

AIS Sections (Emphasis, Special Topic, and Service Learning Courses) and  
Discussing AIS with First-Year Students  
Fall 2016

Dear Advisors,

On behalf of the First-Year Experience (FYE), thank you for your support and assistance with enrolling first-year students in Academic Inquiry & Scholarship (AIS) 1203 for fall 2016. I want to highlight changes to AIS and to provide information to share with first-year students about AIS.

*AIS Sections*

FYE will offer 57 AIS sections this fall. In the past AIS has provided a general multidisciplinary introduction to research (General AIS). This fall we will continue to offer these sections. However, we are excited to offer additional AIS sections with a particular discipline emphasis, special focus topic, and/or service-learning component. The variety of AIS sections provides students the opportunity to select an AIS section of interest.

Below is a brief description of the different types of AIS sections offered for fall 2016. The attached handout provides descriptions for the AIS sections with a discipline emphasis (Emphasis), special focus topic (Special Focus), and/or service-learning component (Service-Learning).

- **General AIS (18 Sections):** These sections are general multidisciplinary in nature without a specific emphasis/focus.
  - Students learn about research practices in the Humanities (e.g. art, literature), Social Sciences (e.g. business, psychology, political science), and Natural Sciences (e.g. engineering, biology).
  - Students will gain skills in critical thinking, communication, information literacy, and basic inquiry/research. As a pinnacle experience, students work in teams to develop a semester-long research project.
- **Emphasis:** An emphasis section approaches research according to one discipline—Humanities, Social Sciences, or Natural Sciences.
- **Special Focus:** These sections focus on a particular topic, and use a particular or multidisciplinary approach to examine the topic.
- **Service-Learning:** Some AIS sections will incorporate a service-learning component. Students participate in a community-based learning experience.

**NOTE:** Some sections offer Emphasis, Special Focus, and Service-Learning component within one AIS section. They are noted on the attached handout.


**Discussing AIS with First-Year Students**

When students ask about the AIS course and why they should take it, here are some discussion points to share with your students:

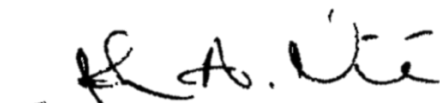
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- AIS's main goal is to introduce students to critical thinking, communication, and research practices in various academic disciplines/cultures. These skills are valuable and transfer to their major academic courses and in their professional endeavors.
- Some of the activities in AIS may include: service learning projects; visiting the library; analyzing articles, film, art, etc.; attending research-related events on campus; and various inquiry-based writing assignments. Every professor conducts their class differently, depending on the AIS section.
- AIS helps students explore majors and academic fields. Students attend events that are specific to exploring career and academic major interests. Additionally, some class time is dedicated to exploring those interests.
- AIS provides an opportunity to work in teams on research projects. This year teams will be nominated and selected to present their projects at a campus undergraduate research showcase.
- Lastly, out-of-class opportunities, such as a lecture series and guest speakers, will be a part of the AIS experience.

Once again, thank you! FYE appreciates collaborating with you! Contact us if you have any questions at 458-7490.

  
Susan Colorado-Burt, Director

  
Diane Elizondo, Associate Director

  
John Niemi, Assistant Director

  
Jessica Rivera, Program Coordinator

  
Brandon Cruz, Program Coordinator

  
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## Humanities Emphasis – AIS Course Fall 2016 (1604 Campus)

### Mid-20<sup>th</sup> – Century Events that Changed the American Way of Life

W. Sherrill

Major events from the mid-twentieth century to the present changed the American way of life. This period witnessed the arrival of nuclear energy, the moon landings, civil rights movement, environmental conservation movement, the internet, and social media. To understand the ways these events influenced and are influenced by American culture, we will explore how research practices through the lens of Humanities provides insight focusing on contemporary art, music, history, language, psychology, and literature, as well as science and technology.

TR 8:30-9:45am

16844 or 16845

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Humanities Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### San Antonio Culture

K. Dodwell

San Antonio has a vibrant culture rich in artwork, architecture, music and literature that students will study through the lens of Humanities in this AIS course. Students will investigate research practices in the Humanities as a way of exploring topics, such as the architectural origins of the San Antonio Missions—now a UNESCO World Heritage site; the poetry of San Antonio's own Carmen Tafolla, currently Poet Laureate of Texas; and the *conjunto* music of Flaco Jimenez, the accordion king.

