

GHEA21

Spring 2026 GHEA21 Online Courses

Artificial Intelligence in a Human World: Skills, Ethics & Impact

January 12, 2026 - April 29, 2026

Anguelina Popova, American University of Central Asia

This course introduces modern AI systems and tools while exploring their ethical implications and societal impact. Students gain practical experience using AI technologies like Large Language Models, Generative Art tools, and AI agents, while simultaneously developing a critical framework for understanding AI ethics, governance, and responsible use. The course combines hands-on workshops with discussions on the philosophical, social, and policy dimensions of AI in contemporary society. Beyond practical applications, this course helps demystify the inner workings of modern AI tools, from foundational machine learning concepts to transformer architectures that power today's large language models. Students will unpack the technical "black box" of AI systems to understand how they function, why they sometimes fail, and what their fundamental limitations are. This technical grounding, accessible to non-technical students, will empower learners to think more critically about AI capabilities, make informed decisions about their use, and engage meaningfully in debates about the future of artificial intelligence in society. Through a combination of interactive demonstrations, intuitive explanations, and hands-on exercises, students will develop a deeper understanding of the mechanisms behind the AI revolution, providing them with both practical skills and the conceptual framework needed to navigate an increasingly AI-integrated world

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Beyond Bollywood: Cultural Identity in South Asian Cinema

January 27, 2026 - May 14, 2026

Fahmidul Haq, Bard College

South Asian Cinema is nearly synonymous with Indian Cinema to the international audience, though other South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal have developed strong film cultures too. The objective of the course

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is mapping the cine profile of the South Asian countries and examining Bollywood's hegemonic presence in the region. This course will study some cases across a range of South Asian cinema cultures by exploring their common as well as different cultural backgrounds, historiography, and sociopolitical realities. Topics will include both historical and contemporary cinematic practices in South Asian countries. The course will also enable students to understand how cinema as a medium shapes the cultural identity of the region by exploring the following topics: the Partition of India in South Asian cinema, Bollywood's cultural influence in other South Asian countries, the portrayal of Kashmir in Indian cinema, and new and independent cinematic practices, both parallel to and within the mainstream industry.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Children's Rights

January 21, 2026 - May 06, 2026

Venera Urbaeva, American University of Central Asia

What do governments owe to children? And what rights do children have that are enforceable by law? Children face unique dangers. Millions annually succumb to preventable killer diseases such as malaria, measles and pneumonia; thousands more are subject to abandonment, abuse and trafficking, and children comprise about a third of the world's war victims and refugees. One hundred years ago, English social reformer Eglantyne Jebb launched a campaign to assist the child victims of World War I. Her movement eventually grew into a vast Children's Rights framework, with treaties and laws, non-governmental organizations and its own United Nations agency, UNICEF. The achievements of the Children's Rights movement are numerous, including a global decline in child mortality, and a steep increase in access to education, even in the poorest countries. And yet wars, climate related disasters and dictatorial or capricious governments continue to pose threats to children's wellbeing worldwide. In this course, students will be introduced to the major categories of human rights issues affecting children, and the system for monitoring and addressing them. They will also have an opportunity to develop their own advocacy strategy to promote awareness and policy options concerning an issue of their choosing, and present this in a mock meeting of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, a body of experts that monitors the realization of children's rights around the world.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

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Cinema and Human Rights

January 30, 2026 - May 22, 2026

Sabine El Chamaa, Bard College

This course looks at the intersection between human rights and cinema by exploring fiction and non-fiction films (both in terms of plot and film form) directed by pioneering filmmakers. Students will acquire the analytical tools to read films as text through an interdisciplinary lens, drawing from readings in film theory, film studies, anthropology, queer studies, and post-colonial studies. They will equally acquire the tools to understand the inseparable nature of film form (Editing, Cinematography, Sound) from the filmmaker's intent. The course critically engages with the historical (and current) role of film in provoking social change, problematising the changing historical and cultural notions of human rights, while questioning the inherent ideologies in the politics of representation. The course will require film viewings, and will be taught through a combination of lectures and debates.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Civic Engagement and Social Action

