

Honors Seminar Descriptions

Fall 2020

HONR 192

Section 1: Wild Thinking - Creativity in Art, Science, and Business - Glycenfer, Francie

Section 1: MWF 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM

Section 3: MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM

Is creativity the exclusive domain of artists? Or does the creative process occur in other fields such as science and business? This course will demonstrate the value of creativity in our lives, in our work and within the broader context of culture. Each individual will be given the opportunity to access their own creative potential as well as enhancing creativity in others. A creative interdisciplinary approach will emphasize discovering the relationships that can be built in both the classroom and culture. Creative explorations in art, science and business will enhance the understanding and experience for students.

Section 2: North American Empires - Sheflin, Doug

Section 2: TR 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

In some circles, “empire” is a dirty word. It connotes tyranny and authoritarianism, the use of military power to exert control, and the abuse and subjugation of defeated peoples. Others argue that “empire” is something for which nations should strive to become. It suggests a level of power and influence often unparalleled and it ensures that the empire enjoys autonomy and independence on a regional, and sometimes global, scale. What if the truth about empire is somewhere between the good and the bad? In this course, we will utilize the history of empires in North America to better understand the development of the United States and its role in the hemisphere and the world. The study of empires presents a unique venue to view the interaction, and often the clash, of different cultures and disparate world views. In tracing the development of empires on the continent from 1776 to the present, we will utilize environmental, military, political, social, and economic history to explore how the history of empires can inform our understanding of empires today, affording us the chance to better appreciate the sometimes inspirational and sometimes ugly – but always complex – history of the United States.

Section 3: See Section 1

Section 4: International Graphic Novels - Davies, Ashley

Section 4: MWF 2:00 PM – 2:50 PM

By reading a variety of international graphic novels we'll begin to understand different cultures: their values, their relationships, and their narrative and artistic styles. Through our exploration, we'll challenge the simplistic thinking that often reduces a nation to a caricature or a stop at Disney's Epcot. In the Brazilian Daytripper, we'll consider how celebration of a sea goddess influences the work and demonstrates the complex history of a country. Moving to African Comics, we'll see modern superheroes and re-imagined history. In Israel, Modan's Exit Wounds will help us think through family relationships marked by ongoing political turmoil. Ranma 1/2 from Japan is a delightful tale of high schoolers dealing with gender expectations. Finally, we'll move to Europe with the French graphic novel Blue is the Warmest Color to think about more about romantic relationships. In each geographic area, we'll look at samples of work from these locations to get a better sense of patterns. Using the

interdisciplinary approach of cultural studies, we'll consider the connections between the personal, the familial, and the national identity. By bringing graphic novels and scholarly work together, we will develop a better understanding of our increasingly global world and work towards more complex multicultural perspectives.

Section 5: Sexuality Across the Lifespan - Krafchick, Jennifer

Section 5: TR 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM

We are sexual beings from the moment we are born until we die. Cultures around the world have different perspectives and ideas about sexuality. We will use a developmental lens to examine changing attitudes about sexuality. This seminar will be discussion oriented and guide students towards an understanding of the diversity and breadth of human sexuality. Students will explore how sexuality is influenced by society, family, the media, religion, and other institutions. We will consider cultural influences on sexual expression, sex as depicted in popular culture, sexual violence, how people learn about sexuality, sexual stereotypes, and double standards.

Section 6: 20th Century American Gangsters - Vaughan Knaus, Pam

Section 6: MWF 2:00 PM – 2:50 PM

American gangsters in the twentieth century: this class hopes to suggest larger interpretive guidelines for better understanding the epoch. America's gangsters are best understood not as an aberration, but as an integral part of American history. The twentieth century was a time of intense conflict and millennial expectations, and Italians were at the very heart of mobsters, rum-runners and 'tough guys.' Gangsters were not as powerful in the 1920s as is often assumed, nor was law enforcement as much on the defensive. The insurgent political and social movements of the last century--including immigrant unrest and governmental power, Prohibition, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and gambling--drew from even as they sought to transform values and beliefs deeply rooted in American political culture. Students will take from this course some sense of how gangsters served for many Americans as fact and fiction, regarding United States history in the last century.

