

# Course Descriptions

University Honors Program

Fall 2015

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# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Origins and Evolutions of Modern Thought

### Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought

#### The Good Life

William Winstead  
HONR 1015:MV – 4 credits  
MW 1:00- 2:15 PM  
CRN: 62395  
Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities  
Equivalent Courses: UW1020  
Writing Lab: M 2:20- 3:20 PM; CRN: 63265

The good life is the principle theme of antiquity. It is addressed by philosophers, poets, historians, theologians, and political leaders. It is prized by the ancients, because it is believed to embody the truest way of living, and therefore the most fully human and gratifying form of life. Our contemporary notions of the good life in the West build upon the ancients' concept of the good life, while differing from and sharing similarities with images of the good life found in the ancient East (China and India, in particular). Our readings this semester come from both Eastern and Western traditions, and include texts from the Greek, Hebrew, Chinese, and Indian traditions. Our discussions of these texts will be guided by fundamental questions: What is good (and, equally, what is bad, or evil)? What is human nature? How ought I to live? What is a just community? What is knowledge? What is the divine? What is natural? Throughout the semester, our discussions will be collective, critical, and open-ended. Because our course is designed to cultivate your capacity to write effectively, we will also pay close attention to the different forms of writing that we encounter in our readings and work to access the strengths and weaknesses of their approaches.

#### Virtue

Micah Tillman  
HONR 1015:MV1 – 4 credits  
MW 11:30- 12:45 PM  
CRN: 62610  
Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities  
Equivalent Courses: UW1020  
Writing Lab: W 10:30- 11:20 AM; CRN: 63266

Do you believe that everyone is equal, or that we're only born equal? If we're born equal, do we stay equal, or do some end up better than others? Ancient thinkers from Greece to China agreed with our contemporary bards (e.g., Mercury, Minaj, Scott/Young, Wayne) that we're not all the same. Through the virtues—the “excellences” or “awesomenesses”—some people stand head-and-shoulders above the rest. But would Plato's list of virtues match Mrs. Carter's. And would Mr. Rogers's list match the Buddha's? Where they conflict, who is right? Is there a universal standard of excellence for us all? We will answer these questions by studying classic texts from ancient Greece, India, and China—the books that shaped our world, both East and West. We will risk their criticisms and challenge all assumptions. We will seek both concord and disagreement. But we will also learn, and through learning we will come to better understand not only ourselves, but also our neighbors around the globe.

#### Our Ancestors, Ourselves: Exploring the Roots of the Human Story

Rebecca Carr  
HONR 1015:MV2 – 4 credits  
TR 2:30- 3:45 PM

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## Origins and Evolutions of Modern Thought

CRN: 62611

Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities

Equivalent Courses: UW1020

Writing Lab: R 11:30- 12:20 PM; CRN: 63267

This course will explore what it means to be human—what humans value and how they demonstrate that, what it means to be mortal, what humans expect from life and through what means and at what cost they try to achieve those expectations—through some of the world’s oldest works of literature. The course will investigate the world’s oldest piece of written literature, Gilgamesh; Greek tragedy and comedy, including at least Antigone and Lysistrata; the Law Code of Manu and an abbreviated version of the Mahabharata, including the Bhagavad Gita; Jataka Tales, birth stories of Buddha; Mesopotamian Myths; The Book of Job; ancient Chinese folktales and fantasies; and Ovid, either his Metamorphoses or his Ars Amatoria.

### Harmony

Joseph Trullinger

HONR 1015:MV3 – 4 credits

TR 10:00- 11:15 PM

CRN: 62612

Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities

Equivalent Courses: UW1020

Writing Lab: W 10:00- 10:50 AM; CRN: 63268

How can many become one? The great works of Western and Eastern antiquity stress the importance of a larger order—whether that is a cosmic law, a divine plan, or a political system—to which individuals must align themselves in order to do well and to be well. Does the process of harmonizing with this order require people to sacrifice their identity for the sake of the whole? In other words, is harmony synonymous with a kind of monotony? How can differing cosmic, social, political, or psychological elements exist together so that they count as one genuine whole, without the suppression of any part therein? When articulated in the concrete terms of daily life, we can readily see that the nature of harmony is a question that continues to resonate in the questions we ask ourselves today. This seminar will be an intensive study of these questions as posed by the artists, historians, leaders, and thinkers of the ancient world. In the process of critically analyzing these classic texts from the Hebrew, Greek, Chinese, and Indian traditions, we will not merely scrutinize their ideas but also internalize their ways of thinking, thereby becoming better thinkers in our own right.

