



LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Team-taught by two professors, Learning Communities pair two traditionally different subject areas with a common theme.

Learning Communities inspire discovery of two disciplines in the context of our contemporary times. Your learning will be active and engaged. You will make connections between courses, see how ideas intersect, and take ownership of your first year in college. These linked courses fulfill a piece of Westminster's WCore requirements or requirements for your major.

Learning Communities are designed to help you adjust to college, improve critical thinking skills, and establish strong relationships with other students and faculty members. You will be able to choose a Learning Community that matches your interests in these integrated courses.

A full selection of Learning Communities offered during the coming academic year is detailed on the following pages. Find something that captures your imagination.



FALL 2016

Rockin' History

WCFAH 202 (America's Best Idea), Professor Jeff Nichols
WCSAM 111 (National Parks Geology), Professor Tiffany Rivera

Utah's exquisite landscape is more than just rocks. This learning community will explore geologic phenomena such as earthquakes and volcanoes through the lens of America's National Parks, while investigating the concept of the "national park," its implications for natural and human history, and the impact that the establishment of a park service has had on Native Americans, wildlife, and American history and culture. The LC includes a field trip to Zion National Park.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCFAH course, one WCSAM course, Quantitative Emphasis, Writing Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Probability, Reason, and Myths about Human Behavior

WCSAM 113 (Probability, Risk, and Reward), Professor Bill Bynum
WCSAM 101 (Bust That Psych Myth), Professor Jonathan Amburgey

How can understanding mathematics and psychology help people become better thinkers, decision-makers, and broaden critical thinking skills? How do mathematics and research in psychological science help us better understand people and behavior? In this LC, we'll explore how probabilistic reasoning can be applied to everyday life in order to explore questions about why people make risky decisions, why games of chance are often counterintuitive, how decision-making is often biased by our personal intuitions, and how understanding probability applies to cognition and behavior. You'll learn how to apply mathematical concepts in a variety of real-world situations, as well as debunk common myths about people and behavior, including misconceptions about the brain and perception, development and aging, memory, learning, intelligence, motivation, personality, social interactions, and psychological disorders.

Successful completion of this community fulfills two WCSAM courses, Quantitative Emphasis, Research Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Atoms and Apps: The Role of Computers in Science and Medicine

CHEM 111 (Principles of Chemistry I and Lab), Professor Jessica Johnston
WCSAM 102 (Computer Science principles), Professor Greg Gagne

Computers are helping advance discoveries in science and medicine. For example, the 2013 Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded for computational chemistry research. Students in this learning community will develop mobile apps for Android phones and tablets while also discovering how computing is driving innovation in science and medicine. Some of the apps students develop in WCSAM 102 will be used directly in CHEM 111 to assist in data collection and analysis.

CHEM 111 is a required course for all science programs.

This Learning Community is designed for science majors and students in a pre-health program with no computer science or programming background.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSAM course and Learning Community WCore requirements.

What Makes Us Human and What Humans Make: The Mashup of Art and History

Art 110 (Survey of Art), Professor Hikmet Loe
WCFAH 110 (Models of History), Professor Mary Jane Chase

Explore the connections between the history of the world and the objects humans make for use, for beauty, for ritual, and for communication. We'll be looking at human development from the beginning of human migrations across the continents up to the Columbian Exchange (ca. 35,000 BCE to 1500 CE), including the development of cities, civilizations, world religions, trade, and how all of these developments are both reflected in and created by art and architecture. You'll learn the language of art, the mediums used, and how/why specific artworks were created. You'll explore how historians try to solve the puzzle of the past in a period where we don't have all the puzzle pieces. Does art imitate life or does life imitate art? Come and explore!

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCFAH requirement, Writing Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.



Mind. Body. Life.

WCSBS 103 (Communicating Across Cultures), Professor Jennifer Ritter
HPW 250 (Fitness for Life), Professor Traci Siriprathane

Coming to college means leaving what we are used to behind and involves establishing new routines, meeting new people, and developing identities. This learning community integrates social and physical dimensions of wellness beyond thinking: we will be doing. We will take charge of our health and make healthy choices for our minds and bodies. We will interact with others from Utah and beyond and learn how to be flexible communicators. We will learn to take care of our minds and bodies as we move into new places. Let's live a way of life to achieve our highest potential.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSBS course and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Analyzing Political Power

WCSAM 103 (Counting Votes), Professor Holly Zullo
WCSBS 106 (Explorations in Politics), Professor Michael Zarkin

The contemporary political world is overpopulated with people who freely express their opinions without reference to facts, data, or sound arguments. Wouldn't societies be better off if leaders and citizens alike formed their political conclusions based on sound analysis? We think so. In this learning community, we use the study of political systems as a vehicle for developing the writing and quantitative reasoning skills that all informed citizens should possess.