Section 7: The Power of Community: Understanding Human Sustainability - Merline, Anne Marie

Section 7: TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Section 11: TR 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM

Using the book "Happy City" as a guide, we'll explore together the secrets of living a happy and sustainable life. As the human race migrates back to urban environments, we examine our social selves as a part of living environment. We'll begin by trying to identify what makes a city great. Successful cities are no accident - it requires a lifetime of good planning that takes people, planet, profit and, of course, purpose into consideration. We'll discover that our public lives and/or civic well-being is positively linked to personal well-being. We travel the world via E2-- a PBS series that shows how different cities around the world have become happy cities. Is the secret ingredient public spaces for walking, biking, and recreating as in Bogotá Columbia? Is it through a bike share program in Paris? A garden in Cairo? So many cultures, and so many ways to build successful communities.

Section 8: Children's Literature and Culture - Gollapudi, Aparna

Section 8: TR 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM

Talking rabbits that take you down a hole, wicked witches that melt away, rivers of chocolate, magic everywhere – this is the stuff of children’s literature. Works meant for young audiences are usually considered light-hearted entertainment that teaches children simple life lessons. Rarely are they considered worthy of serious scholarly attention. However, literature meant for children is as much a product of complex cultural forces and ideologies as the most revered canonical “classic” novels. Books meant for children are often very much engaged with contemporary social, political, and ethical issues, whether it be Lewis Carroll’s critique of aristocratic privilege in *Alice in Wonderland* or Roald Dahl’s subversion of capitalistic acquisition in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. In addition, some works meant for children have incredibly long-lasting lives in popular culture – including adult popular culture – as they are re-read, reworked, adapted into films, referenced in songs, or turned into consumer merchandise over decades and even centuries. With each new version, children’s works absorb contemporary ideologies or perpetuate the cultural agendas of their specific historical moment. This course will explore the some very popular children’s works as cultural phenomena that take on different nuances as they are remade to suit new markets. Focusing on ‘classics’ of children’s literature such as *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Harry Potter (I)*, this course will use rigorous critical interpretation tools to analyze these children’s books and/or movies as powerful cultural phenomena offering important insights into the adult world, even as they reveal how the child is constructed in various historical contexts.

Section 9: You Are What You Eat” – Food in Our Everyday Life - Raadik Cottrell, Jana

Section 9: MW 3:00 PM – 4:15 PM

Anthelme Brillat-Savarin wrote in, *Physiologie du Gout, ou Meditations de Gastronomie Transcendante*, 1826: "Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es." [Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are]. The phrase, rooted in the French culture of food appreciation entered the public consciousness in America most likely in 1940’s, but truly got a new lease of life in the 1960’s hippy era and stayed with us since then. From the individual belief in a healthy diet to the organic/slow food movement as a social phenomenon, issues of food in our life today are related to critical issues of consumerism, sustainable development, social justice, and even political stability. This course adopts an experiential education approach to critically address issues related to food in our everyday life from the aspects of personal choice and consumerism, overproduction, waste and food shortage, and many other. Relationships between food and identity as cultural phenomenon are discussed to address the role of food as a cultural ambassador. Food as state of art today is more than haute cuisine of yesterday; it is the creative exploration of opportunities for a positive change. Food as a social phenomenon today invites us to explore the ways to simplify our lives, cultivate community and spend more time with friends and family. Community gardens, farmers markets, slow food movement are few examples of re-evaluation the role of food in our lives. Through discussions, literary and media explorations, observations, and practical hands-on experiences, you together with your instructor will try to answer the questions of concern: How to make more healthy, tasty and sustainable choices in your everyday food palette as a student? Why does it matter where our food comes from? What does it mean “you are what you eat’?

Section 10: How wildlife influences human society - Vieira, Nicole

Section 10: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM

Our interactions with wildlife have shaped the course of human society and influence our wellbeing. In early human societies, wild animals served as food and shamanistic totems, and the domestication of

wildlife led to major agricultural progress for hunter-gatherer societies. Skipping ahead to Darwin's era, observations of variation in wildlife led to the theory of evolution via natural selection, one of the most important and controversial scientific discoveries of all time. Ultimately, the study of critters widened the rift between science and religion. In modern times, wildlife provides important ecosystem services to humans, like pollination, and they also provide educational opportunities for us to discover more about our moral and ecological standing. In this course, we will cover these fundamental human-wildlife relationships, and will also explore "unusual" influences animals have had on us as exotic pets, as inspiration for children's tales and horror film, as threats through man eating and zoonotic disease transmission, and as psychological cultivators of healing and empathy. We will explore these weird ties with wildlife through popular literature and film, philosophical and spiritual reflection, creative group projects, and outdoor exploration of our campus environment!

