

Course Descriptions

University Honors Program

Spring 2023

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Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought

Revolution

Professor Joseph Trullinger
HONR 1016:MV1 - 4 Credits
CRN: 64262
MW 11:30AM - 12:45PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor course PHIL 2112

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: 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, moral repentance, spiritual renewal, and revolutions in social values as fundamental as democracy and individualism.

Liberty

Professor Theodore Christov
HONR 1016:MV2 - 4 Credits
CRN: 64977
MW 8:30AM - 9:45AM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor course PHIL 2112

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 ideal of liberty? Taking its premise from our natural desire to be free and 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, economic power, psychological power, bodily power, conceptual power—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 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.

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Freedom in the Modern Age

Professor William Winstead
HONR 1016:MV3 - 4 Credits
CRN: 65255
MW 2:30PM - 3:45PM

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HONR 1016:MV4 - 4 Credits
CRN: 65256
MW 4:10PM - 5:25PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor course PHIL 2112

Course Description: The modern age has often been characterized as the epoch of absolute freedom. Its insistence on individual liberty and the right to live one's life as one wishes, free of interference from tradition, church, or state, are symptomatic of modernity's radical commitment to freedom. The scope of its emancipatory impulse may be measured not only by the radical politics of the age—the American, French, and Russian revolutions, among others—but also by the defense of unrestrained expression in the aesthetic sphere (artistic freedom, freedom of speech) and toleration of individual conscience in the moral sphere. Our readings this semester will examine the intellectual revolutions that established freedom as the central value of the modern project and institutionalized it in the liberal state, the market economy, and the self-reflective individual. Readings will include Hobbes, Mill, Nietzsche, Freud, Beauvoir, Audre Lorde, James Baldwin, the Combahee River Collective, and the Dalai Lama.

The Death of God

Professor Mark Ralkowski
HONR 1015:MV5 – 4 Credits
CRN: 65257
TR 1:00PM - 2:15PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor course PHIL 2112

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

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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.

Theories of Justice

Professor Eyal Aviv
HONR 1016:MV8- 4 Credits
CRN: 68594
TR 8:30AM - 11:15AM

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HONR 1016:MV6 - 4 Credits
CRN: 65258
TR 10:00AM - 11:15AM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor course PHIL 2112

Course Description: In the second part of the course, we will dive deep into a diverse range of theories that try to define and enact justice. We will shift our attention from the "origins" to the "evolution" of modern notions of justice, ethics, and morality. In the pre-modern world, traditional values served as moral authorities. But if traditions are questioned, who determines what the right thing to do is? How can we distinguish the moral from the immoral? We will read the writings of theologians, philosophers, and writers who challenged their societies by asking questions and providing surprising answers.

Resistance

Professor Liza Williams
HONR 1016:MV7- 4 Credits
CRN: 66187
TR 8:30AM - 11:15AM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- CCAS: Philosophy major/minor course PHIL 2112

Course Description: This course evaluates theories and practices of resistance in the modern and contemporary period, from acts of dissent to civil disobedience to protest movements. In some instances, individual and collective acts of resistance have catalyzed political revolution, remade society, brought down oppressive regimes, or led to decolonization. In other cases, resistance has failed to inaugurate social and political changes, sometimes resulting in greater conditions of unfreedom, political repression, and democratic backsliding. Under what circumstances does resistance result in enhanced forms of freedom for groups of people, and when will protest fail to achieve greater emancipation? When is one obligated to obey the law and when should unjust laws and social norms be transgressed? When is protest justified and in what form of resistance? What is the political value and effect of various forms of resistance? When is exiting the political community altogether an effective means of resistance against authority? This course will engage with these questions by reading contemporary texts from political science, sociology, and philosophy, alongside works by practitioners of civil disobedience. We will think about these questions by considering cases from the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution, the Algerian War, the Indian Independence Movement, the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, the dissolution of the U.S.S.R., the end of Apartheid in South Africa, the Arab Spring, and recent, widespread resistance against the

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Iranian government in 2022. Authors considered will include Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Henry David Thoreau, M.K. Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Hannah Arendt, Albert Camus, Frantz Fanon, Jean-Paul Sartre, Nelson Mandela, and Václav Havel.

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Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

Revolutions in Astronomy

Professor Bethany Cobb Kung
HONR 1034:MV1 - 4 Credits
CRN: 65259
TR 9:00AM - 10:50 AM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Scientific Reasoning (natural/physical science with lab)
- CCAS: GPAC Local/Civic Engagement

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.

