

# Honors Seminar Descriptions

Spring 2020

## HONR 492

### **Section 1: Philanthropy In Action: Passion To Serve – F. Glycener**

*MW 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM*

We often wrestle with how to put our good intentions more fully into action in ways that will benefit our community as well as enhance our individual lives. Digging into the meaning of philanthropy which literally means the "love of people" can give us refreshed purpose in understanding why we engage in these endeavors. Volunteering in America is at an all-time record high; however, there can often be challenges between making the world a better place and actually achieving it. This seminar empowers students to maximize their potential to participate fully in philanthropic service through the lens of alleviating material poverty by investigating theoretical constructs, viewing video examples, incorporating fiction reading, and practical hands-on experience. The call for aid in our world is great our passion to serve must be greater.

### **Section 2: Freedom in Focus – K. Jagers**

*T 2:00 PM – 4:30 PM*

This seminar is organized around the idea, and practice, of freedom. While freedom is said to be "on the march" in the world today, what, precisely, does this mean? What does it mean to have free will; to live in a free society; to express oneself freely? Moreover, is the march of freedom inevitable? Is it desirable? Should it be unbridled in both its promotion and construction? While there is a temptation in our society to uncritically accept the idea of freedom as an unalloyed "good" by viewing the concept of freedom through the analytical lenses of philosophy and the social sciences we are better able to understand the "bounded" role of freedom in human society. The objective of this course is to think critically about the idea of freedom and, in the process, to evaluate the political, social, theological and ethical arguments both for, and against, its promotion. In this course we will examine the idea of freedom by reading the works of classic social theorists and commentators (e.g., Plato, Mill, Kant, Freud, Sartre, etc.) and by interpreting these works through the lens of modern cinema (e.g., *The Seventh Seal*, *The Matrix*, *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, *Apocalypse Now*, *A Clockwork Orange*, etc.).

### **Section 3 & 4: America and the Civil War – M. Elkins**

*Section 3: MWF 11:00 AM – 11:50 AM*

*Section 4: TR 9:30 AM – 10:45 AM*

"Any understanding of this nation has to be based on an understanding of the Civil War. . . it defines us." These are the words of the eminent writer and historian Shelby Foote, and they form the premise of this course. Who we are as a nation, how we see ourselves, what we value, and how we conduct our national and international life, all have their roots in this great 19th Century catastrophic upheaval. This is not a history course although we will be reading historical texts. Rather it is a course on the ways in which the Civil War has seeped into our consciousness and been revised and reinterpreted over generations. In particular, we will look at its influences in art, both popular and elite. We will look at

fiction dealing with the Civil War and films ranging from *Gone with the Wind* through *Glory* and *Gettysburg*. We will consider such issues as the image and reputation of Abraham Lincoln over the years, the relationship between slavery and contemporary racism. The consequences of the Civil War, both good and ill, are all around us. And the interest in the War and its iconic cast (Lincoln, Lee, Grant, and Frederick Douglass, to name only four) is manifested in the amazing amount of research of a very high quality, that appears on bookshelves on an almost daily basis. In the words of William Faulkner, "The past is not dead. In fact, it isn't even past."

#### **Section 4: See Section 3**

#### **Section 5: Globalize This? Fear and Loathing in the Age of Progress and Prosperity – K. Jagers**

*TR 12:30 PM – 1:45 PM*

In this seminar we will explore both the perils and promises of globalization. For better or worse, the process of globalization is fundamentally transforming the economic, cultural and political foundations of the globe. While globalization holds out the promise of progress "providing significant opportunities for the emancipation of much of the world's population from the tyranny of poverty, ignorance and political repression" it simultaneously evokes a sense of fear and loathing throughout much of the globe. Globalization is a contentious process -- its meaning almost entirely dependent on who is talking about it. Pro-market economic reformers, displaced workers, environmental and human rights activists, security experts and cultural nationalists, to name a few, all compete for the right to stake claim to the idea of globalization and shape public perceptions about its potential impact on the world in which we live. In a very real sense globalization has become the buzzword that serves to crystallize disagreements concerning the speed and direction of social and political change in the world at-large. While both the meaning and merits of globalization have become highly politicized in recent years, with intellectual debate about this topic sometimes transforming itself into contentious political action and legislation, in this class we will seek to evaluate the origins, nature and impact of this phenomenon by using insights and analytical tools from the humanities (e.g., history and philosophy) and the social sciences (e.g., economics, political science, psychology and sociology).

#### **Section 6: First Generation American Women Psychologists – V. Volbrecht**

*TR 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM*

The Civil War has ended and the area of psychology is struggling to find its identity: does it belong in philosophy or does it belong as its own field of science? Women are also struggling to break the barriers of the separate sphere: should they have access to education, will education decrease their fertility, should they have jobs outside the home? Into this mix of chaos, comes a group of women who push through barriers seeking a graduation education and a doctoral degree: the first-generation of American women psychologists. What obstacles do they face? What if you are a Jewish, African American or a Latina woman seeking a doctoral degree in psychology? This course explores the genesis of American psychology, the societal and educational struggles of American women, and the pioneering women psychologists, often forgotten, who helped define American psychology.

#### **Section 7: Change - Social, Environmental and Economic Perspectives – J. Raadik Cottrell**

*MW 5:00 PM – 6:15 PM*

There's only one thing for sure in life and that's Change. We as individuals change (i.e., beliefs, attitudes and behaviors) throughout our lifespan and so does the world around us. In lieu of today's rapid societal, environmental, economic, technological, etc. changes, the need for more balanced development is acute. Bold and transformative steps are necessary to shift global societies on a positive course of change to a more sustainable and resilient path. Today's young generation is undoubtedly one of the most influential agents of change for a more sustainable future. Changing worldviews and the ability to take advantage of the advancements of today's science and technology create endless opportunities and pose challenging ethical responsibilities.

**Section 8: A History of Sex in Art – S. Zwick-Tapley**

*MW 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM*

Nudity. Eroticism. Power. Victimization. Gender. Destruction and promotion of religious norms. Since the beginning of artistic expression the fine and performing arts have explored sex. What intrigues us most? What captivates us? In this class we'll discuss ancient Greek theatre, Renaissance portrayals of Jesus, 2nd century Indian erotic temple art, English Restoration Theatre, Japanese Shunga, Argentinian tango, rap and contemporary American photography and film. In addition, the theme of censorship will be explored. NOTE: The content in this seminar may be offensive to some students.