Honors Seminar Descriptions
Fall 2021

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 12:00 PM – 12:50 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: - Pompeii: Death of a Roman City – Wilson, Emily

Section 8: MWF 3:00 PM – 3:50 PM
Section 25 MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM
When Mt. Vesuvius erupted on August 24, 79 CE, it buried the people and town of Pompeii in over 12 feet of ash, killing any who were left in the city, and preserved the ruins to an extraordinary degree, including Roman brothels, the first ‘beware of dog’ sign, ancient papyrus scrolls with Roman books on them (now burnt to a crisp), a Roman ‘Lamborghini,’ and even bread that had just been pulled from the oven! This class will explore various facets of life in Pompeii that we can learn from the archaeological remains, including prostitution, gladiatorial contests, what the gods looked like, where Romans drank their wine (at the many, many neighborhood bars), how they decorated their houses, and even the types of food they ate! We will also look at the dead of Pompeii, which can illuminate who walked its streets - from the lowliest slave to the most noble of aristocrats - as well as the animals who served as farm labor, pets, and guardians (bodies of dogs, donkeys, horses have been found). Finally, a secondary goal is to introduce students to the basic sets of evidence available to any scholar of this world (archaeology, literary texts, inscriptions, papyrus scrolls, etc.) and utilize them all to come to a more holistic understanding of what life in Roman Pompeii was like.

Section 9: You Are What You Eat” – Food in Our Everyday Life - Raadik Cottrell, Jana
Section 9: MW 12:30 PM – 1:45 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
Section 18: MWF 2:00 PM – 2:50 PM
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 13: Who Changes the World? An Exploration of the “Renegade” – Hickey, Nora
Section 13: TR 3:30 PM – 4:45 PM
What is a renegade—a rogue or rebel? An outsider or pioneer? In this course, we will explore the role of
the renegade in arts, literature, history, and more from the emergence of Jazz to the modern tale of
Timothy Treadwell as told in Werner Herzog’s Grizzly Man. Our studies will focus on how renegades
challenged the status quo and pushed for change. In particular, we will examine how people throughout
centuries and across geography portray and celebrate, or deride, the diversity and dynamism of those that
forged their own, new paths, in whatever situation they found themselves—some more ideal than others.
We’ll discuss renegades who have reached "success," and also study those that have met worse fates,
perhaps due to their boundary pushing. We will examine renegades who went against the grain for all
different purposes, and in varied ways—from the forceful to the quiet. And, we will explore how context
works to shape our perception of who is “bad” or “good” in their rebellion. Through our critical written
and oral examinations of renegades, we will be able to articulate aspects of our own desires to buck the
system.

Section 14: The 1960s in America: Moving Forward or Falling Apart? - Vaughan Knaus, Pam
Section 14: MWF 2:00 PM – 2:50 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 12:30 PM – 1:45 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: Imagining Paris: On Dreams and Reality in the City of Light – Holz, Leah
Section 16: MWF 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM
Paris between World Wars One and Two in the 1920s and 30s is often depicted as a cultural melting pot where artistic and cultural innovations took center stage. Paris at that time of les années folles (the “crazy years”) appears freeing, open-minded, and the place to go for budding artists to explore their identities. This course aims to analyze representations of Paris that go beyond romantic imaginations of the city. We will examine Paris in musicals, art, film, music, and novels alongside main artistic and cultural movements that spread outside the city and include: surrealism, the Harlem Renaissance, French colonialism, and the Négritude movement. In this course, students will experience, read, scrutinize, analyze, and discuss a variety of sources and will reflect critically upon the time period as it relates to present-day imaginations of Paris. We will address the questions of how human experiences are translated into art and the cultural implications of art, specifically during the 20th and 21st-centuries in Paris. We will examine societal institutions and the implications of individual and collective behaviors and the impacts on cultural relationships during this time period.

Section 17: The American West: History and Myth – Elkins, Mary
Section 17: MWF 9:00 AM – 9:50 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 18: See section 10

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 5:00 PM – 6:15 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: The Power of Love; the Love of Power – Scott, Anne
Section 24: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM
Section 27: MWF 10:00 AM – 10:50 AM
Does “true love” exist? In what ways does power corrupt? What might a powerful love look like, and when does power resemble love? In this course, we will explore these two complex concepts – their nature, function, interrelationship, motivations, and manifestations. We will also explore the ways in which love and power, and their relationship, lie at the root of so much human achievement, whether for good or ill. We will define, re-define, and contextualize these concepts through a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspective provided for us through a carefully selected body of literature: creation myths, short stories, novel, poetry, drama, political theory, spiritual writings, psychology, cultural criticism, and theology. We will also discuss the important corollaries and “kissing cousins” of love and power—e.g., compassion, affection, sympathy, empathy, kindness, charity, ambition, achievement, prestige, and reputation—which underlie our expressions of love and power, drive our successes or failures, and might earn us praise or blame. Finally, we will also discuss two films that illustrate the complexities of these two concepts. Be prepared for engaging discussions, small-group work, academic essays and revisions, a research project, and oral communication practice – all designed to hone your writing, reading, speaking, and thinking skills as we make our way through an exciting semester focused on love and power.

Section 25: See section 8

Section 26: See Section 16

Section 27: See Section 24

Section 28: The American West: History and Myth – Elkins, Mary
Section 28: MWF 12:00 PM – 12:50 PM
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