:30AM	Adkins, Brent A
What should we eat? The question is unavoidable. It must be answered, yet a little reflection shows that answering the question involves us in a whole host of economic, moral, ethical, political, nutritional, cultural, religious, aesthetic, and environmental concerns. Furthermore, these concerns are often in tension with one another. The fact of the matter is, though, that we rarely engage in such reflection. Our food choices are the result of habit and inertia. Using the work of Aristotle and Spinoza we will analyze the role of habit in human experience. Then we will turn to recent work by Michael Pollan to see how wide-ranging factors limit our food choices and thus the type of habits we can develop.			
INQ-300-C1	Making Life Count	MWF 01:10PM-02:10PM	Gibbs, Sharon C
INQ-300-C2	Making Life Count	MWF 09:40AM-10:40AM	Gibbs, Sharon C
What makes life fulfilling? Do you need material wealth? How does personal attitude contribute to a successful life? This course will explore how to make our life count by examining the relationship of attitude and our perception of living a meaningful life. Do we have to be an effective member of the community to make our life count? We will discuss the very real issues of poverty, homelessness, and people with physical disabilities in our nation and around the world and examine the question "Can everyone live a life with purpose?" This course requires a service learning component. The service learning experience will allow students to work with underprivileged community members in the Roanoke Valley and gain a deeper understanding of their situation.			
INQ-300-D	End of World as We Know It	MWF 09:40AM-10:40AM	Grant, Richard G
Across this country a growing number of Americans are preparing themselves for a catastrophic apocalypse. For reasons ranging from terrorist attacks to natural disasters or an economic meltdown,			

these individuals have been taking survival courses, constructing safe rooms and shelters, and stockpiling canned goods in preparation for the end of the world as we know it. Are their fears founded in fact or fantasy? Does the scientific data support the likelihood of an event occurring? Are there preparations we can take to ensure our survival if it does occur? In this course you will investigate a potential catastrophic event and the underlying science and technology, assess the level of threat based on all available evidence, and develop an action plan with persuasive arguments to advise others of the apparent danger and how to prepare and respond to the event.

INQ-300-F	Autism & Our Society	MW 02:20PM-03:50PM	Anderson, Shannon Latkin
<p>Given current estimates that 1 in 68 births in the US will be an autistic child, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects us all. But what is autism? Is it a disease, a disability, or something else altogether? Autism is not only a biomedical phenomenon; it is a deeply social one. Boys are diagnosed more often and younger than girls; do gender expectations play a role in identification and diagnosis? What other social factors might be influencing access to resources, and what should be done to make it fairer? Who among stakeholders—family, legal experts, doctors and therapists, autistic people—should decide policy regarding ASD? In this class you will research the issues that ASD raises and suggest actions or approaches that will help us engage with ASD and autistic people more fairly and productively in our society.</p>			
INQ-300-J1	Memorials, Monuments, and Memory	TTH 08:30AM-10:00AM	Bucher, Jesse Walter
INQ-300-J2	Memorials, Monuments, and Memory	TTH 10:10AM-11:40AM	Bucher, Jesse Walter
<p>This course addresses the ways in which people, in various times and places, interact with public monuments and memorials. By focusing on examples from different parts of the world, the class broadly asks how memory about the past gets constructed, challenged, and reconfigured through public events and art. The course contends that no monument or memorial ever exists in a political, social, or cultural vacuum and that their meaning and utility change over time. Students in this course will directly engage with artists and critics who are currently producing work that expands the ways in which we think about monuments, memorials, and memory.</p>			

May Term Course Descriptions – May 2026 Offerings

On Campus, open sections

INQ-277-CI	Japanese History Through Films	Xu, Stella
Fee: \$0		
<p>How can we understand history through films? How can we develop a critical view on history through examining historical films? How close to or how different from history are the films? This course examines Japanese history as reflected in various films produced in Japan in the twentieth and early twenty-first century. By framing visual representations in their respective historical context, we will discuss political, social, and cultural evolutions that took place in Japan from the medieval to the contemporary period. No Knowledge of Japanese language is required. All readings are in English, and films will be shown with English subtitles. Students are expected to complete assigned readings, be prepared to participate actively in class discussion, and answer questions about films and readings.</p>		
INQ-177-CD	Celluloid Boot: Italy & Film	Chapman, Giuliana F
Fee: \$0		
<p>This course will focus on Italian historical, cultural, and geographical identities as presented through Italian films. What version of history is revealed through her films? What do these films tell us about the Italian nation and her people? The course will study major movements in modern Italian history (the Risorgimento & Unification, the rise of Fascism, WWII and post-WWII, the North/South divide) and the attempts of some of Italy's film directors (Luchino Visconti, Roberto Rossellini, Vittorio De Sica, and others) to contextualize these periods. The artistic innovations and contributions made by filmmakers such as Federico Fellini and Pier Paolo Pasolini will also be examined. In order to better gain an appreciation for the Italian sense of place and belonging, the regions and cities that appeared in the frame will be explored to understand why these images endure. Daily screenings are mandatory and selected readings will include Italian history and some literature in translation. Proficiency in Italian is not required.</p>		