

'The Walking Dead,' killer clowns and Bill Belichick: Unusual course topics in Central Mass. colleges

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One Central Massachusetts college is offering a course that will take students to Iceland to learn more about its geological and mythological history.

Two others are offering courses that will examine the AMC television show “The Walking Dead.”

With students making their way back to campus this fall, some colleges in the region shared a few examples of unusual and interesting courses they're offering this academic year.

Quinsigamond Community College

Trawl to Table

A culinary course that explores the theory and practice of fisheries' sustainability through lectures, readings and laboratory exercises and by interacting with local fishermen. This course focuses primarily on species harvested in the Gulf of Maine, with an emphasis on sustainable seafood options for local chefs.

Composition I and Composition II

Composition I will look at gaming to help students reimagine essay components and generate topics. The course will incorporate playing games, such as “Apple to Apples” and “Dungeons and Dragons.” From the satanic panic of the 1980s to killer clowns, the class also infuses classic and contemporary urban legends into the course to hone students' critical thinking

and reading skills by having students read articles from multiple disciplines. Students will be asked to use the readings from the course to analyze a local urban legend.

Composition II is themed around the Marvel Cinematic Universe and has students find essay topics in the films. Students will explore things such as heroic archetypes, examine gendered treatments of the characters and actors, reflect on race and colonialism, consider climate activism and fascism, interrogate the role of AI and ChatGPT, and generally reflect on the role of pop culture in our world.