

## Curriculum Committee Resolution 23/24-13

Date: April 18, 2024  
To: St. Olaf Faculty  
From: Curriculum Committee  
RE: Proposed New Courses

At the April 2024 Faculty Meeting the Curriculum Committee will move that the faculty approve the following new courses.

### **ENVST 204: Sustainable Development in Costa Rica**

**Course description:** This course uses the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a critical lens for examining sustainable development in tropical regions, using the case study of Costa Rica - a global leader in conserving its lands and water systems. Leveraging the Costa Rican context as a classroom, this course has a significant field-based component. Faculty lectures are supplemented by guest speakers, hands-on workshops, field visits, and short research projects.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Fulfills the following requirements:**

**GE:** None

**OLE Core:** NTS - Natural Science

**Rationale:** This course is a single element of the Global Semester program. Global Semester is a fall-semester-length academic program which gives students insight into sites around the world. Through the combination of coursework in a variety of disciplines and experiential learning opportunities, the semester provides a remarkable experience of academic merit and personal development.

The Sustainable Development in the Tropics: Costa Rica and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals course offers students the opportunity for in depth study of environmental sustainability ground in Costa Rica and connected to other conversations in the department.

The course is a single element of the Global Semester program, open only to semester participants who apply and are accepted to participate. Even where general topics of study overlap with on-campus courses, the students participating in this course have the opportunity for mentored experiential learning in the host context.

### **HIST 248: Digital Storytelling: Podcasting**

**Course description:** This course explores a public-facing format for historical storytelling: podcasting. Students are trained in assessing podcasts as public history, then develop podcasting episode topics, conduct historical research, practice “writing for the ear”, learn how to optimize sound recording and edit audio, and engage in peer review and iterative writing and

audio editing processes. For the final project, students work together to produce a podcast of their own, from concept to final product.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Fulfills the following requirements:**

**GE:** None

**OLE Core:** WAC - Writing Across the Curriculum  
OEP - Ole Experience in Practice

**Counts toward:** B.A. in History

**DegreePath Bucket Info:** Two additional courses - History electives

**Rationale:** This is a course that was offered successfully as a "Methods Seminar" in spring 2023, and which won a 2023 Cassling Innovation Award. Along with Oral History and Genealogy Workshop, the History department has been growing its methodological approaches to "doing" history in the last decade or so; Digital History is another approach to history methods that is essential for our students (as professional academic and public historians, teachers, and a range of vocations). This course centers on the application of digital historical research methods, and experiential learning, where students develop as writers and researchers. A 200-level course focused on podcasting also complements our higher-level Digital History course, where students typically engage a wider range of digital history methodologies outside of podcasting (such as geomapping, textual analyses, sentiment analyses, etc). The course has a listed cap of 18 because it is intended to be offered as a WAC, as iterative writing of podcast scripts and podcast public history reviews are the focus of the course.

## **REL 215: Gender and Judaism**

**Course description:** This course explores how gender has shaped Jewish texts, ideas, and practices in a variety of historical contexts. Students consider how Jewish thinkers have understood - and sometimes worked to change - how gender operates in Jewish life and thought. Students use these thinkers as models for exploring how to think about ethical and religious questions using resources from a tradition of thought that they both learn from and critique.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Fulfills the following requirements:**

**GE:** None

**OLE Core:** RFV - Religion, Faith and Values

**Counts toward:** B.A. in Religion

**DegreePath Bucket Info:** - Either Religion in History and Culture bucket or the requirement to study a "second tradition" (other than Christianity)

**Rationale:** This course adds a new approach to the study of Judaism to other courses in the department in two ways: first, it offers a direct focus on gender as a key lens for understanding Jewish life and thought. Second, it engages substantially with the full historical range of Jewish texts, from the Bible to the present day. While the department offers other courses on the intersection of gender and religion, this would be the only such course that would focus on Judaism.

While there are other courses that address gender elsewhere in the college, this course is among just a few courses considering the intersection of gender and religion and is the only course directly addressing gender and Judaism. This intersection allows students to be introduced to what for many of them is a new religious tradition while also using gender as a critical lens for analyzing it.

This course adds to a growing range of courses that introduce students to Jewish life and practice. While other existing courses have a more narrow historical focus, or place Judaism in direct conversation with another religious tradition, this course surveys a wide range of historical material, allowing students to build fluency in Jewish thought, as well as tools for thinking critically about gender in both historical and contemporary contexts.