“STUDIOC” (STUDIO OBERLIN CONVERGENCE) THEME-BASED LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Professors from across the college and conservatory have teamed up to design and teach one of their courses as part of StudiOC’s learning communities. These learning communities are organized around a theme and are comprised of two or more courses. Faculty and students within a learning community work together at key points throughout the semester for interdisciplinary discussion, shared assignments and programming.

For first-year students, learning communities are an opportunity for making connections across disciplines and developing rich interactions with their professors and classmates. Although individual courses within a cluster will have their own disciplinary learning goals, the learning objective of StudiOC is to cultivate the art of creative and integrative multidisciplinary inquiry in students—a skill essential for interpreting and addressing social, cultural, artistic, political, and scientific questions.

Several StudiOC learning communities are open to students each semester, and learning communities change every year. Please note the course enrollment requirements for each learning community. Entering first-year students are invited to enroll in one of the following learning communities designed for them for Fall 2017.

SPORTS, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY – Enrollment Limit 15

This learning community will introduce students to the role of sports in culture and society. It is a unique opportunity to reflect on our vibrant academic and athletics cultures on campus and in the broader local community. Participants in this learning community will examine sports from multiple academic perspectives. In addition, students will gain the important experience of connecting their in-class studies to the service of our broader community through community-based service and research on sports.

All three of the following courses are required for enrollment in the learning community:

ENGL 167: 13 Ways of Looking at Sports, (Santiago Colás), MWF 1:30-2:20, Full Course

Sports is perhaps the most popular pastime around the world today. And the images, metaphors, narratives, and values that spring up around sports weave themselves into the stories we tell about ourselves and our world, even when we don't think we're talking about sports. In this course, we'll use tools from philosophy, literary and cultural study, sociology, economics, and the sciences to look at sports and its accompanying cultural forms and practices. We'll be looking at what they tell us about how we think about such things as play, beauty, goodness, violence, money, sex, gender, race, and nations.

FYSP 054: Sport: Contested Contests (Daphne John), TTh 9:30-10:50, Full Course

Using an interdisciplinary framework, students will learn to assess sport critically as a social institution that holds the potential to both reproduce as well as challenge social inequalities, particularly regarding race and ethnicity, social class, gender, sexualities, and citizenship. Topics include inclusivity and exclusivity in sport, linkages to sport and economy, the local and global aspects of sport as well as how sport shapes individual, organizational, and state/national identities. The goals of the course are to understand how individuals and groups interact within sport that can result in reproduction of inequalities or offer spaces for activism and social change.

SOCI 390: Sport and Community (Tim McCrory), MWF 9-9:50, Half Course

This practicum explores academic concepts studied in the Sports, Culture and Society learning community by students participating in a series of service and research initiatives across campus and in the Oberlin Public Schools. These activities, informed by the academic study of sports as a cultural form and social institution, will examine the role sports already plays in the lives of youth and college students. In particular, activities will support integration of the physical, intellectual,
and emotional well-being of the students in the learning community, and in the broader community they will serve.

**MATTERS OF FACT, MATTERS OF FICTION – Enrollment Limit 30**

Even before recent appeals to “alternative facts,” matters of fact and matters of fiction have been a hotly debated topic in the Arts and Sciences. This learning community analyzes notions of fact and fiction and how representations of our world can be both matters of fact and matters of fiction. Each course in this learning community seeks to build the skills and expertise appropriate to its own disciplinary methods, but appreciates that no full account of its central topic can be made without engaging other disciplines and perspectives.

**PHIL 209 and either FYSP 044 or FYSP 084 are required for enrollment in this learning community:**

**PHIL 209: Representation and Reality** (Todd Ganson) MWF 11:00-11:50, Full Course

This course explores the notion of representation, which figures centrally in the behavioral sciences and the arts. Scientists routinely explain behavior by determining a creature’s viewpoint on reality—the way the creature represents the world. How do scientists determine a creature’s subjective point of view and how do they arrive at an objective viewpoint on reality from which representational accuracy can be assessed? In discussions of art since Plato, representational art has been thought to exploit the boundary between reality and representation, between fact and fiction. How does representational art blur the lines between matters of fact and matters of fiction? Enrollment Limit 30

**FYSP 044: Objects and Apparitions** (DeSales Harrison) MWF 10:00-10:50, Full Course

Poems have traditionally understood themselves to be matters of fact and matters of fiction at the same time. The word “poem” comes from the Greek for “made thing.” As a made thing, a poem is an object, but it is also a representation, often of subjective experience. Because they are works of imagination, we think of them as made up, or fictional. This course considers poetry as a rich domain in which to examine the relation between art objects and subjective experience. What roles will objectivity and subjectivity play as we learn to “make sense” of poems?

**FYSP 084: The Science of Thinking about Thinking** (Patty deWinstanley) TuTh 3:00-4:15, Full Course

Our awareness, understanding, and control of our perceptions, memory, thinking, and reasoning are central to our ability to distinguish between matters of fact and matters of fiction. Some of the questions that we will consider are the following: What is knowledge? What is consciousness? What is free will? How much control do we have over our consciousness and our free will? What is creativity and can we know about and control the processes that lead to creative performance? And, do non-human animals and machines have metacognition?

**ARTS AND THE OVERLOOKED: THE ACTIVISM OF ACCESS – Enrollment Limit 15**

Public images of disability and incarceration are rife with prejudices and stereotypes, usually with profound consequences for the people concerned. What becomes of the humanity of people living with
daily barriers? To whom may they speak, and who will listen? Authoritative discourse is most often conducted by “experts” speaking about disability and incarceration rather than from the points of view of the people living with disability or in prison. This learning community turns the tables on expertise and authority, listening to and learning from the voices of people who are too often overlooked. Through course work combined with community engagement, students will study justice, access, and the power of the arts to transcend and transform the walls that divide us.

Both of the following courses are required for enrollment in the learning community:

**FYSP 093: Disability** (Elizabeth Hamilton), TuTh 11-12:15, Full Course

Many think of disability as something that a doctor diagnoses, something that requires treatment or cure. Others see disability as a social problem, casting the disabled as weak people needing the help of the strong. Some religions see in disability the bodily reflection of moral failure, a physical punishment for sin. Literary metaphors of disability have long represented conflicts or challenges. But how do people with disabilities see themselves? This seminar examines conceptual and historical models of disability, studying the impact of defining concepts on the lives of real people. How do stories of disability change when people with disabilities hold the pen, the paintbrush, the microphone, or the senate floor?

**PACE 220: Arts Behind Bars** (Jody Kerchner) TuTh 3:00-4:15, Full Course

Students will encounter models of arts programs offered for people who are often overlooked—those who are incarcerated. An overview of general political, philosophical, and societal issues relative to incarceration in the U.S. and globally will lead to the consideration of access to arts education in prisons as acts of activism. Primary readings will include research on the effects of arts education access for those incarcerated and the ways the arts have the potential to transform and inform us of our common humanity. This is a community-based learning course that includes students assisting with and/or implementing arts education experiences for people who are incarcerated in Lorain County. Volunteer training at the prisons is mandatory for the CBL portion of this course.