

OLLI Course Description and Instructor Bio Examples

The purpose of this document is to provide OLLI Instructors with a reference for crafting engaging course descriptions and narrative biographies for new course proposals.

Below are examples of accepted course descriptions and instructor bios that have appeared in our course catalogs.

Course Description:

Iceland Essentials Part I: Nature and Environment

Iceland may be a small island nation on the edge of the Arctic Circle, but few places on earth have so many diverse natural wonders. Surging tourism has also made Iceland a perfect laboratory for the evolving field of sustainable travel as visitors seek to minimize their impact on its pristine environments. In the first of a two-part series, we will explore Iceland's glaciers, geysers, volcanoes, lava fields, fjords, and waterfalls as well as its hardy flora and spectacular wildlife. Class attendees will discover Iceland's dynamic and dramatic landscapes and natural history while developing an appreciation for responsible tourism.

Instructor Bio:

Amy Denton has a Ph.D. in plant molecular evolution from the University of Washington. She has been a professor of biology at CSUCI since 2003 and prior to that was faculty in the University of Alaska Fairbanks Department of Biology & Wildlife. Amy studies how climate and geology have influenced the evolution of arctic and alpine plant populations. Plant hunting has taken her to the mountains of the Pacific Northwest, Tibet, Yunnan, and to the arctic regions of Alaska, Canada, Iceland, Svalbard, and Greenland. Amy maintains a keen interest in the history of science, particularly evolutionary biology, botany, and biogeography.

Course Description:

Unlocking ChatGPT's Potential

This course is designed to help you unlock the full potential of ChatGPT, one of the most advanced natural language processing tools from OpenAI. The course focuses on effective prompt engineering, which is the art of crafting compelling prompts that elicit high-quality responses from ChatGPT. Through lectures and real-world examples, you will learn how to use ChatGPT more effectively by creating prompts that are clear, concise, and relevant to your specific use case. You will also gain a good understanding of the underlying mechanisms of prompt engineering, including how to choose the right prompt type, how to balance specificity and open-endedness, and how to evaluate the quality of ChatGPT's responses. By the end of the course, you will have the skills and knowledge needed to unlock ChatGPT's full potential.

Instructor Bio:

Minder Chen, Ph.D., is a professor of Management Information Systems at California State University Channel Islands. He has a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from National Taiwan University, an M.B.A. from National Chiao Tung University, and a Ph.D. in Management Information Systems from the University of Arizona. He has taught various courses at undergraduate and graduate levels and published over 40 journal papers and several books in areas such as

electronic commerce, innovation and entrepreneurship, and management information systems. Chen is an Associate Editor of the Electronic Commerce Research Journal and a keynote speaker on emerging technologies.

Course Description:

Existentialist Thought in the Life and Works of Albert Camus

The class will begin with a brief exploration of the nature of Existentialist thought, a 20th century philosophical movement that centers on the individual's experience of existence and the search for meaning in life. We will then focus on one of the most influential and intriguing figures of the movement, the French writer Albert Camus. Through an examination of Camus' life and works, we will analyze how he expressed and developed Existentialist ideas, and how he contributed to shaping the movement's legacy. Whether you are a seasoned scholar of philosophy or a curious newcomer, this course offers a stimulating and thought-provoking exploration of one of the most important intellectual movements of the modern era.

Instructor Bio:

Bill Garlington, Ph.D., has a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in History from UCLA and a Doctorate in Asian Studies and Sociology from the Australian National University. He has taught at all academic levels on three continents and carried out sociological/anthropological fieldwork in India. His main academic interests are the sociology of religion and the history of ideas

Course Description:

The Genetics Revolution: A Whole New World

Trailblazing scientists are making ground-breaking discoveries in the rapidly evolving world of genetic engineering. Technologies like CRISPR are making it possible to quickly and cheaply change the DNA of all living things. Science is at a tipping point, as human beings perch at the cusp of technologies and decisions that can change the world as we know it. In this class we trace the brief but intense history of gene editing, from the discovery of the structure of DNA, sequencing the human genome, and cracking the code of life. This life-science revolution holds the promise of improving the world, but at what cost? Do we want to help shape the future, or sit back and let it shape us? We explore these big questions and meet the men and women propelling the science as it progresses at a breakneck speed. No background in science required, just curiosity

Instructor Bio:

Mark Olevin has taught the History of Science for OLLI programs at Cal State Fresno, University of Washington, and UCLA since 2018. He has previously worked as a designer and consultant with clients including NASA/JPL, Amgen and Lockheed. Marc is a member of the History of Science Society and a graduate of Wayne State University in Detroit. He is a speaker to civic and professional groups and brings the ever-evolving story of science to life with a spotlight on the individuals who never stop questioning; their stories illustrate the endless curiosity for discovery and impact our lives daily.