MWF 2-2:50pm

16885 or 16886

Linked Course: WRC 1023

\*Humanities Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### Media and Popular Culture

C. Medina

Popular culture is an important part of daily life. Through popular culture we are exposed to ideas, social norms, and values; we also use popular culture for different purposes, including resistance, identity construction, and community building. This section of AIS will use readings from scholarly works and popular criticism to critically examine American Popular Culture. The course emphasizes writing skills, analysis, and critical thinking.

MWF 10-10:50am

16760 or 16761

Linked Course: WRC 1013

MWF 11-11:50am

16772 or 16773

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Humanities Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### A Journey Into Art, Photography, and Music

A. Malagamba

This AIS course will take you on a journey to analyze art, photography and music while exploring the ways in which scholars in the Humanities engage in research and seek to understand the complexities of the art world. The course will expose you to research principles and methodologies that will encourage you ask questions in a whole new way.

MWF 1-1:50pm

18285

Stand Alone Course

TR 1-2:15pm

16859 or 16860

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Humanities Emphasis \*\*Special Focus \*\*\*Service Learning Component

## Social Science Emphasis – AIS Course Fall 2016 (1604 Campus)

### The Age of the Anthropocene (Human Activity Impacting Earth's Sustainability)

D. Matiella

Humans now represent the most significant source of impact on the geology and ecosystems of Earth. How did this come to be and what can be done? Through multidisciplinary research practices and studies, we will examine human activities in the age of the Anthropocene, where we've come from, where we could be and where we should be by the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. We will examine the social, environmental, economic, and political consequences and opportunities that lay before us and how we can create a sustainable future for ourselves.

TR 2:30-3:45pm

16866 or 20672

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Social Science Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### What is the World in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

R. Minten

What are the most pressing problems in the world today and what can we do to resolve them? Why are these problems so challenging? What are the most important advances in the world today? How can we use these advances to improve the world? In this AIS class, we will examine the motivations that cause beneficial and detrimental change and explore the consequences of those changes through research practices in social sciences.

MWF 12-12:50pm

19299

Stand Alone Course

\*Social Science Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### Be The Change

L. Furrh

Connect, become an active citizen, and make a real impact on the San Antonio community. Students will practice civic engagement by volunteering for a service project of their choice, and then use these experiences as a lens to explore academic research skills and information literacy throughout the semester and discover how social scientists would conduct research studies on local issues.

MWF 9-9:50am

18344

Stand Alone Course

MWF 10-10:50am

16758 or 16759

Linked Course: WRC 1013

MWF 12-12:50pm

16785 or 16786

Linked Course: WRC 1013

MWF 1-1:50pm

16791 or 16792

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Social Science Emphasis \*\*Service Learning Component

## Natural Science Emphasis – AIS Course Fall 2016 (1604 Campus)

### Science on TV: The Big Bang Theory

L. Martinez Rivera

From cosmology to chemistry, neurobiology, and everything in between, *The Big Bang Theory* attempts to represent the science and the scientists whose research falls within these academic disciplines. In this section we will explore some of those scientific theories and principles to evaluate if Hollywood is getting it right.

MWF 11-11:50am

19300

Stand Alone Course

MWF 2-2:50pm

16801 or 16802

Linked Course: WRC 1023

\*Natural Science Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### Inquiry in the Natural Sciences: Research Design, Ethics and Application

S. Dalterio

In this AIS course students will practice library search skills, design research projects, write Abstracts, construct Poster Projects, and develop Power Point presentations that represent current standards and practices in science and engineering. Ethical considerations for conducting research involving human and animal subjects will be discussed. Themes and topics will represent class interests/majors and participation in University-sponsored undergraduate research opportunities will be encouraged.

TR 2:30-3:45pm

16868 or 16869

Linked Course: WRC 1013

TR 4-5:15pm

16872 or 16873

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Natural Science Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### Clean Water and Environment

J. Scherer

Flint, Michigan; Gold King Mine, Colorado; Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill... the list of disasters despoiling our water resources is long. We will practice Natural Science critical thinking and communication skills necessary for science and engineering majors by investigating cause and effect of environmental disasters while proposing new research questions.