January 27, 2026 - May 19, 2026

Bonnie Goad, Jacob Udo-Udo Jacob, Bard College

What does it mean to be engaged with your community? What can students participating in civic engagement projects learn from others in places like Haiti, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Bangladesh and the United States? This course will examine historical, philosophical and practical elements of civic engagement while exploring the underlying question of what it means to be civically engaged in the early 21st century. Together, students will explore issues related to political participation, civil society, associational life, social justice, and personal responsibility, as well as how issues like race and socio-economic status impact civic participation. The class reflects a balance between study and practice of engagement which includes interrogating theoretical notions of civic life while also empowering students to be active participants in the communities in which they are situated. The culminating project asks students to propose a civic engagement project in their home or local community. Speakers and workshops will be offered by civic leaders, government officials, global not-for-profit leaders, and volunteers from communities across the globe. This course will feature workshops, lectures and seminar discussions that include students taking the same course across the GHEA21 network.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

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Civic Engagement in Repressive Contexts

January 26, 2026 - May 21, 2026

Obaidullah Bahir, American University of Afghanistan

The course seeks to help the students and professors of the course answer the classic question: “What is to be done (by us)?”. It does this through examining four themes: cultural freedom, investigating the arts and sciences as a key achievement of modernity and an important ground for civic engagement; media and autonomous publics, examining the notion of public life and the role a free public space plays in supporting alternatives to autocracies; politics as concerted action, considering how people, when they come together on the basis of shared principles, speaking and acting in each other’s presence, and developing a capacity to act in concert, create political power as an alternative to violence and coercion; and finally, the responsibilities of intellectuals and the roles they play in creating democratic public life, political power and cultural freedom. Some of the key questions to come up will be: What are the alternatives to the power of coercion in repressive social and political contexts? How are they grounded, acted upon and with what consequences? What roles do intellectuals play? Who is the intellectual? What are the distinctive roles of democratic intellectuals? What are the distinctions that should be made between the responsibilities of intellectuals, scholars, scientists, students, activists, politicians, and experts?

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Climate Change and Business

February 04, 2026 - May 20, 2026

Syed Mahfuzur Rahman, BRAC University

Climate change is one of the most discussed issues in local to national, and the global context for the last half century, since it brings risks for natural, human, and social system. The multi-dimensional impact of climate change has attracted researchers and policymakers along with other stakeholders including investors who want to keep their investment in business safe. Business entities require adjustment to the policy initiatives national governments and/or intergovernmental organizations make with an aim, for instance, to address climate change and its impacts including emissions of greenhouse gases. This process brings enormous opportunities. Resource optimization resulting in cost minimization and innovation help companies to gain higher market share. Since global production and consumption have been increasing dramatically due to versatile demand from

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consumers end, doing business as-usual will have some obvious consequences. Thus, an improved and inclusive education of business is pertinent.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Climate Change and Natural Disasters

February 02, 2026 - March 06, 2026

Sagynbek Orunbaev, American University of Central Asia

The societies that we live in are regularly subjected to different types of natural and environmental disasters, both man-made and natural, and these seem to be increasing in both severity and frequency as human settlements expand into new regions, we begin to exploit more resources, and our climate changes around us. The impact of climate change on our world and way of life is not to be underestimated, and the consequences of not adapting to our new reality could be disastrous. This course aims to introduce students to the concepts involved in disaster and emergency management as they relate to the natural environment and the impacts of climate change. The course will cover an introduction to the types, causes, and impacts of natural and environmental disasters; an introduction to climate science and modeling; an explanation of the connections between climate change and the frequency and severity of natural disaster occurrences; an overview of the risk analysis and disaster and emergency management strategies that can be employed to mitigate against the impacts of such occurrences; and the importance of not just preparing for and mitigating these disasters, but adapting our societies to the new realities we face under climate change for our continued survival.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Climate Change Solutions

February 03, 2026 - May 26, 2026

Dalia Najjar, Al-Quds Bard College

This interdisciplinary course explores climate solutions through three complementary modules: science, political economy, and communication. Delivered in a modular format by three professors, students will first develop a scientific understanding of climate challenges and potential interventions, then examine the economic and political contexts that shape implementation, and finally learn strategies to effectively communicate solutions to diverse audiences. Alongside the modules, students will carry out a semester-long individual project focused on local, national, or regional solutions. Each project will integrate scientific, policy, and

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communication dimensions. Students will also collaborate with peers at other institutions for cross-institutional feedback and review, gaining both local insight and global perspective.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Communication Ethics

January 08, 2026 - April 30, 2026

Nsgena Burton, Tuskegee University

The purpose of this course is to develop your knowledge and skills involved in recognizing and thinking about the ethical dimension of communication. This involves:

1. developing your ability to recognize and identify ethical issues and tensions in communication situations (Skills of moral sensitivity and moral imagination),
2. exploring different approaches to thinking about ethics in human communication (Moral imagination, skills of moral reasoning and judgment),
3. clarifying the ethical tensions found in a variety of communication acts in a reasoned and systematic fashion as part of the process for deciding when, how, and what to communicate (Skills of moral reasoning and judgment).
4. clarifying your personal ethical standard for human communication (Moral development).

