

Course Descriptions

University Honors Program

Spring 2016

Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought	1
Scientific Reasoning and Discovery	5
Introductory and Special	8
Self and Society.....	9
Arts and Humanities	13
Contract Courses	17
Senior Capstone and Thesis	18

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought

Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought

The Death of God

Professor Mark Ralkowski

HONR 1016:10 - 3 Credits

CRN: 74417

TR 2:20-3:35 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

This section of Origins will be an in-depth study of the concepts that shaped the modern worldview. We will consider the Christian origins of modern individualism, the scientific revolution and the “disenchantment of the world,” the new politics that gave a central place to human rights and individual liberties, and the critics of modernity—e.g., Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud—who hoped to lay the foundations for a new and better beginning. We will conclude with a critique of modernity's critics, and reflections on an ethics and idealism for the new millennium.

The Rise of the Individual

Professor Ronald Dworkin

HONR 1016:11 - 3 Credits

CRN: 74418

T 3:30-6:00 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

This course traces the development of the “individual” from antiquity to the present day. Students will learn about the “individual” in the same way that the world did: first as a revolutionary concept in philosophy; then as a political and economic reality in the U.S. and Europe. The reaction against the “individual” will then be studied—again, first in philosophy, then in the form of twentieth century mass political movements such as fascism and communism. Thus, the course is not a pure philosophy course, but, instead, is designed to show how ideas have consequences for everyday life. Saint Augustine, Hobbes, Machiavelli, Locke, Rousseau, Burke, Nietzsche, Marx, and Tocqueville are among the writers to be studied. The various facets of the “individual” will also be examined—for example, the difference between individualism and individuality, and how the concept of the individual stands in relation to other concepts in modernity, such as democracy, equality, and liberty. The course examines post-war trends in American individualism, including the intense conformism of the 1950s, followed by the aggressive individualism of the 1960s and 70s. More recent trends in American individualism, including the quest for community and the rise of expressive individualism, will also be examined. Finally, non-Western perspectives on the individual will be discussed.

Revolution

Professor Joseph Trullinger

HONR 1016:12 - 3 Credits

CRN: 74422

TR 12:45-2:00 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought

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. The word revolution carries multiple meanings. First, the word can mean a radical change that installs a fundamentally better way of living or seeing the world. In this sense, revolution is a salutary overhaul of what is defunct or oppressive. However, revolution can also imply a catastrophe, a disintegration of order that throws the world out of its proper balance, leaving individuals helpless and fragmented. Finally, revolution can also mean “to complete a turn,” to come back to where one started. Would we be transformed for having gone through this cycle? Can we—as members of Western civilization, broadly understood—ever come back home again, so to speak? Are the traditional ways truly “home,” or are they only home for a certain group of people? Where do we go now, if not there? We will begin with a consideration of the Christian roots of modernity, which lay the foundations for modern individualism through its emphasis on inner, spiritual freedom. We will then turn to the scientific revolution and the new form of rationality that it establishes, making humanity the sovereign master of the earth. These two forms of conscientious reflection in turn laid the groundwork for new theories of politics, which place popular sovereignty and individual liberty at the center of political life. In the final section of our course, we will consider thinkers who attempt to clarify the contradictions of modern rationalism and realize the still unrealized ideals of the modern age.

Freedom and Modernity

Professor William Winstead

HONR 1016:13 - 3 Credits

CRN: 77249

MW 2:20-3:35 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

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 the state and the weight of tradition, are symptomatic expressions of modernity's radical commitment to freedom. The breathtaking scope of its emancipatory impulse appears not only in the revolutionary politics of the age (the American, French, and Russian revolutions), but also in its 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. We will begin with a consideration of the Christian roots of modernity, which lay the seeds for modern individualism through its emphasis on inner, spiritual freedom. We will then turn to the scientific revolution and the new form of rationality that it establishes, making humanity the sovereign master of the earth. The new science in turn laid the groundwork for novel theories of politics that place popular sovereignty and individual liberty at the center of political life. In the final sections of our course, we will consider thinkers who attempt to clarify the contradictions of modern rationalism and realize the still unrealized ideals of the modern age. Readings will include Hobbes, Mill, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, The Gospel of Matthew, Marcuse, as well as texts from the Zen tradition and scientific revolution.

