Creative Minds
at Libby

Creative Minds RAP

Course Information Booklet

Fall 2026

All students living in Libby Hall are *required* to take one or more CMRAP classes this academic year.

University of Colorado
Boulder

FALL OFFERINGS

ARTS 1171 **Photography for Non-Majors** *Benjamin Nicholson*

ARTS 1212 **Painting for Non-Majors** *Tyler Alpern*

DNCE 3014 **Inside The Groove: Developing Rhythmic Skills** *Maputo Mensa*

MUEL 2852 **Music of the Rock Era** *Benjamin Nicholson*

ECON 2010 **Principles of Microeconomics** *Dan Zuchegno*

GEOL 1010 **Exploring Earth** *Lisa Barlow*

HIST 2516 **America Through Baseball** *Martin Babicz*

IPHY 2420 **Introduction to Nutrition** *Donna Louie*

LIBB 1133 **Exploring Art, Culture, & Visual Literacy through Drawing** *Tyler Alpern*

LIBB 2800 **Horror Films & American Culture** *Karen Auvinen*

LIBB 1600 **Gender and Film** *Karen Auvinen*

LIBB 2728 **Sports & Its Economics: The Relationship between Sports Teams, Markets, and Local Communities** *Dan Zuchegno*

PHIL 2800 **Special Topics in Philosophy: Ethical Puzzles and Moral Conflicts** *Michele Simpson*

SOCY 1001 **Introduction to Sociology** *Robert Scott*

WRTG 1150 **1st Year Writing & Rhetoric** *Gabriela Rios*

Detailed descriptions of each class & times offered follows this page.

Course Descriptions are organized by **Course Categories** and are ***color coded*** by the days offered**:**

ART COURSES

ARTS 1171 Photography for Non-Majors - 3 credits

Taught by Dr. Ben Nicholson

MoWe 9:30am – 12:00pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Arts & Humanities

Instructor Description

This course aims to immerse you in the compelling, eclectic, and creative world of photography. During the course of this term, you will learn about the elements that create a well-composed photograph, the terms and tools used in photographic image creation, and techniques and tips to improve your photography. We will also explore the history of photography, the contributions and work of famous photographers, and the ways to critique works of photographic art.

Student Testimonials

"I have thoroughly enjoyed photography for non-majors as it allows me to pursue a passion of mine with a medium workload. I'd suggest this class to anybody who loves photography and wants to have a little more structure to their practice"

"Professor Nicholson provided a great course that gave me insight into how to use a DSLR camera along with how to create the best photos possible. He was very helpful during studio time and gave us plenty of time to complete our projects within the class."

"I like all of the projects and the creativity they allow, letting us choose our own subjects so each of our photos and projects turn out unique."

"I think he's a great professor who shows a lot of care for his students and is very kind. He also obviously is very knowledgeable."

ARTS 1212 Painting for Non-Majors - 3 credits

Taught by Tyler Alpern, MFA

MoWe 1:25pm-3:55pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Arts & Humanities

Instructor Description

Ideal class for both accomplished artists and complete novices. Explore color, innovation, and self-expression in this introduction to the field of painting in contemporary art studio practice. A combination of technical work and creative projects will allow students to find their own artistic voice and original style and effectively express themselves in a visual manner. Students will gain valuable academic and life skills through exposure to the creative process, organized design methodology, idea production strategies, discipline, risk-taking and coping with frustration and failure. Regular attendance is required.

Student Testimonials

“Like most people our age, I was so adamant that I sucked at art. I couldn’t draw, much less add color and paint. However, I’ve seen so much improvement in my abilities just this year. With your creative inspiration and technique, I saw myself create things I was so proud of.”

“I had a lot of fun in this class. Tyler was very engaging and made sure everyone participated. He was always there for everyone when needed advice or criticism. The class was overall amazing and taught super well. I loved my experience in the class.”

“The class always had a very supportive environment where everyone's work and opinion was valued.”

“Thank you for being excited about painting and bringing energy to every class. I am very thankful I was able to share this class and painting experience with you and some other classmates. I was able to expand my creative brain and express myself.”

“You encouraged me to be creative and fostered my self-confidence. Presenting my art to others and having them love it too felt so good, and it felt even better to have a trained eye look and give praise. Your honesty and support has made me not only a better artist, but a better person and student.”

