

Course Descriptions

University Honors Program

Spring 2022

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Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought

Revolution

Professor Joseph Trullinger

HONR 1016:MV1 - 3 Credits

CRN 34649

MW 11:10AM - 12:25PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor elective
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB: Humanities
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: Modernity is often understood as an era of innovation and upheaval, of new ideas and ways of life. Modernity seems new by virtue of its idea that what is new is permissible, if not preferable, over against adhering to time-honored order. This section of Origins will attempt to understand modernity as an era of revolution, of radical breaks with all sorts of established order: political, familial, economic, moral, cultural, and everything in between. In addition to those who argue for a sweeping overhaul of society, we will engage important critics of revolution, who make the case that the complaints of revolutionaries are ill-founded, or else can be resolved through gradual reform rather than sudden revolution. Reform versus revolution: the opposition between these views will form the basic framework for our exploration of a wide array of texts, criticizing and calling for bourgeois revolution, anti-colonial revolution, feminist revolution, slave revolts, communist revolution, fascist revolution, moral repentance, spiritual renewal, and revolutions in social values as fundamental as democracy and individualism.

Body Politics

Professor Summer Renault-Steele

HONR 1016:MV3 - 3 Credits

CRN 35891

TR 10:00AM-11:15AM

HONR 1016:MV4 - 3 Credits

CRN 35892

TR 11:30AM-12:45PM

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Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor elective
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB: Humanities
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: Until recently, serious reflection about human nature and political life in the Western tradition has entailed drawing exclusively on the tools of the rational mind. From Plato to Descartes, the body has been characterized as an obstacle to overcome when it comes to understanding who we are, both as individuals and as a group. Ironically, this tradition has left us with prevailing theorizations of human being and the body politic that lack sufficient attention to the politics of human bodies.

In contrast, this proseminar takes the human body as its point of departure in order to think about the relationship between human nature and political life. We turn to modern and contemporary Western and non-Western thinkers who reverse the traditional orientation, asking us to consider instead how our embodied existence informs who we are and how power works in our body politic.

Power

Professor Theodore Christov

HONR 1016:MV2 - 3 Credits

CRN 35551

MW 08:30AM-09:45AM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor elective
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB: Humanities
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: If individual liberty is a central aspiration of modernity, what power can the state claim? What kinds of power have shaped and corrupted modernity's ideals? Taking its premise from Foucault's claim that "power is everywhere," this course examines theories and practices of power and oppression and how they challenge our modern idea of liberty. We begin with conceptual foundations, asking what liberty means, why it might be valuable, and how it relates to the concept of power. We will grapple with fundamental political concepts, such as state sovereignty, natural law, and social contract; moral ideas, such as autonomy, equality, and reasoning; and social forces, such as labor, class struggle, racial oppression, and human emancipation. By tracing how power—state power (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau), economic power (Marx/Engels, Weber, Baldwin) psychological power (Freud, Nietzsche, Fanon), bodily power (Wollstonecraft, Beauvoir), conceptual power (Arendt, Foucault)—permeates virtually all kinds of human relations, we will question and critique our own understanding and experience of liberty and consider forms of resistance to power

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and oppression, from the sixteenth century to the present. The course will help you develop your ability to make and evaluate arguments, both in writing and in conversation, and thereby help you think clearly and critically how power and oppression relate to liberty.

Theories of Justice

Professor Eyal Aviv

HONR 1016:MV6 - 3 Credits

CRN 35894

TR 8:30-9:45AM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor elective
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB: Humanities
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: In the second part of the course we will shift our attention from the “origins” to the “evolution” of modern thought. A special attention will be given to the rise of novel theories of justice in the modern period, which appeared in conjunction with the decline of “tradition” (whether political or religious). Traditional values served in the pre-modern world as moral authorities. But if traditions themselves are questioned, then who determines what is the right thing to do? How can we distinguish the moral from the immoral? We will read writings of thinkers and writers who followed the command of Immanuel Kant: Sapere Aude! Dare to know, challenged their societies by asking the question “what is the right thing to do?” And “How do we know that it is right?” Finally, we will continue raising critical questions, discuss and debate them in class and further develop the academic skills that we began exploring in the first semester.

The Death of God

Professor Mark Ralkowski

HONR 1016:MV5 - 3 Credits

CRN 35893

TR 02:20PM- 03:35PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor elective
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB: Humanities

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- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: Is capitalism always dehumanizing, or can it promote human welfare? How do race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and social class affect our understanding of ourselves and others? Are our cultural values good for us, or do they undermine our mental health and harm the planet? Do experiences of marginalization and oppression give those who experience them unique knowledge about our society and how it operates? What might the earth and nonhuman animals teach us about how we ought to live? As we explore questions like these in this course, we will discover how philosophy can be what Freire calls the “practice of freedom.” We will begin by studying the rise of the modern worldview and the spread of its political values, but most of our time will be spent on a wide range of cultural critics—e.g., Tolstoy, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Frankl, Baldwin, de Beauvoir, Lorde, the Combahee River Collective, Freire, the Dalai Lama, and Robin Wall Kimmerer—who lay the foundations for a less alienating and more humane world. Our discussions will cover some of their most revolutionary ideas, which have transformed the way we think about the human place in nature, the relationship between culture and economics, our conscious and unconscious minds, colonialism and liberation, gender and racial justice, and the aims of an emancipatory education. The main goal of this course is for us to see how these philosophies are more than abstract theories in books that are hard to read. They are provocations to reexamine our beliefs and values, reckon with our place in history, and reimagine the future of our interconnected world.