Successful completion of this community will complete one WCSAM course, one WCSBS course, Quantitative Emphasis, Writing Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Experiencing Business

BUSI 101A (Business Fundamentals I, Communicating), Professors Gail Aven-
daño and David Perry
BUSI 101B (Business Fundamentals I, Calculating), Professors Richard Haskell and Alysse Morton

Are you interested in business? Considering enrolling in one of the dynamic majors offered through Westminster's Gore School of Business? This learning community will introduce you to the functional areas of business while giving you a strong foundation of communication and quantitative skills required to be successful in our business program. Students in this course will form a company, determine a set of products to sell to the Westminster community, manage the functional business areas, and ultimately influence the use of firm profits—including the funding of a community service project. In the process, students will become familiar with a variety of aspects of business in a real-world approach to learning and come to understand how personally rewarding business can be.

Completion of this community fulfills the Learning Community WCore requirement. BUSI 101A and BUSI 101B fulfill core requirements for Business for business majors, computer information systems (CIS) majors, and business minors.

Also available during Spring Semester 2017.

Writing Culture

WCFAH 105 (Communicating Through Writing), Professor Fatima Mujcinovic
WCSBS 104 (Culture in Anthropology), Professor Gretchen Siegler

In addition to introducing key strategies of academic writing and research, this learning community will explore how societies throughout the world construct, interpret, and perform gender and sexuality. We will begin to understand the abstract concept of culture and its foundational role in shaping ideas and identities through the lens of cultural ethnography. From kinship systems and rites of passage to fluid gender variations and modern sex, the fascinating topics of cultural anthropology will offer many opportunities for vigorous class discussions, team presentations, analytical papers, and research projects. All course assignments will emphasize critical thinking and analytical writing skills while promoting well-informed understanding of cultural differences.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCFAH course, one WCSBS course, Writing Emphasis, Research Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.



Growing Up and Growing Older

WCSBS 101 (Aging Matters), Professor Cordelia Schaffer
WCSBS 108 (Hot Topics in Development), Professor Barbara Schulz Smith

What do we know about birth, dying, and all of the life-changing events in between? In this learning community, we will explore the science of lifespan development and aging. Students will examine aspects of development and aging within historical, cultural, physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, economic, and interpersonal contexts. The impact of an increased aging population will be a central theme. Current cross-cultural research on emerging trends in development will also be showcased. Come ready to read, write, and explore the hot topic of how we age across the lifespan and why it matters.

Completion of this community fulfills two WCSBS course requirements, Writing Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Ways of Being/Know Thyself

WCSBS 102 (Bust that Psych Myth), Professor Paul Presson
EDUC 201 (Discovering Creativity through Multiple Intelligences), Professor Tim Carr

Ways of Being suggests that we are complete and unique human beings with a vast array of likes, dislikes, abilities, skills, and strengths. We believe that a life well-lived involves appreciating others at a deep level of understanding, as well as being a contributing member of the community.

Knowing yourself is about understanding and predicting human behavior. We will examine the factors that contribute to people's perceptions of reality. Those perceptions are in turn shaped by culture. As we cover the fundamentals of psychology, we will examine our culture from a psychological perspective.

Through this community experience, you will discover great things about yourself, your friends, family members, and your classmates.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSBS course, the Research Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Alien Encounters

WCFAH 109 (Making Sense of Movies), Professor Sean Desilets
WCFAH 102 (Alien Encounters in History), Professor Mary Jane Chase

This community uses the concept of alien encounters to illuminate some central concerns in history and film studies. To study history we encounter a different time, one inhabited by people who think differently from us. We study how people in the past reacted to encounters between different cultures. Medieval Christians and Muslims, slaves and masters in ancient Rome: all are examples of cultures that intersect and interact. The community will also consider how films have both addressed historical encounters (Revenant) and imagined others (the cantina scene in the original Star Wars). We will see films as particularly fertile ground for understanding and addressing cross-cultural confrontations. Some films may contain violent and sexually explicit images.

