

# General Education Elective Course Descriptions

## Spring 2022

### Theme 1: Arts in Society

#### **ENL1726 Symbols, Text and Meaning**

Symbols and text are used to express, evoke, and manipulate an entire range of human emotions and reactions. In this interactive, discussion-based course, students will explore historical and contemporary approaches to using symbols, text, and language in conceptual and contemporary art, graphic design and advertising, poetry and lyrics, and in online technology. Through discussion, analysis, informal debate, and critical thinking, students will explore how symbols and text influence individuals, society, and culture.

#### **GED5005 Greek Mythology**

Students explore intriguing characters, important places and famous myths of Classical Greece. By examining a variety of popular myths, students discover how the Ancient Greeks crafted narratives of gods, goddesses, monsters, and heroic figures to make sense of their lives and the world around them. Using examples from art, science, and industry, students examine how these epic stories from oral tradition have endured and continue to influence contemporary society.

#### **GED6022 A Sense of Humour**

Humour is a universal tool of communication and social influence. Students survey the development, use and value of humour in Canadian visual and creative arts. Varieties of humour, such as irony, satire and farce are positioned in the context of Canadian culture to enhance students' appreciation of humour and self-awareness.

#### **GEN1957 Science Fiction**

Science fiction is both a genre of popular entertainment and an effective mode of social commentary. Students explore the formal conventions and the history of the genre, analyze a representative range of science fiction, and develop their critical appreciation of the role and place of science fiction in society. In addition to writing reflective and analytical assignments, students have an opportunity to create their own piece of science fiction.

### Theme 2: Civic Life

#### **ENV0002 Environmental Citizenship**

Environmental Citizenship is based on the principles of national citizenship, yet it goes beyond political borders to emphasize global environmental rights and responsibilities. An environmental citizen is committed to learning more about the environment and to taking responsible environmental action. Through a combination of interactive activities, assignments and discussions, students learn how they are personally connected with current environmental issues. Students are also encouraged to adopt attitudes and behaviours that foster global environmental responsibility.

#### **GED2200 Free Speech and the Challenge of Social Media**

This course will allow students to explore social media and its effects on free speech and public discourse in contemporary society. It will cover the philosophical foundations of free speech, the legal and institutional expressions of free speech in modern democracies, the characteristics of social media infrastructure, how our society's free speech is being influenced if not transformed by this infrastructure, and perspectives on | the need, or not, for "regulatory fixes" advanced from different viewpoints.

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### **GED5002 Victimology**

An increased awareness of the ripple effect of crime has recently given rise to victimology as a significant field of study. Students investigate victims of crime and the impact that crime has on their lives, their families and society by studying the history of victimology and the victims' movement, the nature and extent of victimization, its emerging theories and resulting legislation. In addition, victims' services, accessibility to services, rights of the victim and the victim in the criminal justice system are examined. Students also learn about crime in the workplace, schools, and campuses, and the importance of recognizing those at risk.

### **GED5301 On Death, Dying and Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)**

Though death is an immutable consequence of life, society's attitudes and reactions to it have been ever-changing. The viewpoint that life is sacrosanct, to be protected at all costs, is now being challenged by individuals demanding greater control of their quality of life, including the right to die. An historical overview of attitudes towards death will be examined, with a focus on the growing acceptability of medical assistance in dying (MAID), and the reasons behind this movement (demographics, economics, medicine). This course, through discussion of differing social perspectives, government legislation, case studies, research, images and videos will provide students a greater understanding of society's past and present approaches to death.

### **GEN2007 Community Services**

Volunteerism not only benefits a community, it can broaden the worldview of the volunteer. Students who give their time and energy to a particular cause, gain an opportunity to reflect on the value of the volunteer in contemporary society. Through research and discussion, students consider different types of volunteer settings, trace the history of volunteer organizations, examine the various roles volunteers play within society and reflect on ethical issues.

## **Theme 3: Social and Cultural Understanding**

### **GED5006 World Religions**

In Canada, society embraces people from many cultures of the world. By exploring different religious beliefs about the world, the individual, the meaning of life and death, and how individuals are encouraged to conduct themselves, students begin to appreciate the underlying forces that shape followers' lives. Students explore the history and basic teachings of six of the major religions of the world: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and the Baha'i Faith. Each religion's distinctive features are highlighted, while their similarities and shared values are examined. Students have the opportunity to broaden their worldview through an exposure to divergent religious traditions.

### **HOS2228 Wine, Food and Culture**

An understanding of culture can be discovered by exploring eating and drinking customs. Students experience a virtual global tour, exploring culture, history and traditions through the lens of wine and food. Students acquire a sense of the customs of their culture and those of others. Through comparison, observation, discussion, and reflection, students discover something found in all cultures: the importance of food and drink.

### **HOS2288 The Dinner Party**

Table manners are as unique to a culture as the foods they eat – how people eat varies widely from country to country. Participants in this course explore the culture and customs of international

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dining practices. Through investigation, discussion and reflection, participants have the opportunity to raise their own and each other's awareness and sensitivity to different cultural behaviours and customs. Over scheduled lunches and dinners, participants consider the influence of culture, society, religion, geography and history on dining practices around the world.

### **MGT7330 Trends in Today's Workplace**

In today's culture of work, every employee needs to be knowledgeable about current trends and issues in the workplace. Students explore emerging issues facing employees in today's technology-driven workplace and investigate the realities of social networking, diversity in the workplace and work mobility.

