Interdisciplinary Courses

The Kenyon College faculty voted to change from Kenyon units to semester hours. This change will go into effect for all students who start at the College in the fall of 2024. Both systems will be used throughout the course catalog with the Kenyon units being listed first.

Data Analysis: Seeing w/ Data

INDS 100 CREDITS: 2/0 QR

In this course, students will gain experience analyzing, interpreting, and critiquing quantitative claims and communicating results and conclusions using graphical representations of data. Examples will be drawn from across the natural and social sciences, with context provided for each data set, so that students from any disciplinary background can participate in and benefit from this course. This course has no pre-requisites. It will be taught at a level accessible to all Kenyon students. Excellent preparation for further work on quantitative topics, this course will hone students' ability to apply mathematical techniques including graphing, statistics, linear and non-linear regression, and modeling the graphical behavior of mathematical functions to understanding and interpreting data. Students will practice these skills by engaging in critical reading of primary sources, oral presentation of quantitative data, and expression of analytic ideas in writing. Assessment will be based on in-class assignments, monthly quizzes, and oral reports on data-driven projects selected in consultation with the instructor.

Intro to Research Meth in STEM

INDS 101 CREDITS: 2/0

Scientific Data

INDS 110 CREDITS: 0.13/1

In this course, we will learn to collect, analyze, evaluate, interpret, criticize and communicate scientific data. Course activities will include tutorials on mathematical and computational tools as well as group exercises in data analysis. Workshops will explore critical reading of primary scientific sources, effective oral presentation of data, and sound technical writing. Students will

apply their learning to a research project collecting, assessing and presenting original data. This course is held during pre-orientation. Enrollment is limited.

Methods for Promoting Science Understanding

INDS 120 CREDITS: 0.25/2

This course is a community engaged course where students will learn how to promote the understanding of STEM sciences to the general public of Knox County. The objectives of this course revolve around a service learning project with our community partner, SPI (where Science and Play Intersect!) of Mt. Vernon. The course participants will read primary literature about science learning, generate new scientific communications, work as teams to produce science installations and will further their own understanding of the principles of STEM. This course involves several trips to SPI, the main floor of the Wright Center in Mt. Vernon, so students will need to arrange their own transportation or ride the Knox Area Transit's Purple Shuttle to attend some classes. No prerequisite.

Research Strategies in the Contemporary Age

INDS 140 CREDITS: 0.25/2

Separate wheat from chaff and find that haystack needle (or journal article). Learn how to find, evaluate, and use information and research materials in all disciplines. Identify potential resources: understand effective search strategies and practice navigating sources. Learn how to critically evaluate information and use it successfully for research assignments in any class. No prerequisite.

Access Denied Science Information Literacy

INDS 142 CREDITS: 0.25/2

Have you ever searched Google Scholar for an article, only to hit a paywall? Paywalls block scientific progress and keep the general public from accessing important scientific findings. The ability to access, retrieve, analyze, critically evaluate and effectively use scientific information is essential to being an informed citizen able to make decisions about complex science issues as an individual and for society. Using a variety of internet, open access and library-provided resources, students in this course gain an understanding of how the scientific community

produces information and how that information is communicated to broader audiences. We investigate topics such as bias, misinformation, mistrust in science, information privilege, open science and open access. While the focus is on science resources, the course is designed for students in all areas of study to come away with an understanding of the components of science information literacy, building a foundation of skills that will allow for life-long critical thinking and learning about scientific issues and access to information. No prerequisite.

Social Justice and Data

INDS 146 CREDITS: 0.25/2

Becoming “data conversant” is only growing in importance as data-related practice becomes increasingly ingrained in public and academic discourse. Learning data-related skills, like reading, working with, analyzing, and arguing with data, is often viewed as a purely technical process that centers mastery of coding or data analysis software. Instead, this course takes a justice-centered approach to data: Students gain practical experience through low-tech explorations of real-world data, but we won’t shy away from or gloss over data’s inherent complexities. And data are complex, just like the people who are responsible for their creation, curation, and use. To help us navigate these murky waters, and to move past number crunching to deeper critical analysis, we’ draw on the expertise of scholars, practitioners, and enthusiasts from an array of disciplines and backgrounds.

No prerequisite.

