HONR 292A (satisfies category 3A) (old 294)

Section 1: Science as a Way of Knowing: Human Origins - M. Pante
This seminar will engage students in the exploration of science as a way of knowing, specifically as it relates to the field of paleoanthropology and human origins research. The seminar considers what counts as scientific knowledge, and the ethical and aesthetic implications of what one gains and does with the acquisition of knowledge. Students will integrate the history and philosophy of science with theoretical, methodological and ethical considerations in human origins research. Students will also consider controversial topics in human origins, such as creationism vs evolution and the “Man the Hunter” hypothesis.

Section 2: Science as a Way of Knowing: Water Science- C. Olivo-Delgado
Water is a fascinating substance that intrigues scientists from all historical ages and disciplines. It is essential for sustaining life on earth and represents ¾ of the human body. What are the intrinsic qualities that it has, and particular transformations it undergoes that make water a unique compound controlling many processes in engineering, chemistry, biology, ecology, nutrition, and even human behavior? This seminar will engage students in the exploration of science from an interdisciplinary standpoint. The discussions will focus on relevant topics that will make students question scientific knowledge, theoretical frameworks and ethical considerations while applying concepts to the study of water.

HONR 292B (satisfies category 3B) (old 292)

Section 1: Knowing in Arts and Humanities - K. Foskin
The seminar will engage students in the exploration of different ways of knowing - and their purposes, values, and limitations - in the arts and humanities. The seminar considers what counts as knowledge, and by whom; the methods employed to gain or affirm knowledge; the values attributed to knowledge; and the ethical and aesthetic implications of what one gains and does with the acquisition of knowledge. Students will integrate literature, film, theater, art, and philosophy in discussions and assignments.

Equally, we shall investigate the dynamic and complex ways in which we know via the principal vehicle of our being human and how ‘contests’ with both within the human and non-human realms utilize many aspects or elements of knowing (e.g., narrative, myth, science, morality and technology). This course takes as its premise the following starting point: that knowing (and knowledge) is a diverse human construct involving three planes of human activity, 1) the emotional/psychological, 2) the somatic, and 3) conceptual/analytical. Our ‘playing fields of enquiry’ will be a series of seminal sci-fi novels (and their equivalent films) that challenges and ‘contests’ how we know ourselves to be human.

Section 2: Knowing in Arts and Humanities - C. Becker
The seminar will engage students in the exploration of different ways of knowing - and their
purposes, values, and limitations - in the arts and humanities. The seminar considers what counts as knowledge, and by whom; the methods employed to gain or affirm knowledge; the values attributed to knowledge; and the ethical and aesthetic implications of what one gains and does with the acquisition of knowledge. Students will integrate literature, art, music, and philosophy in discussions and assignments. The thematic focus of the seminar is on “knowing nature”. The seminar explores and critically reflects on different ways of knowing about nature in the context of arts and humanities, including reflections on scientific ways of knowing nature. The seminar discusses the relevance of a broader understanding of nature for analyzing and addressing current environmental issues and sustainability challenges, how different types of knowing can be integrated in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations, and why arts and humanities are crucial for understanding and achieving sustainability. Students will practice the critical analysis and integration of different ways of knowing to address sustainability issues with case studies.

Section 3: Knowing in Arts and Humanities: Construction of Knowledge – M. Brown
The overarching theme for this seminar is the “construction of knowledge.” Students will be engaged in discussions, readings, written communication, and oral communication to consider ideas of how knowledge is produced, by whom it is produced and for what purposes it is produced. The political construction of knowledge challenges students to consider the potential impacts of manipulating what is known and by whom it is known. Cultural identity, arts, philosophy, literature, film, and social media will be considered for their subjectivity and selectivity in the sharing of knowledge which can ultimately drive election outcomes, perpetuate social injustices, or be used as justification for wars. Students will also be challenged to reflect upon the sources of their own knowledge and to identify gaps that may ultimately impact their views and actions.

Section 4 and 5: Knowing in Arts and Humanities - J. Kitchens
The theme for this course is the “social construction of knowledge,” and it engages with the ideas of how knowledge gets produced, by whom and for what purposes. Other considerations include what counts as knowledge and how has it been produced and transmitted in the past (and present), e.g., public schooling? What other institutions are involved in the production of knowledge? And what is the relationship between knowledge and power? Course materials will range in disciplinary perspectives including philosophy, history, education, sociology, literature, and film. Students will also be guided in a self-reflective investigation into how knowledge has been produced in their personal lives, and specifically how such knowledge informs their worldview, i.e., how they interpret and act in the world.

Section 5: See Section 4 above

Section 6 and 7: Knowing In Arts and Humanities: Do Non-Human Animals Make Art? - S. Zwick-Tapley
Do non-human animals engage in the arts and humanities? How do we know? How do we know what constitutes the arts and humanities among our own species? This class will look at the definitions, history and current research regarding language, creativity and expression. From the philosophies of Charles Darwin and Renee Descartes to the research by Jane Goodall, Marc Hauser
and Sue Savage-Rumbaugh, we will explore the human identity and the identity we attribute to other species. Be prepared for thinking both inside and outside of the box of what we know and what we imagine.