Life: A Journey Through Earth's Biodiversity

Professor Thiago Moreira
HONR 1034:MV - 4 Credits
CRN: 61501
MW 1:00PM - 2:50PM
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HONR 1034:MV5 - 4 Credits
CRN: 62236
MW 3:00PM - 4:50PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Scientific Reasoning (natural/physical science with lab)
- CCAS: GPAC Local/Civic Engagement

Course Description: "A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers, but borrowed from his children." — John James Audubon

Are you alive? What is it to be alive? What are the limits of life? How diverse is life? Our planet is brimming with life. From the depths of the oceans to the tallest mountains, we find different life forms. Some beautiful, some scary, some

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intriguing, and some... weird. But all amazing. To understand better the lifeforms around us and how they connect to the planet is to understand ourselves better. In this course, we will explore life on our planet in a broad aspect. We will explore the major groups of living things and how they come to be. How different lifeforms are interconnected, and how they relate and interact with other. How life started and (almost) ended (several times!). We will use modern biological theory to get foundational knowledge about the sciences that explore biodiversity and its relations with the planet. We will study how we use science and its methodologies to recognize, describe and catalog the several different lifeforms on the planet and how to use this knowledge to ask meaningful, scientific questions about life. Once we have a solid basis, we can permit ourselves to ponder a bit about the most theoretical and philosophical aspects of life: when does life start? When does it end? Are we alone in the universe? How can we recognize alien life when (or if) we ever find some? By the end of our encounters, you will have a deeper understanding of life on Earth, its varieties, and the importance of preserving it for future generations.

Environmental Science

Professor Sammi Munson
HONR 1034:MV1 - 4 Credits
CRN: 64978
TR 4:10PM - 6:00PM

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HONR 1034:MV2 - 4 Credits
CRN: 64979
TR 6:10PM - 8:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Scientific Reasoning (natural/physical science with lab)
- CCAS: GPAC Local/Civic Engagement

Course Description: This course provides an overview of how the natural world works, how humans interact with it, and how we can use evidence-based approaches to protect, restore, and sustain it for the future. Within diverse social contexts, we will introduce you to the key biological, chemical, physical, and ecological principles of environmental science. We take a solutions-focus to explore major themes such as biodiversity, food, water, climate change, and waste, as well as the limitations of these solutions due to science, technology, cultural beliefs, political systems, and resource availability. We will explore how environmental science can support pathways to equitable, inclusive solutions. As members of society and the Earth, we are collectively responsible for environmental impacts and must also be responsible for making educated decisions when influencing environmental issues, electing policy making officials, and choosing lifestyles. This class will include readings, discussions, written reflections, quizzes, laboratories, presentations, research, and exams to support your learning.

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Introductory and Special

Macroeconomics

Professor Michael Bradley
HONR 2044:10 - 3 Credits
CRN: 60163
TR 11:10AM - 12:45PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Social Sciences
- Equivalent to ECON 1012

Course Description: 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. This course will also count toward the Honors Self & Society requirement.

Course prerequisites: ECON 1011

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Self & Society

Future Crimes

Professor Maria Restrepo
HONR 2047:10 - 3 Credits
CRN: 64263
R 12:45PM - 3:15PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Social Sciences
- CCAS: Counts as SOC 2189 for Sociology and Criminal Justice programs
- CCAS: Peace Studies Major Group 2 International Peace and Conflict requirement
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

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?

History of Neuroscience

Professor Leo Chalupa
HONR 2047:11 - 3 Credits
CRN: 65260
TR 2:20PM - 3:35PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

Course Description: The human brain is the most complex entity in the known universe. This course will examine the antecedents of contemporary brain research from philosophical, medical, cultural and scientific perspectives beginning from ancient Egypt to the 21st century. We will consider how advances in our understanding of the human brain have impacted art, literature, economics, cognitive sciences, the legal profession, as well as recent work in artificial intelligence. Students will be required to make a podcast of their 45 minute oral presentation to the class. The necessary arrangements for the production of the podcast will be a joint projection for the students enrolled in the class.

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Patriotism

Professor Harris Mylonas
HONR 2047:12 - 3 Credits
CRN: 65261
W 12:45PM - 3:15PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Social Sciences
- CCAS: Political Science Group E course
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

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 modern ones such as Hannah Arendt's "The Origins of Totalitarianism," all the way to contemporary debates including Deva R. Woodly's "Reckoning: Black Lives Matter and the Democratic Necessity of Social Movements". 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.