### Virtue

Micah Tillman

HONR 1015:MV4 – 4 credits

MW 1:00- 2:15 PM

CRN: 62613

Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities

Equivalent Courses: UW1020

Writing Lab: M 2:30- 3:20 PM; CRN: 63269

Do you believe that everyone is equal, or that we’re only born equal? If we’re born equal, do we stay equal, or do some end up better than others? Ancient thinkers from Greece to China agreed with our contemporary bards (e.g., Mercury, Minaj, Scott/Young, Wayne) that we’re not all the same. Through the virtues—the “excellences” or “awesomenesses”—some people stand head-and-shoulders above the rest. But would Plato’s list of virtues match Mrs. Carter’s. And would Mr. Rogers’s list match the Buddha’s? Where they conflict, who is right? Is there a universal standard of excellence for us all? We will answer these questions by studying

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## Origins and Evolutions of Modern Thought

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### Work and Rest

Helen McManus  
HONR 1015:MV5 – 4 credits  
MW 10:00- 11:15 AM  
CRN: 62614  
Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities  
Equivalent Courses: UW1020  
Writing Lab: W 11:30- 12:20 PM; CRN: 63270

This Origins seminar will explore ideas of work and labor, rest and tranquility in the ancient world. How did ancient Greek, Roman, and Chinese thinkers understand and value work? How did they characterize rest, and why did they find leisure and tranquility so important? While a job or career often defines a person's status today, ancient texts provoke us to question work's place in our own understandings of identity, citizenship, culture, and community. To what extent do, and should, our ethical and political ideals revolve around work?

### Wisdom

Mark Ralkowski  
HONR 1015:MV6 – 4 credits  
TR 10:00- 11:15 AM  
CRN: 62615  
Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities  
Equivalent Courses: UW1020  
Writing Lab: F 11:00- 11:50 AM; CRN: 63272

What is happiness, and how can I live a life that will make me happy? How should I cope with the fact that I am going to suffer and die, along with everyone I love most? What is justice, and how can we reshape our institutions, as well as our own choices and lives, so that they better reflect it? Is love really such a good thing? Is art good or bad for us? Why is there anything at all, rather than nothing? These are among the earliest questions asked by human beings in the Middle East, Greece, China, and India. In this seminar we will read seminal texts from each of these traditions. Our syllabus will include the Hebrew Bible, Plato, Sophocles, Thucydides, Aristotle, Confucius, Lao Tzu, and the Buddha. And our discussions will cover issues in ethics, politics, psychology, aesthetics, religion, metaphysics, and epistemology. One of the primary goals of this seminar is to see that, in the ancient world, these concepts were studied as a way of life whose goals were wisdom and happiness. As Socrates once said, "We are studying no small matter, but how we ought to live."

### Wisdom

Mark Ralkowski  
HONR 1015:MV7 – 4 credits  
TR 1:00- 2:15 PM  
CRN: 63115  
Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities  
Equivalent Courses: UW1020

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## Origins and Evolutions of Modern Thought

Writing Lab: F 12:00- 12:50 PM; CRN: 63273

What is happiness, and how can I live a life that will make me happy? How should I cope with the fact that I am going to suffer and die, along with everyone I love most? What is justice, and how can we reshape our institutions, as well as our own choices and lives, so that they better reflect it? Is love really such a good thing? Is art good or bad for us? Why is there anything at all, rather than nothing? These are among the earliest questions asked by human beings in the Middle East, Greece, China, and India. In this seminar we will read seminal texts from each of these traditions. Our syllabus will include the Hebrew Bible, Plato, Sophocles, Thucydides, Aristotle, Confucius, Lao Tzu, and the Buddha. And our discussions will cover issues in ethics, politics, psychology, aesthetics, religion, metaphysics, and epistemology. One of the primary goals of this seminar is to see that, in the ancient world, these concepts were studied as a way of life whose goals were wisdom and happiness. As Socrates once said, "We are studying no small matter, but how we ought to live."

### Harmony

Joseph Trullinger

HONR 1015:MV8 – 4 credits

TR 1:00- 2:15 PM

CRN: 65432

Fulfills: SEAS: Humanities

Equivalent Courses: UW1020

Writing Lab: W 11:30- 12:20 PM; CRN: 65431

How can many become one? The great works of Western and Eastern antiquity stress the importance of a larger order—whether that is a cosmic law, a divine plan, or a political system—to which individuals must align themselves in order to do well and to be well. Does the process of harmonizing with this order require people to sacrifice their identity for the sake of the whole? In other words, is harmony synonymous with a kind of monotony? How can differing cosmic, social, political, or psychological elements exist together so that they count as one genuine whole, without the suppression of any part therein? When articulated in the concrete terms of daily life, we can readily see that the nature of harmony is a question that continues to resonate in the questions we ask ourselves today. This seminar will be an intensive study of these questions as posed by the artists, historians, leaders, and thinkers of the ancient world. In the process of critically analyzing these classic texts from the Hebrew, Greek, Chinese, and Indian traditions, we will not merely scrutinize their ideas but also internalize their ways of thinking, thereby becoming better thinkers in our own right.

