



## General Education (GNED) Course Descriptions Spring/Summer 2024

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### **GNED 1101 – Reimagining Leadership in the 21st Century**

Why do so many of today's leaders seem to be in a state of paralysis, unable to rise to the interrelated challenges, like climate crisis or rising inequity? While leadership remains a concept in motion, meaning different things to different people, this course focuses on the integrative model, a values based theory and practice of leadership that may be our best chance of effectively responding to the planetary challenges and opportunities we currently face.

The holistic leadership approach seeks to broaden student's perspective of leadership and to unravel power dynamics across systemic, generational, ideological and class divides. To help students learn how to tap into the creative potentials of diversity, values, change and complexity. Students will explore their own orientation to leadership and the world, as they engage in self and social reflection to formulate a practice of leadership that supports both individual growth and an egalitarian and environmentally sustainable planet.

Note: this course was previously titled "Leadership and Motivation".

### **GNED 1106 – Psychology: Understanding Ourselves and Others**

Do you ever wonder why people behave the way they do? What were they thinking? What motivates your own behaviour and thinking? Through experiments, videos, reflections, and other activities, you will better understand how the mind works. Like how you learn and forget things. Or how you can use psychological knowledge to improve your sleep, enhance your understanding of mental health and psychological disorders, and make sense of how people behave in groups. You will even have some choice in how you demonstrate this learning!

Note: this course was previously titled "Selected Topics in Psychology".

### **GNED 1112 - Healthy Habits From Around The World**

What makes Italy the world's healthiest country? Why has Finland been crowned the happiest nation for six years running? What is it about the Mediterranean diet that increases one's life expectancy? Wouldn't you love to be healthier, happier, and live longer? Let's take a deep dive into improving human health by exploring wellness practices from around the world. Let's learn about the impact genetics and geography has on our health. Let's discover how we can implement healthy habits practiced globally into our everyday world. You have the opportunity to apply these practices through experimenting and designing a lifestyle project to improve your overall health and wellness.

Note: this course was previously titled "Human Health and Behaviour".

### **GNED 1119 – Money Matters**

What do YOU want to do...

Today? Tomorrow? In a few years?

It takes more than money to get what you want out of life. Why? Because hope alone doesn't make dreams come true. Goals do! Planning ahead will turn your dollars into something you can drive, live or retire in down the track. Start setting your goals today. Remember, when you plan, YOU save! We all have various amounts of money, but we

spend and save it differently. The better we understand money, the more of it we will have. Start your journey to financial success!

This course will provide a general overview of a wide variety of money topics including budgeting, expenses, debt, saving, retirement and insurance among others.

Understanding how each of these topics work together and relate to one another can help in laying the groundwork of a solid financial foundation. Students in this course will be evaluated using quizzes, assignments, worksheets, and participation in discussion items.

### **GNED 1120 – Stress, Wellness & Nutrition**

Stress can play a huge factor in our professional lives. Learning how to deal with it is vital to our long-term health. While stress alone doesn't cause disease, it triggers molecular changes throughout the body that make us more susceptible to many illnesses. In this course, students will gain an understanding of the importance of how to deal with both positive and negative stress in their lives. By using wellness perspectives, each student will gain more insight into how he or she can control both internal and external stressors.

### **GNED 1123 – Happily Ever After**

This course is designed to introduce students to the area of critical thinking and the ability to assess arguments in terms of their credibility. Students will be made familiar with the language and patterns of reasoning, credibility criteria used to assess reasoning and the flaws that occur in many arguments. Students will also develop their knowledge to produce their own credible arguments. Students will be evaluated using a combination of assessment methods including weekly on line posts to relevant topics, individual and group assignments.