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Creative Economies

January 31, 2026 - June 03, 2026

Noora Barker, Al-Quds Bard College

This course explores the development of cultural and creative industries with a focus on cultural heritage, community engagement, and creative economies in global and digital contexts, with particular emphasis on Palestine and West Asia. Through case studies of performing arts organizations in Palestine and the region, students will explore the administrative, financial, and creative frameworks that sustain these sectors. The course combines theory and practice through class exercises, projects, and critical analysis of artistic productions, highlighting the sociopolitical role of culture and its relation to historical and contemporary change.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

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Creative Nonfiction: Writing about Place

January 27, 2026 - May 14, 2026

Rebecca Chase, Bard College

Where are you writing from? A city, a village, an airplane, under a tree? How does the “where” reveal the “who” of the narrator? Creative nonfiction reports back to the reader from the world around us: stories based in fact, often heavily researched, but always filtered through the lens of the subjective “I” and crafted with tools borrowed from fiction. This course will be writing and reading intensive, with close reading and short writing assignments culminating in a final portfolio.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Curating Culture: African Festivals & Biennials in Global Perspective

February 12, 2026 - May 14, 2026

Brett Pyper, University of the Witwatersrand

The arts of Africa and its diasporas have made notable contributions to global public culture in the postcolonial period and can be recognized across the world today. While nation states and other authorities have claimed important roles in these developments, artists, creative entrepreneurs, and variously constituted communities have also been vital exponents of festivals, biennials, carnivals, parades, and related arts events. While noticeably linked to nation-building in their state-led manifestations, these festive forms have also been used to claim visibility on the public stage by protagonists claiming recognition where it has been denied or repressed by governments. Often these articulate, in their forms as well as their program content, counter-hegemonic senses of self and collective identity. In this short, seven-week online course, we place African and Afro-diasporic case studies at the center of a conversation about how festive forms can be potent vehicles for the crafting of public practices, across boundaries. We critically explore comparative international experiences of curating and managing festivals, biennales and related art gatherings across Africa and its diasporas. The course is underpinned by the principle that the curation and the leadership and management of festivals integrally inform one another and that practitioners are increasingly looking not only to produce cultural products, but also frameworks that enable ecosystems to grow, sustain, and transform societies. We thus bring discerning curatorial and humanities practices into dialogue with the study of the strategic positioning, marketing and

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funding of these types of events. Intervening in the legacies of the historical objectification of people from Africa and their descendants, the course explores the potential of the agency of display to yield transformative cultural encounters. While thinking from Africa, the course engages festival practices wherever students are located.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Democratization

January 28, 2026 - May 11, 2026

Hidayet Siddikoglu, American University of Afghanistan

This course is intended as a broad, introductory survey of all those factors that foster the development and consolidation of democratization processes in the global era. Each factor will be examined with reference to a variety of different national experiences drawn from diverse examples, to finally compare it with countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkiye and the United States. An important aim of the course is to encourage each student to relate the characteristics and historical developments of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkiye to the various theories about democratization. Reading materials, lectures, focused discussions and a research project will help accomplish this goal

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Diplomatic History

January 13, 2026 - April 30, 2026

Mirko Tasic, American University of Central Asia

This course provides a comprehensive examination of the nexus between war and diplomacy. Students will delve into historical case studies to understand the political, economic, and social factors that contribute to armed conflict. The curriculum focuses on the diplomatic strategies—including negotiation, mediation, and sanctions—employed to prevent, de-escalate, and resolve wars. Key topics include the role of global governance, statecraft, and non-state actors in shaping military outcomes and postwar settlements.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Dissent: Politics, Justice, Dignity