### Enlightenment East and West

William Winstead

HONR 2016:10– 4 credits

T 3:30- 6:00 PM

CRN: 63692

Fulfills: ESIA: Humanities; SEAS: Humanities

**\*\*This course is limited to students who joined the Honors Program as rising-sophomores.\*\***

The great works of the Western and Eastern intellectual traditions take the problem of Enlightenment as their guiding theme. The concern with enlightenment emerges in the West with the origin of Occidental philosophy in Plato's famous allegory of the cave, while in the East it takes shape with the Buddha's call a century earlier to break with illusion and practice awakening. The modern enlightenment project contrasts sharply with those of antiquity thanks to its commitment to science and technological power and their political and economic counterparts, liberalism and free-market capitalism. Our seminar this semester will examine enlightenment projects East and West, highlighting particularly the sharp differences between a variety of seminal responses to the

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## Origins and Evolutions of Modern Thought

problems of human delusion, suffering, and injustice. In addition to the theme of enlightenment, our discussions will be guided by fundamental questions: What are good and evil? What constitutes genuine knowledge? What is the character of human nature? What is natural? What is just or virtuous? Our approach to these questions will be open-ended and deliberative, and we will strive to remain sensitive to the complexity of argumentation found in our readings as we discuss and debate their claims.

## Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

### Energy

Bethany Kung

HONR 1033:10 – 4 credits

TR 9:00-10:50 AM

CRN: 62607

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab; GWSB: Science; SEAS: Elective; ESIA: Science

Our lives are a complex web of energy, yet we never give energy much thought. Only when energy resources (e.g. oil, solar, nuclear) become big news do people start paying attention. But how can we be savvy consumers of energy rhetoric without a basic understanding of the fundamental physics of energy? This course will serve as an introduction to the physics of energy, from the basics, e.g. kinetic vs. potential energy, to more complex issues such as energy production, storage and transportation. We will explore alternative energy sources such as solar and nuclear energy. Topics to be covered will include: The physics of energy: work, power, heat, electromagnetic radiation, electricity; Energy storage and transportation: fuels, batteries, the electrical grid; Nuclear physics: atoms, quantum mechanics, fission and fusion; Energy resources: coal, wind, alternative fuels, solar, nuclear. Throughout the course, students will also tackle the fundamentals of science including the scientific method, experimentation and error measurement. Quantitative analysis will be emphasized to help build problem solving abilities and mathematical intuition (mathematics will be confined to algebra and geometry). This course is designed to increase student scientific curiosity and science literacy. Students will be expected to take an active role in the classroom, where we will explore these topics through lecture, discussion, debate, writing, experimentation, group projects and mathematical exercises. (This is a Green Leaf course that satisfies the "Track A" requirement toward a Minor in Sustainability.)

### Energy

Bethany Kung

HONR 1033:11 – 4 credits

TR 11:00-12:50 PM

CRN: 64645

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab; GWSB: Science; SEAS: Elective; ESIA: Science

Our lives are a complex web of energy, yet we never give energy much thought. Only when energy resources (e.g. oil, solar, nuclear) become big news do people start paying attention. But how can we be savvy consumers of energy rhetoric without a basic understanding of the fundamental physics of energy? This course will serve as an introduction to the physics of energy, from the basics, e.g. kinetic vs. potential energy, to more complex issues such as energy production, storage and transportation. We will explore alternative energy sources such as solar and nuclear energy. Topics to be covered will include: The physics of energy: work, power, heat, electromagnetic radiation, electricity; Energy storage and transportation: fuels, batteries, the electrical grid; Nuclear physics: atoms, quantum mechanics, fission and fusion; Energy resources: coal, wind, alternative fuels, solar, nuclear. Throughout the course, students will also tackle the fundamentals of science including the scientific method, experimentation and error measurement. Quantitative analysis will be emphasized to help build problem solving abilities and mathematical intuition (mathematics will be confined to algebra and geometry). This course is designed to increase student scientific curiosity and science literacy. Students will be expected to take an active role in the classroom, where we will explore these topics through lecture, discussion, debate, writing, experimentation, group projects and mathematical exercises. (This is a Green Leaf course that satisfies the "Track A" requirement toward a Minor in Sustainability.)

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## Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

### Biology

LaTisha Hammond

HONR 1033:MV – 4 credits

TR 10:00- 11:50 PM

CRN: 63514

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab; GWSB: Science; SEAS: Elective; ESIA: Science

Biofuels, GMO foods, food allergies, gene therapy, cancer, honeybees, coral reef health. At first glance this may be a seemingly random string of topics, but a common thread throughout them all is biology, and all require some understanding of biological concepts to understand their implications and make informed decisions about them. In this course we will explore biological concepts through the lens of contemporary issues in biology as they relate to society and everyday life. This course will serve as an introduction to the fundamentals of biology and the nature of science. Topics to be covered include cells and molecules, genetics, physiology, ecology and evolution as they relate to the more complex and nuanced biological issues of disease, food sources, organism interactions, sustainability, climate change, and bioethics, to name a few. Lab exercises will introduce biological techniques for studying these topics. Students will engage in the process of science in an effort to increase their scientific literacy. Students will be expected to take an active role in the class, where we will explore these topics through lecture, discussion, debate, experimentation, data analysis, writing, and group projects.