### **GNED 1125 – Gender & Sexuality**

Students in this course will explore a variety of issues surrounding gender and sexuality in contemporary Western society: gender socialization, social and cultural norms, rape culture, sexual shaming, the impact of religion & politics on gender and sexuality, constructs of masculinity and sexual deviance. Through an interactive blend of lectures, discussions and debates, students will broaden and challenge their understanding of the role(s) of both gender and sexuality in media, politics, religion and popular culture. Ultimately, this course seeks to analyze the shifting landscape of gender and sexual politics and its relevance in this particularly important, controversial time in human history. This is a hybrid course and will be evaluated using a combination of weekly participation activities (reflections and debates) online, as well as two (2) in-class tests, one (1) group oral presentation and one (1) final paper.

### **GNED 1204 – History of Popular Music**

The history of Rock and Roll is synonymous with the history of popular music. Popular music has a number of elements: it appeals to a large percentage of the population; it is familiar and widely heard; and it is profitable. Leading up to the early 1950s, American music experienced the merging of a variety of musical styles that blurred racial, economic, geographic, cultural and class boundaries. According to historian Michael

Campbell, "...the marketplace dictated the rules, for better or worse." The music became known as Rock and Roll and would reflect, and even shape, mainstream culture, politics and economics in America and abroad. Through readings, lectures, the use of historical audio and video recordings, discussions, and group work, students will examine the thematic growth of popular music, paying attention to music industry structure, technological innovations, and social and political impetus.

### **GNED 1227 – Funny Bone: The Canadian Comedy Identity**

Jim Carrey, Mike Myers, Samantha Bee - Canada has a reputation for producing strong comedic talent, but its thriving comedy industry has largely been unexplored. What is a comedian? What does a career in comedy look like? What impact do comedians have on the Canadian identity? By examining the development, use, and value of comedy as communication, this course will answer those questions and more.

### **GNED 1325 – Deconstructing Superheroes**

Superheroes have abilities that exist only in our imaginations. These fictional powerhouses have been a comic book industry staple for nearly a century and have always been popular. From Superman to Black Panther, Ms. Marvel and Wonder Woman, the depiction of superheroes can represent many ideas and allegories in our own society. Does Superman represent the immigrant story? How does Black Panther help us to understand racial allegories? Are the X-Men representative of a civil rights struggle? Is Wonder Woman connected to feminism?

Students explore superheroes through lenses of gender, race, class, and sexuality. Beginning by examining superhero mythology and the comics from which they came, students deconstruct that mythology and determine whether socio-political theoretical frameworks apply to these stories. Through online discussions and close literary readings, students develop critical thinking skills to examine and decode visual and societal messages both within and outside of the superhero comic world. In addition, students explore ideas through unique expressions like a comic and a group podcast, and gain a better cultural understanding of their world and how they can be depowered or empowered by it.

### **GNED 1403 – A Short History of the World**

Become a more global citizen by exploring the world as one planet through the broad patterns of our shared human history. Our past can reveal much about our present and future. Discover how the modern world was shaped, how globalization is taking hold, and what wisdom this can bring to your life and career choices. This is our story – the human story. It is forward looking and thoroughly modern, an exciting and inspiring big-picture course that includes a student-designed website, dynamic communications-driven assignments, and an engaging "talk show" feature that brings the world to the classroom.

### **GNED 1404 – Popular Culture & the Media**

In this course, students will answer the question "Who is in Charge?" by using cultural analysis to connect to what's going on in our society and how it occurs. Students will examine the role of popular culture in maintaining and reproducing the kind of society

we live in by critically analyzing the influence of advertising, music and media, views of gender, ethnicity, race, age, class, and sexuality. Participants will learn to question media messaging and the impact messaging has on the way we think, our actions and behaviours. This course will provide participants with an understanding of the 20th century information age and how its many changes has reshaped and improved our daily lives, yet, at the same time has changed the way we find truths. Students will practice applying a critical lens over the course of the semester to in-class discussion, debates, group activity, on-line posts and assignments.