January 26, 2026 - May 18, 2026

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Pinar Kemerli, Bard College

Why do citizens and non-citizens rebel? How do oppressed, exploited, indignified bodies become agents of resistance? When is it legitimate to break laws? What makes resistance “civil”? This course surveys modern theories of dissent and resistance. We will examine the characteristics, justifications, and limitations of various forms of resistance and refusal that individuals and collectives have historically engaged in across the world. In addition to the kinds of dissent that take collectivist forms including popular uprisings, civil disobedience, and anticolonialism, we will cover acts of refusal that might not reach such popular forms and/or remain dismissed as marginal acts of protests including conscientious objection, hunger strikes, and self-immolations. Liberal, republican and radical perspectives on what makes such forms of resistance political, necessary and just will be examined. Our scale of analysis will be global, reaching from the American civil rights struggle to the infamous French refugee camp, the “Calais Jungle,” from the Irish hunger strikers in the notorious Maze Prison to Tahrir Square in Cairo, from the Gezi Park protest in Turkey to the Algerian War of Independence. Our goal is to acquire a historically grounded understanding of diverse forms of resistance with a focus on the key theoretical concepts and expressions informing them in order to learn to form connections between philosophical debates we study and our contemporary political dilemmas. In addition to textual resources, the course includes analysis of several movies and documentaries including Malcolm X (1992), Hunger (2008), The Square (2013), No Other Land (2024).

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Documenting African American and Youth Voter Suppression

January 27, 2026 - May 19, 2026

Lisa Katzman, Bard College

This course will engage students in an interdisciplinary examination of the history of the disenfranchisement and enfranchisement of both African American and youth voting rights. We will consider the social and political movements, study key Supreme Court decisions: Dred Scot v., Plessy v Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education that affected civil and voting rights; amendments to the constitution, and legislation that contributed to overcoming voting rights inequities from Reconstruction through the passage of the historic Voting Rights Act in 1965. We will also examine the Supreme Court's dismantling of this landmark piece of legislation

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through its *Shelby v. Holder* ruling in 2013, opening the door to intensified gerrymandering in many states, but also to new forms of voting rights activism to counter restrictions that target the voting rights of people of color and young voters.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Eco-Anthropology: Garbage, Culture, and the Human–Earth Relationship

January 27, 2026 - May 19, 2026

Felix Kaputu, Simon’s Rock at Bard College

This course examines garbage through the lens of environmental anthropology, exploring how waste production, circulation, and treatment shape human societies and their ecosystems. Garbage is not merely a byproduct but also a cultural marker that reflects values, practices, and inequalities. Students will analyze how waste has become deeply ingrained in daily life, influencing urban planning, rural livelihoods, public health, and environmental change. By foregrounding the anthropology of waste, the course highlights the complex social processes through which communities normalize or contest garbage, while considering the broader ecological consequences that extend beyond sanitation and disease. Special attention will be given to the linkages between waste, climate change, and biodiversity loss, as well as to how states, corporations, and grassroots actors manage or mismanage garbage. By connecting local practices to global ecological systems, the course encourages students to critically examine their own routines, cultural assumptions, and environmental responsibilities.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Ecological History of the Globe

February 2 - May 20, 2026

Saad Amira, Al-Quds Bard College

This course will focus on the history of humankind’s relationship with the environment. It uses the words “environment” and “ecology” to refer to the nonhuman components of the natural world. This course situates power at the nexus between culture, politics and ecology by exploring the interaction between different eco systems, human cultures and lifestyles. The course then will expand to questions of environmental conflicts, uses of natural resources, the politicization of nature and landscape, and the environmental effects of mass migrations. As a case study, this

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course will study ecology in Palestine using methods of ethnographic research to interrogate the situation of the “ecological” within the framework of the colonial present.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Epistemology of Conspiracy Theories

January 27, 2026 - May 19, 2026

Bruce Matthews, Bard Early Colleges

Epistemology of Conspiracy Theories will introduce students to the interdisciplinary study of why we appear to be becoming more susceptible to believing in conspiracy theories and ‘fake news’ that reinforces our existing way of seeing the world. Students will examine works of literature and philosophy that have wrestled with the intersection of truth and narratives of power, engaging with Plato’s Noble Lie and George Orwell’s 1984, while also focusing on propaganda and the manufacturing of consent within our contemporary social media landscapes. Building on the insights of multiple schools of epistemology, students will engage and critique select conspiracy theories, as they learn to contextualize and understand the political and technological currents that shape the competing narratives of truth we confront in today’s world. Faced with the possibility of living in a ‘post-truth’ world, students need to be exposed to historical and political forces as well as master epistemological techniques to better establish and justify their understanding of reality in order to increase the effectiveness of their civic engagement. Coming to grips with the thousands of years old narratives of power shaping truth helps students situate current debates about conspiracy theory and disinformation within an historical context, while interrogating the epistemological theories of Descartes, Hume, Nietzsche and Baudrillard provides them with a set of tools to dismantle and test the conspiracy theories students select to investigate in teams, as they work towards their final panel discussions that apply the central question of epistemology to contemporary events, namely how do you know what you think you know is true?