### Biology

LaTisha Hammond

HONR 1033:MV1 – 4 credits

TR 1:00- 2:50 PM

CRN: 62609

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab; GWSB: Science; SEAS: Elective; ESIA: Science

Biofuels, GMO foods, food allergies, gene therapy, cancer, honeybees, coral reef health. At first glance this may be a seemingly random string of topics, but a common thread throughout them all is biology, and all require some understanding of biological concepts to understand their implications and make informed decisions about them. In this course we will explore biological concepts through the lens of contemporary issues in biology as they relate to society and everyday life. This course will serve as an introduction to the fundamentals of biology and the nature of science. Topics to be covered include cells and molecules, genetics, physiology, ecology and evolution as they relate to the more complex and nuanced biological issues of disease, food sources, organism interactions, sustainability, climate change, and bioethics, to name a few. Lab exercises will introduce biological techniques for studying these topics. Students will engage in the process of science in an effort to increase their scientific literacy. Students will be expected to take an active role in the class, where we will explore these topics through lecture, discussion, debate, experimentation, data analysis, writing, and group projects.

### Human Biology: Investigating Claims about your Health

Carly Jordan

HONR 1031:MV2 – 4 credits

MW 1:00- 2:15 PM

CRN: 64942

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab; GWSB: Science; SEAS: Elective; ESIA: Science

Lab: M 11:00-12:50 PM; CRN: 67420

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

Every day we hear all sorts of claims about how to live a healthy life. From what to eat to whether or not to get a vaccine or take a certain drug, we are constantly bombarded with advice about how to live our lives. Who do you listen to? How do you know if the claims you hear are true? In this course, you will develop science literacy and critical thinking skills necessary to make sense of the information you encounter every day. You will learn quantitative skills and basic statistics that will help you interpret data. The major project in this course will be to find a claim and investigate its validity. You will determine the legitimacy of its makers, learn where to find primary sources to support or refute the claim, propose additional studies to help clarify confusing information, and create a dissemination piece to share your understanding with your peers. In this course, we will analyze serious medical claims and silly urban legends, but we will do it all using sound logic and the scientific method. At the end of the semester, you will be armed with the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about your health.

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Introductory and Special

### Introductory and Special

#### Honors Intro Microeconomics

Robert Goldfarb

HONR 2043:10 – 3 credits

TR 11:10- 12:25 PM

CRN: 60235

Fulfills: CCAS: Social Sciences; ESIA: ECON 1011 requirement

Equivalent Courses: ECON 1011; HONR 2047

HONR 2043, combined with HONR 2044 in the spring, satisfies the same curriculum requirements as ECON 1011 and ECON 1012 and serve as the prerequisite for upper-level economics courses. This section of HONR 2043 goes beyond ECON 1011 by covering more advanced microeconomics topics.

### Self and Society

#### Ethics and World Politics

Martha Finnemore

HONR 2047:10 - 3 Credits

CRN: 66587

T 11:10-1:00 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Upper-level Political Science elective; SEAS: Social Sciences; CCAS: Social Sciences; GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective; ESIA: Advanced Fundamental for International/Comparative Politics, Comparative Political Economic and Social Systems Concentration, Conflict Resolution Concentration, International Politics Concentration

This seminar will explore whether and how different ethical claims shape global politics. One long-standing school of thought argues that ethical concerns do not and should not apply in the international realm. Ethics are a luxury, this argument holds, one that we cannot afford in a dangerous world. Critics of this view are many, but they disagree among themselves about what actions, exactly, are ethical and how best to pursue ethically desirable goals. We will consider contrasting arguments about these issues and apply them to real-world political problems including war, genocide, poverty, and human rights.

#### Justice and the Legal System

Jill Kasle

HONR 2047:11 – 3 credits

MW 12:45- 2:00 PM

CRN: 65649

Fulfills: CCAS: Social Sciences; ESIA: Elective; GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective; GPAC Oral Communication

Justice and the Legal System is a law school course in constitutional law that has been adapted for students in the Honors Program; thus, the course employs modified law school teaching methods, exams, and grading standards. The primary goal of the course is to help students continue to develop their intellectual sophistication. Specifically, the course emphasizes the development of analytic skills and the ability to think, write, and speak clearly and concisely.

#### Conflicts in the Persian Gulf: Origins, Evolution and Resolution

Hossein Askari

HONR 2047:12 - 3 Credits

CRN: 65650

T 12:45-3:15 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Social Sciences; SEAS: Social Sciences; ESIA: Middle East Regional Foundation; Concentrations: Middle East (Group A); Conflict Resolution; Security Policy; International Politics; Comparative Political, Economic and Social Systems; GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

Disputes in the Persian Gulf are attributable to a host of factors that include religious, sectarian, ethnic and tribal feuds, disputes over borders and natural resources, political, economic and social injustice and foreign intervention. We survey the underlying reasons for these apparently diverse conflicts and discuss how they have evolved largely into a struggle over resources. The quest for 'revenge and justice' to settle old scores is only the apparent fuel but its essential fuel is to control resources. Our goal is to develop a vision of how the region may pull back from the ongoing path of continuous conflicts, and embark on the path of reconciliation, cooperation and mutual resurgence as free, democratic and prosperous societies.