Personal Finance for the Greater Good

Professor Annamaria Lusardi
HONR 2047:15 - 3 Credits
CRN: 65832
R 12:45PM - 3:15PM
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HONR 2047:18 - 3 Credits
CRN: 68858
W 3:30PM - 6:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

Course Description: Do you know how to manage your student loan(s)? Have you saved part of the income from your summer job? Do you have a credit card and do you carry a balance? Now more than ever, individuals are in charge of making decisions that have important implications for themselves and for society. From student loans to credit cards, from mortgages to pensions, we are all facing a myriad of decisions that are complex and require basic financial skills. 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. There is a lot at stake; both the wellbeing and financial security of individuals and families and the stability and inclusivity of the financial and economic system rely on basic financial literacy. How can we make sure that we possess the knowledge required to navigate the economic world around us, build resilience, and be financially secure? And how can we make sure that nobody is left behind and that finance can be used to promote the greater good?

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Pediatric Ethics

Professor Jeffrey Spike
HONR 2047:16 - 3 Credits
CRN: 66188
W 3:30PM - 6:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- Milken: Public Health major/minor elective

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.

Empires from Rome to Washington

Professor Theodore Christov
HONR 2047:82 - 3 Credits
CRN: 65687
M 10:00AM - 11:50AM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the 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

Course cross listed with HIST 2001.M80 (CRN: 68023)

This course will be held on the Mount Vernon Campus

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'.

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Holocaust Memory

Professor Walter Reich
HONR 2047:81 - 3 Credits
CRN: 66191
W 3:30PM - 6:00PM

Fulfills:

- CCAS: Upper-level History European Regional requirement
- ESIA: Comparative, Political, Economic, and Social Systems, Conflict Resolution, Contemporary Cultures and Societies, Europe and Eurasia, International Politics, Security Policy concentrations
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Course cross listed with IAFF 3190.82 (CRN: 68471) and JSTD 2002 (CRN:)

Course Description: The sources, construction, development, nature, uses and misuses of the memory, or public consciousness, of the Holocaust. How different publics in different countries, cultures and societies know, or think they know, about the Holocaust from diaries, memoirs, testimonies, fiction, documentaries, television, commercial films, memorials, museums, the Internet, educational programs and the statements of world leaders—some of them historically accurate and some of them highly distorted. The challenge of representing the Holocaust with fidelity and memorializing its victims with dignity and authenticity. The impact of Holocaust memory on contemporary responses to other genocides and to crimes against humanity. The increasing efforts to hijack, misuse, minimize, deny or attack the Holocaust for political, strategic, ideological, anti-Semitic or other purposes. The effectiveness—or lack of effectiveness—of Holocaust memory in teaching the Holocaust’s contemporary “lessons,” especially “Never again!” The roles of Holocaust memory, and of Holocaust denial or minimization, in international affairs, including in the Middle East in general and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in particular.

Epidemics in American History

Professor Vanessa Northington Gamble
HONR 2047W:80 - 3 Credits
CRN: 65263
MW 12:45PM - 2:00PM

Fulfills:

- WID requirement
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Course cross listed with AMST 4701W.80 (CRN: 63770) and HIST 33011.80 (CRN: 63730)

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.

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Ethics in World Politics

Professor Martha Finnemore
HONR 2047:84 - 3 Credits
CRN: 69031
T 12:45PM - 3:15PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Social Sciences
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

Course cross listed with PSC 2993.81 (CRN: 69034)

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.

Totalitarianism: Reading Hannah Arendt

Professor Ingrid Creppell
HONR 2047W:81 - 3 Credits
CRN: 66189
W 12:45PM - 3:15PM

Fulfills:

- WID requirement
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Course cross listed with PSC 3192W.80 (CRN: 66382)

Course Description: This course will engage in a close reading of Hannah Arendt's masterpiece *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951). Considered by many contemporary writers to be an essential reference today (see for a couple of examples: <https://www.theatlantic.com/books/archive/2022/03/arendt-origins-of-tota...> and <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/podcasts/anne-applebaum-ezra-klein-in...>), this text requires careful exploration for its philosophical, historical, psychological, analytical and of course brilliant political insights. It has also stirred up a great deal of controversy since its publication, for its discussions of anti-semitism, race and imperialism, and communism, to name only the most explosive topics. Its magisterial achievement, passionate and engaged scholarship and enormously ambitious scope make it worth devoting an entire semester to close analysis. Hans Morgenthau (a

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founder of 20th century Realism in IR theory) observed: “You can fight over many things with her, but she was the first to understand fascism. Then all the professors came along years later to make details where she was the pioneer. She was a historian very close up, like Thucydides” (quoted in *Why Arendt Matters* By Elisabeth Young-Bruehl).

