

Experiments in Learning, 2/9/22

Learning Across the Techie-Fuzzy Divide

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Philosophy

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Opening Prompt

How would you design a class to attract students from a variety of disciplines? What would you do to make it exciting, welcoming, and relevant for this diverse group?

Some other 1-Unit “Teaser” Courses

- Know Your Planet (School of Earth)
- Entrepreneurial Thought Leaders’ Seminar (Management Science & Engineering)
- The History of 2021 (History)
- My Journey: Conversations on Race and Ethnicity (Comparative Studies in Race & Ethnicity)
- Democracy Matters (School of Humanities & Sciences)
- Civilization and Sustainability (School of Humanities & Sciences)

See also VPUE’s list of freshman-friendly “One-Unit Wonders and Terrific Twos”:

<https://advising.stanford.edu/current-students/choosing-courses/wonders>

DANGEROUS IDEAS

ARTHIST 36 / COMPLIT 36A / EALC 36 / ENGLISH 71 / ETHICSOC 36X /
FRENCH 36 HISTORY 3D / MUSIC 36H / PHIL 36 / POLISCI 70 /
RELIGST 36X / SLAVIC 36 / TAPS 36

- **Black Magic** (Aileen Robinson, Theater & Performance Studies)
- **The Decline and Fall of Nations?** (Caroline Winterer, History)
- **Discrimination Against Immigrants** (Ronald Egan, East Asian Languages & Cultures)
- **Effective Altruism** (Rob Reich, Political Science)
- **Equality** (Debra Satz, Philosophy)
- **Evil** (Chris Bobonich, Philosophy)
- **Fact Versus Fiction** (Alex Woloch, English)
- **Folklore and Authenticity** (Gabriella Safran, Slavic)
- **Freedom and Censorship** (Paula Findlen, History)
- **Gender** (Adrian Daub, Comparative Literature / German)
- **Hell** (Kathryn Gin Lum, Religious Studies)
- **Humanity** (Grant Parker, Classics)
- **Hypocrisy** (Haiyan Lee, East Asian Languages & Cultures)
- **Ideas** (Joshua Landy, French / Comparative Literature)
- **Inequality** (Walter Scheidel, Classics / History)
- **Invisibility** (Marci Kwon, Art & Art History)
- **Mandatory Voting** (Emilee Chapman, Political Science)
- **Migrants and Borders** (Ana Raquel Minian, History)
- **Pop Culture** (Dafna Zur, East Asian Languages & Cultures)
- **Postcolonialism** (Ato Quayson, English)
- **Progress** (Priya Satia, History)
- **Race** (Paula Moya, English)
- **Race in the 'Post-Race' Era** (Michele Elam, English)
- **Redemption** (Lanier Anderson, Philosophy)
- **Religious Toleration** (Jack Rakove, History)
- **Revolution** (Dan Edelstein, French)
- **Self-Denial** (Paul Harrison, Religious Studies)
- **Teaching** (Alexander Nemerov, Art & Art History)
- **Technology** (Fred Turner, Communication)
- **Tradition: The Enemy of Progress?** (Mark Applebaum, Music)
- **Universal Basic Income** (Juliana Bidadanure, Philosophy)
- **The University** (James Campbell, History)
- **Waste** (Gabrielle Hecht, History)
- **Wilderness** (Jeff Schwegman, School of Humanities & Sciences)

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Watch the online lectures from Spring 2020 on ConnectSU:
<https://connect.stanford.edu/dangerous-ideas>

Dangerous Ideas Demographics (2019)

Degree Program Breakdown:	Number	Percent of Class
Undergraduate	104	72
Graduate	19	13
Distinguished Career Institute / Other	22	15
Total Enrolled Students	145	100

Undergraduate Breakdown		
Major(s)	Number	Percent
Undeclared	50	48
Humanities	15	14
Social Sciences	12	12
STEM (H&S, Engineering, Earth)	12	12
Double Majors	15	14
Total	104	100

Themes From Student Feedback

“The lectures are thought-provoking and great fodder for after-class conversations. This series reminded me of why I'm here attending Stanford.”

“This class was so much more engaging than I anticipated! I just took it because it seemed like a chill one-unit but I found myself talking about it with family and friends.”

“This is the best class I've taken at Stanford because it promotes learning for the sake of learning, not for the sake of a grade.”

“Tradition: The Enemy of Progress?”

Mark Applebaum (Music)



Photo: <https://www.niefnorf.org/mark-applebaum>

Students on Integrative Learning

“This is a really great course for introducing students to a wide range of fields. It also helps students to see that topics are not field confined but rather intersectional.”

“I liked how lecturers engag[ed] with the life and current context of students... Personal stories add to relevance of the topic.”

Sustainability and Civilization

BIO 35 / HISTORY 35 / POLISCI 35

Course Design Team

Lanier Anderson (Philosophy)
Anna Grzymala-Busse (Political Science)
Walter Scheidel (Classics, History)
Jeff Schwegman (H&S Dean's Office)
Tim Stearns (Biology, Genetics)

Session Topics:

Historical Disasters

Paula Findlen (History)

The Disappearance of Diversity: Species, Cultures, & Languages

Rodolfo Dirzo (Biology)
Ian Morris (Classics)

Experiments We Shouldn't Do

Henry Greely (Law)
Megan Palmer (Bioengineering)
David Relman (Medicine)

Structural Vulnerabilities: Inequality and Bias

Hakeem Jefferson (Political Science)
Hazel Markus (Psychology)
Paula Moya (English)

Democratic Erosion

Justin Grimmer (Political Science)
Didi Kuo (CDDRL)
Francis Fukuyama (FSI)

Policy and its Limits

Chris Field (Earth System Science, Biology)
Daniel Ho (Law, Political Science)
Meagan Mauter (Civil and Environmental Engineering)
Rob Reich (Political Science)

Human Capital and the Fragility of Knowledge

Tom Mullaney (History)
Mehran Sahami (Computer Science)
Krish Seeta (Anthropology)

Climate Change and Destruction of Nature

Gretchen Daily (Biology)
Noah Diffenbaugh (Earth System Science)
Stephen Palumbi (Biology)

Crisis as Opportunity? The Benefits of Disaster

Margot Gerritsen (Energy Resources Engineering)
Jonathan Levin (Business)
Walter Scheidel (Classics, History)

Caring for a Burgeoning Population

Alexandria Boehm (Civil and Environmental Engineering)
David Lobell (Earth System Science)
Yvonne Maldonado (Medicine)

Discussion Prompt

Think about a class you've taught—or might teach—that seeks to engage students from a variety of disciplines.

How would you:

- Lower the perceived stakes, so that students feel more willing to take risks and be curious
- Create space for integrative learning, where students are encouraged to draw connections between the course material and other personal or academic contexts and experiences?