**BEING A FAN OF DISNEY
Wednesday, 11:30 am –12:25 pm (Section 301, 11900)
Dr. Cody Havard, Sport & Leisure Commerce**In this forum, we will discuss what it means to be a fan of the Walt Disney brand. Discussions will focus on the history, technology, and innovation of Walt Disney and the Walt Disney Organization, and how the global brand fits into contemporary society.

**THE CASE AGAINST SUGAR**

**Thursday, 2:40 pm - 3:35 pm (Section 302, CRN 11902)**

**Dr. Jeffrey Berman, Psychology**

This course uses the book by Gary Taubes, The Case Against Sugar, as a means of exploring the social context of scientific knowledge and its interplay with medicine, public health policy, political pressures, and commercial interests. In addition to reading and discussing the book, students will read critical reaction to it and the author’s responses. Emphasis is placed on viewing the account of research on sugar as an example of potential social pressures and biases that can occur in any area of scientific inquiry.

**EVERYTHING CHANGED WHEN THE FIRE NATION ATTACKED
Monday, 11:30 am – 12:25 pm (Section 303, CRN 25119)
Tammy Jones, English**
When *The Fellowship of the Ring* and *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* hit big screens in 2001, television networks scrambled to develop programming that would help them ride the wave of enthusiasm for high fantasy generated by those successful adaptations.  Nickelodeon was no exception.  As a result, two recent graduates of Rhode Island School of Design pitched the idea for an animated fantasy series influenced by their love of wuxia cinema, Japanese anime, and Eastern meditation.  It was not in any way a predictable fit for Nickelodeon’s previously successful formula for children’s programming, but based on that pitch from Mike DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko, a pilot episode was nevertheless ordered, and *Avatar:  The Last Airbender* debuted on the network in 2005.  And as the opening narration says, “Everything changed when the Fire Nation attacked.”  Therefore, this UNHP seminar will explore the influence of Nickelodeon’s series *Avatar:*  *The Last Airbender* as students make their way through all 61 episodes of the inaugural series of what has become a beloved franchise.  Topics to be covered include how the series differs from Nickelodeon’s usual programming and how it paved the way for subsequent, innovative animation; the show’s treatment of serious topics like genocide, imperialism, terrorism, and the importance of spiritual beliefs in a way suitable for children; how the show launched the careers of several influential creatives such a Dave Filoni who is currently an executive producer in charge of creative development at Lucasfilm; and how the series with absolutely no technology in its fictional universe captured the hearts and imaginations of a generation of digital natives now entering adulthood.

**THE PROMISE AND PERIL OF GENERATIVE AI
Friday, 10:20 am – 11:15 am (Section 304, CRN 26519)
Dr. Steve Strain, Herff College of Engineering**
The rise of generative AI systems like ChatGPT is transforming society in profound ways. In this forum, we will explore how these systems work and their potential benefits and risks, using Stephen Wolfram’s book *What Is ChatGPT Doing...and Why Does It Work?* as a guide. Key topics will include: the capabilities and limitations of systems like ChatGPT; their underlying natural language processing and machine learning; strategies for evaluating generative AI content; the potential of generative AI to enhance education, creativity, scientific research, engineering, and business; ethical concerns around bias, misinformation, and impact on jobs; and the broader societal implications for the global economy, politics, culture, and humanity’s relationship with technology. Students will gain critical perspective on this fast-evolving field, analyzing generative AI’s profound potential alongside its disruptive effects on society. The course will empower students to navigate this technology as informed citizens, lifelong learners, and future leaders.