"I really appreciate all you've done for me this year and the vast amount you've taught me, so thank you for being my professor this year!“

LIBB 1133 Exploring Art, Culture and Visual Literacy through Drawing- 3 credits

Taught by Tyler Alpern, MFA

MoWe 4:00pm-5:15pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Arts & Humanities

Instructor Description

Express yourself and make your mark! Learn to draw or draw better and be inspired by and be able to deconstruct and analyze images that bombard us on social media, in advertising, and from diverse sources such as street art and tattoos. Dive into the creative process and challenge yourself to develop ideas and strive for excellence no matter what your major or career choice. Risk taking, coping with and overcoming frustration, learning from failure, and creative problem solving are skills that will help you become more innovative, flexible, marketable and adaptable to navigate inevitable change and career challenges.

Student Testimonials

"Tyler was very engaging and he truly wanted to help students and push them to be their best. Going into this class I wasn't sure if my art skills were good enough to be successful in this class, but Tyler did an outstanding job of helping every student, no matter what level of art they were capable of, do their best, push them to strive for better, and help them see their potential."

"I really enjoyed this class. I learned so much about drawing and pushing my limits. You are a great teacher and I like how you structured the class."

"Tyler Alpern was an amazing professor. His passion for art was made clear during my time in his class, and this enthusiasm spread to every student in the room. He always came to class eager to teach us about his passion."

"Professor Alpern was one of the most inspiring people I have ever met. He gave so much passion and value to his class and lectures. I loved having this class in person and being able to grow my understanding of the world through art. I would take this course again because I truly enjoyed it!"

CINEMA AND MEDIA STUDIES COURSES

LIBB 2800 Horror Films & American Culture – 3 Credits

Taught by Dr. Karen Auvinen

TuTh 12:30pm-1:45pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Arts & Humanities
Arts & Sciences General Education: Diversity-U.S. Perspective

Instructor Description

This course looks at our fascination with American horror films by exploring the real cultural work they do. Identifying the iconographic features of cinematic horror, we trace the genre from its beginnings up to the present day to consider how horror functions to reflect not only ideology, but our fears and anxieties while also providing relief, antidote, and feedback about what's happening in our world.

Student Testimonials

"Being in such a close environment with a small amount of students, made me comfortable speaking in class and in getting to know you. Karen is accepting, funny, kind, and encouraged us to work hard. Learning about how films can shape our social environment has helped me in recognizing these themes and will be useful in my future academic career."

"I enjoy having weekly film and reading assignments. The pace at which we have been taught in class is neither too slow nor too fast. I like how you give us the content that will be on our exams ahead of time so we can prepare as much as we can to succeed in your class."

"I really really love this teacher. I can tell she cares so much about this class and her students. She makes class easy to follow and keeps it interesting. I enjoy the way she teaches and how comfortable she can make the room. I am never afraid to speak out in class or that my opinion may be wrong."

LIBB 1600 Gender and Film – 3 Credits

Taught by Dr. Karen Auvinen

TuTh 11:00pm-12:15pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Arts & Humanities
Arts & Sciences General Education: Diversity-U.S. Perspective

Instructor Description

This course examines depictions of femininity, masculinity, sexuality, class, ethnicity, and race on film. We begin by exploring the formulaic Hollywood film and its massive influence by first looking at the kinds of stereotypes it circulates about specific people and/or groups, and then by examining films that shatter these stereotypes and seek authentic expressions of identity, human diversity, and experience. Students will learn the ways in which film influences our perceptions about each other and will expand the range of each student's understanding of the experience of individuals and groups who have been marginalized in society.

Student Testimonials

"I really liked this class and how the class discussions were set up. They really helped me understand different perspectives and ideas I wouldn't have had myself."

"I think that the most effective part of this course is that it is very interactive. I feel that I am always involved in the conversation and welcome to speak my opinion. I think that a conversation-based class allows for multiple ideas to be discussed and is a more effective way to get everyone learning."

"Dr. Auvinen provided me and peers a great opportunity to reflect on and discuss diverse POVs and lives in a time where empathy and compassion is increasingly important. I was very grateful for her willingness to open up debate and communication about topics we may have disagreed on, and she held a respectful atmosphere for anyone who wanted to speak out and learn more about or clarify something she addressed."

"I think this course was one of the most eye opening, group bonding, and interesting classes I have taken thus far in university."

"Karen was a valuable resource throughout this course. She outlined expectations clearly and set up this course to work for and with first year students. Her daily discussions, consistent checkins and course load all have the student's wellbeing and learning experience in mind."