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Ethics of Artificial Intelligence

January 27, 2026 - May 19, 2026

Chrys Margaritidis, Bard College

This course provides a forum for discussing a selection of topics about the ethical aspects of Artificial Intelligence through contemporary literature on ethics and

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technology. We examine and debate case studies on AI and reach conclusions about principles and problems of broader ethical significance. As they prepare for their debates with their fellow students, participants in this class will have the chance to debate a chatbot. In addition, students will engage with generative technology with the help of Google's Cloud Skills Boost platform, learning the basics of AI prompting. Some of the ethical topics discussed include accountability, trust, intelligence, identity, privacy, and mass surveillance. Philosophical principles and problems discussed include the doctrine of double effect, doing vs. allowing harm, theories of personal identity, and aspects of liberal morality and democracy. We also develop a framework to handle ethical questions in the context of AI for individuals, private corporations, and states. No background in ethics or law is required but some affinity to how AI is developing around us is assumed. By the end of the course, students will be able to: be able to understand the basics principles of debate and participate in formal debates demonstrate a clear understanding of debates on central ethical issues in AI and be able to take part in these debates by critiquing significant arguments explain how various positions taken on these topics relate to deeper principles and problems in ethics be able to apply a framework of dealing with issues related to AI perform their own evaluation and critique of the validity and soundness of arguments with care and clarity, both orally and in writing be able to understand and use generative AI prompting

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Freedom of Expression

January 30, 2026 - May 15, 2026

Denis Skopin, Smolny Beyond Borders

This course provides an introduction to debates about freedom of expression. What does this definition mean? Is there a right to say anything? The course investigates who has had this right, where and why, and what it has had to do in particular with politics and culture. What powers does speech have, and for what? Debates about censorship, dissidence and protest, hate speech, the First Amendment and Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are obvious starting points, but the course also explores some less obvious questions: about faith and the secular, the rights of minorities, migration, surveillance, speaking and political agency, law and politics, social media, cancel culture, and the force(s) of words. In asking about the status of the speaking human subject, the course looks at the ways in which the subject of rights, and indeed the thought of human rights itself, derives from an experience of claiming, speaking, and speaking up. These questions are examined, if not answered, across a variety of philosophical, legal, journalistic, and political texts,

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with a heavy dose of case studies (many of them happening right now) and readings in contemporary critical and legal theory. Taught in parallel with OSUN partner institutions where many assignments and activities are shared, and students work jointly with peers at other schools.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Historiography

January 26, 2026 - April 20, 2026

Vojtech Pojar, American University of Central Asia

The course introduces students to historiography, that is, the study of how history is written, and examines the transformations of historical writing in the modern era from a global perspective. Throughout the semester, students will engage with works by historians from diverse regions of the world and intellectual traditions, exploring the different ways they have understood the past and presented their findings. In doing so, the course will not only familiarize students with the methods and sources historians use to interpret the past professionally, but also trace how historical understanding, professional standards, and forms of historical writing have changed over time. Furthermore, it will situate these approaches within their broader intellectual, cultural, and political contexts, showing that interpretations of the past have always been closely intertwined with reflections on the challenges of the present. Ultimately, the course aims to equip students with analytical tools useful for social science professionals, educators, and social activists, while also emphasizing the civic role that historical perspective can play in open societies.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Human Rights and Decolonization

January 26, 2026 - May 07, 2026

Haroun Rahimi, American University of Afghanistan

This course stimulates critical thinking and contemplation regarding the position of international human rights law and its significance in the global community. It explores the possibilities of decolonizing human rights law by critically examining legal practices through the perspectives of colonial and post-colonial theories. The course will delve into topics such as addressing the historical effects of colonialism through redress and reparation, and assessing the degree to which these practices are currently embedded in the language of human rights.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

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Introduction to Narrative Inquiry: What's in a Story?