MWF 3-3:50pm

16979

Stand Alone Course

MWF 12-12:50pm

16787 or 16788

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Natural Science \*\*Special Focus \*\*\*Service Learning Component

### Gaming and Computer Simulations

J. Scherer

Many computer games simulate real-life situations by use of mathematical algorithms. We will practice Natural Science critical thinking and communication skills necessary for science and engineering majors by experimenting with various simulation games to detect the underlying controlling models, and proposing new research questions. Students will be expected to use their own laptops in class.

TR 4-5:15pm

18284

Stand Alone Course

MWF 2-2:50pm

16799 or 16800

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Natural Science \*\*Special Focus \*\*\*Service Learning Component

## Multidisciplinary Application – AIS Course Fall 2016 (1604 Campus)

### Contemporary Issues in the Lives of Children and Adolescents

T. Leveridge

This AIS course will examine current research investigating the contemporary issues that affect children and adolescents. Many issues will be investigated and will include a multidisciplinary approach (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences) to understanding how they may affect children.

MWF 9-9:50am

16748 or 16887

Linked Course: WRC 1013

MWF 12-12:50pm

16778 or 16781

Linked Course: WRC 1013

**\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\*Special Focus**

### “To Infinity and Beyond...” Science Fiction and Fantasy

D. Edmondson

The ancient Greeks told epic stories of superhuman beings like those of Mount Olympus or one-eyed giants and a six-headed creature. Early Europe and into the Industrial Revolution gave us stories of robots, traveling to far off planets and utopian societies. Through a multidisciplinary (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences) lens, we will explore research practices and ways of knowing about what makes us human in a cosmic context.

MWF 11-11:50am

16157 or 16158

Linked Course: WRC 1013

**\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\*Special Focus**

### What Does it Mean to be First?

S. Colorado-Burt or D. Edmondson

To be the first in your family to go to college and earn a four-year degree is an empowering and impactful experience. Although being a Pioneer poses challenges, in this course we will examine the assets and strengths that first generation students bring to a campus community. Through an exploration of multidisciplinary (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences) approaches, research practices, scholarly articles and studies, this course will analyze what it means to be the first in your family to go to college.

D. Edmondson

MWF 10-10:50am

16155 or 16156

Linked Course: WRC 1013

S. Colorado-Burt

TR 10-11:15am

16848 or 16849

Linked Course: WRC 1013

**\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\*Special Focus on Issues Critical to First-Generation College Students**

### Do We Have Enough Clean Water?

J. Sharma

The growing human population has increased the demands for clean water. Through multidisciplinary research practices and studies, we will examine human activities that have contributed to the shortage of water, the effects on living organisms and possible solutions. We will examine historical, economic, health, political and ethical aspects of the 'importance of clean water' on a local and global scale.

TR 8:30-9:45am

16842 or 16843

Linked Course: WRC 1013

**\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\* Special Focus**

## Multidisciplinary Application continued. – AIS Course Fall 2016 (1604 Campus)

### U.S-Mexico Border Issues

A. Malagamba

The U.S.-Mexico Border region has been the site of cultural, political, geographical, ecological, social and artistic developments that most of time are not reflected in the national narratives of the border on both countries. This AIS course will explore research practices through a multidisciplinary (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences) lens and explore border facts and fictions while proposing new questions.

TR 4-5:15pm

16876

Stand Alone Course

MWF 3-3:50pm

16809 or 16810

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\*Special Focus \*\*\*Service Learning Component

### Politics and Pop Culture

P. Rodriguez

This section of AIS closely examines the dynamic interaction between the political spectrum in the United States and the vastness of popular culture. Through this course, students will explore how music, social media, film, and visual arts contribute to the social construction of sociopolitical issues and political figures. This course will accomplish this objective through gaining a deeper understanding of academic cultures and research.

MWF 11-11:50am

16774 or 16775

Linked Course: WRC 1013

TR 11:30-12:45pm

16855 or 16856

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\*Special Focus \*\*\*Service Learning Component

### Making Your Own Path

K. Laborde

This section of AIS includes hands on research that uses mixed methods to explore what it means to be a first year student by examining one's personal transition from high school to college. While engaging in research with the class, students are also able to explore their own multi-disciplinary research focus. The semester includes an opportunity for students to present class research at a campus wide research showcase.