Knowledge is Power

Professor Jordan Corner

HONR 1016:MV7 - 3 Credits

CRN 37345

MW 10:00-11:15AM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor elective
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB: Humanities
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: What do cellphones, cars, nuclear weapons, concentration camps, and anthropogenic climate change all have in common? One answer is that they are all technological features of the modern world—but why? Why does the modern world seem to be defined by increasing technological influence on nature and society? We will begin to ask this question more precisely by examining the origin and basis of one of the key premises of modern natural and political science, that knowledge is power, in the writings of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Descartes, and Bacon. We will then read the works of several authors who are less sanguine about the modern project to conquer nature: Rousseau, Marx, and Mary Shelley. Finally, we will ask if the technological way of seeing the world that seems to be a feature of modernity is actually a feature of Western thought in general by reading Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Said, Beauvoir, and Strauss.

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Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

Revolutions in Astronomy

Professor Bethany Kung

HONR 1034:MV - 4 Credits

CRN 35895

TR 9:00-10:50 AM

HONR 1034:MV1 - 4 Credits

CRN 35552

TR 11:00AM-12:5PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Natural/Physical Science with Lab
- CCAS: Oral Communication
- ESIA: Science
- GWSB: Science

Course Description: This course explores the history and frontiers of modern astronomy. In the 400 years since Galileo first turned his telescope toward the heavens, the science of astronomy has gone through numerous radical shifts in our understanding of the universe. We will examine these great paradigm shifts, starting with the Copernican revolution, through Hubble's discovery of the expanding universe, to topics in astrophysics that remain controversial and perplexing even today such as extrasolar planets, black holes, dark matter and dark energy. Both the concepts behind these astronomy revolutions and the associated physics will be emphasized (there is, however, no mathematics prerequisites and the math level will be confined to algebra). We will consider historical and scientific perspectives on who was behind these radical discoveries, what evidence supports each revolution, and how astronomers and society have responded to each advance. Students in this course will develop an understanding of the types of modern astronomical topics discussed frequently in the popular science press and media and will come to appreciate how the science of astronomy is performed. Students will be expected to take an active role in the classroom, where we will explore topics through a combination of lecture, discussion, student presentations, group projects and mathematical exercises.

It's Not Easy Being Green: Plants and Society

Professor Frank Stearns

HONR 1034:MV4 - 4 Credits

CRN 31583

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MW 11:00AM-12:50PM

HONR 1034:MV5 - 4 Credits

CRN 32388

MW 2:00-3:50PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Natural/Physical Science with Lab
- CCAS: Oral Communication
- ESIA: Science
- GWSB: Science

Course Description:

“Maybe plants are really farming us, giving us oxygen until we eventually expire and turn into mulch which they can consume.” - Unknown

Despite the fact that plants are all around us, they are often overlooked. Part of this comes from the belief that plants are simpler than animals. This is far from true. Plants lead complex (though mostly sedentary) lives. They have behaviors and senses that are analogous to those of many animals. And they make their own food! This course will explore plants from structure and function and a survey of the plant kingdom to plant adaptations and finish with a discussion about an active debate as to whether plants have an analogue to consciousness. Assignments will include short papers, quizzes, exams, a debate, and an oral presentation on a gardening design. We will do several labs on plant anatomy and physiology and plant genetics. Material will be based on discussion, lectures, and readings such as *_Lessons From Plants_* by Beronda Montgomery. There is no prerequisite for this course.

Biology of Sex & Reproduction

Professor Carly Jordan

HONR 1034:MV2 - 4 Credits

CRN 35553

TR 1:00-2:50PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Natural/Physical Science with Lab
- CCAS: Oral Communication
- ESIA: Science
- GWSB: Science

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Course Description: This course explores the biology of sex and human reproduction, with views at many levels. At the cellular level (How are sperm and egg made? How do chromosomes get sorted?), the organ level (What's happening in the reproductive organs, throughout a month or a lifetime?), the organismal level (How does an embryo become a tiny person? How do changing hormones affect the whole body?), and at the societal level (What misconceptions do we hold about sex and reproduction? What factors contribute to disparities in sexual health?).

Beyond biology, this course is about the scientific process and evaluating information. We constantly encounter claims that we may not be sure about, and sometimes that uncertainty can have important implications for your wellbeing. If you see a claim that herpes can't be transmitted by oral sex, it's important to know how to decipher the truth! (Spoiler alert- Herpes absolutely can be transmitted by oral sex- use dental dams and condoms.) By exploring the science behind such claims and practicing skills in content analysis and reading primary sources, you will learn to interrogate these questions on your own. This course will help you to feel empowered to make evidence-based choices about your sexual health.