Section 11: See Section 7

Section 12: What Can We Learn from the Ancient Greeks about Women, Men, and the Human Condition - Cooper, Lee

Section 12: MWF 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM

This multi-disciplinary seminar is for students with little or no background in ancient Greek history, literature, philosophy, and culture. Some of the questions that the discussions and readings will examine are: • What motivates individuals and societies: Honor? Security? Material wealth? • What role does sex, gender, and power play? • Are our choices free or determined? • What are the consequences when decisions are based more on illusion and emotion rather than reality and factual truth? • Which ethical standards prevent wrongdoing? • How important is leadership in determining military and political success or failure? • Why do men go to war? How do they justify their actions? • Does human happiness depend on substantial wealth or accomplishment? Contemporary readings will explore which ancient perspectives on human life, mortality, relationships, power, and freedom are still relevant.

Section 14: The 1960s in America: Moving Forward or Falling Apart? - Vaughan Knaus, Pam

Section 14: MWF 12:00 PM – 12:50 PM

Section 20: MWF 1:00 PM – 1:50 PM

While making no claim to be offering a total interpretation of the 1960s in America, this class will suggest interpretive guidelines for understanding the decade. The 1960s are best examined not as an aberration, but as an integral part of American history. It was a time of intense conflict and millennial expectations, similar in many respects to the one Americans endured a century earlier--with results as mixed, ambiguous and frustrated as those produced by the Civil War. Liberalism was not as powerful in the 1960s as is often assumed, nor, equally was conservatism as much on the defensive. The insurgent political and social movements of the decade--including student unrest and Black Power, the New Left, environmentalism, and feminism--drew from, even as they sought to transform, values and beliefs deeply rooted in American political culture. Ideally, students will take from this course how the 1960s served for a generation of Americans as the dramatization of our humanity. In the process, students will be exposed to a number of historical mediums including film, music, and a tremendous amount of lively class discussion.

Section 15: Leisure in your life – a look at leisure, recreation, and work in contemporary society - Raadik Cottrell, Jana

Section 15: TR 5:00 PM – 6:15 PM

Section 22: TR 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

To paraphrase Socrates, there is no greater question than “how we should live”. Thus, the issues of value related to time, leisure and work directly address this question. Your course is about leisure in your life, what it means, and what it could mean. You will be asked to think about your own values and behavior. What makes you happy? What kind of experiences do you seek to enhance your life? What do you do when you are relatively free to choose? How do your choices affect your happiness, your health, your family, your friends, and society? Compared to a few decades ago, distinctive boundaries between leisure and work time have blurred; thus, meaningful experiences acquired through leisure, recreation and travel are even more important for a quality of life. Designed to introduce recreation and travel studies, this seminar encourages you to start by examining leisure as it relates to your life and then broaden your understanding to include the rest of the world in the context of healthy lifestyles and livelihoods.

Section 16: PEACEMAKING: Skills for Negotiating Life – Hentschel, Margit

Section 16: TR 9:00 AM – 10:45 AM

HONR 192 Peacemaking: Skills for Negotiating Life will prepare students to understand both historical and applied aspects of peacemaking and conflict management, and how these can impact their own lives. Case study analyses will permit thoughtful discussions about real events that are complex as well as what alternative resolutions might be possible. Role playing will allow students to explore different perspectives while developing their negotiation skills, how critical and creative thinking can provide insights into the complex and interrelated issues of violence, social justice, economic inequities, environmental degradation—on personal, community and societal levels—and how that can impact our shared responsibilities for creating a better and more sustainable future. Students will explore cases when a commitment to peace has permitted creative, nonviolent responses to conflicts, whether these are personal, professional, regional or global. Students will study how people can learn to work more cooperatively on negotiated solutions to complex problems and why deep listening can engender empathy and understanding for others and yourself. Students will explore understand how effective communication generally can help overcome differences and facilitate consensus, how anger and emotion can be best understood and managed; and what it takes to stay centered in times of crisis.

