

Wesleyan Graduate Liberal Studies Fall 2025 course listings

Spring Term: January 22, 2026 – May 10, 2026

Make up classes, final presentations and examinations may be scheduled in the following week (through May 15, 2026).

GLS Program Overview

Tuition & Fees:

- 3-credit GLS course: \$3,699
- Audited course (not for credit): \$1,233
- Registration fee (non-refundable): \$100
- Additional course fees may apply
- Note: Tuition and fees are subject to change.

Programs and Degrees:

- Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS): Concentrations in arts, humanities, sciences, social sciences, or education and human development. Includes capstone option. No prerequisites or required courses.
- Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Liberal Arts: Requires a prior master's or post-baccalaureate degree. Includes a final thesis.
- Graduate Certificate in Writing: Six-course certificate aimed at business professionals, aspiring writers, and others.
- Non-degree Enrollment: Anyone with a four-year degree may take GLS courses and use full academic resources.

Course Options:

- Online Courses: Some courses and the writing certificate can be completed online (no fully online degree).
- Schedules: Flexible offerings—fall/spring evening classes; summer includes morning, afternoon, evening, and immersion formats.

Student Life:

- Campus Housing: Available during the summer only.
- Facilities Access: Library and gym access provided for enrolled students.
- Class Observations: Prospective students may sit in on classes. Contact Glenn Knight at gknight01@wesleyan.edu for arrangements

ARTS 620

Wednesday
06:30PM – 09:00PM

Noah Baerman

Popular Music of the Rock Era

This course will focus on the history and analysis of rock, R&B, and other relevant popular styles that influenced and interacted with them. Topics include the distinctions (and similarities) among various sub-categories and chronological periods, roles of the primary instruments used and how these roles have evolved, vocal styles, song form, and the racial, cultural, and economic dynamics influencing the music. Through reading and listening to many recordings, students will become familiar with many of the important figures in rock and R&B music, including Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, James Brown, the Beatles, Bob Dylan, Aretha Franklin, Joni Mitchell, Prince, Public Enemy, and many others.

We will examine historical developments and chronology, but it is not a history class. We will delve into some structural issues, but it is not a music theory class - indeed, no background in music or music theory is expected for this course. In essence, we will be developing the awareness and tools that will allow us to understand and evaluate what we are hearing when we listen to live or recorded rock, blues, soul, and so on. We will explore how and why the musicians do what they do and the larger context into which a performance fits.

SCIE 646

Monday

06:00PM – 08:30 PM

Rehana Patel

Mathematics of Sustainability

The question of sustainability is inherently quantitative: How do we shepherd our resources, natural and human-made -- even intangible ones, such as health -- so as not to deplete them? How can we -- indeed, can we -- allow for economic growth and human flourishing in the present without denying the same to future generations?

To address such questions, we need to be able to measure our resource base; create models to understand the processes of its accumulation and change; make risk assessments; and develop methodologies to evaluate outcomes. All of these tasks lie within the purview of mathematics, which provides tools that may be operated under the strictures of economics, natural laws, social behavior and ethical norms.

The first part of this course will introduce students to some of these mathematical tools and their applications to issues of sustainability. Topics that we will discuss include: units and measurement; stocks and flows; functions and change; networks; and probability. These topics will be motivated by a series of examples drawn from the literature on sustainability, and the format will be largely lecture-discussion.

The second part of the course will be in the form of a structured seminar, with students having a greater role in the choice of topics for discussion and presentation. A large proportion of students' work for this course will lie in developing and writing a term paper on a case study of their choice that applies mathematical tools to an issue related to sustainability. These structured seminars will revolve around the topics that the students have chosen for their term papers.

EDHD 623

EDHD 623W

SOCS 623

SOCS 623W

SCIE 623

SCIE 623W

Tuesday
06:00PM – 08:30PM

Noel Garrett

Dynamics of Character

Personality can be defined as a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations (Ryckman, 2004). The word "personality" originates from the Latin persona, which means mask.

Significantly, in the theater of the ancient Latin-speaking world, the mask was not used as a plot device to disguise the identity of a character, but rather was a convention employed to represent or typify that character.

Personality psychology is a branch of psychology that studies personality and individual differences. One emphasis in this area is to construct a coherent picture of a person and his or her major psychological processes (Bradberry, 2007). Another emphasis views personality as the study of individual differences, in other words, how people differ from each other. A third area of emphasis examines human nature and how all people are similar to one another. These three viewpoints merge together in the study of personality.

The study of personality has a rich and varied history in psychology, with an abundance of theoretical traditions. The major theories include dispositional (trait) perspective, psychodynamic, humanistic, biological, behaviorist and social learning perspective. There is no consensus on the definition of "personality" in psychology. Most researchers and psychologists do not explicitly identify themselves with a certain perspective and often taken an eclectic approach.