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Introductory and Special

Honors Macroeconomics

Professor Ronald Bird

HONR 2044:10 - 3 Credits

CRN 30175

TR 3:45-5:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: Social Sciences
- SEAS: Social Sciences
- Equivalent Courses: HONR 2047; ECON 1012

Introduction to the principles of aggregate economic output, employment, consumption, investment, fiscal and monetary policy and international trade. Students will learn about sources of data measuring aggregate economic activity, about the causes and consequences of business cycles, inflation, financial crises, income and wealth inequality, the role of money, interest rates and the banking system. The focus will be on the United States economy, but other global economies and economic systems will also be discussed. Course prerequisites: ECON 1011

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Self & Society

Future Crimes

Professor Maria Restrepo

HONR 2047:10 - 3 Credits

CRN 34650

Time: R 12:45-3:15PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- CCAS: Counts as SOC 2189 for Sociology and Criminal Justice programs
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science

Course Description: This course seeks to understand the interplay of Internet technology and criminal activity. While offline violent crime is usually linked to cities, and more specifically, to definite spaces in cities, future crimes (cybercrimes and future crimes) in our online space reach all of us everywhere, even if we don't do anything, simply because we are connected (and interconnected) online. Technology is a double-edged sword: as much good as it brings, it can also create unprecedented possibilities for crimes — many of which may be new and un-thought. Given the freshness of this phenomenon, this course will seek to identify the relevant questions rather than give definitive answers. Some of the questions that the course will explore and refine include: Are our current understanding and existing theories of crime and crime prevention approaches, appropriate to deal with the new wave of future crimes linked to technology? Will technology increase crime exponentially, mirroring the famous 'Moore's Law' of advances in computing capability? What type of crimes are we, and might we, end up dealing with as a society? Are future crimes and 'offline' crimes correlated? Has the Internet revolution already created the path for some irreversible crimes?

Humanitarian Governance

Professor Michael Barnett

HONR 2047:11 - 3 Credits

CRN 35896

Time: W 03:30PM-06:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- CCAS: Political Science Major Group C (international politics, law, international organizations) requirement
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science

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Course Description: This class explores humanitarianism – the attempt to provide life-saving relief during moments of urgency to distant strangers. We will begin with a look at the origins, tensions, and dilemmas of humanitarianism. Then we will examine several critical topics for understanding the challenges facing contemporary humanitarianism -- and especially how humanitarianism is constrained and shaped by forces beyond its control. Such as? Its financing -- it depends on donors who expect something in return. States that are the sources of suffering - and who have little reason to want humanitarians to reduce it. Changes in our compassion for others -- why care about others when there is so much turmoil at home? How has humanitarianism responded to these challenges? How has it adapted and fought back? We will examine a series of topics and cases.

Patriotism

Professor Harris Mylonas

HONR 2047:12 - 3 Credits

CRN 35897

Time: W 12:45PM-03:15PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- CCAS: Political Science Group E course
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science

Course Description: This is a course on the genealogy of the term "Patriotism," based on a close reading of texts ranging from ancient texts such as Sophocles' "Antigone," to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "The Government of Poland," all the way to Hannah Arendt's "The Origins of Totalitarianism". The idea is to discuss the ancient and modern manifestations of "Patriotism," analytically distinguish it from "Nationalism," and engage contemporary debates on the tensions between cosmopolitanism and nationalism.

Ethics in World Politics

Professor Martha Finnemore

HONR 2047:13 - 3 Credits

CRN 36464

Time: W 12:45-3:15PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science

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Course Description: This seminar will explore whether and how ethical concerns shape world politics. Thinkers going back to ancient Greece have argued that, in fact, ethics have no place in world affairs. Understanding how this could be so is our starting point. Not surprisingly, this amoral view of the world has been challenged on many grounds over the past two millennia but figuring out exactly how and why ethical concerns can exert force and which ethical positions we should champion requires thought. To explore the role of ethics in global affairs we consider contrasting arguments by philosophers and social thinkers including Hannah Arendt, Mohandas Gandhi, Immanuel Kant, Martha Nussbaum, Amartya Sen, Henry Shue, Peter Singer, and Michael Walzer. As we consider these arguments we will apply them to real-world political problems including war, poverty, genocide, immigration, human rights, gender issues, and climate change. Our goal will be to use these classic philosophic arguments to explore ethical problems in contemporary politics and to think about politically successful routes to ethically desirable outcomes.

Personal Finance for the Greater Good

Professor Annamaria Lusardi

HONR 2047:14 - 3 Credits

CRN 36465

Time: R 12:45PM-3:15PM

HONR 2047:15 - 3 Credits

CRN 36821

Time: W 3:30PM-6:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science

Course Description: This course provides the knowledge and tools necessary to evaluate the wide range of financial decisions individuals make throughout their lifetime. Concepts such as interest compounding and the time value of money, the relationship between risk and return, and the benefits of risk diversification will be introduced to provide the context in which individuals make financial decisions. Applications of the personal finance concepts will include, but are not limited to, managing credit cards, student loans, financial apps, achieving and keeping a high credit score, valuing business projects, and planning for the future. The course will cover new topics such as Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) criteria for investing, the role of fintech, and how to build financial resilience during a pandemic. Importantly, the course will cover not only how personal finance decisions impact the wellbeing and happiness of individuals, but also how they impact the wellbeing of society and how access to personal finance knowledge can transform individuals and economies. Applications of personal finance concepts can be used for the greater good.