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Self and Society

### Leadership in Theory and Practice

Stephen Joel Trachtenberg and Gerald Kauvar

HONR 2048:10 - 3 Credits

CRN: 65654

W 12:45-3:45 PM

Fulfills: GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

An idiosyncratic course that introduces students to a wide variety of guest speakers who are leaders in diverse fields from religion to national defense with side trips to small and large business, non-profit leadership, the judiciary, the arts, and executive and legislative branches of government. Students are responsible for presenting on a weekly basis solutions to case studies relevant to the speaker's leadership role. Students will write at least one paper on a leadership topic. Students work in two teams of six; teams must meet weekly to prepare their presentations. Field trips to embassies have been a frequent part of the course. The final class meets with the guest speaker at a dinner at the Four Seasons hotel or the Cosmos Club.

### Islamic Economics , Finance and Development: Theory vs. Reality

Hossein Askari

HONR 2048:11 - 3 Credits

CRN: 65653

R 12:45-3:15 PM

Fulfills: GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective; ESIA: Middle East Regional Foundation; Concentrations: Middle East (Group A), International Development, International Economics

Islam is an immutable rules-based system with a prescribed method for humans and society to achieve material and non-material development grounded in rule-compliance and effective institutions. The collection of rules from the Quran and the life of the Prophet Mohammad, which in turn defines institutions, afford guidelines for economic and financial systems and for development. We survey the essential features of Islamic economic and financial systems, and the Islamic vision of human and economic development. While the ideal is not in place anywhere in the Muslim world, we endeavor to explain the divergence from the ideal in human, economic and political development in the Middle East region (or their "Islamicity").

### The Way We Now Think

David Alan Grier

HONR 2048: 12 - 3 Credits

CRN: 67219

W 3:30-6:00 PM

Fulfills: GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

Much of how we approach daily life, how we conceive the activities of our day and how we respond to events, has been shaped by the literature of production. This literature has been largely ignored in the academy. We teach the newest and latest theories of production as the most efficient ways of running a company and the best changes of making money, but we dismiss the older ideas as out of date or, at times, wrong. This course considers the literature of production as a coherent body of knowledge and shows how this literature has shaped our organizations and the way that we think. It considers older workers in this literature in the same kind way that we consider classic fiction and poetry, as exemplars of their time and as building blocks for our modern approach to production. Because of this approach, the course stops substantially short of our age. The newest literature it considers comes from the late 1980s and early 1990s.

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Self and Society

### Cultural Perspectives on Religion and Identity

Joel Kuipers  
HONR 2048:13 - 3 Credits  
CRN: 67220  
T 11:10-1:00 PM  
Fulfills: GWSB: Non-Business Elective/Unrestricted Elective

The course will look comparatively at the relation between religion, identity and language as forms of belonging. Through reading selected recent ethnographies and a novel, and drawing examples from my own research in Indonesia (Sumba and Java), we plan to look at the ways in which language provides resources for the organization of identity through personal belonging. By exploring the example of religious identity, we will examine it as a form of linguistic participation that shifts historically, comparatively and contextually, and more broadly as a strategy for understanding the relation between self and community. Students will be encouraged to explore their own religious and secular forms of belonging as a way of giving shape to their own intellectual identities.

### Race, American Medicine, and Public Health

Vanessa Gamble  
HONR 2048W:80 - 3 Credits  
CRN: 66977  
MW 12:45-2:00 PM  
Fulfills: WID  
Equivalent: AMST 4702W, HIST 3001W

This course focuses on the role of race and racism in the development of American medicine and public health by examining the experiences of African Americans from slavery to today. It will emphasize the importance of understanding the historical roots of contemporary policy dilemmas such as racial and ethnic disparities in health and health care. The course will challenge students to synthesize materials from several disciplines to gain a broad understanding of the relationship between race, medicine, and public health in the United States. Among the questions that will be addressed are: How have race and racism influenced, and continue to influence, American medicine and public health? What is race? How have concepts of race evolved? What are racial and ethnic disparities in health and health care? What is the history of these disparities? What factors have contributed to these disparities? How have African Americans, the medical and public health professions, and governmental agencies addressed disparities in health and health care? What have been the experiences of African Americans as patients and health care providers?

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Arts and Humanities

### Arts and Humanities

#### An Eye For An Eye- Savage Triggers, Warnings (Not) Included

Rebecca Boylan  
HONR 2053W:10 - 3 Credits  
CRN: 64853  
TR 3:45-5:00 PM

Fulfills: WID; CCAS: Humanities; ESIA: Humanities; GWSB: Non-Business and Unrestricted Elective; SEAS: Humanities Elective

We live in an age of violent, I-centric insistent and resistances provoking hatreds and assaults most recently rearing ugly heads in Ferguson, Paris, Nigeria, Syria, and U.S. college campuses. Of course, part of being human is to know one's self by seeking affirmation in the codes of those various cultures that give our individualism a place to belong. Oscar Wilde, John Stuart Mill, and Aristotle – all champions of individual nature and perspective – also note the paradox that in our pursuit of self via the community, we too often dangerously lose sight of both self and other. Suddenly we're in debt to the cultural currency of our hard-won identity, blindly absorbed by rhetoric anxious to persuade ourselves and others in the absolute rightness of our causes, perspectives, and rights. In these eye-for-I rages we often devalue the more challenging pursuit of Truth through dialectical exchanges which beg us to find ways to argue with words in our walk toward perceptions that liberate empathy. Course participants will collaborate as human rights entrepreneurs confronting humanity's savagery in literature, film, and philosophy in such texts as *The Great Gatsby*, *The Tempest*, *Go Set A Watchman*, *Atonement*, *Tess*, *The Drop*, and *Bird Man*.