HUMANITIES COURSES

LIBB 2728 Sports & Its Economics: The Relationship between Sports Teams, Markets, and Local Communities – 3 credits

Taught By Dan Zuchegno

TuTh 12:30pm-1:45pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Elective

Instructor Description

Economics and business models have increasingly been used to analyze a wide range of issues in professional sports and collegiate athletics from trying to understand wages in US professional sports leagues to the global appeal of futbol. We will look at wages paid to athletes as well as the level and sources of profits and revenues to teams and clubs. We will also look into the organizational structure of leagues and the role of government in professional sports.

On the collegiate level, we will address NCAA rules on scholarships and eligibility, and the ever-increasing role that name, image, and likeness is playing in intercollegiate athletics. We will also look into the revenues generated in college sports and the sources of these revenues. Additionally, we will address the impact of television revenues on the ever-changing structure and alignment of athletic conferences in the US.

Student Testimonials

"He was a fantastic teacher who made his lectures fun while still being informative. I had a great semester with him."

"Fun and interesting course. I felt like this course was a little unstructured, but that is understandable given it's a special topic that's not offered often. I wish there would have been a rubric or clearer grading criteria for the essay and a few other items."

"He was interesting and passionate"

"I thought this class was an awesome class. Super interesting and super informative good teacher and very smart guy"

HIST 2516 America Through Baseball – 3 Credits

Taught by Dr. Martin Babicz

MoWeFr 1:25pm-2:15pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution – Arts & Humanities

Instructor Description

This purpose of the course is to arrive at a better understand the history of the United States through the history of baseball. This course examines American History since the Civil War and explores how the social, cultural, economic, and political forces shaping America were reflected in the national pastime. The course also examines the events and people who shaped baseball and looks at how they influenced American society at large.

Student Testimonials

"Professor Babicz is a very good professor. He goes in depth with the material and is very passionate about it as well. It makes the class fun and interesting, and I have learned a lot from him. "

"Professor Babicz is one of the most caring and informed professors I have had at CU. Each and every class, I could tell that HE was interested in what he was teaching and was excited to be lecturing the students."

"Thank you so much for your work this semester, Professor Babicz. I truly enjoyed this class and believe that the structure of the course corresponds well with the content. I value your knowledge of history, and the connection baseball reflects with our past events. This has been a really great class."

PHIL 2800 Special Topics in Philosophy: Ethical Puzzles and Moral Conflicts – 3 Credits

Taught by Dr. Michele D. Simpson

TuTh 11:00am-12:15pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Arts & Humanities

Instructor Description

Complex issues call upon us to take into account ethical and moral considerations such as human rights, global and environmental justice, animal rights, and a menu of other rights and responsibilities. Ethics represents the moral code that guides a person's choices and behaviors. And the idea of a moral code extends beyond the individual to include what is determined to be right, and wrong, for a community or society at large. The course will consist of lectures, case studies, and extensive student participation, all in the service of thoughtfully reflecting on the nature of the right and the good, character, and agency. Students will develop analytical abilities, and acquire reading, writing, thinking, presentation, and argumentation skills that will assist them in Ethical Puzzles & Moral Conflicts and their other courses.

Student Testimonials

"I wasn't extremely interested in ethics but after having Professor Simpson, I found her to be one of the best I ever had and she made me like ethics."

"I loved this class. I changed my major to Philosophy halfway through the semester."

"The class pushed me to think differently on a range of topics. I always looked forward to class and was eager to listen."

"She made ethics exciting and fun for the whole class. I will taking another ethics class in the Fall."

MUSIC & DANCE COURSES

DNCE 3014 Inside the Groove: Developing Rhythmic Skills* - 3 credits

Taught by Maputo Mensah

TuTh 12:30pm-1:45pm IN LIBBY HALL DANCE STUDIO

***Students can take this course and another RAP course during the same semester**.

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Arts & Humanities

Instructor Description

In this experience and dance-based course, we look at how African dance and music teaches us not only to move, but about life, such as issues of femininity and masculinity, race, and ethnicity. African dance gives you ways to express yourself and it heals you! Also, it gives you strength, happiness, and joy. In it, we learn to care for one another as family, to step out of our comfort zones and become better people and, eventually, global citizens.

Student Testimonials

"It is a joy to move to live music."

"This class changed my outlook on life."

"I was fascinated to watch how simple gestures meant different ideas and concepts to different people. We all come from different walks of life, and our experiences shape us into the people that we are. That being said, when a group of people, such as our class, come together to communicate similar ideas to reach a common goal, making sure everyone is understanding what is being communicated is key."

"I am happy that I came away from this class with a change that I did not expect to happen: I made friends outside my major."