### **GNED 1407 – Introduction to Sociology**

Sociology is the study of people and how they interact with each other and various social groups. This course deals with the study of people's lives, their relationship to society as a whole, and how people are affected by the society in which they live. The concepts, theories and methods of the discipline will be introduced and discussed with particular emphasis on the dynamics of Canadian society and Canadian social problems.

### **GNED 1411 – Social Media & Society**

The rise of social media has profoundly changed the global communication landscape and shaped our understanding of ourselves, society, and the world around us. With the advent of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, TikTok, and Twitter, more and more people connect and collaborate online, and consume, create, and share content in ways we have never seen before. This course will examine social media's historical evolution and affordances and explore its social, cultural, political, and economic impacts. By engaging with social media and critically analyzing emerging issues and topics, students will investigate the complex role of social media in contemporary society.

### **GNED 1412 – World Religions**

Can you imagine a world without religion? Most of us would probably find it very difficult to do. No wonder; religion has been central to human culture for millennia. And as it looks at the moment, this is not likely to change any time soon. We shall explore the major tenets of five religions: the three Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), Buddhism - a religion without God, and the belief system of the aboriginal tribe of the Navajo. We shall also explore the (often troubled) relationship between religion and science, and the historical influence of religion on human sexuality. Students will be evaluated through a combination of written assignments, quizzes, discussions, and group presentations.

### **GNED 1413 – Current Affairs: Becoming the Change You Wish to See in the World**

Why do so many of us resist change and continue to unsuccessfully meet the present and future with what we have been doing in the past? This widening gap between what we want and need of ourselves and our leaders, and what today's realities demand, comes at a time when looming climate crises, growing inequity, and the rise of authoritarianism call for more conscious and collaborative responses than ever before.

Today's challenges and opportunities necessitate an awakening of our moral imagination, civic responsibility, and systems thinking, as we work together to design entirely new, egalitarian and sustainable ways of living and impacting the planet. The course begins by identifying the student's sub-conscious world-views, and then explores and compares these to contemporary ideologies that shape and influence (for better or for worse) today's imbalanced social, political, and environmental realities. Students are invited to explore topics of interest, and to study the nature of knowledge, so as to develop a reflective practice that nurtures integrative thinking, openness, and self-authorship - in the hopes of helping students become the change they wish to see in the world.

Note: this course was previously titled "Current Affairs"

### **GNED 1418 – History of Games**

In this general education course, students are introduced to the historical evolution and impact of video games. This class explores the origins and evolution of games, as well as the key historical figures that have been so influential to this industry. It also explores the impact video games have had on society as they become more firmly entrenched in our lives and our culture.

### **GNED 1426 – Cultural Diversity in Canada**

Students will critically identify and examine issues in diversity. Specifically, students will focus on topics pertaining to inequality in various social settings, including but not limited to race, gender, ethnicity, class and sexual orientation. Incorporating social/legal explanations of diversity, students will develop a clear understanding of the impacted groups and possible strategies for community empowerment.

### **GNED 1434 – The History of Gardens**

What is a garden? A garden can serve a wide variety of purposes, from supplying food through reflecting cultural values. This course examines the history of gardens, from the earliest Paradise gardens up to the eclectic variety of contemporary public and private gardens. The influences of culture, psychology, science, and business on garden styles and practices are explored through an examination of the great gardens of the past and present. Historic and currently prominent Canadian gardens and arboretums are emphasized. This course includes an open-book/resource final test and a research project. The course is delivered 100% online and requires students to manage their own time and workload in order to be successful.

### **GNED 1435 – Deviance**

Wrong. Bad. Illegal. Weird. What is defined as "deviant" in society, and why? From cannabis use to cannibalism, our fascination with behaviours that break social norms is never-ending. In this General Education course, students will explore the nature of deviance from a sociological perspective, including foundational theories to guide our journey through highly subjective and often controversial subject matter. As such, students will be invited to reflect upon their biases and connect their learning to their own lives, local communities, and current events. Major topic areas of this course include violence, sex & gender, cyberdeviance, mental illness, appearance,



countercultures, and positive deviance. Within these topics, examples such as gangs, serial killers, sex work, cyberbullying, addiction, body modification, and cults may be discussed. This course will use music, videos, documentaries, newspaper articles, and scholarly sources to examine the complexity of contemporary social issues from a Canadian perspective, including Indigenous knowledge, with historical and cross-cultural comparisons. Students will be evaluated using a variety of assignments where they will have considerable freedom to choose meaningful topics and forms of submission.