#### Post-Soul Literature and Culture

Gayle Wald  
HONR 2053W:11 - 3 Credits  
CRN: 62782  
W 12:45-3:15 PM

Fulfills: WID; CCAS: Humanities; ESIA: Humanities; GWSB: Non-Business and Unrestricted Elective; SEAS: Humanities Elective  
Equivalent: ENGL 3950 Cultural Theory and Black Studies, can count as category C, D, or E

This course is about the literary and cultural expressions of African American "post-soul" writers, musicians, and performers. Unlike their parents, post-soul (or post-civil rights) artists came of age in an era shaped by the hallmark achievements of the civil rights era. We'll sample some exemplary expressions of this "post-" generation, from ZZ Packer's exquisite short-story collection *Drinking Coffee Elsewhere* to Suzan-Lori Parks's audacious plays, and from the provocative art of Kara Walker to popular Web series "Ask a Slave." We will perhaps examine the world dominance of Queen Bey. Over the course of the semester, we'll define and interrogate the notion of post-soul, read scholarly debates about post-soul politics and culture, and, especially, immerse ourselves in creative works that exemplify, imagine, contest, narrate and re-narrate the post-soul. We will be especially interested in the relation of post-soul to post-race discourse, to ongoing debates about modernity/post-modernity, and to questions of satire in relation to African American history and memory. Questions we will attempt to answer include: Does a post-soul aesthetic exist? Is anything ever really "post"? Does it make sense to talk about cultural production in terms of generations, as in "the hip hop generation"?

#### Detective Fiction and Film

Rebecca Boylan  
HONR 2053W:12 - 3 Credits

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## Arts and Humanities

CRN: 64860

TR 2:20-3:35 PM

Fulfills: WID; CCAS: Humanities; ESIA: Humanities; GWSB: Non-Business and Unrestricted Elective; SEAS: Humanities Elective; ESIA: Humanities Elective

Equivalent: ENGL 3810 Special Topics, counts as an upper level English Literature elective

Detectives are a rather singular breed, empowered by a second sight often blind to their own natures. Some wield a gun, others yield to the girl (or guy), while still others fascinate with their "little gray cells" or exude a mystique almost as alluring as following the track of their gum shoes in pursuit of evil. Our own game's afoot. From beneath the fedora, we'll ferret out origins of various detective personas. How does the madman in Poe inspire the raving Holmes? Is there a semblance of Baker Street's ego maniac in the fastidious Hercule Poirot? How does the hardboiled cynicism of Marlowe and Hammett resurrect in "Scorcher" Kennedy? We will explore detective fiction from the 19th to the 21st centuries set in England, Ireland, San Francisco, Berlin, and Prague. There's nothing like a chill winter's eve to curl up with Agatha Christie's *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, to double check the locks against the chilling BBC's *Broadchurch* or to enjoy the detective story as thriller in *L. A. Confidential*. We will explore the genre's identifiable textualities, the transition from fiction to the screen (*True Detective*), and detective stories as popular culture, historical time travel, brain exercise and ethical catharsis.

### Past and Future

Peter Caws

HONR 2053W: MV - 3 Credits

CRN: 67224

W 11:10-1:00 PM

Fulfills: WID; CCAS: Humanities; ESIA: Humanities; GWSB: Non-Business and Unrestricted Elective; SEAS: Humanities Elective; ESIA: Humanities Elective

According to one well-known theory of time, past and future do not exist. The present is all that exists (or all that exists is in the present); the past once existed but does so no longer, the future will exist but not yet. According to a rival theory everything exists all at once and it is only our position in this totality that makes some events appear past and some future. There are problems with both of these theories, and one of the tasks of the seminar will be to look for answers to them. Past and future, however, have content and meaning far beyond academic exercises in the theory of time. They pervade our lives, which are continually in transition from the one to the other. There are many pasts, personal, familial, social, institutional, national, all the way up to galactic or cosmic, and as many futures, feared or conjectured or hoped for. People troubleshoot when the past delivers an unacceptable present, or strategize when deciding what to do now about an uncertain future. They reminisce, or they plan. How much of the past (how far back) can we recall, or recover? How much of the future (how far off) can we foresee, or prepare for? From tradition to prophecy, from historical novels to science-fiction fantasies, from the Big Bang to the eventual dissipation of the universe, there are enough puzzles and projects in this domain to keep conversation going for the rest of our lives, let alone a semester. The seminar will as always be driven, once it has gotten underway, by the interests of its members, but perhaps it will help us to find some point of reflection and understanding that will make sense of our complex relation to such a perennial topic. There is a statue of "The Future" outside the National Archives, bearing the Shakespearean inscription "the past is prologue." Whoever chose it cannot have read Shakespeare very carefully - or maybe it represents only too accurately a particularly American attitude. In any case it is an example of how past and future penetrate public space. A good one to begin with.

