

Course Justification

Logical thinking skills and strategy are important abilities for many fields. The card game of bridge can be an intense mental activity that hones logical thinking skills and strategic thinking. To quote Sharon Osberg from a New York Times, Nov. 27, 2005 article, "Bridge embodies cooperation, logic, problem-solving and has even been linked to higher test scores among children."

Warren Buffett is a bridge enthusiast and claims that bridge sharpens minds and business acumen. "Bridge is a great way to learn inference." Buffett says. "A lot of decisions you make in life you make by inferring what you know." (See <http://www.nextavenue.org/bridge-everywhere/>) There is evidence that bridge is also a healthy activity, especially for the elderly. (See <http://www.aarp.com/health/brain-health/info-2015/bridge-for-brain-health.html>) The instruction of bridge is growing, with some countries like Poland and China offering it in primary and secondary school curriculum. (See <http://www.acolbridgeclub.com/about-bridge/why-learn-bridge>)

Bridge is also offered for credit at some universities in the United States, including Rice University, Oklahoma State, Georgia Southern, Birmingham Southern, Calvin College, and University of Minnesota.

Course catalog description

A study of critical thinking skills and strategies particularly as they pertain to the game of bridge, including logical thinking, inferential analysis, problem solving skills, sequencing, visualization, lateral thinking, memory, observation, and psychological strategies. Communications skills found during bidding (including conventional bids) and during card play (signalling) will also be addressed. No prior knowledge is needed.

Learning outcomes or learning objectives for the course

- 1) Learn the rules of bridge, basic bidding, and card play.
- 2) Strengthen analytic skills, short- and long-term memory skills, and critical thinking.
- 3) Enhance non-verbal communication and teamwork skills, as well as quantitative literacy.
- 3) Learn the ethics of bridge and build a foundation for lifetime learning.
- 4) Gain knowledge of the history of bridge and its cultural impact.
- 5) Learn a game that is accessible to all ages and all physical abilities.

COURSE SYLLABUS
SPECIAL STUDIES
INTRODUCTION TO BRIDGE
LSINDP 296-01
HONORS 296-01
FALL 2018

Instructor: Dr. Peter Lampe

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Office Hours: Daily 11-12

Texts: *Play of the Hand in the 21st Century*, Grant and Starzac, *Bidding in the 21st Century*, Grant and Starzac

Important Dates:

- Sept 17 – Last Day to Drop without W
- Oct 26 – Last Day to Drop with W
- Dec 13 – Final Exam (4:45-6:45 pm)

Prerequisites: None.

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Course Objectives:

- 1) Learn the rules of bridge, basic bidding, and card play.
- 2) Strengthen analytic skills, short- and long-term memory skills, and critical thinking.
- 3) Enhance non-verbal communication and teamwork skills, as well as quantitative literacy.
- 4) Learn the ethics of bridge and build a foundation for lifetime learning.
- 5) Gain knowledge of history of bridge and its cultural impact.
- 6) Learn a game accessible to all ages and all physical abilities.

Attendance: Attendance is required for fifteen hours of regularly scheduled class meetings and at the end of the year tournament scheduled during the Final Exam Week. Students are encouraged to play on Thursday afternoons with the Whitewater Bridge

Club and at ACBL-sanctioned games and tournaments. Excused absences (including absences due to illness or University events) can be covered by attending these other games.

Grading: Weekly quizzes cover the prior week's reading. A Satisfactory grade is earned with an average quiz score of 70% or higher, and a No Credit grade is earned with an average quiz score below 70%.

Final Exam Week: Mini-Tournament, Dec 13, 4:45-6:45

Honors Project: To receive Honors Credit, a student must complete an Honors Project. Possible topics may include but are not limited to:

- Evaluation and/or comparison of bidding systems like Standard American Yellow Card, ACOL, Italian Blue Club, Two-Over-One (2/1) game forcing, and Precision, and a presentation of the results.
- Outreach to retirement communities, high schools, or under-represented groups.
- Study of inclusivity in bridge, including the accessibility of bridge for those with physical impairments, and the history of American Bridge Association, and a presentation of the results.
- Analyzing the organizational structure of a non-government organization like the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL) and organizing an event like a Sectional Tournament through the organization.

University Statement: The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is dedicated to a safe, supportive and non-discriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all undergraduate and graduate students to familiarize themselves with University policies regarding Special Accommodations, Misconduct, Religious Beliefs Accommodation, Discrimination and Absence for University Sponsored Events. (For details please refer to the Undergraduate and Graduate Timetables; the "Rights and Responsibilities" section of the Undergraduate Bulletin; the Academic Requirements and Policies and the Facilities and Services sections or the Graduate Bulletin; and the Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures" [UWS Chapter 14]; and the "Student Nonacademic Disciplinary Procedures" [UWS Chapter 17]).