



Albion College | Early Fall Classes

The Origins and Biology of Covid-19

Did the COVID-19 virus originate in a Chinese lab? Was it genetically engineered by scientists and released in Wuhan? Or, did it originate as a bat virus, transmit to an intermediate host and ultimately to humans? What was the direct source of introduction of the virus to the USA? How quickly does the virus mutate? How will this affect the development of a vaccine? How many different strains of the virus are currently circulating in the world? How does the virus infect human cells? What unique aspects of the virus make it particularly infective and contagious? In this course we will investigate these questions, focusing on how genome sequencing has been used to track the origins and biology of Covid-19 virus.

Ken Saville, Professor of Biology

Education During the Pandemic

The course focuses on personal experiences and the larger impact of COVID-19. The pandemic has had broad and diverse impacts on recent educational experiences from January 2020 to now. It has also imposed consequences differently individuals, families and communities. What are these differences? And, how do these connect to issues of gender, immigration, race, socioeconomic status? Film, music, social media video, oral history, artwork, and games will facilitate our exploration of the pandemic's impact across our communities and country.

Kyle Shanton, Professor of Education

Suellyn Henke, Professor of Education

Betty Okwako-Riekkola, Associate Professor of Education

Democracy: A Never-Ending Quest

Although many take democracy for granted, including American democracy, the system itself depends on active and informed citizenry. To deepen our understanding of how democracy works, we will read texts that are considered foundational for democratic theory. After taking this course, students will be able to better understand what democracy is, how it functions, and what its future prospects are.

Dawid Tatarczyk, Asst. Prof. of Political Science

The Macroeconomic Effects of the 2020 Pandemic

This course will survey the state of the U.S. economy before the coronavirus pandemic began in March 2020 and the effects of the pandemic following the virus impacting the U.S. We will focus on the effects on major macroeconomic variables including gross domestic product and unemployment as well as the sharp decline in the stock market. We will examine the fiscal and monetary policy responses by the federal government and the Federal Reserve. Students will be required to write a series of short papers that examine economic performance and specific policy actions. Class discussions will be held every Tuesday (beginning June 30) and Thursday 3-4:15 pm Eastern time using Google Meet. Students will be assigned outside reading and must participate in the discussion sessions. Grades will be based on short papers and participation in class discussions.

Jon Hooks, Professor of Economics and Management

How to be an Anti-Racist: A Course for the Current American Moment

In this course, students will examine the ways in which race, ethnicity and cultural diversity have shaped American institutions, ideology, law, and social relationships, focusing especially on the period from the end of the Civil War (that is, after slavery became illegal in the United States) to the present. From that starting point, we will then explore strategies for creating a more inclusive democracy and imagine what substantive change might entail. Through readings, activities, lectures, and writing, students will be expected to reflect honestly, and perhaps painfully, on themselves and make critical assessments of the world in which we live.

Marcy Sacks, Professor of History