### Topics in Islamic Thought

Professor Seyyed Nasr

HONR 2054:10 - 3 Credits

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Arts and Humanities

CRN: 67031

TR 11:10-12:25 PM

Fulfills: ESIA: Humanities; GWSB: Non-Business and Unrestricted Elective; SEAS: Humanities Elective

The course is based on the reading and analysis of several important Islamic philosophical texts. Each philosopher whose work has been chosen is also discussed from the point of view of his general philosophical outlook and significance in the history of Islamic philosophy. In reading actual philosophical texts in English, some attention will nevertheless be paid to the technical philosophical vocabulary in Arabic and also in translation.

### Children's Literature: Classics and After

Supriya Goswami

HONR 2054:11 - 3 Credits

CRN: 67032

T 12:45-3:15 PM

Fulfills: ESIA: Humanities; GWSB: Non-Business and Unrestricted Elective; SEAS: Humanities Elective

Equivalent: ENGL 3510 Children's Literature, can count as category B or C

This course explores the various kinds of literature available for children and young adults and examines the powerful cultural role of children's texts. We begin by reading classic fairytales written by Charles Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, and Hans Christian Andersen. We then turn our attention to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century "Golden Age" classics central to the development of British and American children's literature and read representative works by Lewis Carroll, Rudyard Kipling, Beatrix Potter, Frances H. Burnett, among others. This will be followed by a look at more recently published works by popular authors such as J.K. Rowling, Lois Lowry and Louis Sachar in order to explore the ways in which British and American children's literature may (or may not) have changed or adapted to reflect the diverse experiences of its audience. In addition, we will watch cinematic adaptations of popular children's texts to facilitate a discussion on trends that are currently (re)shaping the focus and objectives of children's literature.

### The Idea of Extraterrestrial Life, from Ancient Greece to the Enlightenment

Derek Malone-France

HONR 2054:12 - 3 Credits

CRN: 65655

W 11:10 AM-1:00 PM

Fulfills: ESIA: Humanities; GWSB: Non-Business and Unrestricted Elective; SEAS: Humanities Elective

The emergence of the idea of extraterrestrial life (ETL) as a prominent element in Western culture is generally associated with modern science fiction. But the possibility of life beyond Earth has fascinated, inspired, and sometimes terrified or repulsed Western thinkers ever since the ancient Greek Atomists, who proposed an infinite plenitude of 'worlds' containing an infinite variety of life, challenging the single world cosmologies of Plato and Aristotle. Taking many different forms—some positive, some negative; some cautious, some extravagant—the concept of ETL periodically reemerged as an important topic of debate among Western philosophers, theologians, and (eventually) scientists, at various intellectual and cultural transition points between the ancient and medieval, medieval and Renaissance, and Renaissance and modern eras. In each instance, the conceptions of ETL at-play either strongly reflected, or provocatively controverted, traditional human self-conceptions. Thus, debates over the existence and nature of ETL have always been, also, debates over human nature, our collective identity, and the significance of our existence. In this course, we will explore the long and winding history of the ETL debate as a lens on the larger history of Western thought and culture that illuminates often overlooked but critical dynamics and elements at-play therein.

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Arts and Humanities

### Spinoza and His Critics

Joseph Trullinger  
HONR 2054.80 – 3 Credits  
CRN: 67651  
W 3:30-6:00 PM  
Equivalent: PHIL 4198

This course will study the great debate following Spinoza's (in)famous proof that God and Nature are the same. In the space of a few years it sparked a crisis of meaning in Europe that overturned traditional beliefs in free will, objective morality, and religion. The word "nihilism" was coined at that time—and it inspired later movements such as existentialism and romanticism, in addition to prominent philosophers of the 19th century such as Hegel, Nietzsche, and Kierkegaard. Even Kant weighed in on the debate. We will see how today's questions about whether life has any objective meaning sprang out of this crisis. This seminar is intended for rising juniors and seniors with an interest in learning one of the greatest philosophical debates of all time.

### The Idea of Beauty

Margaret Soltan  
HONR 2054W:10 - 3 Credits  
CRN: 64854  
TR 12:45 PM-2:00 PM  
Course Description  
Fulfills: WID; ESIA: Humanities; GWSB: Non-Business and Unrestricted Elective; SEAS: Humanities Elective  
Equivalent: ENGL 3830 Aesthetics, counts as category E

What do we consider beautiful and why? Is beauty still something we recognize in, and maybe even demand from, artworks, like poems and paintings and music? Is it something we feel in our experience of nature? What do we actually mean when we call something beautiful? Philosophers like Alexander Nehamas claim that developing one's own aesthetic preferences is crucial to becoming fully individual, and to achieving an authentic and meaningful life. Other observers claim that a preoccupation with beautiful things can function as a way to distract yourself from moral and political questions. In this course, we'll read philosophers, political theorists, and literary critics on this rich subject. We'll also look at lots of art (short stories, poems, architecture, music, dance, sculpture) and read eco-theorists on the beauty of the earth.

