

UHL COURSE SCHEDULE SPRING 2027

Courses for First-Year UHL Students

UNHL 2755 001: UHL Seminar (1 credit)

Instructor: Traci Jones

Meeting Pattern: Friday 9:15 am – 10:30

Note: Required for all students who completed UNHL 2755 in fall 2026

ENGL 2030-U01: Core Composition II - special UHL section (3 credits)

Instructor: Andrea Modica (English)

Meeting Pattern: Friday 11:00 am – 1:50 pm

Note: Required for every student without credit for ENGL 2030

Conspiracy Theories, Hoaxes and Outright Lies: This course focuses on the elements of research-based academic argumentation. Students will construct analytical and persuasive arguments to explore current, controversial news topics of their choosing (such as healthcare or immigration). Highlighting conspiracy theories and the like, the course will show students how to navigate news and social media using logic and reasoning. Students will also strengthen their critical thinking, reading and writing skills while working with a variety of academic and news sources.

Courses for Second- and Third-Year UHL Students and Upper Division Transfers

UNHL 3640 001: People and Other Animals (3 credits)

Instructor: Jenny Vermilya (Sociology)

Meeting Pattern: Tuesday/Thursday 9:30 am – 10:45

This course uses social scientific perspectives to explore a subject that is often examined through a biomedical lens: nonhuman animals. We will learn about the historical and cross-cultural evolutions of other animals to try to understand how and why we view them today in modern society. Students will critically examine institutions in which humans and nonhuman animals interact such as factory farming, zoos and aquariums, laboratories, and inside our own homes. We will watch films, read children's books, and engage with other cultural examples to discern how symbolic representations affect lived experiences that are often oppressive. These constructions of difference help maintain systems of inequality for other animals and for us.

UNHL 3999 001: The Evolution of Leadership in the 21st Century (3 credit)

Instructor: Jean Boyd

Meeting Pattern: 3:30 pm – 6:20

Leadership is among the most studied subjects, and among the least settled — a century of research has produced no universally accepted definition of a good leader. Yet the evaluation that someone “is a great leader” remains one of the most-used and least-examined phrases in American life, prominently in sport, business, and certainly today in politics. We understand that leadership is significant, beginning with ourselves, and that leadership approaches and practices evolve over time, along with the human experience. Beginning with the concept of self-leadership, students will compare the major frameworks the field has produced, test them against cases of leadership success and collapse in sport and other team-oriented environments, and examine how generational change, modernly distributed information (social media, AI, etc.), and the erosion of positional authority have reshaped what the word is asked to mean. Students will increase their self-awareness and study examples of high performers in terms of leadership characteristics, as they are empowered to establish their own 21st century leadership practice.

UNHL 3999 002: AI in Action: from Concepts to Real-World Decisions (3 credits)**Instructor:** Diana White (Mathematics and Math Education)**Meeting Pattern:** Monday 9:30 am – 12:50 pm

What does it take to understand, use effectively, and make good decisions about AI in a world where the technology is evolving almost daily?

This interdisciplinary course combines a clear conceptual foundation in modern AI with hands-on exploration of AI tools and case-based analysis of real-world challenges. You'll look under the hood of major AI systems, experiment firsthand with technologies such as large language models, retrieval-based systems, image generation, and AI agents, and put that knowledge to work on consequential questions facing organizations and society.

Rather than studying AI in the abstract, you'll step into the roles of leaders, decision-makers, and advisory committees confronting authentic challenges across education, healthcare, government, business, nonprofits, the arts, and scientific research. What should an organization automate—and what should remain firmly in human hands? How should leaders weigh innovation against risk? Who benefits, who bears the costs, and what evidence should guide the decision?

Through these cases, you'll learn to move beyond both AI hype and AI skepticism. You'll develop evidence-based recommendations that integrate technical understanding with stakeholder perspectives, competing values, real-world constraints, and professional judgment. By the end of the course, you won't just know more about how AI works - you'll be better equipped to decide when, where, and how it should be used.

UNHL 3999 003: High Art/Pop Culture (3 credits)**Instructor:** Maria Buszek**Meeting Pattern:** Tuesday/Thursday 3:35 pm – 4:45

This course will explore the relationships between "fine art" and popular art forms—and the ideologies and issues that motivated them—from the late 19th century to the present. The course will focus on visual culture and art theory and criticism that have challenged distinctions between what the influential art critic Clement Greenberg identified as “avant-garde and kitsch.” We will explore these eras’ shifting labels of “high” vs. “low,” “vanguard” vs. “mainstream,” and “commercial” versus “fine,” which will be considered and critiqued as interdependent opposites

Courses for Fourth-Year UHL Students**UNHL 4991: Senior Seminar I (3 credits)****Instructor:** Jennifer Camacho Taylor (SHED)**Meeting Pattern:** Wednesday 2:00 pm – 4:50**UNHL 4992: Senior Seminar II (1 credit)****Instructor:** Kristen Kahn**Meeting Pattern:** Monday 8:15 am – 9:15

Maymester 2027 (May 17 – June 3)

UNHL 3999 H01: Standup Comedy: Humor, Identity, & Power (3 credits)

Instructor: Lacy Lowrey (Communication)

Meeting Pattern: M/T/W/TR 9:00am – 1:00 pm

Why do we laugh, and what can our laughter tell us about ourselves and the world around us? In this intensive three-week Maymester course, we'll use stand-up comedy as a window into larger questions about humor, identity, culture, and social power. More than entertainment, stand-up is a cultural practice, artistic performance, form of communication, and site of social commentary, one that different academic disciplines understand in very different ways. Drawing from fields such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, performance studies, political and media studies, and communication, we'll explore not only how comedy works and what it can do, but also how different ways of studying comedy shape what we are able to see and understand. Students will put these perspectives into conversation, asking what each discipline reveals about humor and where any single perspective may fall short.

Through readings, discussions, collaborative “comedy labs,” and close examination of stand-up performances, we'll investigate questions such as: Why are some things funny? Does who tells a joke change what it means? How do identity and culture shape what audiences find funny or offensive? What does it mean to “punch up” or “punch down”? Can comedy challenge social and political power? Are there subjects that should be off-limits, and who gets to decide? Rather than searching for a single explanation of comedy, we'll use competing and complementary perspectives to examine what our laughter can reveal about ourselves and contemporary society. In doing so, students will practice the central work of interdisciplinary inquiry: comparing different ways of understanding a complex phenomenon, recognizing the possibilities and limitations of those approaches, and bringing them together to develop new insights.