Domination

Professor Navid Hassanzadeh

HONR 1016:13 - 3 Credits

CRN: 74464

MW 12:45-2:00 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Although freedom in social and political life is often thought to be emblematic of the transition to modernity in Western societies, leading analysts of the modern experience see its liberatory aspects as inevitably coupled with new forms of unfreedom. With this Janus-faced quality of modernity in mind, introducing as it does circumstances that at once liberate and oppress the societies that it

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought

gives rise to, this course is designed with the aim of bringing out the theoretical importance of dwelling on the latter, more unseemly dimensions of the modern world. Accordingly we will focus on the meaning and importance of domination to modern life. We will cover Western and non-Western authors from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and concentrate on understanding and evaluating the different approaches that these thinkers adopt in making sense of domination, understood in connection with socio-economic organization, rationality and rationalization, race, labor, and governance. We will examine in particular how specific historical circumstances and social processes shape the manner in which each theorist conceives of domination, how modern forms of domination compare with pre-modern forms, and whether or not it is desirable, and/or possible, to move beyond conditions of domination in the context of modernity.

Domination

Professor Navid Hassanzadeh

HONR 1016:14 - 3 Credits

CRN: 77465

MW 11:10-12:25 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Although freedom in social and political life is often thought to be emblematic of the transition to modernity in Western societies, leading analysts of the modern experience see its liberatory aspects as inevitably coupled with new forms of unfreedom. With this Janus-faced quality of modernity in mind, introducing as it does circumstances that at once liberate and oppress the societies that it gives rise to, this course is designed with the aim of bringing out the theoretical importance of dwelling on the latter, more unseemly dimensions of the modern world. Accordingly we will focus on the meaning and importance of domination to modern life. We will cover Western and non-Western authors from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and concentrate on understanding and evaluating the different approaches that these thinkers adopt in making sense of domination, understood in connection with socio-economic organization, rationality and rationalization, race, labor, and governance. We will examine in particular how specific historical circumstances and social processes shape the manner in which each theorist conceives of domination, how modern forms of domination compare with pre-modern forms, and whether or not it is desirable, and/or possible, to move beyond conditions of domination in the context of modernity.

Theories of Justice

Professor Eyal Aviv

HONR 1016:MV - 3 Credits

CRN: 74423

TR 1:00-2:15 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

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

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Origins and Evolution of Modern Thought

Intellectual Sextants

Professor Rebecca Carr

HONR 1016:MV1 - 3 Credits

CRN: 74424

MW 4:10-5:25 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Ideas are instruments or tools, like the sextant, by which we navigate reality and by which we change reality. The ideas of liberty and individualism are powerful instruments by which those of the Western world have navigated for the past six centuries. These ideas seem to be the unique creation of the Western mind. Changes of all kinds- political, social, philosophical, and aesthetic- bespeak the force of these ideas.

This course first considers the Christian roots of modernity, as they lay the foundation for modern individualism through emphasis on inner freedom. From here we turn to the scientific revolution and the new rationality that it establishes, making humanity the sovereign master of the earth. New science lays the groundwork for new theories of politics, which place popular sovereignty and individual liberty at the center of political life. Thinkers who attempt to clarify the contradictions of modern rationalism and individualism and determine whether these ideas have contemporary value as instruments to navigate reality are our final consideration.