# Spring 2015 Course Descriptions

## Contract Courses

### Contract Courses

#### Honors Internship

Chosen by student  
HONR 2182:10 – 0 to 4 credits  
CRN: 63537

Please see an Honors Advisor for further information.

#### Honors Undergraduate Research

Chosen by student  
HONR 2184:10 – 0 to 4 credits  
CRN: 60958

The Honors Program gives credit for independent study work completed in cooperation with a professor. Each student needs a faculty member to oversee his or her project and assign a grade. The student and the professor must meet at least ten times during the semester.

#### Honors Research Assistantship

Chosen by student  
HONR 2185:10 – 0 to 4 credits  
CRN: 61954

Students pursuing a directed research project in collaboration with a faculty advisor may receive credit for the project with Honors Program approval. Students participating will be actively engaged in the scholarly research of the supervising faculty member.

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Senior Capstone and Thesis

### Senior Capstone and Thesis

#### Honors Senior Thesis

Chosen by Student

HONR 4198:10 – 3 to 4 credits

CRN: 60715

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. The students and professor should meet at least ten times during the semester. 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.

#### September Capstone: The Art of Love

William Winstead

HONR 4199:10 - 1 Credit

CRN: 60992

T 7:00-9:00 PM

Meets September 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th. “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 seminar this year as we discuss several of the most illuminating visions of love through the ages with an eye towards acquiring abiding insight into the difficult, essential, and lifelong “art of love.” Our readings will include selections from Plato’s Symposium, Ovid’s The Art of Love, the Letters of Abelard and Heloise, Fromm’s The Art of Loving, and Simone de Beauvoir’s The Second Sex. Time and interest permitting, we will also consider a selection of love songs by Schumann and Beethoven from the classical Lieder tradition.

#### October Capstone: Walking

Mark Ralkowski

HONR 4199:11 - 1 Credit

CRN: 63022

R 7:00-9:00 PM

Meets October 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th. Nietzsche once said that, “Only ideas won by walking have any value.” Thoreau thought that walking—a way of life that requires “four hours a day at least”—was an “art” that only the rarest of individuals knew how to practice. Virginia Woolf said, “The hour should be the evening and the season winter, for in winter the champagne brightness of the air and the sociability of the streets are grateful.” She liked to walk in the city, and she preferred the “evening hour,” because it “gives us the irresponsibility which darkness and lamplight bestow. We are no longer quite ourselves.” Is there an “art” of walking? Can it make us no longer quite ourselves? What is the relationship between walking and thinking that Nietzsche talks about? This capstone will be devoted to a careful consideration of walking—as “art,” as street haunting in the winter streets of London, as journey into the wild, as rehabilitation, as meditation, as repetition, as pilgrimage, as stroll, as solitude, as slowness, as freedom, and

# Fall 2015 Course Descriptions

## Senior Capstone and Thesis

more. In addition to Thoreau, Woolf, and Nietzsche, our illustrious companions on this journey will include Rousseau, Kierkegaard, and Wordsworth. And who knows? Perhaps we will even take a walk!

### November Capstone: Life and Living

LaTisha Hammond  
HONR 4199:12 - 1 Credit  
CRN: 64522  
W 4:00-6:00 PM

Meets October 28th, November 4th, 11th, and 18th. What is life? What does it mean for something to be living? What constitutes a life lived? In this capstone we will discuss life and living from biological and social perspectives, exploring where and how these perspectives converge and diverge. Some of the questions we will ask and attempt to understand will include: what are the biological requirements of life, and what does it mean for something or someone to live at these minimum requirements versus something more? What characterizes living? What is considered a "good" quality of life, and who or what decides this? What are the indicators of a good life, and what does it mean to live well? All of these questions and others will be considered in various readings and media as we reflect on the experiences of life and living.

### November Capstone: The Pursuit of Happiness

Maria Frawley  
HONR 4199:13 - 1 Credit  
CRN: 67436  
M 2:00-4:00 PM

Meets November 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd. "Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The phrase resonates with meaning for most of us born and raised in the United States, but this capstone will give us the opportunity to reflect on just what we mean by "happiness" and what the implications of its "pursuit" are for our relationships, our career paths, and our sense of the future. Reading will be varied -- some philosophical essays (including John Stuart Mill); some literature extracts (including Jane Austen); some recent work that blends autobiography, psychology, and sociology. Hugh McKay calls for a moratorium on the word "happiness," believing it a dangerous idea that has led to "a contemporary disease in Western society, which is fear of sadness." We will reflect on this and many other approaches to happiness in our four afternoons of conversation.