

Pathway Descriptions

Titles – 100 Characters

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1. Ancient Civilizations

Humanity’s ancient past continues to influence the present in profound ways. This pathway examines the emergence of the major civilizations of the ancient world, beginning with the Paleolithic Era (2.5 million years ago), and ending at the close of the Middle Ages. The courses in this pathway show how societies, their technologies and their economic, political and belief systems evolved over time, and how each made significant contributions to the development of humanity. The courses also highlight how many aspects of these ancient civilizations continue to remain relevant in today’s world. **[598 char.]**

2. Business, Economy and Society

As societies throughout the world become globally integrated in time and space, debates have intensified over the roles of government, institutions, transnational production, corporate responsibility and personal ethics in fostering national economic development. The aim of this pathway is to encourage an interdisciplinary perspective on how business-society relations have evolved over time and in different places, as well as the socio-political, communication and ethical factors that influence such relations. **[516]**

3. Cities and Societies

Cities and societies are the essential building blocks of civilization. In fact, along with the culture and spaces they generate, they are the hallmarks of humanity’s civilization. We all live in or near urban societies, contribute to them, and are under their influence. Gaining an appreciation for the relationship between cities and society past and present, their inner and outer workings, their diversity, their rise and fall, their unequal socio-economic territoriality, as well as their cultural expressions, aids an appreciation of our own individual and collective experience within them. **[598]**

4. Cross Cultural Explorations

The breadth of contemporary cross-cultural experiences, from migrations to transnational flows of art and commerce, calls for a deeper understanding of the diverse intellectual foundations and everyday lived experiences that continue to shape cultural, economic, and political diversity in our global society. The intent of this pathway is to provide the tools necessary for comparative analysis and cross-cultural engagement by pairing a “big ideas” curriculum - examining, for example, different conceptions of

humanity, nature, and politics - with courses focusing on everyday experiences and skills development, such as cross-cultural communication. [654]

5. Cultures in Rebellion and Avant Gardes Innovation

Beginning in the late 19th Century, a new cultural movement was born: the avant garde. With the avant garde, a centuries old pact between the artist and the broader society was broken, and with that break art's purpose, autonomy, significance, and purview all became open questions. This pathway seeks to understand the historical, theoretical, and aesthetic practices that constitute the avant garde in a wide variety of mediums including art, visual culture, poetry, theatre, literature, music, and film. [506]

6. Design and the Built Environment

This pathway considers the interaction between design practices and human needs, use and utility as they manifest themselves in the constructed environment that surrounds us. Through attention to issues such as spatial histories and demographic change, design aesthetics, and the phenomena of the city, "Design and the Built Environment" aims to develop awareness of design as a form of critical thinking and an analytical approach to problem solving. [451]

7. Environment and Sustainability

Who we are is intimately linked to nature and the environment we inhabit. This pathway explores the different ways people create, interact with, and change their environment, and how humanity, in turn, is influenced by these changes. The courses in this pathway explore different aspects of this dynamic: the science behind the processes generating environmental changes such as global warming; social and humanistic implications of social structures; and technical solutions to advance human development while sustaining natural resources. [463]

8. Global Conflicts

One way to write the history of the human race is to write its history of its conflicts. This pathway considers the way in which wars throughout history and around the world have shaped the human story and served to define issues such as international relations, regional development, and human rights. Through the study of specific conflicts alongside the representation of war in art, literature, and the social sciences, this pathway seeks to understand the role of conflict in world history. [495]

9. Global South

The goal of this pathway is to analyze the unequal power relations present in experiences and histories defined by Euro-American norms, exploring the many ways other cultures have sought to challenge dominant understandings of the world and offer

alternative perspectives, theories, and ways of knowing. Courses will focus on the cultural, historical, political, and economic origins and consequences of a world divided among the rich and poor, the privileged and excluded, the mainstream and the marginalized. [511]

10. Health, Medicine and Society

What are “health” and “illness”? What are their causes? What counts as “normal” or “abnormal”? Is anatomy – or genetics – destiny? These questions are fundamental to medicine, yet they involve much more than biological factors. Physicians, health-care professionals, policymakers, and citizens need to understand how such “social contexts” affect our attempts to heal, cure, or live with disease or disability. This pathway explores the ever-changing relationships between bodies/biology and the social, cultural, political, environmental, and economic determinants of health, disease, illness, and normality, and tackles questions such as who gets ill, and why; who gets labeled abnormal, and why; how societies across the globe construct and respond to illness and abnormality; the changing experience and meanings of health and illness; the historical forces shaping the physician-patient relationship; and the future of medicine and health-care. [949]

11. Human Nature

Individuals and societies have long pondered questions about what (if anything) constitutes the core of human nature and how much universality or variability there is in what we call humanity. This pathway provides an avenue to reflect upon what it means to be human and what our place is in the natural world from a variety of historical and disciplinary perspectives. It includes philosophical discussion of a host of big questions about meaning, value, knowledge, and reality; analysis of the biological and cognitive underpinnings of human behavior; and courses on the genetic, evolutionary, developmental, and artistic approaches to these fundamental issues. [664]