Successful completion of this fulfills two WCFAH courses, Writing Emphasis, Research, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Understanding You: Unlocking the Mysteries Behind Your Appetite, Interests, and Attitudes

WCSAM 102 (Computer Science Principles), Professor Helen Hu
WCSAM 106 (Genetics of Human Behavior), Professor Brian Avery

Why are people good at certain things, but not at others? Why do some people enjoy eating, while others live to exercise? Why do some people hold rigid attitudes, while others float between extremes? The answer to these questions about you—and many more—can be partially answered by genetics. In this learning community, students learn fundamental principles of genetics and get answers to some of life's most interesting questions, questions that look at how much of our life is shaped by our family inheritance and how much by our environments. Students in this learning community will develop apps for their Android devices while discovering how computing answers questions and drives innovation in genetics and other fields. This learning community is targeted at students with no computer programming background.

Successful completion of this community fulfills two WCSAM courses, Quantitative Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.



Wired or Fired: Understanding the Digital Divide in Society

WCSAM 102 (Computer Science Principles), Professor Helen Hu
WCSBS 114 (The Sociological Imagination), Professor Julie Stewart

Your generation is the most connected in history—and your phone is the key. You watch TV, monitor your exercise, check your bank account, and send texts all on your phone. But who is creating this technology? First, the good news: Creating phone apps is something everyone can do, including you. Now, the bad news: Have you heard about the digital divide? This refers to the “haves” and the “have nots” in terms of technology and those who create technology. Unfortunately, many people think they can’t create technology. In this learning community, we will explore the social factors that contribute to low numbers of women, people of color, and non-wealthy studying and working in science, technology, engineering, and math. Learning about these social factors of exclusion will help us to change this. You will learn the principles of computer science and will develop apps for Android devices. This learning community is targeted at students with no computer programming background.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSAM course, one WCSBS course, Diversity Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.



Rock Your Body

WCSAM 107 (Geology of the American West), Professor Dave Goldsmith
HPW 250 (Fitness for Life), Professor Laura Iverson

It has been said that the best geologist is the one who has seen the most rocks. But to see the rocks, first you need to get to them. Students in this learning community will gain the confidence and fitness to hike to some of the Salt Lake valley’s most interesting rock formations—and the scientific knowledge to understand what those rocks tell us about the geological history of the West and of the earth in general. In this learning community, students will learn about how their bodies and the earth work, and how energy and force can shape them both.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSAM course and the Learning Community WCore requirements.



Environment: Science, Society, and Culture

ENVI 101 (Environment: Science, Society, and Culture), Professor Brent Olsen and TBD

With topics ranging from agriculture to climate change to biodiversity and beyond, this team-taught course will challenge you to think through the interconnected and complicated relationships between people and the world we live in. Through this course, students will have the opportunity to engage in an on-campus environmental project. This learning community will offer you a chance to explore the complicated nature of environmental issues from the perspectives of the social sciences, the humanities, and the natural sciences.

Successful completion of this course will complete the Learning Community WCore requirements.

Also available during Spring Semester 2017.



Why Social Entrepreneurs and Artists Make Fine Bedfellows

WCFAH 113 (Power of Arts in Our Community), Professor David Dynak
WCSBS 206 (Social Entrepreneurship: Doing Well While Doing Good), Professor Cliff Hurst

This learning community tells the story of how tiny, provocative ideas can grow into large enterprises. It is the story of how healthy communities with rich arts and culture networks are envisioned and sculpted; it is the story of our new economy that is driven by creativity and innovation. We will learn the plot points of how data about arts, culture, and entrepreneurship are identified, documented, and analyzed for opportunity. The story explores how openings are mined by individuals deeply concerned about social transformation. It is a story of how we might let go of the world as we know it—and imagine the sorts of social initiatives that could help us navigate our precarious future.

Successful completion of the community will fulfill one WCFAH course, one WCSBS course, Writing Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.



The World That Is and The World That Ought To Be

WCSBS 114 (The Sociological Imagination), Professor Mark Rubinfeld
PHIL 206 (Introduction to Ethics), Professor Jason Goltz

Exploring the cultural, moral, and social contexts of who we are, what we do, and why we do it, this learning community integrates sociology and philosophy to examine the values, beliefs, judgments, actions, relations, expectations, obligations, organizations, and institutions that constitute society.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSBS course, Diversity Emphasis, and the Learning Community WCore requirements.