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Arts & Humanities

Hidden Locations in D.C. Slavery: Invisible Places, Public Acknowledgment, and Contemporary Politics

Professor Kerric Harvey
HONR 2053:11 - 3 Credits
CRN: 65688
TR 2:20PM - 3:35PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities

Course Description: This new class would focus on ways in which to rectify the continuing invisibilization of key places in Washington's landscape that played important roles in the city's long and complicated relationship with slavery. Like the earlier class, this course would take a "praxis" approach -- we'd be in the classroom for a concentrated period in the beginning of the semester but would then move out into the city for the rest of it. During that experiential period, we'd be using original research strategies to find, identify, and document several of these slavery-related sites that are still unmarked in the cityscape. The third part of the course would be learning to navigate the channels of city government, with the goal of submitting several formal proposals to the historical commission, putting forward some of the sites we found as candidates for plaques, signs, or some other type of public acknowledgment.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: A History

Professor Christopher Brick
HONR 2053:13 - 3 Credits
CRN: 67434
TR 12:45PM - 2:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities

Course Description: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one of the world's most recognizable documents, "the foundation of international human rights law," according to the United Nations, and one of the most widely reprinted texts in human history. While its framers theorized the UDHR as a "Magna Carta for all," opponents and detractors have routinely cast it instead as an empty vessel, at best, and at worst a dangerous tool of oppression. Is it either of these things, neither, or something else entirely? This course will invite students to consider these questions anew as it examines the Declaration's conceptual origins in the ancient past, the historical context that led the UN General Assembly to formalize and promulgate a human rights coda in 1948, and the UDHR's colorful evolution into a flashpoint of controversy for activists, policymakers, intellectuals, and the international community writ large. Please note that in researching their term projects for this course, students will be required to draw upon resources from the permanent collection of the Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, a research center of the GW History Department and archive of UDHR materials that UNESCO has designated "vital to global heritage and personhood."

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Antisemitism in a Historical Perspective

Professor David Schwartz
HONR 2053:81 - 3 Credits
CRN: 65266
T 11:00AM - 1:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Course cross listed with HIST 2051.80 (CRN: 66414) and JSTD 2002.81 (CRN: 66201)

Course Description: The current spike in antisemitism, along with the debate over how to define antisemitism in the first place, serves as a backdrop for this course, which aims to trace the long pedigree and elusive meaning of antisemitism from ancient times to the present. We will focus primarily on antisemitism as a discourse—that is, as a shifting, but often recurring, complex of terms, ideas, beliefs, myths, symbols, and tropes—and less on analyzing actual acts of antisemitic violence. Is antisemitism what some have called the “longest hatred,” extending over millennia and continents? Or is it primarily a modern phenomenon that originated around the time the term was coined in 1879? Should we speak of anti-Judaism and antisemitism as distinct concepts, and if so, what is the historical relationship between them? Is Jew-hatred always simply a projection of irrational Gentile fears and fantasies onto Jews, or does it have any basis, however distorted, in Jewish actions and behavior? What is the relationship between antisemitism and other forms of group hatred? What similarities and differences do we find between right-wing and left-wing antisemitism? Is anti-Zionism antisemitism? These are among the questions this seminar will address. My hope is that you will emerge from this class armed with a historical perspective that will make you more clear-eyed, discerning judges of what constitutes antisemitism and more informed participants in the struggle to combat it.