MUEL 2852 Music in the Rock Era - 3 credits

Taught by Dr. Benjamin Nicholson

MoWe 12:20pm-1:35pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Arts & Humanities

Instructor Description

We will trace the development of rock as an art form as well as its cultural significance and saturation. We will consider technological advances, commercialism, record production, rock videos, concerts and festivals, and so on. We will also explore the influence that popular music, as well as other forms of popular culture, exert on various aspects of society such as social justice, human rights and individual liberties. These topics will be approached primarily from musical and cultural standpoints but also from philosophical, sociological, psychological, and political standpoints. Additionally, you will be instructed on how to listen more effectively to gain a deeper appreciation for the music we will be studying and enjoying.

Student Testimonials from Other Courses Dr. Nicholson Taught

"I absolutely LOVED this course! All assignments were highly engaging, with content which was a great balance of challenging yet also being manageable (especially for a course which was taken during the first semester). Professor Ben is so wonderful! He cares very much about his students and is sure to provide the resources needed for them to succeed."

"I think that this class was super cool and explored more than just the basics on movies and editing. Ben was an amazing instructor and tried to help in any way possible. He made everyone feel included and super laid back about class and if you needed to miss it for some reason."

"Actually, my favorite class this semester!! I loved your class and the content we watched, even though I said some of the movies were boring, I still think that the reflections you assigned helped me connect them to more in-depth concepts. The reflections were always super fun and easy, and I liked that your class wasn't as demanding with assignments and gave me a chance to relax from the rest of my classes! I'll miss your class Mr. Ben!!"

"This was my favorite course because there was so much discussion and reflection that I feel as if I learned and grew most in this course and realized how much I am inspired by the film. My professor was the nicest and most inclusive, thoughtful teacher, and I could tell he was always interested in the class's perspectives."

SCIENCE COURSES

IPHY 2420 Intro to Nutrition – 3 Credits

Taught by Dr. Donna Louie

MoWeFr 10:10am- 11:00am

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Natural Science

Instructor Description

In this course, you will learn the biology and chemistry behind nutrition, including how your body works, what nutrients you need to stay healthy and perform well, and what happens when you do not eat right. You will learn to evaluate fad diets and maintain a healthy body that includes analyzing your food intake, lifestyle, blood pressure, heart rate, and a mock blood test. By the end of the course, you will have valuable information to share with your friends and family so that you and everyone around you can live a long, healthy life.

Topics discussed frequently in this course will include obesity, eating habits and methods, calorie counting, starvation mode, and other health issues related to nutrition.

Student Testimonials

"I loved this class, I found the topic interesting, and it was presented in a very understandable and detailed way to make sure I got the most out of the class. The mini reviews, chapter outlines, and Kahoot sessions were very helpful and allowed me to make notecards on what I should expect on the test. Amazing class and the teacher is so encouraging and always willing to help."

"Dr. Louie does a very good job of explaining the material and providing opportunities for her students to review with herself and others outside of class time."

"Dr. Louie is a very nice professor who makes it clear that she wants the best for her students."
"Professor Louie has illustrated that she genuinely cares about her students and the learning process. It is clear she puts a great amount of effort in her course and teaching efforts. She draws visuals and takes the time to further explain concepts if students do not understand. I learned a great deal in her class, and I can confidently say that she is an excellent teacher."

GEOL 1010-280R – Exploring Earth – 3 Credits

Taught by Dr. Lisa Barlow

MoWeFr 12:20pm-1:10pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Distribution-Natural Sciences

Instructor Description

Geology is everywhere you look, especially if you know how to see! The Earth that we live with is a fascinating and dynamic planet with a rich history of tales to tell. Geology has inspired creatives of all kinds for millennia, and this section of GEOL 1010 will include works of art (sculpture, photography, painting, functional objects …) to bring an artist's perspective to a conventional introductory Geology course. We'll learn how to recognize different basic mineral and rock types (e.g., alabaster vs. marble in sculpture) and rock types of large features (can you tell the difference between the sedimentary rocks of the Flatirons and the igneous rocks of Yosemite's Half Dome just by looking at images?), how to read topographic and geologic maps, and how to use plate tectonic theory to understand everything from why marine rocks are found at the top of Mount Everest to why some volcanoes are more dangerous (and more aesthetically pleasing) than others. We'll do a lot of armchair travel around the world seeing both beautiful outdoor geology and beautiful human expressions of this amazing planet we live with.