### **RAD2001 Popular Culture**

One dictionary definition of popular culture is the "totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought." This definition allows us great freedom and scope. Students examine recent North American popular culture including trends, fads, styles, theories and the cult of the new. By exploring our perceptions of culture and the trivialization of society, students begin to appreciate how the media has relentlessly helped to shape today's values. Through online research, assigned readings, and participation in self-directed learning, students critique popular culture's place in North American society, concentrating on their decade of choice.

## **Theme 4: Personal Understanding**

### **FIN2300 Introduction to Personal Finance**

Establishing and maintaining healthy personal financial affairs are important steps towards overall success in life. Through self-study of | text material, review questions, self-test quizzes, assignments and a final examination, students acquire knowledge and skills concerning credit and debt, home ownership and mortgages, the savings challenge, government programs to encourage saving, fixed income and equity investments, mutual funds, budgeting and financial planning, retirement strategies, public and private pensions, business ownership and insurance.

### **GED0022 Positive Psychology: The Science of Happiness and Well-Being**

While fulfillment and well-being mark some people's lives, many others remain dissatisfied with life. Positive Psychology is concerned with explaining how individuals and communities flourish through the scientific exploration of happiness, optimal human functioning, and civic engagement. The field of Positive Psychology has the objective of making life more satisfying and meaningful through interventions that promote and develop qualities such as self-knowledge, learned optimism, gratitude, mindfulness, resilience, and community connection. Students participate in both interactive lectures and on-line discussions, maintain weekly journals, and develop personal strengths through direct engagement with well-being initiatives.

### **GED5200 Learning Disabilities, The Invisible Disability**

Students increase their awareness of, and sensitivity to, persons with learning disabilities in social, educational and work settings. The field of learning disabilities is introduced through an historical overview, definitions, characteristics and various models of the causes of learning disabilities. Students learn about the impact learning disabilities have on people's day-to-day lives and the strategies that may be used to compensate for them. Activities include group work, independent research, reflection and case studies. Students are encouraged to share personal experience and knowledge.

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### **GEN2003 Healthy Lifestyle**

Are you eating healthy foods? Do you exercise regularly? Do you know how to prevent injuries and disease? These are some of the skills necessary to live a healthy lifestyle. Through self-evaluation, weekly journals and hands-on exercises, students assess their personal lifestyles and learn how to improve them.

### **SOC2003 Understanding Human Sexuality**

Students study human sexuality through an interdisciplinary approach. Students gain a basic understanding of human sexuality through an investigation of history, culture, physiology, sexual development, sexual behaviours, sexually transmitted diseases, attitudes, sex, deviance and sexual relationships.

## **Theme 5: Science and Technology**

### **GED5003 The Science of Play**

Toys and games, key components of play, have evolved from homemade trinkets to highly engineered items in a multi-billion dollar industry. Students explore the connections between technology and play, specifically the benefits, drawbacks and ethical implications of toy and game design. Case studies allow students to consider familial, cultural, sociological, and other influences upon toy and game design over the last century. Through discussion, analysis and workshops, students move towards designing their own toy or game or modifying an existing one.

### **GED5004 Living Green**

The need to lead healthy, environmentally conscious lives is becoming increasingly important. Students acquire the practical knowledge and skills required to explore current environmental challenges and identify personal plans for living in an environmentally responsible manner. Through a combination of assignments, discussion boards, and quiz work, students investigate the history and development of current environmental concerns, the environmental impact of our choices and behaviours, and strategies involved in living green.

### **GED5010 The Fungus Among Us**

Understanding fungi is critical for a more complete picture of both natural history, as well as historical and current human affairs. Students learn the major groups of fungi most of which are beneficial to humans. Students learn the influence of fungi on historical and cultural activities including art and food. Students also examine the direct involvement of fungi on industrial processes and current medical and biotechnological processes. Students explore the role of fungi as it relates to soil fertility and best practices in agriculture and environmental sustainability. Students will connect fungi to the world around them.

### **GED5300 The Science of Everyday Life**

The mysteries of science surround us and play a significant role in everyone's daily life, regardless of their level of awareness. Familiarity with the basic concepts of science in disciplines, such as biology, physics and chemistry, helps students better understand the world in which they live, the attitudes and opinions of those with whom they interact and the reasons why many things happen. By examining everyday occurrences, students are introduced to scientific ways of thought and to problem-solving methods used by scientists. A background in science and math is not required.

### **GEO0012 Foreign Landscapes and Their Inhabitants**

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Understanding the natural environment and the geological features and landscapes that shape our world is vital for students to have a greater understanding and respect for others by being more globally and culturally aware. The transformation of Earth as we know it has been a 4.5 billion year marvel in the making. The ever-changing continents, oceans, seas, and geographic landforms continue to reshape our world. Through the exploration of the unique landscapes of Earth and the examination of the geographic distribution of populations, countries, and regions of the world, students will use virtual field trips, case studies, and web quests to enhance their sense of global community.

### SCI2200 DyNAMic DNA: You are not Alone

DNA is the recipe book for all living things. This small molecule can tell us about our past, present, and future. It is what makes us all unique and what ties us together. DNA can answer some of life's biggest questions: Where do we come from? How are we made? Can we cure disease? Can we predict the future or change the outcome? In this course, we will examine the spectacular DNA molecule and how it works. Through contemporary articles, research, images, and videos, we will investigate ways in which DNA can be used to predict traits, detect disease, discover ancestry and engineer babies. We will look at DNA's involvement in our evolution, and how we can harness its powers to create superfoods, change a wolf into a pug or clone extinct species. Through a combination of discussion boards quizzes and assignments, students will discuss DNA history, technology and social attitudes, providing them with a greater understanding of their genetic make-up, both on a personal and global level.