The Frankfurt School

Professor Joseph Trullinger
HONR 2053:82 - 3 Credits
CRN: 65268
TR 3:45PM - 5:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- GPAC Oral Communication

Course cross listed with PHIL 4198.80 (CRN: 66764)

Course Description: Why do we desire our servitude as if it were our freedom? In a time of runaway capitalist inequality, daring experiments in art and theory, and a political status quo unresponsive to the emerging voice of social minorities and lackadaisical about brewing fascist resentment, a group of Marxist scholars came together to understand why the promise of communist uprising failed when it came so close to succeeding. Their Institute for Social Research was founded in Frankfurt, Germany in 1923. It has generated some of the sharpest critiques of the apparently unstoppable “success story” that is capitalist democracy: that its soulless practicality is whitewashed exploitation and mass

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destruction of humans and non-humans alike. Nonetheless they found promises of utopian hope amidst this ruinous pseudo-progress—that a radically different world is possible. To commemorate the centennial of “the Frankfurt School,” this seminar will explore some of its most famous affiliated thinkers—Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Ernst Bloch, Walter Benjamin—and those in later generations who took up their torch in other ways (such as Angela Davis and Paulo Freire). We will also examine current conservative backlash against the Frankfurt School as a Trojan horse supposedly undermining “Western values.”

Nietzsche & Political Thought

Professor William Winstead
HONR 2053:83 - 3 Credits
CRN: 68210
T 3:30PM - 6:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Social Sciences
- CCAS: Philosophy major 2000-level elective

Course cross listed with PSC 2991.80 (CRN: 67960)

Course Description: Nietzsche is a fierce critic of modern politics and a relentless advocate of the agonistic politics of the Greek citystate. He argues that modern politics is beset by decay, evident in the slackening of citizen vigor (or will-power) and the timidity of the age's most powerful political movements, above all liberalism and socialism. We will begin our course this semester with Nietzsche's antidote to modern politics, the vigorous politics of the ancient Greek polis, which serves as the normative model for all of his writings. By embracing the Greeks, and particularly the tragic Greeks, Nietzsche turns away from modern rationalism and the systematic political philosophy inaugurated by Plato in favor of an experiment in new modes of political thinking that are at once anti-modern and post-modern. After considering Nietzsche's image of antiquity, we will turn to his interpretation of modernity and its political forms, and examine his critique of the political ideals of the age (liberalism, equality, and rights). Throughout the semester, we will pay close attention to the relationships that Nietzsche draws between art and politics, culture and the state, justice and rights, and freedom and asceticism.

Other People's Bios

Professor Jenna Weissman Joselit
HONR 2053:84 - 3 Credits
CRN: 67677
M 3:30PM - 5:20PM

Fulfills:

- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Course cross listed with HIST 3001. 80 (CRN: 65427)

Spring 2023 Course Descriptions

Course Description: The lives of others, be they saints or sinners, celebrities or just plain folks, fascinates us. Sometimes we turn to them out of curiosity; at other moments, we seek inspiration, and at still other moments, we're drawn in by the juicy bits. A mix of motivations also prompts people to write about themselves. Sometimes they attempt to set the record straight or to settle a score; at other moments, they seek forgiveness or reconciliation; and at other times, they have a great story to tell of a life well-lived.

It's to these varied expressions of the self that this interdisciplinary seminar attends. Through a series of case studies that encompass autobiography and autofiction, biography and bio-pics, memoir, obituaries and reminiscences, as well as the diaries, letters, objects, portraiture and photo albums on which they're based, we'll explore up close & personal what makes us tick.

Buddhism and Cognitive Science

Professor Eyal Aviv
HONR 2053:85 - 3 Credits
CRN: 68695
R 12:30PM – 3:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities

Course cross listed with REL 3990.80 (CRN: 68804) and PHIL 3100.85 (CRN: 68793)

Course Description: In October 1987, a group of cognitive scientists met the Dalai Lama for a first of what will become an annual meeting of exchange between Buddhists and scientists. Both parties concluded that a conference between the young science and the ancient teachings of Buddhism would be mutually beneficial. Three decades later, our course focuses on the contours of this dialogue and what the two sides are learning from one another. We will discuss shared topics of interest between cognitive science and Buddhism, such as the nature of consciousness, emotions, how to develop empathy and compassion, and the art and science of Buddhist meditation. In addition to the points of convergence, we will consider some points of divergence, including competing metaphysical assumptions and different methodologies. Our overarching goal would be to gain a deeper understanding of our minds with the best of what both traditions offer.

The Life of Things

Professor Jenna Weissman Joselit
HONR 2053:86 - 3 Credits
CRN 66192
M 12:45PM - 2:35PM

Fulfills:

- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Course cross listed with HIST 2001.81 (CRN: 66406)

Spring 2023 Course Descriptions

Course Description: This interdisciplinary humanities seminar takes a hard and searching look at stuff - furniture, clothing, shoes, religious artifacts, building materials, toys, tools and home décor - all with an eye toward understanding our relationship to the material world. Focused largely, though not exclusively on the United States, it explores the ways in which objects contain a wealth of ideas about authenticity, convenience, craft, faith, heritage, taste and value. This seminar should appeal to those especially interested in museums and public history as well as design and social engineering.

