Honors Teaching Fellows and Courses Fall 2019

CAN SIUC SURVIVE?

Dave Johnson  
Associate Professor, Classics, Classics Section Head

SIUC has half as many students as it once did. State and federal funding are in decline, and the very concept of public higher education has come under attack in some quarters. This class will make you part of the search to understand SIUC’s crisis and suggest possible solutions to it. As a current SIUC student, you have a unique perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of SIUC; you know why you enrolled here, and you are experiencing the pluses and minuses of being an SIUC student. The class will culminate with student group proposals to help SIUC survive and thrive. Groups will present their work not only in class but, in appropriate form, to the SIUC community. Where practicable, we will also invite the public to class sessions featuring outside speakers. This class will give you the opportunity to play a real part in helping SIUC survive.

FORESTS AND HUMANS: INTER-DEPENDENCIES, IMAGININGS, AND CHANGEMAKING

Cade Bursell, Professor - Cinema and Photography

This course will explore our remarkably vibrant and historically rich location – the Shawnee National Forest- to delve into the deep interdependence between humans and forests. You will be involved in creating an interdisciplinary enquiry as well as a transient learning community that will develop an understanding of the specific history of our region through cultural, historical, artistic and scientific research coupled with experiential learning activities. The work of this class consists of creative experimentation, research, development and presentation of new work that blurs the lines between disciplines, artistic practice and research. Our goal will be to imagine and map a future for this place given the economic and environmental challenges further pressured by climate change.
**SURVIVAL AND THE ARTS: DIASPORA, MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENTS**

*Laurel Fredrickson  Assistant Professor, Art History*

This course will explore the themes of diaspora, migration, and transnational identity in the work of contemporary artists, art collectives; and refugees. As a class, in groups, and individually, you will examine, describe, interpret, and analyze works of art to ask: Can art serve as a means of survival for individuals and collectivities? And, if so, in what ways? We will learn about the history and politics of migration and displacement; themes, such as, transnational identity, hybridity, and créolité; and explore art as an activist practice oriented toward personal and collective survival. Students will be introduced to New Media Art, from the digital (as in art projects that use the internet) to video, as well as art activism, environmental art installation, and performance art. Class projects will include in-class group and individual presentations, response papers, blog entries, and art projects.

**SURVIVAL STORIES: MAKING THE LITERATURE OF SURVIVAL**

*Pinckney Benedict, Professor, English*

This course asks students to consider, through encounters with established narratives (both fiction and nonfiction), what human being have done through the ages in order to survive. It further asks you, through the creation of your own stories, what you yourselves would do to survive, and what the term "survival" means to you. Is it simply the preservation of life and limb? The preservation of culture, of language, of dignity, of honor, of psychological health? Is it regaining well-being after a bout with cancer, or recovering from sexual and other sorts of trauma? We will make a survey of the literature of survival while writing (and recording, and publishing) our own survival narratives, both fiction and creative nonfiction. The lab component of the class will take advantage of the Creative Writing Program's new podcasting facility to make these stories concrete through audio production and, if the student wishes, to send them out into the world.
SURVIVING THE ATOMIC AGE: ENGAGING SCIENCE THROUGH HUMANITY

Satoshi Tovosaki, Associate Professor, Communication Studies

Since people learned how to split an atom, we have been living in the atomic age. We have been using the nuclear technology/ies in various ways, ranging from the atomic bombs detonated over people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki to nuclear power plants and medical radiation. The atomic age changed and continues to change how we live; it has produced a radical era of politicized uncertainty. It is an age filled with stories of survival, such as those of the victims of the atomic bombs and of cancer survivors/radiation therapy patients. This course is, of necessity, interdisciplinary as it reflects upon what is the biggest human created threat to human civilization. Beginning with survival narratives, we will seek to understand the complex relationship among science, technology, and humanity (or lack thereof), and develop our own peace messages. In so doing, we will work on creative nonfiction writing “and” auto-ethnographic writing as a means of reflection, analysis, reporting, and representation.

SUSTAINABILITY AS EVERYDAY PRACTICE: SURVIVING IN A CHANGING WORLD

This is a student-generated course that brings together faculty from various disciplines, including Art and Design, Geoengineering, Environmental Studies, Energy, Policy, Architecture, Media, and business to consider, in theory and practice, design as a way to conceptualize and find solutions for sustainable living. Weekly meetings will include lectures, discussions, readings and project based work. The course was initiated by University Innovation Fellows Jacob Coddington (graduate student, Master of Business Administration) and Carly Kasicki (majoring in Biological Sciences, French, and German) with Elizabeth Donoghue (Mentor, UHP). Jyotsna Kapur, Professor, Cinema and Photography & Director, University Honors Program