Section 17: Cannibals, Savages and Deviants: Encounters with the 'Other.' - Hull, Brian

Section 17: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM

This interdisciplinary course will focus on the concept of the ‘Other.’ Historically, descriptions of those peoples or cultures inscribed with ‘difference’ have rarely been neutral and have predictably served to reinforce those in power while relegating others to the margins. The discourses produced are often full of inherent contradictions. In American history, Native Americans have been revered as exemplars of living harmoniously with nature while being simultaneously reviled as ‘savages’ and ‘cannibals.’ These old stereotypes still reverberate in modern representations of indigenous peoples. However, ‘othering’ isn’t limited to the human realm. Perhaps animals were the first sentient beings to have been relegated to the status of ‘otherness,’ though modern science increasingly blurs the lines between our next of kin and ourselves. These phenomena will be looked out through disciplinary lenses as varied as Cultural

Studies, Sociology, Primatology, philosophy, Ethnic Studies, Gender Studies and history. Students will consider the historical and modern ways in which representation in literature, film and other media shapes our understanding of the world and our perceptions of both exclusion and inclusiveness. Readings and participation in daily discussions will be key to enhancing understanding of these issues.

Section 18: You Are What You Eat” – Food in Our Everyday Life - Raadik Cottrell, Jana

Section 18: MW 5:00 PM – 6:15 PM

Anthelme Brillat-Savarin wrote in, *Physiologie du Gout, ou Meditations de Gastronomie Transcendante*, 1826: "Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es." [Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are]. The phrase, rooted in the French culture of food appreciation entered the public consciousness in America most likely in 1940's, but truly got a new lease of life in the 1960's hippy era and stayed with us since then. From the individual belief in a healthy diet to the organic/slow food movement as a social phenomenon, issues of food in our life today are related to critical issues of consumerism, sustainable development, social justice, and even political stability. This course adopts an experiential education approach to critically address issues related to food in our everyday life from the aspects of personal choice and consumerism, overproduction, waste and food shortage, and many other. Relationships between food and identity as cultural phenomenon are discussed to address the role of food as a cultural ambassador. Food as state of art today is more than haute cuisine of yesterday; it is the creative exploration of opportunities for a positive change. Food as a social phenomenon today invites us to explore the ways to simplify our lives, cultivate community and spend more time with friends and family. Community gardens, farmers markets, slow food movement are few examples of re-evaluation the role of food in our lives. Through discussions, literary and media explorations, observations, and practical hands-on experiences, you together with your instructor will try to answer the questions of concern: How to make more healthy, tasty and sustainable choices in your everyday food palette as a student? Why does it matter where our food comes from? What does it mean "you are what you eat"?

Section 19: Food controversies: Growing Food in a Changing World - Hoag, Dana

Section 19: T 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM

Through the early 20th century the United States fed a growing population by expanding land use. When the land ran out, growth was fueled by amazing gains in technology, including hybrid corn, improved fertilizers and pesticides, and most recently genetically modified organisms (GMO's). By midcentury, people started to question agricultural intensification, which put the actions of farmers and ranchers under increasing public scrutiny. The way food is grown and sold can have profound impacts on humans, animals and the environment. Consequently, people not living on farms want a say on how farmers use nutrients and pesticides, their land, their water and their livestock. Have you ever wondered if you should eat meat, or food with GMO's? Is it good to buy locally? Does the good from pesticides and GMOs outweigh the bad? Which farming practices are sustainable and which are not? This class will focus on how farmers can serve a market where consumers have such different views about these important questions. To make the class more meaningful and fun, students will present their views and help lead discussions on these topics. Each student will also propose a solution to improve sustainability.