Migration to Education: Global Immigration and Domestic Realities in the US

WCFAH 112 (Patterns of Global Immigration), Professor Gary Marquardt
WCSBS 110 (Immigration, Education, & Equity), Professor Marilee Coles-Ritchie

More people migrate to the United States than to any other country in the world. Currently, one in five people living in the US are first- or second-generation residents. Unlike the immigrants arriving at the turn of the twentieth century, recent immigrants are mostly from the global South, not Europe. They are transforming the United States into a society consisting of multiple racial and ethnic groups. This Learning Community explores the background of immigration and how it interacts with today's US school system. Who becomes and immigrant and why? How does immigration affect US school systems? How do school structures enable and constrain new immigrants? This LC provides a foundation for understanding the lived experiences of immigrant populations from a global and local perspective.

Completion of this community will fulfill one WCFAH course, one WCSBS course, Diversity Emphasis, and the Learning Community WCore requirements.

Innovative Connections

WCFAH 118 (Yogic Experience), Professor Nina Vought
WCFAH 101 (Being Creative), Professor Heidi Van Ert

This learning community is designed to be an interactive exploration of creativity while providing the opportunity to develop a personal practice of yoga. As class participants, we will discover the benefits of yoga's moving and breathing principles. We will be encouraged to expand our practice beyond the mat, bringing increased awareness into all aspects of our lives. Students will be given the chance to explore specific aspects of creativity in order to enhance educational, personal, and career objectives. This class will be more about asking big questions rather than providing simple answers. Questions we will ponder include: what is creativity? What is the power of failure? How can a personal practice of yoga enrich the creative and imaginative process? This course is highly experiential in nature and will be geared toward the specific individuals who are enrolled.

Successful completion of this community will fulfill two WCFAH courses and the Learning Community WCore requirements.

Also available during Spring Semester 2017.

Early Start (Offered Summer Block B)

AVFL 121 (Foundations of Flight) & AVFL 122A (Foundations of Flight Lab I), Professor Scott Olsen
AVIA 100 (Transitioning to College for Aviation Students), Professors Gail Avendaño & Lance Vaculin

This learning community is designed for flight students accepted into the Early Start program, which begins July 5. These classes provide students with a foundation of success as they transition to college and begin a unique and innovative flight-training curriculum. Students will also prepare to pass the FAA written exam (required for a private pilot's certificate) before the end of summer.

Successful completion of this community fulfills the AVFL 121 (Foundations of Flight) requirement for aviation students and the Learning Community WCore requirement.



Aviation Connections

AVIA 101 (Air Transportation), Professor John Schaefer
 INTR 100 (Transitioning to College), Professor Gail Avendaño

This learning community is designed for flight operations or aviation management majors who are starting their first semester of college. Students will be given an overview of the aviation industry, and will receive a solid introduction to the academic expectations of college-level study and the resources available to ensure their success.

Successful completion of this community fulfills the AVIA (Air Transportation) requirement for aviation students and the Learning Community WCore requirement.

West Arches Learning Community

WCSBS 102 (Bust that Psych Myth), Professor Julian Mendez
 WARCH 101 (Seminar 1), Professor Jen Simonds

Students admitted to the WestARCHES program will participate in community-based research for a local organization through the WestARCHES Seminar I. Students will connect the skills they are developing in that experience to a range of psychological topics through Bust That Psych Myth.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSBS course, Research Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Perceptions of (Un)Fairness

WCSBS 109, (Imagining (In)justice), Professor Giancarlo Panagia
 WCFAH 213, (Re)Visioning (dis)Ability), Professor Shamby Polychronis

Come explore social justice issues by going beyond talking about justice to reflectively observing the potentials of isms, bias, bigotry, power, privilege, and oppression in human interactions. In this community, you will explore controversial issues of morality, ethics, and values, while learning how to put problems into broader historical and cultural contexts and develop an expanded view of self that includes one's relationship to others in diverse communities.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSBS course, Research Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Big Picture, Little Picture: Locating the Self in Society

WCSBS 114 (The Sociological Imagination), Professor Kristjane Nordmeyer
 WCFAH 106 (Drawing, Inquiry, and Expression), Professor Naomi Marine

Sociology studies the social world in which we live, from large institutions to individual interactions. Although we experience this world from our own unique perspectives, there are many larger patterns we can see when we look at the big picture. This learning community will focus on developing awareness about the ways in which individuals form a sense of self within larger social structures. Students will develop their basic drawing abilities and use visual language to reflect, analyze, and communicate about the connections between self and society.

Successful completion of the community will fulfill one WCSBS course, one WCFAH course, Diversity, and the Learning Community WCore requirements.



SPRING 2017

Environment: Science, Society, and Culture

ENVI 101 (Environment: Science, Society, and Culture), Professor Brent Olsen and TBD

With topics ranging from agriculture to climate change to biodiversity and beyond, this team-taught course will challenge you to think through the interconnected and complicated relationships between people and the world we live in. Through this course, students will have the opportunity to engage in an on-campus environmental project. This learning community will offer you a chance to explore the complicated nature of environmental issues from the perspectives of the social sciences, the humanities, and the natural sciences.