Sovereignty

Professor Helen McManus

HONR 1016:MV2 - 3 Credits

CRN: 74425

MW 10:00-11:15 AM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, GWSB: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Sovereignty, or supreme authority, underpins modern concepts of the nation-state and the self, yet it is widely agreed to be inadequate to contemporary life. This Origins seminar will trace sovereignty's roots in medieval debates over papal and royal power, its consolidation in social contract theories, and its resilience in the face of twentieth- and twenty-first century challenges. Our readings will include feminist, queer, and postcolonial critiques of individual and state sovereignty. Students will be encouraged to explore the adequacies and inadequacies of this key concept to their own identities, indigenous peoples, environmental destruction, and the flow of people, capital, and information across borders. When have states and individuals invoked sovereignty, and why? What would it mean to think of ourselves and our communities as non-sovereign moral and political actors--and should we aim to do so?

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

Revolutions in Astronomy

Professor Bethany Kung
HONR 1034:10 - 4 Credits
CRN: 72422
MW 9:00-10:50 AM
Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab, ESIA: Science, GWSB: Science

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.

Revolutions in Astronomy

Bethany Kung
HONR 1034:11 - 4 Credits
CRN: 74427
MW 11:00-12:50 PM
Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab, ESIA: Science, GWSB: Science

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.

Your Place in Nature

Professor Bernard Wood

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

HONR 1034:12 - 4 Credits

CRN: 72269

TR 9:35-10:50 AM

Discussion Section: HONR 1034:30 - 0 Credits; CRN: 75457; M 11:10 - 1:00 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab, ESIA: Science, GWSB: Science

The name of this course is taken from the title of a book published in London in 1863. It was called Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature and its author was Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895). It was one of two books about human origins published in 1863 (Charles Lyell's Antiquity of Man was the other) and because it is more wide-ranging than the latter, Huxley's book probably qualifies as the first scientific account of human origins. The course will compare and contrast what was known about "Man's Place in Nature" at the time Huxley wrote Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature with what we know now. It will cover the history of ideas about our relationship with the rest of the natural world, how we work out how animals are related, the fossil record for human evolution and the growth of the sciences involved in the interpretation of that fossil record. It will explore the social and intellectual context of relevant discoveries as well as the biographies of the people who made major contributions to working out the relationships among the great apes and to the recovery and interpretation of the fossil evidence for human evolution.

Marine Biology

Professor LaTisha Hammond

HONR 1034:MV - 4 Credits

CRN: 75459

TR 11:00-12:50 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab, ESIA: Science, GWSB: Science

The ocean covers approximately 71% of the Earth's surface. In the media we hear about this vast ocean in stories and anecdotes about fish, sharks, coral reefs, and the occasional giant squid. However, when it comes to decisions about the oceanic environment and its many other inhabitants, how do we make informed decisions regarding issues such as wild-caught vs. farmed fish, overfishing, pollution, and biodiversity without an understanding of the various marine habitats and organisms. This course is an introduction to the marine environment and the biological diversity within, from the coast to the deep sea. Topics include the physical characteristics of the ocean, marine habitat types and structure, organism physiology, zoology, and ecology. We will also delve into human interactions with the marine environment, marine biology in popular media, environmental issues, sustainability, and policy discussions around conservation. Labs will introduce techniques for studying related topics. Additionally, 1-2 possible field trips, including the local aquarium, will help further our studies. This course is designed to increase student 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, research, and group projects.

Global Climate Change Biology

Professor LaTisha Hammond

HONR 1034:MV1 - 4 Credits

CRN: 75458

TR 8:30-10:20 AM

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab, ESIA: Science, GWSB: Science

This course explores the impacts and implications of climate change on biological systems. Throughout the history of Earth, the planet has undergone major changes in climate, with significant impacts on biological systems. However, the current climate change event is unique compared to previous events, resulting in distinctive issues and consequences for life on the planet. We will explore

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Scientific Reasoning and Discovery

global change by delving into the biological processes that are impacted by the changing climate - this will also include reviewing some of the basic chemical principles that underlie the biological processes being impacted. We will review past biological trends, look more in-depth at present-day scenarios, and discuss future projections and consequences for life on the planet. The course will also include discussion of the scientific basis of global change impacts on human society, environmental issues, sustainability, and policy discussions and measures. Lab exercises will introduce biological techniques for studying various aspects of global change biology. This course is designed to increase student 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- The Nutrition Edition

Professor Carly Jordan

HONR 1034:MV2 - 4 Credits

CRN: 77382

TR 9:00-10:50 AM

Fulfills: CCAS: Natural/Physical Science with Lab, ESIA: Science, GWSB: Science

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.