### **GNED 1438 – Hip Hop: History, Culture & Society**

Hip hop has become one of the most popular and influential forms of music currently listened to today. This course will examine hip hop's early roots in African history and its migration to American soil. From there, the course will chart the evolution of modern hip hop from its birth place in the Bronx up until the present day where it is now a global phenomenon. Along the way, the course will examine hip hop music and culture, and its complex relationship with power, business, class, gender, race and society. Students will also get a better grounding in the four foundational elements of hip hop: MCing, DJing, Graffiti and B-boying. The course will wrap up with an examination of the culture's current challenges and its future opportunities

### **GNED 1441 – Food for Thought**

Students in this course will center on expanding the knowledge of our continually changing food systems through studying academic essays that focus on issues arising from the question, "How should we eat?" There will be a focus on food as fundamental to the human experience, and will introduce students to the shifting interpretations, perspectives, challenges, governance issues, and future visions that shape the ethical issues surrounding food. As a result, this course will heavily examine the benefits of adapting a more environmentally friendly vegetarian lifestyle worldwide. By studying modern issues and developments surrounding food ethics, students will cultivate a new appreciation for where their food supply comes from, how it is brought to their plates, and how to make more conscious food choices that will benefit themselves, others, and the environment. This course will be delivered in a fully online format. Students in this course will be evaluated using online discussions, study questions, and a cumulative assignment.

### **GNED 1444 – Introduction to LGBTQ Studies**

This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to the social, cultural, and political histories of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer peoples in the Western world. It is intended that students will, on one hand, explore and come to appreciate the dynamics between sexual and gender minorities and the gender conformant and heterosexual majority and, on the other hand, investigate and come to understand how sexual identities are socially constructed and how sexual identities in turn intersect with other categories of identity such as race, gender, class, and ethnicity. The methods of evaluation for this course include: weekly in-class discussion, written reactions, quizzes, written analysis of a primary text and a final summative piece.

### **GNED 1465 – Youth & Social Regulation**

This course will explore how the bodies, minds, behaviors and social worlds of youth are regulated in society. This will include the regulation of youth through formal systems – including the criminal justice system (as youth victims and offenders) – and through informal social controls. This course will also explore how youth themselves play a role in shaping and regulating society through social movements and activism. Students will be challenged to get active, mobilizing for a cause of their choice within their community in person and/or through social media.

### **GNED 1466 – Organized Crime**

This course will provide students with an understanding of organized crime, its structure and practices. Organizations including motorcycle gangs, Italian and Russian mafia and Latin Cartels will all be examined and the businesses in which they run. Students will look at the development and history of organized crime as well as the government and law enforcement responses. Through a variety of readings, assignments, film reviews and in-depth discussion; students will gain an understanding of the key players and organization as well as societal contributors and will learn to think critically about some of the largely debated areas of organized crime.

### **GNED 1473 – Conflict, Colonization & Courage: First Nations, Métis, & Inuit in Canada**

The course will provide students with an introduction to First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) peoples in Canada including their diverse histories, cultures, and ways of knowing. Students will challenge pre-conceived ideas and stereotypes about FNMI people and will learn about the past, present, and future as it relates to FNMI peoples in Canada. Some topics will include Indigenous world view, colonization, treaties, the Indian Act, residential schools, the 60's Scoop, urban issues, intergenerational trauma, resiliency, and reconciliation.