Section 7: See Section 6 above

Section 8: Knowing in Arts & Humanities: Knowing Through Literature - J. Kitchens
What can literature tell us about the world around us? Or about how we are to live in it? The literary arts have been part of the transmission of knowledge and culture from their inception. This class will examine literature that was purposefully meant to transmit culture, convey information, or otherwise provide knowledge or wisdom. Much of what we call “myth” was for others, much more literal as it often sought to explain natural events in the world as well as provide instruction on how to live a virtuous and meaningful life. This class will read various texts from around the world, including those from ancient mythology as well as the wisdom literature and mysticism of the near and far east, e.g., excerpts from Proverbs, the works of Rumi, The Tao Te Ching, and The Jātaka Tales (Buddhist instructional stories). We will also read fables including tales from One Thousand and One Nights, The Brothers Grimm, and some Norwegian folktale stories. Students will also investigate the Morality Plays from the Medieval era (and will have the opportunity to write their own). Finally, the class will look at American “Sage” writers such as Henry David Thoreau and John Muir in addition to realism and Modernist authors who often thought that literature could provide greater “truths” than science, or other objective disciplines.

HONR 292C (satisfies category 3E) (old 293)

Section 1: Knowing Across Cultures: Wildlife Conservation Issues - N. Vieira
The seminar will engage students in the exploration of ways of knowing across cultures by understanding different cultural perspectives and values, and analyzing how these perspectives and values influence what we know about self, others, and world issues. Specifically, we will look at how culture influences global conservation of fish and wildlife. Students will critically reflect on how power, privilege, cultural identities, historical frameworks, social systems, and cultural backgrounds interact with science to influence both conservation successes and intercultural conflicts over wildlife management. Students will also learn to recognize effects of different “ways of knowing” and cultural biases on the interpretation of facts, empirical data, observation, and experience, and how they shape understanding of the possibility for certainty and objective knowledge in conservation, and in life in general. We will explore these themes through readings, group discussion, movies and videos, guest speakers, walking field trips and outside time!

Section 2: Knowing Across Cultures: Exploring the Foundations of Moral Reasoning Across Cultures - K. Jaggers
The seminar will engage students in the exploration of different ways of knowing across cultures by understanding different cultural perspectives and analyzing how cultural values differently inform
research methodologies. The seminar considers how cultural values inform what counts as knowledge, and by whom; the methods employed to gain or affirm knowledge; the values attributed to knowledge; and moral implications of how knowledge is constructed, evaluated, and reproduced. Specifically, this course will provide experiences for students to critically and analytically reflect on how power, privilege, cultural identities, historical frameworks, social systems, and cultural backgrounds influence what we know about self, others, and the world. These reflections will involve examples of how social and historical gaps, omissions, and shifts in knowledge, including what is not known, what cannot be known, and what is un-known (which may have been disregarded, discarded, or forgotten) often reflect competing cultural perspectives and values. Students will also learn to understand the effects of cultural bias on the interpretation of facts, empirical data, observation, and experience, and how this shapes understandings of the possibility for certainty and objective knowledge. In this way, students will explore how cultural values inform and influence which research methodologies are used for knowledge production, construction, and acquisition. By analyzing contemporary case studies or issues on a theme, students will further integrate and evaluate different ways of knowing.

Section 3: Knowing Across Cultures: Indigenous Peoples and Their Environments - C. Keyt

Every few decades, Americans begin to long for simpler times – making food from scratch, camping in the backcountry, and imagining ourselves living as the “Indians” might have. European colonizers long ago reduced Indigenous lifeways to superstition, witchcraft, and “lack of knowledge.” Only in recent decades has the Western worldview begun to tentatively accept – but never fully validate – ways of knowing that provide reciprocal relationships between humans and their environments. Come explore the ways in which Indigenous peoples around the world have maintained connections with their non-human relatives; that is, with natural elements that possess “personhood” in coastally-based environments.

This seminar provides opportunities to analyze how indigenous peoples around the world determine(d) what knowledge was/is most important for their social groups. Students will gain a more nuanced view of how specific landscapes influence construction and maintenance of knowledge, the methods used to gain or affirm such knowledge, and its social and moral implications. Over the duration of the class, we will examine how humans subsequently form(ed) sustainable relationships with those the elements in those landscapes, including plants, animals, water, and geological features.

We will investigate how traditional ecological knowledge (ways of knowing how to use one’s environment for survival) guides religious practices, economic choices, education, tribal governments, and even entertainment. Finally, students will have opportunities to dissect controversial and fraught relationships between native and non-native groups, such as universities, the media and Hollywood, Hippies, New Age followers, and environmentalists and associated problems of appropriation of Indigenous knowledge. We will end the course by examining self-determination of Indigenous peoples around the globe in the 21st century, including how they have shaped and contributed to political agendas around natural resource use.

Major topics that we will explore include spiritual connections to subsistence, contemporary Native
environmental issues, continued evolution of indigenous beliefs and lifeways, traditional ecological knowledge, and natural resource management policy, all within the framework of protecting homelands.

Section 4: Knowing Across Cultures: Indigenous Peoples and Their Environments - C. Keyt

Every few decades, Americans begin to long for simpler times – making food from scratch, camping in the backcountry, and imagining ourselves living as the “Indians” might have. European colonizers long ago reduced Indigenous lifeways to superstition, witchcraft, and “lack of knowledge.” Only in recent decades has the Western worldview begun to tentatively accept – but never fully validate – ways of knowing that provide reciprocal relationships between humans and their environments. Come explore the ways in which Indigenous peoples around the world have maintained connections with their non-human relatives; that is, with natural elements that possess “personhood” in coastally-based environments.

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