Note: Spring 2016 will focus on the science of nutrition, metabolism, and exercise.

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Introductory and Special

Introductory and Special

Honors Macroeconomics

Professor Michael Bradley

HONR 2044:10 - 3 Credits

CRN: 70226

TR 11:10-12:25 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Social Sciences, ESIA: ECON 1012 Requirement, SEAS: Social Sciences

Equivalent Courses: HONR 2048, ECON 1012

The course will provide an introduction to the major institutions and analytical structures that determine aggregate economic outcomes. It places an emphasis on understanding current economic conditions and policies, as well as examination of important macroeconomic controversies.

Self and Society

The Evolving Human Mind: Understanding Emotion, Sociality, Sex, Thinking, and Behavior

Professor Stephen Forssell

HONR 2047:10 - 3 Credits

CRN: 77517

TR 3:45-5:00 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Social Sciences, CCAS: Upper-level Psychology elective, SEAS: Social Sciences

Evolutionary psychology presents a broader and fundamentally different paradigm for thinking about the human condition than social science traditionally employs. It asserts a “mind-as-adaptation” theoretical stance, stating as its core tenet that we are not born “tabula rasa”. Rather our minds have been shaped by millions of years of evolution, acquiring adaptations – psychological traits and capabilities - to cope with environmental reproductive and survival challenges. We will engage in an extensive cross-cultural examination of human behavior, We will search for confirmatory and contradicting evidence of the human mind’s adaptation through natural selection as we explore human behavior, emotion, social interaction, sexuality, thought, language, memory, and cognition. Many areas of inquiry in evolutionary psychology are controversial, politically charged and naturally provoke debate. Critical thinking skills and consideration of counter-hypotheses will be important in getting the most from this course. In addition to a text we will read landmark works from key theoreticians in the field. Learning will arise from in-class discussion and writing about the issues and from audio-visual presentations. Likewise, a significant degree of understanding will come from hands-on experience. Students will both apply and expand their knowledge by designing an experiment to test hypotheses derived from evolutionary psychological theory.

Theories of Identity and Difference

Professor Ingrid Creppell

HONR 2047:80 - 3 Credits

CRN: 75460

R 3:30-6:00 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Social Sciences, SEAS: Social Sciences

Equivalent Courses: PSC 2994

Human identity is one of the most complex topics for political theory and the social sciences. As a way we think about our selves and categorize others, notions of identity and difference serve as basic references for political and cultural power. In this course, we will study major works (philosophy, literature, film) that have contributed to the political and social theory of identity and difference. The course is oriented to ask and attempt to answer questions of the following kind: what is identity, at the individual and collective level? What aspects of modern history have made identity a political and psychological issue and problem? Where do identifications of self and other come from? How stable or rigid are they, and when/how do they change? Must identities presume different antagonistic Others? How are ethical and political reasoning related to identity/difference? Should or can we move "beyond identity?" We examine debates that arise for contemporary political and ethical theory in relation to class, race, religion, nation, gender, among others.

History of the Internet & The Future of Work

Professor David Grier

HONR 2048:10 - 3 Credits

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Self and Society

CRN: 75464
T 3:30-6:00 PM
Fulfills: SEAS: Social Sciences

The course covers the history of high speed digital communications and how they are changing the nature of work, jobs, and organizations. The course will take an in-depth look at crowdsourcing and how it exemplifies the new forms of work.

Justice and the Legal System, part 2

Professor Jill Kastle
HONR 2048:11 - 3 Credits
CRN: 75960
MW 12:45-2:00 PM
Fulfills: SEAS: Social Sciences

This course focuses on the First Amendment, specifically the guarantee of freedom of speech, and employs the teaching methods used in Justice and the Legal System, Part 1, which is a prerequisite.