12. Media, Innovation, Entrepreneurship

This pathway considers the innovative use of media (film, digital, and print) within the context of business, entrepreneurship and economics, seeking to understand the ways in which media technologies drive innovation, while also replicating and producing culture, and creating new forms of social relation. It provides the opportunity to study media in its various forms while also appreciating its role in the workplace, the formation of innovative ventures at the organizational and management level, and the ways in which media entrepreneurship manifests itself in different geographic locations and countries. [615]

13. Milestones in Western Culture and Arts

This pathway serves as an introduction to some of the most important cultural milestones of western civilization through a variety of forms including art, literature,

architecture, music and film. It affords a deeper appreciation of the role played by aesthetics and artistic production in the shaping of western societies and sensibilities through history, and the interplay between cultural forms and social forces such as politics, philosophy, conflict, and religion. **[454]**

14. Myth, Language and Culture

The most visible marker of a culture is the language that it uses. This is all the more remarkable given that language is in a constant state of flux; but the fluctuations of language occur within a structured system, and that system can be remarkably persistent over time. It has been argued that myth is in essence a form of language, a structured system that encodes crucial cultural information and persists as a structure, if, like language, given to variant expression. This pathway examines not only the structure of language, but how cultural knowledge evolves, persists, and is transferred through linguistic and mythic structure across a variety of traditions. **[670]**

15. Place, Space, and Time

For millennia, humans have interacted with the physical world by creating cities, public spaces, sanctuaries, and works of art. Along the way, they have learned how to exploit natural resources and the distinct advantages offered by different geographical settings and environments. Using media, data, and location-aware technologies to better understand the world of yesterday, today and tomorrow, this pathway explores the ways in which maps, web-geospatial data, satellite images and computational process can be used to interpret the historical and cultural use of space in the past, present and future. **[608]**

16. Religious Diversity

Offering a consideration of a variety of religious traditions, both western and non-western, to provide a larger understanding of their history, their practices, and the ways in which they shape individual and group life, this pathway investigates how religions shape and are shaped by human cultures from multiple perspectives. **[329]**

17. Screen Cultures

Since the mid twentieth century, social life, politics, and identity have been increasingly bound up with on-screen representations. More recently, digital technologies have transformed audiences from simple spectators to user-producer-consumers. Moving pictures have migrated from movie screen to computer screen to mobile phone, and both pictures and screens have become increasingly interactive and responsive to touch. “Screen Cultures” explores the role of screen medias – both digital and film – in the framing and construction of culture. Courses in this pathway will look at expanded notions of cinema in a variety of cultural contexts, and at the impact of interactive screens (games, websites) on contemporary culture. **[729]**

18. Social Justice in a Changing World

This pathway offers an opportunity to explore the promises and challenges of working for social justice in the modern world. The pathway introduces students to the ways in which people analyze justice, oppression and power, and organize to confront deeply-entrenched inequalities. Combining courses on the cultures of social justice – how people have expressed ideals of justice in literature, art, fiction, social media, and film – and its institutions – such as organized campaigns for social change, social movements and national and international non-governmental organizations, classes examine multiple issues that have spurred attempts to create more just societies, including but not limited to: movements for the abolition of slavery, human trafficking, environmental protection, civil rights, women’s equality, indigenous recognition, as well as for the rights of workers, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ communities, and the disabled. **[938]**

19. Social Problems and Social Policies

What causes large-scale social problems? Where do they come from? When do people start to notice them? What can be done to resolve them? Why are they so tough to fix? This pathway focuses on a range of approaches that can be used to try to understand, minimize or resolve persistent social problems such as income inequality, differential access to housing, rapidly aging societies, and more. Courses in this pathway focus on both understanding the roots of social problems and innovative solutions to social problems. **[519]**

20. Spectacular Worlds

We live in a society of the spectacle – the translation of human experience into lively forms for the purpose of shared viewing and contemplation. At our best and worst we turn to spectacle to define ourselves, and to better understand relationships across local and global contexts. Participation in social media and consumption of internet videos or reality TV - popular, contemporary forms of spectacle that continue to change the direction and discourse of global networking - have precedents in histories of live arts performance, festivals, rituals, museums, political demonstrations, literary creation, advertising, parks, architectural design, and technological innovation. This pathway considers the primacy of spectacle around the world to offer perspectives on how it engages with different cultures and peoples. **[824]**

21. Understanding Racism

Overt and covert racism have endured as fundamental social problems in the U.S. since prior to its inception as a country—and racism has been expressed and experienced around the world for hundreds of years. Racism exacts a huge human toll. Is there a way to progress beyond the problems and pathologies associated with racism? This pathway explores the origin and role of race, racism, prejudice, and discrimination in politics, the economy, communities, law, education, pop culture, and social relationships. **[511]**

22. War, Violence and Society

How has violence and warfare shaped American society? Can our society ever be free from violence, or is it an innate, unavoidable characteristic of our democracy? This pathway considers the history, policy, and representation of violence in American culture across a range of disciplinary perspectives to analyze the role of violence and its effect on the development of individuals and the nation. **[399]**