Section 20: See Section 14

Section 21: Science, Ethics, and Policy - Edwards, Melissa

Section 21: TR 2:00 PM – 3:15 PM

Scientific technologies and advancements are commonplace in our daily lives. Whether we know much about them ourselves or not, we regularly see news articles about them or even engage in biased discourse on such topics as gene editing, vaccinations, GMO's, stem cell research, etc. But how do we better understand how these technologies impact our world without further context? In this interdisciplinary course, we will examine key issues of how culture and ethics define the constraints of scientific research and how our public perception and politics influence its advancement. First, we'll explore global ethical differences in scientific research between the US, Europe, and Asian countries. Next, we will examine the "who" and "how" of laws and regulations for these technologies. Lastly, we'll discuss how the opinion of the public and generalized perceptions impact the process of policy and research. Throughout these topics we will address prior technologies; their regulations and public opinion as well as critique those in the present and then extrapolate to future scenarios. Readings and daily discussions will be key to enhancing your understanding. No prior knowledge of various scientific technologies is required.

Section 22: See Section 15

Section 23: Empowered by Education: An Exploration of Teaching and Learning Practices - Hollingsworth, Sonja

Section 23: TR 3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

What happens in classrooms is not accidental; learning activities, grading practices, curriculum and classroom climate are all reflective of choices teachers make informed by their own educational philosophies. The study of this phenomena is known as "pedagogy." This course empowers students to evaluate their educational experiences by acknowledging all of the philosophical and human dimensions of teaching and learning. Learners investigate the "art and science" of teaching and learning by surveying some of the most influential political, economic, social, and cultural conditions that have impacted education. Through this work, learners will leave empowered and better able to understand the schooling processes of which they are a part.

Section 24: Nature in the West: Art, Politics and Perceptions - Elkins, Mary

Section 24: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM

Section 27: MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM

The story of America is, to a large extent, the story of the American West. The histories of New England and the American South and North are significant, of course, but the West and, specifically the movement West, serve as the enduring symbol of American self-definition. In the words of Woodrow Wilson, the 28th President of the United States, "The West has been the great word of our history; the westerner has been the type and master of our American life." It is in this context that this course will consider our topic. We will read, view, and discuss the "facts" of the West and its history and, most especially, the narratives and myths that have grown out of and surround the West. We will consider significant historical moments and events and ideas, larger-than-life characters, both Native Americans and newcomers. We will examine the roles played by the Native Americans, both cooperative and hostile, as warriors, neighbors and victims. Finally, we will see how these narratives and myths have played out throughout the centuries and are still playing out in our own day.

Section 25: World Music Explorations - Apadoca, Denise

Section 25: MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM

Section 26: MWF 12:00 PM – 12:50 PM

Travel to places like India, Africa and China to explore the music, the people and culture. One of the primary goals of this class is to offer the tools with which to explore music that may be new, and to create a framework of evaluation of music from a broad spectrum of cultures that should serve a lifetime. The study of world music provides a framework for thinking about how we encounter musical and cultural differences. This course provides a global sense of music and its meaning; different aspects of the environment, sound, and the significance of music. World Music Explorations will demonstrate how elements such as melody, rhythm, and texture create an infinite variety of sounds and serve as expressions of culture. We will explore the structure, purposes, and interconnectivity of music from a global perspective while providing a balanced coverage of traditional, classical, and popular styles of music from every region around the world. Come travel the world through music!

Section 26: See Section 25

Section 27: See Section 24

Section 28: Cannibals, Savages and Deviants: Encounters with the 'Other.' - Hull, Brian

Section 28: MWF 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM

This interdisciplinary course will focus on the concept of the 'Other.' Historically, descriptions of those peoples or cultures inscribed with 'difference' have rarely been neutral and have predictably served to reinforce those in power while relegating others to the margins. The discourses produced are often full of inherent contradictions. In American history, Native Americans have been revered as exemplars of living harmoniously with nature while being simultaneously reviled as 'savages' and 'cannibals.' These old stereotypes still reverberate in modern representations of indigenous peoples. However, 'othering' isn't limited to the human realm. Perhaps animals were the first sentient beings to have been relegated to the status of 'otherness,' though modern science increasingly blurs the lines between our next of kin and ourselves. These phenomena will be looked out through disciplinary lenses as varied as Cultural Studies, Sociology, Primatology, philosophy, Ethnic Studies, Gender Studies and history. Students will consider the historical and modern ways in which representation in literature, film and other media shapes our understanding of the world and our perceptions of both exclusion and inclusiveness. Readings and participation in daily discussions will be key to enhancing understanding of these issues.