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Pediatric Ethics

Professor Jeffrey Spike

HONR 2047:16 - 3 Credits

CRN 37346

Time: M 3:30-6:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- Milken: Public Health major/minor elective
- SEAS: Social Science

Course Description: We will cover the medical ethics concerning the treatment of children. This is a field of biomedical ethics that has grown considerably, and is more complex and more controversial than traditional ethics for adult patients. We will also read and discuss works on children's rights and a novel that brings many social issues to light.

Reunification, Reconciliation, Resentment

Professor Alasdair Bowie

HONR 2047:80 - 3 Credits

CRN 35898

Time: T 3:30-6:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- CCAS: Political Science Group A (Comparative Politics)
- ESIA: International and Comparative Politics Advanced Fundamental
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Sciences
- Equivalent Course: PSC 2993

Course Description: This course focuses on the experiences of countries whose societies have been reunified in the contemporary era after war and separation, such as Germany, post-Vichy France, post-1949 PRC and Vietnam. It explores the strategic design and institutional structure of the reunified country, the various phases of reunification and (in some cases) reintegration, the question of reconciliation (what it means, to whom, how realistic is it), and how societal resentment often parallels official narratives of redemption and national unity. The instructor draws particularly upon his experience of post-war Vietnam, a country divided into a Communist North Vietnam and a non-communist South Vietnam for three decades and two wars, 1946-1976.

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Empires from Rome to Washington

Professor Theodore Christov

HONR 2047:82 - 3 Credits

CRN 36601

Time: M 10:00-11:50AM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- CCAS: History Electives: Pre-1750 History, Europe History, United States history, Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Latin America History
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science
- Equivalent Course: HIST 2001

Course Description: What gave rise to, and continues to sustain, a common aspiration to a single humanity and world citizenship, from antiquity to the present? This course traces the various ideologies of empires from ancient Rome through the great colonial powers of early modern Europe to imperial resurrections in our present day, such as the World Bank, the IMF, and US power globally. 'Empire' here should be understood loosely to embody a universal set of beliefs about the legitimacy of certain ways of life and political formations. Clearly the modern democracies of the 'West' are not empires in the widely understood sense of the term, but there are many – particularly in the developing world – who would claim that the objectives they pursue are distinctly 'imperialist'. Yet what modern democracies seem to share in common with ancient empires is a single understanding of what a 'civilization' is, and the conviction that such things as rights, freedom of expression and association, even access to free markets, are the properties of all human beings, and not merely the concerns of one particular hegemonic culture. In examining modes of justification used to theorize 'empire', the course focuses on how Europeans came to think of themselves as possessing a distinctive understanding of the world, which they had a duty (and a right) to export, and often impose on others, and how that understanding has come to shape the modern 'Global Neighborhood'.

Intellectuals in Politics

Professor Arie Dubnov

HONR 2047:83 - 3 Credits

CRN 37349

Time: MW 3:45-5:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

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- SEAS: Social Science
- Equivalent Courses: HIST 2001; JSTD 2002

Course Description: The rise of National Socialism to power prompted an unprecedented large-scale exodus of Central European scholars who have had an enormous impact on American cultural life in particular, and the post-World War II world of politics in general. The primary aim of the course is to introduce students to the key ideas and classical writings of these figures, and to examine their responses to and analysis of the age of extremes. We will begin our journey with the writings of Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm – the founders of the Frankfurt School – and will continue with the analyses of totalitarianism and “political Messianism” offered by Hannah Arendt, Gershom Scholem, Jacob L. Talmon, and Karl Popper, which we will then compare and contrast with the evaluation of liberalism one finds in the writings of Leo Strauss, Isaiah Berlin, and Arthur Koestler.

We shall examine these thinkers’ analyses of enlightenment, nationalism, socialism, and totalitarianism, their life stories, and their direct and indirect role in creating a transatlantic political discourse in postwar years. We will try to ask ourselves to what extent were their political and philosophical writings designed as a response to the maladies of the twentieth century, and to what extent did their Jewishness notify their writings, if at all. By doing so we shall be able to contextualize historically the fundamental features of Jewish intellectual activity after 1945.

No prior knowledge of political science, philosophy and/or Jewish studies are required.

Politics and Culture

Professor Harvey Feigenbaum

HONR 2047W:10 - 3 Credits

CRN 36282

Time: T 03:30PM-06:00PM

Fulfills:

- WID requirement
- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- CCAS: Political Science Group A, upper-level Comparative Politics; or an upper-level Political Science major/minor elective
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science

Course Description: This is a course that examines a number of the ways that issues of culture and politics intersect. While the subject is vast, and could hardly be exhausted by a single course, the purpose of this seminar is to give the student an idea as to some of the ways in which culture affects politics and in which politics affects culture. The purpose is also to give the instructor some idea of how students see the interaction of politics and culture. As always in a proseminar, there will be no lectures. Rather, we will discuss the readings assigned each week. Students should have done all the assigned readings for the week before each class begins.