January 26, 2026 - May 07, 2026

Cathy Raymond, American University of Afghanistan

This qualitative research methodology course explores the theory and practice of Narrative Inquiry through readings, discussion, and the design of individualized narrative research projects. One of the central premises of Narrative Inquiry is that the story is central to human experience and that we seek to understand our lived experiences by creating storied narratives. Narrative researchers also understand that an individual's life story does not emerge in a vacuum but is, rather, deeply connected to the social, familial, linguistic, institutional, cultural, and other systems within which individual experience is shaped and expressed. Because of this contextualized nature of lived experience, students will design individual narrative research projects which explore the storied experiences of a small number of participants within their local and/or international communities. The central project in this course is a digital narrative research portfolio which will include samples from each student's individual narrative research project, including documentation of a data set, sample data analysis and description, reflective memoing, and re-presentation of new insights through creative re-storying practices, such as poetry, nonfiction, or fiction. Narrative inquiry offers a multidisciplinary approach to qualitative research which has had diverse applications across numerous areas of study, including psychology, the humanities, education, law, medicine, and more. Narrative inquiry offers a powerful research approach for collaborating closely with participants, for developing cross-cultural empathy through active listening and co-constructed interviews, for working towards social justice and transformation, and for challenging harmful stereotypes through counter-stories.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Leadership, Writing & Public Speaking for Social & Environmental Justice

January 27, 2026 - May 07, 2026

Jennifer Browdy, Simon's Rock at Bard College

Drawing on the writings and speeches of inspiring global leaders in a range of fields, students will learn how to use heartfelt, persuasive rhetorical strategies, in both writing and public speaking, to strongly, skillfully communicate their vision of social and environmental justice. Students will come away from this course with a toolkit of

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skills and tactics for inspiring others, and a portfolio of their own efforts to write and speak out on issues they care about.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Linux Kernel Internals: Data Structures for Open Computing

January 12, 2026 - May 18, 2026

Dmitrii Toksaitov, American University of Central Asia

Dive deep into the heart of the famous Linux kernel by exploring essential data structures: linked lists, hash tables, red-black trees, B-trees, radix trees, and bitmaps. Through hands-on projects, you'll modify kernel code directly, visualize critical algorithms, and build new functionality. Rooted in Linux's open-source philosophy, this globally accessible online course equips you with the skills to build technology that fosters collaboration, transparency, and innovation. To support students across time zones, the course may also be taken asynchronously: you can follow recorded lectures at a time convenient for you, complete take-home labs and projects, and track your progress via the learning management system, in addition to participating in live online class meetings.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Literatures of Terror

January 28, 2026 - May 13, 2026

Zahid Rafiq, Bard College

The course will trace the figure of the rebel from the anarchist to the nihilist, the idealist to the revolutionary to the terrorist in order to trace the transformations of a figure that has been fundamental to the history and politics of the modern world. What do we learn about the dreams and despair, history and politics, of the modern world by turning to the figure of the rebel in literature? From Von Kleist's fanatic seeker of justice, Michael Kohlhaas, to Peter Verkhovensky, Dostoyevsky's manipulative nihilist mastermind, to the avenging monster raised from the dead in Ahmad Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, we shall closely see the character of the rebel and the world they inhabit and the one they create around them. This course will mostly deal with representation of terror in fictional literature and film.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

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Migration, Cultural Identity and Global Citizenship

January 17, 2026 - May 12, 2026

Hidayet Siddikoglu, American University of Afghanistan

This course introduces students to the key facts and trends of international migration. It explores fundamental questions such as: Why do people migrate? What are the social and economic consequences of migration for the countries and families left behind? What are the implications of highly skilled migration? What role do migrant remittances play? And what challenges do researchers face in identifying the impacts of migration? Migration will be studied in relation to climate change, conflict, and demographic shifts such as aging populations. Through case studies from Pakistan, Iran, and Türkiye, students will critically examine migration policies, governance structures, and their effects on both migrants and host societies, with particular attention to cultural adaptation and global citizenship.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Modernism and Modernity in Global Perspective

February 04, 2026 - May 20, 2026

Jeffrey Taylor, European Humanities University

The first part of the course will focus on the phenomenon of Modernity in a global perspective, which is the rapidly changing world of the 19th and 20th Centuries. In this first section we look at the disorienting changes brought about by rapid urbanization and industrialization and how those led to new ideologies of imperialism, nationalism, and socialism. The second section of the course considers the artistic response to these forces that we can call Modernism. We look at the forms this movement took in architecture, applied arts, literature, visual arts, music, and film. The course will have two major assessments, one for each of the two sections. These can be in the form of a research paper, or students are also encouraged to develop an individual project of more creative approach that explores key figures and movements related the course's subject matter