Holocaust Memory

Professor Walter Reich
HONR 2048:80 - 3 Credits
CRN: 75961
T 5:10-7:00 PM
Fulfills: SEAS: Social Sciences
Equivalent Courses: IAFF 3190

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. The course uses a cross-disciplinary approach, drawing on the fields of politics, society, ethics, literature, history, group psychology, social psychology, individual psychology and international affairs.

Humanitarianism

Professor Michael Barnett
HONR 2048:81 - 3 Credits
CRN: 77250
TR 12:45-2:00 PM
Fulfills: ESIA: International Politics; International Development; Comparative, Political, Economic, & Social Systems (CPSS); SEAS: Social Sciences
Equivalent Courses: IAFF 3184, PSC 2994

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Self and Society

This course explores the foundations, logics, dilemmas, and consequences of humanitarianism -- the attempt to relieve the suffering of distant strangers. It begins with an introduction to the philosophy and practice of humanitarianism, proceeds to examine the attempt to relieve the suffering of victims of humanly made and natural disasters, and ends with a section on the attempt to make war less gruesome and more humane.

Prejudice on Trial

Professor Jenna Weissman Joselit
HONR 2048:82 - 3 Credits
CRN: 77252
W 12:30-2:20 PM
Fulfills: SEAS: Social Sciences
Equivalent Courses: HIST 3001

This interdisciplinary seminar explores the public face of anti-semitism by looking at a series of landmark trials and courtroom dramas in Europe and the United States, from the 15th century through modern times. Drawing on original primary sources, from court transcripts to feature films, it examines the ways in which legal institutions disseminated, legitimated, publicized - and on occasion, refuted - anti-semitic beliefs and practices. This course offers a sobering and provocative perspective on one of the world's most enduring prejudices.

Gender Activism in the Muslim World

Professor Kelly Pemberton
HONR 2048.MV - 3 Credits
CRN: 77947
R 1:00-3:30 PM

This undergraduate course is suitable for students who have little to no background in Islamic studies or the Muslim world. It focuses on women's rights activism and activists in Muslim-majority countries and Muslim communities in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and North Am. We will explore this activism with respect to the intersection of history, society, and geopolitics, using the theoretical lens of socio-cultural anthropology, and in consideration of of cultural complexes and social relationships within their particular historical contexts and geographic environments. These perspectives will give us a unique vantage point for exploring some of the present characteristics of women's rights activist communities in Muslim-majority lands and communities, including coalitions among secularists, Islamic, and non-Muslim religious groups, while we investigate some of the major cultural and ideological factors that are shaping these movements. The course will feature at least one guest speaker who is a Muslim activist for women's rights, and will also offer an opportunity for an off-campus visit to a local mosque or Muslim community center.

Epidemics in American History

Professor Vanessa Northington Gamble
HONR 2048W:80 - 3 Credits
CRN: 76115
MW 12:45-2:00 PM
Fulfills: WID, SEAS: Social Sciences
Equivalent Courses: HIST 3301W, AMST 3950W

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

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Self and Society

epidemics on American history and culture. This semester the course will focus on tuberculosis, the 1918 influenza epidemic, polio, and HIV/AIDS. We will use primary documents, historical accounts, memoirs, and films to understand the history of these four diseases.

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Arts and Humanities

Arts and Humanities

Film and Social Justice

Professor Lisa St. Clair Harvey

HONR 2053:10 - 3 Credits

CRN: 77567

R 3:30-6:00 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, ESIA: Humanities, SEAS:Humanities

Entertainment film has played a consistent and sometimes conspicuous role in the unfolding stories of many social justice, humanitarian, and civil rights movements. This class explores the sometimes complicated relationship between feature film and flammable political issues centered around race, sex, gender, ethnicity, religion, economic class, LGBT concerns, physically challenged communities, and other social and cultural populations, both today and in selected historical contexts. Looking at the power of film to persuade as well as to politicize, we'll combine cultural theory, political communication, film theory and media studies to interrogate the ethics and the effectiveness of film as an instrument of political propaganda on both sides of the ideological continuum. In particular, we'll analyze the power of film to provide a meaningful sense of self to marginalized and disadvantaged groups, to educate mainstream movie-goers about ways of life they may not regularly encounter, to galvanize support for global as well as domestic change, and to articulate the possibilities for new ways of practicing democracy.