Successful completion of this course fulfills the Learning Community WCore requirement.

Bones: Writing Our Story

WCSBS 116 (Apes, Archaeology, and Evolution), Professor Gretchen Siegler
WCFAH 105 (Communicating through Writing), Professor Chris LeCluyse

Our ability to communicate through symbols is one of the prime abilities that make us human. In this learning community, we will explore how we got to be this way and, in the process, learn how to enter the academic conversation through writing. Apes, Archaeology, and Evolution will examine the evolutionary development of our species through the study of paleoanthropology, primatology, and archeology. Meanwhile, Communicating through Writing will cultivate your ability to analyze, write, and revise academic writing. In addition to studying the evolution of humans and their primate cousins, we will consider how evolution has shaped our language and beliefs, how the metaphor of evolution has been extended to other spheres of human activity, and how scientific research is communicated to—and debated among—the public.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCSBS course, one WCFAH course, Writing Emphasis, Research Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Gender, Popular Culture, and the Social World

WCSBS 202 (Gender in Society), Professor Kristjane Nordmeyer
SOC 320 (Sociology of Popular Culture), Professor Mark Rubinfeld

Exploring gender in the social world—along with popular culture's influence in shaping that world—this learning community integrates gender studies, sociological perspectives, and popular culture analysis to examine gender, society, and the relationships between gender and society. From policy to popular culture with films, field trips, and guest speakers adding to the excitement, this learning community is for anyone interested in learning more about gender, society, and popular culture.

Successful completion of this community will fulfill one WCSBS course, the Diversity Emphasis, and the Learning Community WCore requirement.

Poverty and the Market Systems

WCFAH 209 (Poverty and Global Justice), Professor Michael Popich
WCSBS 105 (Economics Ethics & Growth), Professor John Watkins

Efforts to extend the market by transforming nature, human beings, and means of production into commodities—something produced for sale—generates economic growth. But it also creates crisis, inequality, environmental degradation, and so on. In this community, we will look at what widely applied ethical theories have to say about (the morality of or not) poverty. Our guiding question will be the basic question of distributive justice: who gets what and on what basis? Topics included will be the social legislation of the 1930s, the rise of unions, the Affordable Care Act, the environmental movement to protect nature, and the bailout of the economy by the government.

Successful completion of this community fulfills one WCFAH course, one WCSBS course, and the Learning Community WCore requirement.



Innovative Connections

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WCFAH 101 (Being Creative), Professor Heidi Van Ert

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Successful completion of this community fulfills two WCFAH courses and the Learning Community WCore requirements.

Composing Time

WCFAH 117 (Writing Time), Professor Sean Desilets
WCFAH 106 (Drawing, Inquiry, Expression), Professor Matt Kruback

We use the word “compose” to describe both writing and drawing. If you trace the word “compose” back to its origin, it means “place down together.” We will take that etymology seriously by thinking about how discreet instants get placed down together when you make something. This learning community considers the problem of how pictures and words take up time. We will divide the time it takes to compose pictures and essays into pieces, and then figure out how we put those pieces together in ways that make sense. We will write about the time it takes to draw and make images of the time it takes to write.

Successful completion of this community fulfills two WCFAH courses, Writing Emphasis, and Learning Community WCore requirements.

Experiencing Business

BUSI 101A (Business Fundamentals I, Communicating), Professors Gail Aven-
daño and David Perry
BUSI 101B (Business Fundamentals I, Calculating), Professors Richard Haskell and Alysse Morton

Are you interested in business? Considering enrolling in one of the dynamic majors offered through Westminster's Gore School of Business? This learning community will introduce you to the functional areas of business while giving you a strong foundation of communication and quantitative skills required to be successful in our business program. Students in this course will form a company, determine a set of products to sell to the Westminster community, manage the functional business areas, and ultimately influence the use of firm profits—including the funding of a community service project. In the process, students will become familiar with a variety of aspects of business in a real-world approach to learning and come to understand how personally rewarding business can be.

Completion of this community fulfills the Learning Community WCore requirement. BUSI 101A and BUSI 101B fulfill core requirements for Business for business majors, computer information systems (CIS) majors, and business minors.

For additional information on the First-Year Program, please contact Barbara Smith at 801.832.2420 or bsmith@westminstercollege.edu.