### **GNED 1475 – First Nations, Métis, & Inuit Representation in Media and Popular Culture**

This course will provide context for past and current portrayals of Indigenous Peoples and topics in literature, film, and media. With a better understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories, and perspectives, students will analyze sources related to, and/or about Indigenous peoples, through a critical lens whilst identifying the failings of the past and the successes of contemporary developments.

### **GNED 1477 – Then, Now, Forever - Indigenous Resiliency in the Modern Era**

This course will explore the current issues affecting First Nation, Metis, and Inuit populations, and will showcase modern examples of Indigenous resistance, resilience, and resurgence. Students will study the contemporary interactions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada, environmental concerns (e.g. Trans Mountain pipeline), laws and policies, national issues (e.g. the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls), contemporary movements (e.g. Idle No More), and reconciliation initiatives.



### **GNED 1479 – The Forgotten People: Exploring Métis Identity**

This course provides an introduction to the Métis and the complexity of emerging Métis identity across Canada today. The focus of the course is on the lives and experiences of Métis people, their ancestral communities, kinship ties, governing systems and contemporary issues, to develop a comprehensive understanding of Métis Nationhood. Important themes include: assimilation, cultural persistence and survival, adaptation and identity. Although it covers broader topics relating to all Métis (e.g. those historically located in Western Canada), course content centres specifically on the Great Lakes Métis (including the modern Ontarian Métis experience).

### **GNED 1509 – Astronomy: Exploring the Night Sky**

Imagine looking up at the night sky. Now, pretend you can fly through space faster than light. Suddenly, the sky, that two-dimensional tapestry of light, becomes three-dimensional. You pass the Moon, asteroids, then some planets, then the Sun. Before long, you find yourself whipping past stars many times larger than the Sun like Betelgeuse and Antares, past dazzling nebulae, past alien star systems with planets of their own, and into Andromeda, our closest galactic neighbour...and you still won't have left Earth's cosmic backyard! Even though we can't travel faster than light, we can (and will!) use scientific inquiry to learn about the origin and fate of these mysterious objects, and even peer back in time, using some of the oldest light in the universe, to learn about the birth of the Universe itself. After taking this course, you will always remember to make time to look up!

### **GNED 1524 – You Are Here: Navigating Your Way through the Wonderful World of Maps**

A tattered, folded up piece of paper in the car's glove box? Not anymore! Satellites and rapid advancements in information processing have made impressive advances in how places are represented by maps. Learn about the challenges of mapping a spherical Earth onto a flat surface. Use web-based tools to travel across town, the globe, and even the universe. Critically analyze your world without having to leave your couch. Just a few clicks can literally take you anywhere. (This is an on-line course. Students will be provided with instructions for downloading free web tools to their devices.)

Note: this course was previously titled "Maps: Picturing the Ends of the Earth and Beyond".

### **GNED 1527 – Artificial Intelligence**

This course explores the idea of artificial intelligence (A.I.) from three different perspectives: scientific, philosophical, and cultural. The scientific perspective provides insight as to how artificial intelligence technologies work, the current limitations, and supposed future potential. The philosophical perspective explores whether A.I. is good or bad, essential or dangerous, and what the future could hold. The cultural angle examines how society views A.I. and whether these views are accurate. Toward the end of the course deeper topics will be introduced including how A.I. compares to human intelligence, the singularity, and futurism.

### **GNED 1531 – Digital Citizenship**

As members of a digital society, we spend our lives surrounded by computers, mobile devices, and smart phones which allow us anytime, anywhere access to news, information, friends and entertainment. With all of this technology, do we ever stop to ask, “Am I using this technology appropriately?” This course will explore the human, cultural, and societal issues related to digital technology and will examine the norms of appropriate, responsible behaviour with regard to technology use. It will also examine the impact of the digital world on concepts of identity and how we shape our public persona by our digital presence. It will include topics based on the nine elements of Digital Citizenship including digital access, digital commerce, digital communication, digital literacy, digital etiquette, digital law, digital rights & responsibilities, digital health & wellness, and digital security.