Student Testimonials

"Dear Dr. B, I can't even begin to express how thankful I am. Your classes were always the best way to start my day. I truly wish everyone shared your passion for the world we live in. I will forever take with me the knowledge I have acquired from your geology classes. Not only am I able to identify every rock I pick up with my mom, but I am incredibly inspired."

"Thank you Dr. B! I learned a lot in this class. Now I can point things out to my friends on road trips to annoy the (heck) out of them. I've always found rocks interesting so I am really happy to have learned so much about them."

"Dr. B, Thank you so much for being such a kind teacher and for always being willing to help me when I was struggling this semester. I'm very glad I took your class because I learned a ton through it! Thank you!"

"Put it this way – I don't need to put my headphones on to play music any more on the long ride to go skiing. I'm looking at the rocks."

SOCIAL SCIENCE COURSES

ECON 2010 – Principles of Microeconomics*- 4 credits
ECON 2010 - Recitation

Taught by Dr. Dan Zuchegno

TuTh 3:30pm-4:45pm (Lecture) AND **Tu** 9:55am-10:45am (Recitation)

*Students must take both the lecture and the recitation for this class

Credit: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

Instructor Description

"Principles of Macroeconomics" provides an overview of the economy, examining the flows of resources and outputs and the factors determining the levels of income and prices. Explores policy problems of inflation, unemployment and economic growth.

Student Testimonials

"By far my favorite class, I enjoy how laid back you are. However, I have learned more from your class then I have in any of my other classes. Your teaching style fit with me very well. I am excited for macro next semester. Thank you for a good first semester!"

"By far my favorite class, I enjoy how laid back you are. However, I have learned more from your class then I have in any of my other classes. Your teaching style fit with me very well. I am excited for macro next semester. Thank you for a good first semester!"

"The most effective aspect of the course was the teaching style. Always allowed students to engage with the lecture and continually connected the learning material to the real world and ensured that concepts were thoroughly understood by the class."

"I thought this class was an awesome class. Super interesting and super informative!"

SOCY 1001-170R - Introduction to Sociology - 3 credit hours

Taught by Dr. Robert Scott

MoWe 2:30pm-3:45pm

Credit: Arts Sci Gen Ed: Distribution-Social Sciences

Instructor Description

This course highlights how social forces shape human behavior and everyday experience. It examines the history of sociology, how to conduct social research, and key theoretical perspectives and debates in the discipline. Students will analyze and evaluate ideas from various areas of specialization, including economic sociology, animals and society, the sociology of death and dying, and the sociology of mental health. In their course assignments, students will apply sociological concepts to past and current events and extend the concepts. They will learn how sociology can influence policy and practice here and now.

Student Testimonials

"He's very understanding, and you can tell he simply wants us to succeed in his class. He explains topics in ways that really help us learn and be curious and seems to know the right balance of lecture vs. activities in class…I really like that after we get notes done there's always an activity where we can talk to others. He really seems to understand students' lives."

"The instructor shows us many different ways to understand content. For example, we will watch videos, do group activities, write notes off of slides, and read articles to fully understand material."

"I think the teacher does a great job of teaching us. Everything is very engaging. I thought the topic today about how our society perceives death was especially interesting."

"He listens to our feedback about how the material is presented, which really helps us understand it in the best way possible. He also changes up the class format between lectures and group activities, giving everyone a chance to learn in the way that suits them best and show their strengths."

"He is a great teacher!! I like watching the videos and doing group projects."

WRITING COURSES

WRTG 1150 – 1st Year Writing & Rhetoric – 3 credit hours

Taught by Dr. Gabriela Rios

TuTh 2:00pm-3:15pm

Credit: Arts & Sciences General Education: Written Communication

Course Description

Rhetorically informed introduction to college writing. Focuses on critical analysis, argument, inquiry, and information literacy. Taught as a writing workshop, the course places a premium on invention, drafting, and thoughtful revision. For placement criteria, see the arts and sciences advising office. May be repeated up to 6 total credit hours.

Instructor Description

You will have fun (yes, fun!) in this class while you become a more confident and competent writer. Towards the end of the semester, we'll "act out" what we've learned by looking at wo different art groups in France during the late-nineteenth century. One art group wants to embrace Modernism, and the other wants to uphold Traditionalism. We'll first learn a bit about each group, and then we'll enjoy becoming characters (artists, art dealers, and art critics) in both groups. We'll celebrate and showcase our learning by "time traveling" to Paris in 1889 and hosting a reenactment of the significant Paris Art Exhibition. You might become Monet! This course offers you added value—and is radically engaging. Extending the notion of text-based writing, we'll play with the principles of "visual rhetorics" and circulation theory.