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Philosophy as Practice

February 02, 2026 - May 27, 2026

Will Buckingham, Parami University

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We often imagine philosophy is a matter of sitting and thinking about things. But philosophy is also a set of practices, modes of living and ways of life. So, how do we think better about philosophy as a practice? And what role does practice have in our present day approaches to philosophy? To be good philosophers, do we need to do more than thinking? Do we need to instead need to put in place new practices, in pursuit of our philosophical goals? In this course, students will explore the idea that philosophy not only proposes new ways of thinking, but that it also challenges us to adopt a suite of practices relating to the arts of living well. The course will take a global perspective on philosophy not just as a series of experiments in thinking otherwise, but as a series of experiments in living otherwise. Students will be encouraged to put philosophical ideas to the test practically, and to cross the boundary between reflection and practice, scholarship and first-person experience, to ask what it might mean to make philosophy a practice, here in the 21st century. Course materials will range from Diogenes and Hipparchia in Ancient Greece — philosophy as protest and performance art — to Confucian ideas of ritual as a form of social practice, an intricate dance that builds trust. It will ask about the limits of practice along with Daoist thinkers, and explore Buddhist traditions of mediation and Zen ideas of everydayness. And it will ask about how feminist, queer and other marginalised perspectives may challenge our notions of what it means to live, think and practice.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Playwriting: Writing Your Truth

January 26, 2026 - May 06, 2026

Aimée Michel, Simon's Rock at Bard College

Most writers will tell you that in order to write, you must read...and what you read should be the best. I will add that what you read should also be diverse, in cultural and historical perspective, in style, and in origin. Dramatic writing is meant to be performed, authentically, in front of a live audience. It is visceral, immediate and speaks human truths powerfully. Over the course of the semester we will be reading plays as well as working on our own playwriting. As we read drama from around the world, spanning over a century, we will study how other dramatists have constructed their plays and solved problems that present themselves to the playwright. We will discuss these plays each week. We will also be writing our own scenes in response to weekly writing prompts. Each week students will bring in original writing and together we will read it aloud. We will then respond as a group to the writer with constructive feedback. It is my hope that, inspired by the plays we are reading

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together and each others' courage, students will begin to hone their authentic dramatic voices and write their own truths.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Qualitative Research Methods

January 27, 2026 - May 19, 2026

Victor Apryshchenko, Bard College

Description: The objectives of this course are to introduce students to research methods that they can apply to their own storytelling capacities. Qualitative Research Methods (hereafter QRM) explores qualitative methodologies practiced by historians, sociologists, and anthropologists. QRM is specifically designed to build on those foundations by giving learners the tools to develop from being the consumers of knowledge to becoming producers. To that end, new skills are required. Specifically, QRM builds the following research capabilities: 1. How to analyze different kinds of sources. 2. Creating oral history sources, including how to secure permissions, consider ethical and legal responsibilities, and best practices for interviewing. 3. Creating visual history sources 4. Using electronic devices (especially smart phones) as research tools. 5. Creating archives. 6. How to design a research project. 7. Enlisting feedback from peers.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Stimulating Public Discourse: Persuasive Writing for Mass Audiences

January 26, 2026 - May 13, 2026

Daniel Calingaert, Bard College

This course explores the concepts and practices of persuasive writing to shape public discourse. Students will analyze a range of pieces written for mass audiences and examine the roles, strategies, and considerations of public writing, as opposed to academic or technical writing. They will deepen their conceptual understanding and build practical skills in dialogue with experienced practitioners and their classmates. They will learn by doing—by producing articles for broad audiences—and develop their capacity to receive and give constructive feedback. For each piece they write, students will delve into key questions: Who is my audience? What is my purpose and motivation? What reactions might I anticipate? This practice-based course aims to

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empower students to write persuasive articles for a general audience that merit publication. These articles may address a range of social, cultural, economic, or political issues of public concern, in line with each student's interests. Students will learn from prominent public intellectuals and from opinion editors of reputable publications and will draft articles, workshop them with classmates, refine them, and submit them for publication in traditional outlets or online platforms. This course requires on-camera participation. Interested students need to submit a writing sample and a statement of interest to apply for entry into this course.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Storytelling with Statistics

January 13, 2026 - April 30, 2026

Polina Dolmatova, American University of Central Asia

"Storytelling with Statistics" is a course designed to teach students how to transform raw data into compelling narratives. Through a blend of statistical techniques and data visualization, students will learn how to present insights in a way that engages and informs their audience. Students will also explore the ethical use of data, common pitfalls in interpretation, and best practices for crafting visuals that tell a clear and impactful story. The course covers foundational topics such as descriptive statistics, probability, hypothesis testing, regression analysis, and time series. By the end of the course, students will be able to create data-driven stories that not only highlight key trends but also communicate their significance in a broader context, with the civic engagement emphasis.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