Doing the Work: Productivity in an Academic Environment

INDS 150 CREDITS: 0.25/2

In this course, students focus on the challenges facing academic “knowledge workers” (in management consultant Peter Drucker's famous phrase). We consider concrete methods that allow us to do our coursework, research, and writing more creatively, more productively, and more efficiently. Achieving this goal requires us to familiarize ourselves with some of the leading ideas in the field of intellection, cognition, organization and human learning. Students should expect to be active participants in this course and be open not only to learning about the processes of learning itself, but also to developing approaches for becoming better learners.

This course is offered only on a graded basis. Enrollment is limited to first-year students and sophomores.. No prerequisite.

Community Healthcare: From Theory to Practice

INDS 160 CREDITS: 0.25/2

This course provides the academic preparation for students to become a Health Coach with the Community Care Network (CCN) at Knox Community Hospital. Health Coaches are members of the CCN team that promote holistic physical, mental and social wellness through in-home visits with members of the community. Any student interested in becoming a Health Coach must take this course.

Course content focuses on population health, diseases that can lead to chronic illness, and psychosocial aspects of health and illness. Activities in this course will include interactive lectures, group discussions and presentations focusing on the conceptual and practical issues surrounding community healthcare. Case studies (actual de-identified patient scenarios) will be key tools in preparing students to become Health Coaches charged with the education and motivation of at-risk patients during in-home visits. The overarching goal of the program is to empower these patients to take an active role in their own wellness by promoting positive behaviors.

After successful completion of this class, it is expected, although not mandatory, that students will participate in the Health Coaches program during the following semester(s). In teams of two, Health Coaches will be assigned their own clients and will collaborate with the hospital healthcare team to promote healthy lifestyle changes. Prerequisite: sophomore standing and permission of instructor to ensure students are prepared to become health coaches following the class.

Scientific Data

INDS 199 CREDITS: 0.25/2

In this course, we will learn to collect, analyze, evaluate, interpret, criticize and communicate scientific data. Course activities will include tutorials on mathematical and computational tools as well as group exercises in data analysis. Workshops will explore critical reading of primary scientific sources, effective oral presentation of data, and sound technical writing. Students will apply their learning to a research project collecting, assessing and presenting original data. This course is held during pre-orientation. Enrollment is limited.

Science and Nature Fiction Writing

INDS 209 CREDITS: 0.5/4

This writing workshop course helps us teach ourselves to write science fiction and nature-focused fiction. We write stories in which characters have adventures involving speculative science and the natural world. To support our stories, we learn how to use concepts of science and nature, as well as inventing new devices and ideas. We experiment with creating neurodiverse characters including humans, alien beings and sentient machines. During class workshops we share our story projects for support and critique. To energize our own writing, we read examples of speculative fiction by classic and experimental authors from Frank Herbert to Nnedi Okorafor. Reading is to writing what sunlight is to photosynthesis. Together we grow our science and nature stories. All levels of experience are welcome; commitment to write is essential. Counts towards the creative practice requirement for the English major provided that students are not counting any other literature or creative writing course from another department towards the major. For the major with emphasis in creative writing, it counts as a second creative practice course in addition to the required departmental introductory course. No prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

The Holocaust: An Interdisciplinary Inquiry

INDS 231 CREDITS: 0.5/4

This course presents an interdisciplinary inquiry into the destruction of European Jewry during World War II. How was it that in the 20th century, in the midst of civilized Europe, a policy of genocide was formulated and systematically implemented? We will examine the Holocaust within the contexts of modern European history, Nazi ideology and practice, the Jewish experience in Europe, the history of anti-Semitism and the psychology of human behavior. Data will be drawn from films, literature, art, memoirs, theology and historical investigations. An

ongoing concern of the course will be the significance of the Holocaust in political discourse and in our own thinking as individuals. When a faculty member from religious studies, modern languages and literatures (German) or history is teaching the course, it counts toward the history, German or religious studies majors.

Senior Honors

INDS 497Y CREDITS: 0.5/4
Students enrolled in this course will be automatically added to INDS 498Y for the spring semester. This interdisciplinary course does not count toward the completion of any diversification requirement. Permission of instructor and program director required.

Senior Honors

INDS 498Y CREDITS: 0.5/4
This interdisciplinary course does not count toward the completion of any diversification requirement. Permission of instructor and program director required.