

Course Description Form

Course number and section: CORH 216

Course Topic: Communication and Media: Lego Building Systems®

Credits: 3

Term: 2022 WT2

Instructor: Marie Loughlin

Course Description:

Invented by Godtfred Kirk Christiansen, the Danish building system LEGO® (coined from the Danish phrase, leg godt or “play well”) has become not just a global brand but a cultural phenomenon. In this course, we will examine LEGO® building bricks as a material medium of communication and rhetoric that has moved into other popular culture media—visual, textual, and digital. Taking up class members’ strengths as student researchers, we will study and apply selected theories of communication and rhetoric (especially as they are employed in the humanities, social sciences and professional disciplines), in order to understand how audience and message are inter-related for the LEGO® building system’s diverse audiences. We will explore this system’s increasing centrality to academic, professional, and public discussions of play and work; gender and race; creativity and conformity; corporate culture and participatory culture, and much more.

Tentative Reading List:

Selections from the following multidisciplinary anthology, available from the UBCO Library, will form the critical readings for the course.

Wolf, Mark J. P., ed. *LEGO Studies: Examining the Building Blocks of a Transmedial Phenomenon*. Routledge, 2014.

Other: This course involves both academic and popular writing, and students can expect to produce a final group project that employs earlier academic research, and translates it into public engagement (e.g., through the creation of a blog, webpage, podcast, video, or other public facing form).