MWF 8-8:50am

16743 or 16744

Linked Course: WRC 1013

MWF 9-9:50am

16750 or 16751

Linked Course: WRC 1013

TR 8:30-9:45am

16840 or 16841

Linked Course: WRC 1013

TR 10-11:15am

16846 or 16978

Linked Course: WRC 1023

\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\*Special Focus

### Ancient Faces and Their Buried Treasures: Greco-Roman Art & Archaeology

J. Gallagher

Students will explore how a broad range of academic disciplines have used artifacts to reveal behaviors and beliefs of ancient Mediterranean societies. Researchers from virtually every modern academic field have developed techniques for breaking the silence of everything from garbage to gold, and treasures to tombs, revealing fascinating details about the daily lives of ancient Greeks, Romans and their neighbors. By exploring multidisciplinary (Humanities, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences) research methods and scholarly work, the nature of modern archaeology offers something for everyone.

MWF 12-12:50pm

16789 or 16977

Linked Course: WRC 1023

\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\*Special Focus

## DT Campus – AIS Course Fall 2016

### **The Age of the Anthropocene (Human Activity Impacting Earth's Sustainability)**

D. Matiella

Humans now represent the most significant source of impact on the geology and ecosystems of Earth. How did this come to be and what can be done? Through multidisciplinary research practices and studies, we will examine human activities in the age of the anthropocene, where we've come from, where we could be and where we should be by the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. We will examine the social, environmental, economic, and political consequences and opportunities that lay before us and how we can create a sustainable future for ourselves.

TR 10:30-11:45am

16160 or 16161 – DT

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Social Science Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### **Political Stratification: Race/Ethnicity and Social Policy**

P. Jaramillo

This AIS course examines the relationship between race/ethnicity and particular public policy issues in the United States. Using a social science approach, we will investigate the relevance of race and ethnicity for public policies in the fields of criminal justice, voting rights, and immigration.

MW 12-1:15pm

16878 – DT

Stand Alone Course

\*Social Science Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

### **Mid-20<sup>th</sup> – Century Events that Changed the American Way of Life**

W. Sherrill

Major events from the mid-twentieth century to the present changed the American way of life. This period witnessed the arrival of nuclear energy, the moon landings, civil rights movement, environmental conservation movement, the internet, and social media. To understand the ways these events influenced and are influenced by American culture, we will explore how research practices through the lens of Humanities provides insight focusing on contemporary art, music, history, language, psychology, and literature, as well as science and technology.

TR 1:30-2:45pm

16882 or 16883 – DT

Linked Course: WRC 1013

\*Humanities Emphasis \*\*Special Focus

## Honors – AIS Course Fall 2016 (1604 Campus)

### **Race: The Power of Construction**

K. McClurg

This course will utilize interdisciplinary approaches and methods from the Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and the Humanities, to evaluate ways in which race is constructed within the United States. Important debates to include: enslavement, freedom, justice, citizenship, immigration, economics, politics, and the assertion of equal rights, will be highlighted. Finally, an evaluation of white privilege and racism as a systematic institution that perpetuates inequality to marginalized peoples, will be utilized to understand how racial constructs, shape people's lives.

TR 10-11:15am

16850 – Honors

Stand Alone Course

TR 1-2:15pm

16863 – Honors

Stand Alone Course

**\*Multidisciplinary Application \*\*Special Focus**

**AIS Courses not listed previously as special emphasis or topic-focused sections, take a multidisciplinary approach to the course.  
Please see the course description below for all non-emphasis/topic-focused multidisciplinary approach sections:**

Through rigorous intellectual content, students have an opportunity to learn about epistemologies (i.e. ways of knowing) in the Humanities/Fine Arts, Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences through an approach that is multidisciplinary and experiential. In addition, student will gain skills in critical thinking, communication, information literacy, and basic inquiry/research. As a pinnacle experience, students work in teams to develop a semester-long research project that explores an academic question through the lens of various academic cultures and/or disciplines.

## Fall 2016 University Peer Mentor Themes

### **First Generation**

Students interested in connecting with other first generation peers will have an opportunity to engage in various activities to promote their success.

### **College Success**

Students interested in how to best succeed at UTSA will engage in activities that promote college success, including community involvement opportunities.

### **Leadership and Networking**

Students interested in expanding their leadership skills will engage in activities that promote networking within the campus community and beyond, including community involvement opportunities.

### **Healthy Living**

Students, who want to live a healthy lifestyle while in college, will engage in activities that encourage ways to be healthy and stay healthy, including community involvement opportunities.

### **Volunteering**

Students interested in volunteer opportunities that promote community involvement will engage in various activities that will connect students with various organizations and causes at UTSA and beyond, including community involvement opportunities.