Spain, Portugal & Viceregal America: Convergence of Cultures

Professor Barbara von Barghahn
HONR 2053:87 - 3 Credits
CRN 66193
R 12:30PM - 3:00PM

Fulfills:

- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Course cross listed with CAH 3134.80 (CRN: 67959) and CAH 6234.80 (CRN: 67970)

Course Description: This class will focus upon art of the Golden Age in Spain and the colonial Americas, especially the centers of Mexico and viceregal Peru. Tangential discussions also will concern artistic links between Portugal, Brazil and the Caribbean. My lectures will focus upon the commercial port city of Seville, from the Renaissance to the reign of the Hapsburg King Philip III (1598-1621), inclusive of the humanist Francisco Pacheco and the young Diego Velázquez. I additionally hope to cover Royal Convents (Descalzas Reales and Encarnación in Madrid) and the Portuguese master Josefa de Óbidos, who was influenced by Seville in her devotional art. Lastly, I will consider the distinctive art of the late sixteenth-century Jesuit artist Bernardo Bitti, who sailed to Lima, Peru. Art of primary centers in Hapsburg Spain that attained renown for the private and public display of sacred art will be considered in student presentations -- Toledo, Valencia, Seville, Madrid -- and important painters such as Luis de Morales, El Greco, Francisco de Zurbarán, Jusepe de Ribera, Bartolomé Estéban Murillo and Juan Valdés Leal. Presentation topics also will include Decorative Arts and the Spanish Aesthetic and important sculptors -- Alonso Berruguete (1488-1561), Juan Martínez Montañés (1568-1649), Alonso Cano (1601-1667). Presentations during the second part of this class will shift to the New World and consider the pre-Columbian heritage in Mexico, Peru, etc. Not only will the persistence of ancient memory in viceregal art and municipal pageantry be addressed, but also the convergence of cultures in Luso America and the Caribbean.

Women in Islamic Art

Professor Mika Natif
HONR 2053:88 - 3 Credits
CRN 68211
W 12:30PM - 3:00PM

Fulfills:

- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Spring 2023 Course Descriptions

Course cross listed with CAH 4165 (CRN: 66351)

Course Description: As artists, patrons, collectors, and subject-matter, women played important and diverse roles in Islamic art. As elite women, they commissioned monuments and gardens, patronized artists and calligraphers, and had their own libraries. Oftentimes, they were involved in all stages of the artistic production, and like their male counterparts, had access to the myriad of resources in the royal workshops. Women in pre-modern Islamic courts used power and financial means to cultivate art and took active part in political and cultural life. This seminar will focus on women as the subjects and the creators of art, as well as the patrons of architecture and artifacts. Classes will be organized chronologically and thematically, starting with a historical survey of the status of women in the pre-modern Muslim sphere, of female artists and their artistic contributions, as well as an examination of art history's exclusions, female portraiture, the female heroine, the nude, and sexuality in illustrations and album paintings. All reading materials, including original sources, will be in English. No previous knowledge of Islamic art, history or religion is required.

Humor

Professor Mark Ralkowski
HONR 2053:89 - 3 Credits
CRN 66909
W 3:30PM - 6:00PM

Fulfills:

- GPAC Critical Thinking in the Humanities
- GPAC Oral Communication
- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

Course cross listed with PHIL 3100.80 (CRN: 65284)

Course Description: This course will focus on philosophical theories of humor, laughter, and comedic amusement. We will draw on ideas from antiquity and modernity and discuss a broad range of authors in an effort to develop a philosophical appreciation of what we find funny, how humor relates to the good life, the ethics and politics of humor, the relationship between humor and identity, humor as a vehicle for the critique of culture and revolutionary practice, and much more. In the end we will see how some of the most cherished humor helps us laugh at ourselves by reminding us that we are not the people we would like to be. If Simon Critchley is right that jokes are like "small anthropological essays," the point of this course is to learn something about ourselves and our culture by enjoying a lot of great humor and hopefully laughing a lot along the way. You will also learn about the surprisingly interesting philosophy of humor that dates back to antiquity and continues to make us think about issues in ethics, aesthetics, logic, existentialism, race, gender, and politics.