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Do You Even Science, Bro? Access and Gatekeeping of Science

Professor Frank Stearns

HONR 2047:17 - 3 Credits

CRN 38983

TR 12:45-2:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science

HONR 2047W:11 - 3 Credits

CRN 38676

TR 12:45-2:00PM

Fulfills:

- WID requirement
- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science

Course Description:

We all rely on science every day, but who has access to science? In the 1600's Robert Boyle attempted to set the ground rules for experimental science. He argued that the goal was establishing, "matters of fact" and that this was best done through public experiments in the presence of reliable and competent witnesses. But how public is public, and how do we identify reliable and competent witnesses? Thomas Hobbes used these two questions to argue against the experimentalists. The modern version of this is the peer review system. Although there has been much made of the "replication crisis" peer review can also be seen as a form of gatekeeping, plagued by inherent biases and preventing those without proper credentials from taking part in the scientific community. Likewise open access continues to be a complicated goal, with much of published science currently hidden from the lay public.

This course addresses questions such as, what is science? Who is considered a scientist? Who should (and who does) have access to scientific knowledge, and how is science communicated? What communities have been left out – do we need to decolonize science? In this course we will address these questions through discussion and readings including excerpts from Leviathan and the Air Pump, Physics on the Fringe, and Diversifying Power: Why We Need Antiracist,

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Feminist Leadership on Climate and Energy. Assignments will include quizzes and papers, as well as oral presentations. There is no science course prerequisite.

Epidemics in American History

Professor Vanessa Northington Gamble

HONR 2047W:80 - 3 Credits

CRN 35900

MW 12:45PM-02:00PM

Fulfills:

- WID requirement
- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Sciences
- Equivalent Courses: AMST 4107W, HIST 3301W

Course Description: This course surveys the history of epidemics in the United States from the late nineteenth century to today. It examines the development of the medical and public health responses to epidemics and the social, political, cultural and economic impact of epidemics on American history and culture.

Value Conflict in Politics

Professor Ingrid Creppell

HONR 2047W:81 - 3 Credits

CRN 37347

Time: T 12:45-3:15PM

Fulfills:

- WID requirement
- CCAS: GPAC Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Social Science
- Equivalent Course: PSC 3192W

Course Description: This course will introduce students to issues and debates about the problem of conflicting values in politics – “value conflict” (VC) – and delve into a number of major political-moral dilemmas revolving around freedom, equality, racial and economic justice, the place of religious faith, and immigration, among others. The difficulty of the problem lies in the reality that both sides think their aims are right and good; they must live together, but resolving clashes over fundamental ideas or “values” seems impossible. We examine classic philosophical texts by writers such as

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Betham, Kant, Weber and Berlin, and then turn to treatments of the issues found in contemporary writings, in order to define the nature of the problem, explore examples of conflicts, and discuss implications for political life regarding how to manage or move forward in the face of profound disagreement.

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Arts & Humanities

Hindu, Buddhist & Daoist Religio-Philosophical Traditions in Comparative Perspective

Professor B.N. Hebbbar

HONR 2053:10 - 3 Credits

CRN 35901

Time: W 6:10-8:40PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Religion majors/minors should consult their departmental advisor
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: This course will look into early Hinduism (prior to the advent of Buddhism) and then, after briefly studying Jainism, move onto study Buddhism (history, philosophy & religion) in all of eastern Asia.

The course will then look into the seven schools of Classical Hinduism and then study the tradition of Daoism in terms of its philosophy and religion.

The course will also look into the conflict and cooperation aspects of Buddhism with both Hinduism (in India) and Daoism (in China).

African Feminisms

Professor Meri Wimberly

HONR 2053:11 - 3 Credits

CRN 36602

Time: F 12:45-3:15PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: Both Black American Feminists and the theorists of continental African feminisms have emphasized the intersectionality of oppression based not only on gender, but also on race and class. These theorists have also

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emphasized the importance of recognizing oppression as endemic in geopolitical systems of domination and exploitation, such as imperialism and globalized neoliberal capitalism. In contesting the universalist attitudes of some white/Western feminist work, African feminists have delineated many different shades of and names for the promotion of female empowerment. This course explores various African feminisms through essays and creative writing. Students will investigate the history of how African feminisms have developed, and how they have combated the exclusivity of white/Western feminisms. Students will gain exposure to diverse perspectives on how to support and empower diverse women.

Politics of the Future

Professor Melani McAlister

HONR 2053:12 - 3 Credits

CRN 37353

Time: TR 2:20-3:35PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: The course examines how writers and filmmakers have speculated about alternative possibilities for human and non-human life. Exploring narratives about aliens and robots, environmental apocalypse, alternative worlds, and/or magical futures, we ask questions about how cultural narratives help us to think about the possibilities of political life, environmental realities, and moral action. Writers and filmmakers from the US and beyond, with special attention to work by people of color, writers from the global South, and women.

Buddhist Meditation

Professor Eyal Aviv

HONR 2053:80 - 3 Credits

CRN 35902

TR 11:10AM-12:25PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities

Spring 2022 Course Descriptions

- Equivalent Courses: REL 3900; PHIL 3100

Course Description: In recent decades meditation has gone from an esoteric practice to a mainstream technique of self-transformation. Bill Clinton, Sting, Katy Perry, Helen Mirren, Jerry Seinfeld, and many more sing its praises (sometimes literally). But what is meditation, and how does it work? Why would people subject themselves to a strict regimen of “doing nothing” in times where there is so much to do? In this course, we will focus on Buddhist meditation. We will begin the course by discussing modern meditation texts. After considering the modern presentation of meditation for Western audiences, we will explore how meditation evolved in early Buddhism. We will then extend our study to include different styles of Buddhist meditations. We will learn about the religious world from which they emerged and what purpose they serve in their traditional context and highlight the radical demand they put on us. Finally, for fun, we will also practice some of these methods together.