In this class, we will explore one of the problems plaguing the fields of psychiatry and psychology: differentiation, especially when the possibility of borderline character pathology exists. These conditions must be differentiated from, on the one hand, the neuroses and neurotic character pathology and, on the other hand, the psychoses, particularly schizophrenia and the major affective disorders. We will analyze the qualities of various kinds of experience and behavior, such as the ways of thinking, the attitudes (recognized and unrecognized), and the modes of action that characterize the different personality/character conditions.

SOCS 642

HUMS 642

Tuesday

06:30PM – 09:00PM

Sandra Luckow

ONLINE

Mirroring the Times

The Golden Age of Hollywood's Studio System (1930 - 1960) produced distinctive brands of genre films (i.e., the Gangster film, the Western, the Screwball Comedy, Film Noir, the Musical, the Women's picture...) that not only entertained the masses when first released, but now provide contemporary audiences with a historical, cultural window into the zeitgeist of societal values and pressures, victories and vices of the times in which they were made.

We begin by understanding the production mode and style of the major studios which modeled filmmaking on the industrial revolution's automotive production line. Each studio defined and refined its particular brand. The French auteur theory will be discussed and challenged with the films of Hawks, Ford, Wyler, Hitchcock and Wilder among others. We will learn how to read a genre film as form, but not formula. We'll explore the techniques of film's visual language and how the amorphous and ethereal clues of culture are communicated. Then, through analysis and close readings, the class will connect the films to a larger context -- the moments in time in which these movies were made, giving us historical insight as primary source materials that reflect, enhance, define, and critique American culture.

SOCS 627**HUMS 627**

Thursday
06:00PM – 08:30PM

Sharisse Kanet

Philosophy of Science Fiction

Philosophers Fred Miller and Nicholas Smith wrote that both science fiction and philosophy aim toward "the discovery of what is essential and valuable in reality." In this class, we will do just that, using both classic and modern science fiction to explore many of the fundamental philosophical problems facing humanity. Engaging with science fiction allows us to confront alternate realities, alien beings, and uncomfortable notions of self from a "safe" distance. We will ask questions like: Who or what is the 'I' and where is it? Do I have a free will, or am I only deluded into thinking that I do? Can the senses ever be trusted, or could my life be some kind of dream? Can a robot or a computer program have consciousness and emotions? Could I somehow transfer my consciousness into a machine and thereby become immortal? By looking at serious questions through exciting stories and futuristic technologies we will be able to engage with important and controversial ideas while being thoroughly entertained!

HUMS 619

Wednesday
06:30PM – 09:00PM

Martine Bellen

ONLINE**Crossing Genres / Hybrid Poetry: An Immersive Poetry Workshop**

In the book-length poem *One Big Self*, C.D. Wright documents--by incorporating interviews and conversations, tattoos, slogans, tests, overheard talk, signage, and other "stuff"--her visits to the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women, the East Carroll Parish Prison Farm, and the Louisiana State Penitentiary. In *Nox*, a book-in-a-box collage journal, Anne Carson creates an elegy object for her brother while translating a Catullus poem. Border works, such as these, iconoclastic multicultural books that cross thresholds by crossing genres--that appropriate elements from a variety of sources such as of memoir, theory, and history--have formed a genre of their own, sometimes referred to as hybrid poetry. How are these protean constructions conceived and built? This workshop is a laboratory intended to answer just these questions. Through reading works and through practice, we will write hybrid poems that will culminate in a chapbook that incorporate a diverse range of genres.

SCIE 615

Neurobiology of Aging

EDHD 615

Thursday
06:00PM – 08:30PM

Clarissa Cavarsan
Muller

The "Neurobiology of Aging" course is designed to explore the intricate relationship between the aging process and the nervous system. As our population ages, understanding the underlying neurobiology of aging becomes increasingly important. This course delves into the physiological, cellular, and molecular aspects of how the nervous system changes over time and the impact of these changes on cognition, behavior, and overall well-being. This course will introduce the student to the study of aging (gerontology) and the effects of normal aging and pathological aging on the nervous system. We will discuss general concepts of aging, and biochemical, physiological, and behavioral age-associated changes in the motor, sensory, cognitive, and neuroendocrine systems. By the end of the course, the student should have a clear understanding of what aging is and what effects it has on normal brain function. In class, I will introduce the topic with slide presentation and after that, we will discuss the topic based on the scientific article discussion. After the classes students will have extensive opportunities for feedback and will be requested to write a project for the last, for oral presentation of the project in the class. Student evaluation will include weekly quizzes, project, mid-term and final exams, and class participation/attendance.