

Deep Learning Signature Course Syllabus

The Why

Individuals who are actively engaged in authentic work and inspired by their experiences are empowered to go on to create thriving global communities.

The How

The course focuses on developing future-ready skills through metacognitive reflection, student agency, and partnerships with professionals. Students explore global and local issues, enhancing Portrait of a Learner (PoL) competencies. The course includes conversations around provocations as well as Harkness-style discussions, encouraging deep questioning and intellectual development. Students engage in rigorous reflection, asking critical questions, and creating artifacts for authentic audiences to showcase their learning.

The Discussions and Norms

Both provocations and the conversations they elicit will bring a diversity of perspectives and could create potentially challenging dialogues. The point of this course is to teach how to engage in civil discourse, empathy, and perspective-taking, including teaching students how to discuss topics with people who have different views, opinions, and beliefs than them in a productive and respectful manner. We will avoid personal attacks in these conversations, and listen respectfully while actively seeking to understand our classmates' perspectives. We will seek to avoid assumptions about any member of the class or generalizations about social groups. We will encourage students to understand that individuals speak for themselves, and not their (perceived) social group. There will be times when people make mistakes in the conversations we are having. We will provide an environment where students can be brave about those mistakes and learn how to move forward after these mistakes in a productive and mutually healthy way, on a case-by-case basis.

The Assessment: Based on the following [Strands and Standards](#)

- **Reflection on Communication:** Through this reflection, I demonstrate the self-directed or team-decided choices I made in communicating to my audience considering the impact of my choices.
- **Reflection on Process:** Through this reflection, I demonstrate how I engaged in meaningful knowledge construction based on the materials I used and how I turned ideas into action. This is also a reflection on how I worked independently and interdependently as a team.
- **Reflection on Significance:** Through this reflection, I demonstrate a global perspective via an ability to make clear and meaningful connections between my learning and the world expressing and creating novel ideas and solutions.

Thread 1: “The Unexamined Life is not Worth Living”-Socrates

- Global Problem 1: [How does knowledge of self impact our views of local and global issues?](#)
- Global Problem 2: [How do we determine what we personally believe?](#)
- Global Problem 3: [How do biases influence, or interfere with, movements on local and global issues?](#)

This section prompts students to assess their internal standards, exploring the significance of values like service and humility in creating effective teams and thriving communities. Collaboratively, they'll address transdisciplinary issues related to UN SDGs, such as Gender Equality, Education, Politics, Economic Systems, and Sustainability. This section invites students to delve into the distinctions between truth, fact, and beliefs, and to ponder the existence of universal truths, the mutability of truths, and the resilience of certain truths to change. It also prompts students to analyze the implications of a post-truth/alternative fact world and to examine how cultural narratives influence the truths we embrace. Ultimately, this section aims to enhance students' ability to discern information and evaluate claims.

Thread 2: "Any large-scale human cooperation is rooted in common myths that exist only in people's collective imagination."-Yuval Noah Harari

- Global Problem 4: [Through what means do we determine what is ethical?](#)

This section asks students to think about what is moral and ethical right and where do these morals and ethics stem from. Students will examine ethical dilemmas in global problems, such as in technology, business, politics, and globalization. They will ask what is worth preserving and what should change as society progresses.

Thread 3: "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." — Martin Luther King, Jr.

- Global Problem 5: [How do we know what should matter in a thriving community?](#)
- Global Problem 6: [How do we balance divergent truths, values and beliefs in the creation of a thriving community?](#)
- [Meaningful Action Project](#)

This section challenges students to explore societal expectations and conflicting goals, encouraging them to contemplate the significance of problems, develop innovative solutions, capitalize on opportunities, and make a difference on critical issues. It also prompts students to consider how they can inspire others to care about these issues and adapt as learners. Students will need to be critical in their exploration around decision making for a thriving community

balancing divergent truths, values and beliefs. Students will leverage the insights gained from their metacognitive reflections on the PoL competencies to chart their course for making an impact in the world. Students will use what they created in global problem 7, as well as their work from the entire year, to determine an area of focus for their meaningful action in a group. They will take part in a need based, thoroughly researched action project.