Antisemitism in an Historical Perspective

Professor Daniel Schwartz

HONR 2053:81 - 3 Credits

CRN 35903

Time: TR 11:10AM-1:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities
- Equivalent Courses: HIST 2051; JSTD 2002

Course Description: Can hate be transhistorical? Can we speak of anti-Jewish hatred as a unique phenomenon that transcends the limits of time and space? Against the backdrop of a massive rise in antisemitic incidents globally, nationally, and on college campuses--and of warring definitions that reveal a lack of consensus over what constitutes antisemitism, in particular with regard to Zionism and the State of Israel--this seminar explores the long pedigree and elusive meaning of antisemitism. We will pay special attention to what the continuities and discontinuities in the story of antisemitism can teach us about problems of historical analysis in general and the challenge of using history to address society.

Kierkegaard

Professor Joseph Trullinger

HONR 2053:82 - 3 Credits

CRN 35905

TR 03:45PM-05:00PM

Spring 2022 Course Descriptions

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities
- Equivalent Course: PHIL 3100

Course Description: Can you think of a better way to spend precious youthful months of your finite lifespan than studying a tormented 19th century philosopher's thoughts on the uncertainty of life's meaning, the pervasiveness of despair, the impossibility of decision without regret, and the inextricable link between freedom and anxiety? No? Even if he's Danish? Then this is the right seminar for you! Though Kierkegaard was an earnestly devout Christian with such relatable titles as *Fear and Trembling* and *The Sickness Unto Death*, you don't need a religious bone in your body to appreciate his keen sense of irony, his bottomless paradoxes, and his passionate style. To that end, we will devote part of the semester to some ways Kierkegaard has inspired other philosophers. For example, something as apparently remote from Christian faith as gender anxiety benefits, as we'll see, from Kierkegaard's analysis of the indeterminacy of selfhood as an irresolvable tension between opposed tendencies. Kierkegaard's satirical use of prior philosophical systems (e.g., Hegel's "dialectic") makes his books powerfully dense, but students need not be philosophy majors to enjoy thinking about despair. A serious openness to open-endedness, and a dose of good ole gothic passion, is all that's necessary.

Disability, Accessibility, and the Arts

Professor Bibiana Obler

HONR 2053:83 - 3 Credits

CRN 35904

W 12:30-3:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities
- Equivalent Course: CAH 4150

Course Description: By no means comprehensive, this seminar will examine theories and histories of various forms and understandings of disability vis-à-vis the arts and visual culture. We will study "disability aesthetics"; inclusive design in architecture, museums, and urban planning; the importance of the gaze; and key debates in the field. We will delve into case studies on early twentieth-century artists' engagement with schizophrenia; the complexities of National Socialist policies on degenerate art and eugenics; and contemporary artists' interventions in discourses on disability. We will read articles and chapters by artists and scholars including Joseph Grigely, Aimi Hamraie, Georgina Kleege, Jasbir K. Puar,

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Tobin Siebers, Vivian Sobchack, Esmé Weijun Wang—and three leading voices in disability studies who teach at GW: David T. Mitchell, Robert McRuer, and Sharon L. Snyder. Drawing on these broad-ranging discussions for foundations and frameworks, students will have the opportunity to pursue substantial research on a topic of their choosing.

Reimagining the Roman World

Professor Rachel Pollack

HONR 2053:13 - 3 Credits

CRN 38828

TR 03:45PM-05:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Art History major/minor elective
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities

Course Description: This course studies the art and architecture of the Roman Empire through the lens of modern archaeology, art historiography, and classical literary sources. Rome's foundational myth and history, recorded by such writers as Virgil, Ovid, Plutarch, Livy, Tacitus, and Suetonius, have established the framework from which we interpret the Roman World. The visual remains of the Roman Empire further illuminate these sources and leave us pondering the reasons why the Romans have left a permanent impression on western art and civilization. Furthermore, we will explore how our ever-changing perception of Roman antiquity has altered our interpretation of the Romans through the analysis of archaeological finds as well as artists from the early modern era who appropriated Roman History.

Food & Drink in American History

Professor Jenna Weissman Joselit

HONR 2053:86 - 3 Credits

CRN 37350

Time: W 12:45-2:35PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- CCAS: Sociology major/minor elective
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities

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- Equivalent Course: HIST 2001

Course Description: This interdisciplinary seminar - a mix of the past and the present, of history and of sociology - looks at the forces that have shaped what Americans eat and drink for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A culinary adventure over time and space, it explores the impact of immigration, religion, race, the marketplace, politics, geography, and the weather on the nation's varied food preferences. What, it asks, accounts for the popularity of BBQ in some parts of the United States and the widespread presence of bagels or tacos in other regions of the country? How did Coca-Cola come to loom so large? Or coffee? Or beer, for that matter? And what of the dieting fads that sweep the nation from time to time, the sudden prominence of kale and cauliflower, the ongoing success of McDonald's, and the rise of the celebrity chef?