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Shakespeare on Film

Professor Alice Alexa Joubin
HONR 2053W:80 - 3 Credits
CRN 65265
TR 2:20PM - 3:35PM

Fulfills:

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

Course cross listed with ENGL 3441W.80 (CRN: 68739)

Course Description: Through the lenses of critical race and gender theories, this course examines cinematic representations of Shakespeare's plays, with a focus on the themes of sexuality, class, and colonialism. In particular, we will focus on racialized bodies, performance of gender and sexuality, disability narratives, feminist interventions, religious fault lines, class struggle, and intersectional identities. Collectively we will reflect on our embodied vulnerability.

Slow Reading Virginia Woolf

Professor Jennifer Green-Lewis
HONR 2053W:90 - 3 Credits
CRN 68794
MW 11:10AM - 12:25PM

Fulfills:

- GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective
- This course has no GPAC designations.

Course cross listed with ENGL 3829.10 (CRN: 68544)

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:

1. Woolf's emphasis on the visual, and some of its sources, including paintings by her sister, Vanessa Bell, and others;
2. Woolf's representation of the passage of time and the workings of memory;
3. 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.

Spring 2023 Course Descriptions

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 completing a thesis within their department of major. Any student considering the Honors Senior Thesis option should contact an Honors Program Manager. This course is only open to Seniors and requires a completed Honors Contract to register. Please see a Program Manager for further information.

Breathe

Professor Eyal Aviv
HONR 4199:10 - 1 Credit
CRN 61667
T 4:00PM - 6:00PM

This course will meet on February 7, 14, 21, 28.

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.

Art of Love

Professor William Winstead
HONR 4199:12 - 1 Credit
CRN 62114
W 7:00PM - 9:00PM

This course will meet on January 18, 25 and February 1, 8.

Course Description: This course will meet on January 18th, 25th and February 1st, 8th. Love and work have rightly been described as the great defining activities of our lives. Of the two, love is undoubtedly the more difficult and by far the more fascinating. Love gives meaning to our lives, brings ecstasies and sorrows, and entangles itself in thorny questions of power, possession, knowledge, and truth. If love often seems to liberate, it just as often threatens to enslave. What is love? How is it practiced? What are its historical forms? Is human happiness ultimately dependent upon deep and abiding love? Must love involve submission and possession? These questions and others will inform our capstone

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seminar this year as we discuss a selection of the most illuminating visions of love through the ages. Readings will include Plato, Freud, de Beauvoir, Ovid, Fromm, and bell hooks.

Is Love Really Such a Good Thing?

Professor Mark Ralkowski
HONR 4199:13 - 1 Credit
CRN 63740
R 6:00PM - 8:00PM

This course will meet on April 6, 13, 20, 27.

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!

Nature Appreciation

Professor Thiago Moreira
HONR 4199:14 - 1 Credit
CRN 63742
T 10:00AM - 1:00PM

This course will meet on March 21, 28 and April 4, 11.

Course Description: “Forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair. —Khalil Gibran”

To live in a modern city in the 21 st century is not easy. We are always busy with our schedules. Things to do, places to be... We are surrounded by all comforts and amenities a modern city has to offer. So much that we can be entirely consumed by modern technology and forget that there is a whole world out there.... In this course, I propose we step out of our busy modern urban life and stop to smell the flowers (literally, if you so wish...). We will visit some places where we can experience and experience some of the beauties nature has to offer to us. We will use our time to visit some places that hold some of the biodiversity of life, but also try to appreciate nature in our daily urban surroundings. This course has a great deal of moving around the city, so we have a more extended time band to cover the trip time.

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Games

Professor Bethany Cobb Kung
HONR 4199:15 - 1 Credit
CRN 68595
F 1:30PM - 3:30PM

This course will meet on January 27 and February 3, 10, 17.

Course Description: Archaeological evidence demonstrates that humans have been playing board games and using dice for over 5,000 years. Today, card and tabletop gaming represents a \$10 billion industry which is expected to continue growing in the coming years. Clearly - humans love to play games! Together in this capstone, we will consider the history of gaming and its purpose in culture and society. We will ponder why we love to play games and what lessons we can learn from these games. We will also play games! During each of our meetings, we will discuss a book about games (exact title TBD) and reserve some time to challenge each other to classics such as Backgammon or to work together in a modern, cooperative-style game. For our final meeting, we will try our hand at an escape room! Please note that this capstone requires a \$15 fee, payable to the Honors Program main office in January.