The Politics of Truth

January 12, 2026 - April 29, 2026

Nathaniel Matala, American University of Central Asia

We live in a world saturated with "alternative facts", AI-generated realities, and state-sponsored propaganda. In this world, the very concept of "truth" has become a political battleground. This course investigates the "politics of truth" by equipping students with a citizen's toolkit to navigate this contested landscape. We will analyze both the timeless psychology of belief and the modern tactics of digital manipulation. Through hands-on workshops and real-world case studies, students will learn to verify sources, deconstruct manipulative narratives, and evaluate strategies of democratic resilience. Students will ultimately apply these skills by

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designing a practical “digital hygiene” toolkit to help a community of their choice contribute to a healthier, more informed public sphere.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

The Psychology of Authoritarianism

January 20, 2026 - May 05, 2026

Amy Loewenhaar-Blauweiss, Bard College

In this introductory class, we explore the psychological dimensions of authoritarianism: its origins in early interactions with caregivers; psychodynamic factors that predispose individuals to relinquish their autonomy; social and cultural patterns that create susceptibility to authoritarian phenomena; mass movements vs. mob rule; the authoritarian personality; and the psychology of totalitarianism. We explore theories of authoritarianism from perspectives that include political psychology; psychohistory; critical theory; political science, social psychology; and sociology. Finally, we use a case study to investigate the link between creativity and enhanced resistance to authoritarianism. By gaining an understanding of the link between individual and group psychology within the larger context of historical, national, and political structures, students will develop a more nuanced understanding of the psychodynamics of authoritarianism and will be able to bring a critical lens to the contemporary authoritarian trends that are developing globally. Students will develop a working knowledge of the language of political psychology and psychoanalysis. Students will also explore the elements of cultural identification and creativity that can undergird resistance to authoritarianism.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Time Machines: Clocks in History of Technology and Contemporary Art

January 29, 2026 - May 21, 2026

Natalia Fedorova, Smolny Beyond Borders

As time is the only resource we have, the course invites to look at it from historical, philosophical, and artistic perspectives. As first universal machines, clocks served to coordinate states and global systems. We'll explore ancient Chinese, Indian, and Arabic clocks, study famous clockmakers like Jaques Droz, and examine artwork based on time such as Christian Marclay's "The Clock," a 24-hour film of cuts from early 20th century cinema. We'll also create a literary clock together.

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Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS

Transcultural Philosophy and Postcolonial Criticism

February 24, 2026 - June 09, 2026

Héctor González Castaño, National Sun Yat-sen University

This course introduces the philosophical investigation of how ideas migrate across cultural boundaries and how colonial legacies shape contemporary thought. By engaging critically with foundational concepts—comparability, culture and identity, non-Western philosophical traditions, modernity, Orientalism, Occidentalism, and philosophical nationalism—students examine the limits of both Eurocentric and anti-Eurocentric frameworks and the ways nationalist appropriations reshape today's philosophical discourse. The course stresses a rigorous transcultural methodology for analyzing the politics of translation and the construction of philosophical nationalism, while inviting reflection on the conditions for a cosmopolitan vision of a shared world. Through seminars, guest lectures, and transdisciplinary dialogue, students acquire analytical tools to interrogate cultural identity, postcolonial dynamics, and systemic prejudice.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Women Rights, Human Rights, and International Law

January 26, 2026 - May 07, 2026

Fereshta Abbasi, American University of Afghanistan

The course explores the intricate issues encompassing women's rights including social, political, economic, and legal dimensions.

Credits: 3 US / 6 ECTS

Women's Sexual and Political Revolutions: Middle East and South Asia

January 26, 2026 - May 11, 2026

Janaki Bakhle, Bard College

This course examines the role of politically organised women's movements, individual pioneers, hashtag and virtual campaigns and the activism of grassroots and working-class movements in 20th Century Middle Eastern (ME) and South Asian

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(SA) contexts, with a focus on their political and sexual struggles, demands, and achievements. The course relates to both the Global Studies and Global Humanities certificates. The course is divided into two parts; it introduces a brief history of the nature and dynamics of women's movements in the ME & SA regions. The second half of the course focuses on feminist documentation and debates around Muslim and Hindu women's piety, sexuality and political representation in a broader interdisciplinary frame. The course will examine how religious sensibility intersects with sexual orientation, gender identity, violence, sex work, the military, and even fashion. It will study these intersections as reflected in Muslim women's writings, desires, activism, demands for sexual freedoms or against sex crimes, in different countries and under different legal regimes and geographies.

Credits: 4 US / 8 ECTS