Pieter Brueghel, Proverbs, & Memory

Professor Barbara von Barghahn

HONR 2053:87 - 3 Credits

CRN 37351

Time: R 12:30-3:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities
- Equivalent Courses: CAH 4129; CAH 6225

This is a graduate level course

Course Description: The Adagia (Venice: 1508) by the Dutch humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam contains several thousand Sententiae – proverbs, adages, maxims, aphorisms -- which were taken from popular and ancient Roman literature (Terence, Cicero, Pliny the Elder, Lucretius, Juvenal, Horace, Ovid). Another sixteenth-century scholar Juan de Mal Lara compiled a collection of a thousand refrains of witty phrases-- the Philosophia vulgar (Seville: 1568). He asserted pithy sayings and prevalent “truths” were remnants of divine wisdom imparted to Adam and Eve in Eden. My lectures will focus upon the art of Pieter Brueghel the Elder (Breda 1525-1569), a highly intellectual Northern Renaissance artist who worked in Antwerp during the tumultuous Reformation age of change, political-religious conflict and uncertainty. While “Peasant Brueghel” has achieved celebrity for his genre pictures, often characterized by picturesque landscape components, his spritely depictions of village life are windows unto the social concerns of the populace. Several of Brueghel’s pictorial documents concern proverbs and moral lessons; others define the changing parameters of spiritual beliefs upheld in the sixteenth century. The art of Brueghel not only will be explored stylistically, but also interpreted allegorically as a mirror of transformations in Flemish society.

Brueghel’s paintings of peasants, towns, landscapes, death, heaven and hell, as well as his prints of the vices and virtues, resonate with ideas that will be pertinent to the subjects selected for research papers and presentations. Brueghel’s

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most arresting compositions reveal the undeniable influence of the earlier Dutch master Hieronymus Bosch (1450-1516). Besides Bosch, Albrecht Dürer, Lucas Cranach and Albrecht Altdorfer, research projects additionally will address: the role of “proverbs” in genre painting of Baroque Holland; the impact of classical “adages” during the Enlightenment (Los Proverbios of Francisco de Goya); and the vestiges of popular aphorisms in later works of art that thematically center upon concepts of morality and ethics.

The Body in Islamic Art

Professor Mika Natif

HONR 2053:88 - 3 Credits

CRN 37352

Time: W 3:30-6:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities
- Equivalent Courses: CAH 4165; CAH 6265

Course Description: This seminar explores the various philosophical, aesthetic, and religious ideas that shaped the ways humans and animals were depicted in Islamic art from the 7th to the 17th centuries. Debates about the legality of images appeared in Muslim theology from the 8th century on and placed artists in a complicated position. These contending notions found their artistic expression in painting and were manifested in Islamic traditions of figurative art. Throughout the course of the semester, we will discuss the perceptions of beauty that influenced the manner in which artists represented the human body; We will examine the different approaches to and techniques of illustrations of living beings, as well as the appearance of new painting methods and ideas, such as atmospheric perspective and portraiture.

No previous background is required.

Heidegger's Being and Time

Professor Mark Ralkowski

HONR 2053:89 - 3 Credits

CRN 38241

Time: W 3:30-6:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: GPAC Humanities

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- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities
- Equivalent Course: PHIL 4198

Course Description: “When I left the auditorium, I was speechless. For a brief moment I felt as if I had a glimpse into the ground and foundation of the world. In my inner being, something was touched that had been asleep for a long time.” That is how one person described the experience of listening to Heidegger present his philosophy in 1929. Our advanced seminar will be an intensive and focused study of Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, one of the most influential philosophical works of the twentieth century. We will begin the course with an overview of Edmund Husserl’s phenomenological method, and then trace how Heidegger adopts and adapts this new way of doing philosophy in order to address the problems of existence. Second, we will work our way through *Being and Time* systematically, mastering Heidegger’s arguments and considering their implications for traditional philosophical problems in epistemology and ontology. Finally, we will look at the “turn” in Heidegger’s later thought, and consider the importance of his philosophy for understanding language, art, and poetry, as well as his profound critique of modernity, which has influenced thinkers as diverse as Sartre, Marcuse, Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, Cavell, Taylor, Agamben, and Žižek. As Richard Rorty once said, “You cannot read most of the important philosophers of recent times without taking Heidegger’s thought into account.” This course is designed for students who want to know why.

Slow Reading Virginia Woolf

Professor Jennifer Green-Lewis

HONR 2053W:89 - 3 Credits

CRN 37348

Time: MW 11:10AM-12:25PM

Fulfills:

- WID Requirement
- CCAS: GPAC Humanities
- ESIA: Humanities
- GWSB Humanities, Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- SEAS: Humanities
- Equivalent Course: ENGL 3820W

Course Description: This course offers a chance to read three of Virginia Woolf’s most demanding experimental novels in the context of her reflections on art and life. While our primary emphasis will be on close textual analysis of Woolf’s prose, we will also focus particularly on three areas:

- Woolf’s emphasis on the visual, and some of its sources, including paintings by her sister, Vanessa Bell, and others;
- Woolf’s representation of the passage of time and the workings of memory;

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- Woolf's conception of the self in relation to others, and her interest in what it means to represent another human being in words or in paint.

Please note that there will be additional readings, including essays, diary entries, and biographical extracts, and frequent writing assignments of varying lengths.

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Contract Courses

Honors Internship

Professor Chosen by Student

HONR 2182:10 - 0 to 4 Credits

Course Description: Students who secure an internship placement can get academic credit by arranging a faculty-supervised project related to their internship. Students must submit an Honors Contract. Please see a Program Manager for further information.

Honors Undergraduate Research

Professor Chosen by Student

HONR 2184:10 - 0 to 4 Credits

Course Description: Students working on original research or on another research project can get academic credit by working closely with a faculty mentor. Students must submit an Honors Contract. Please see a Program Manager for further information.

Honors Research Assistantship

Professor Chosen by Student

HONR 2185:10 - 0 to 4 Credits

Course Description: Students who secure a research assistantship with a faculty member can receive academic credit by completing their assistantship duties. Students must submit an Honors Contract. Please see a Program Manager for further information.

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Senior Capstone and Thesis

Honors Senior Thesis

Professor Chosen by Student
HONR 4198 - 3 to 4 credits

Course Description: The Honors Senior Thesis is a one or two-semester independent study to complete a senior thesis. This course is for students who are NOT doing departmental honors. Any student considering the Honors Senior Thesis option should contact an Honors Advisor. This course is only open to Seniors, and requires a completed Honors Contract to register. Please see an Honors Advisor for further information.

Breathe

Professor Eyal Aviv

HONR 4199:10 - 1 Credit

CRN 31761

Time: T 12:45-2:45PM

This course will meet on January 11, 18, 25 and February 1st.

Course Description: As a senior, you probably feel the need to catch your breath. This capstone is an opportunity to do it together. I don't mean it only figuratively but also literally as an embodied practice. The ancient art of breathing has a long history. One early jade stone from China, as ancient as 500 BCE, warned: "He who follows [correct breathing] will live. He who acts against this will die." Recent scientific studies demonstrate that it is not a hyperbolic statement. Breathing correctly enhances our vitality, health, and wellbeing. In this capstone, we will read together James Nestor's bestseller "Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art" and talk about the ancient art of breathing among Yogis in India and China. We will also practice some of the techniques he recommended and learn to calm our minds and energize our bodies.

The Power of Gentleness

Professor Joseph Trullinger

HONR 4199:12 - 1 Credit

CRN 32249

Time: R 01:00PM-02:50PM

This course will meet on March 3rd, 10th, 24th, and 31st.

Course Description: Questions of power—who has it, who doesn't, why, and what we can do about that—predominantly in the Discourse™. Comparatively rarely, however, do we question what exactly power is; we take ourselves to know what it supposedly isn't, and gentleness would come very late in a list of commonsensical attributes

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of a powerful person. In this course, however, we will explore the deficiency of this common conception, by exploring how and why gentleness is in actual fact quite powerful—provided we revise current conceptions of power along the lines of forceful self-assertion or even brutality. From Taoist conceptions of wu-wei (non-action) to feminist efforts to distinguish gentleness from self-denying sentimentality, we will gain greater perspective on how we can exist differently in an indifferent world.

Is Love Really Such a Good Thing?

Professor Mark Ralkowski

HONR 4199:13 - 1 Credit

CRN 34040

Time: R 06:00PM-08:00PM

This course will meet on March 31, April 7, 14, 21.

Course Description: “I would never want to belong to any club that would have someone like me for a member. That’s the key joke in my adult life, in terms of my relationships with women” (Woody Allen, Annie Hall). We will begin and end this little seminar by asking whether this joke tells us anything important about love. Our discussions will not be aimed at any final answers about the nature of love. How could they be? Our only goal will be to think freely, with the help of great literature and film, about love’s aspirations and desires, its special kind of knowledge, its profound risks, and its unusual powers. We will read one little novel (a light read, but full of insight rooted in psychoanalysis and philosophy), a book on “the female search for love” by bell hooks, and a short book on the Buddhist art of loving by Thich Nhat Hanh. Our experience will be organized around four serious conversations, and there will be a dinner at the end, which we will enjoy while discussing a beautiful movie. Please come prepared to read carefully and talk a lot!

The Purpose and Power of Museums, Monuments and Memorials

Professor Bethany Cobb Kung

TA: Brianna Crayton

HONR 4199:14 - 1 Credit

CRN 34042

Time: F 1:00-4:00PM

This course will meet on February 4th, 18th, and March 4th.

Course Description: This is an experimental capstone, in which we will take our discussions outside of the classroom into the city of DC. Our exact itinerary is TBD, but we will visit together three museums and/or monuments/memorials in DC (possibilities include the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Air and Space Museum, Artechouse, etc.). We will ponder the purpose of museums, monuments, and memorials and consider how these institutions shape - and are shaped by - our society. We will also consider what role these institutions will play in your future as a life-long learner as you come to the end of your formal liberal arts education. What better city to consider

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such questions than in DC? Perhaps you've taken full advantage of the sights our city has to offer in your (fewer than normal because of COVID) years at GW but, if not, now's the time! [This capstone will meet only 3 times but for a longer time band to allow for travel to city destinations. Please make careful note of the days/times before enrollment. This course will be strictly limited to 12 students.]