Literature and Medicine

Professor Marshall Alcorn

HONR 2053:11 - 3 Credits

CRN: 77253

TR 11:10-12:25 PM

Fulfills: CCAS: Humanities, CCAS: Upper-level English literature elective (Group E: Theory and Cultural Studies), ESIA: Humanities, SEAS:Humanities

Literature and Medicine will examine literary representations of medical practice and the medical use of narrative to promote physiological and psychological healing. Course readings will give particular attention to the work of Rita Charon and Arthur Frank. Columbia University physician Rita Charon has been influential in documenting the beneficial use narrative in medical practice. Sociologist Arthur Frank has described modes of narrative useful for coping with physical illness. Key themes for the course will be the trauma of illness, the disruption of death, the implications of the patient doctor relationship, and the power dynamics of medical expertise. Reading content will range across genres from short stories and poems to technical writings in medical literature and social commentary.

The Politics of Immigration

Professor Kimberly Morgan

HONR 2053W:10 - 3 Credits

CRN: 73681

R 12:45-3:15 PM

Fulfills: WID, CCAS: Humanities, CCAS: Upper-level Political Science elective - Comparative Politics (Group A), ESIA: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Arts and Humanities

This class examines immigration as a political issue. The course focuses primarily on US immigration politics and will examine them in historical, comparative and normative perspective. We will investigate what drives immigration, why US policies towards immigration and immigrants look the way they do, and how the US compares to countries in Western Europe. An overarching goal of the class is for students to develop their own opinions about what immigration policies the US should adopt in the years to come.

Heidegger's Being and Time

Professor Mark Ralkowski

HONR 2054:80 - 3 Credits

CRN: 75966

W 3:30-6:00 PM

Fulfills: ESIA: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Equivalent Courses: PHIL 4198

"When I left the auditorium, I was speechless. For a brief moment I felt as if I had a glimpse into the ground and foundation of the world. In my inner being, something was touched that had been asleep for a long time." That is how one person described the experience of listening to Heidegger present his philosophy in 1929. Our advanced seminar will be an intensive and focused study of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, one of the most influential philosophical works of the twentieth century. We will begin the course with an overview of Edmund Husserl's phenomenological method, and then trace how Heidegger adopts and adapts this new way of doing philosophy in order to address the problems of existence. Second, we will work our way through *Being and Time* systematically, mastering Heidegger's arguments and considering their implications for traditional philosophical problems in epistemology and ontology. Finally, we will look at the "turn" in Heidegger's later thought, and consider the importance of his philosophy for understanding language, art, and poetry, as well as his profound critique of modernity, which has influenced thinkers as diverse as Sartre, Marcuse, Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, Cavell, Taylor, Agamben, and Žižek. As Richard Rorty once said, "You cannot read most of the important philosophers of recent times without taking Heidegger's thought into account." This course is designed for students who want to know why. (An added bonus for philosophy majors: this course will fulfill a proseminar requirement, PHIL 4198.)

Evil

Professor Joseph Trullinger

HONR 2054:81 - 3 Credits

CRN: 75968

TR 9:35-10:50 AM

Fulfills: ESIA: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Equivalent Courses: PHIL 3100

Thomas Aquinas once argued, "If evil exists, then God exists." We are surely taken by the counterintuitive boldness of this statement; the existence of evil in the world strikes us as strong evidence against any claim that there exists a God who personally cares for us. Any careful thought on this issue requires that we first think through what we mean by those funny little words, "evil" and "God." Is evil real, and an opposite force to goodness, or is evil only what we label as being less good than something else? Could it be that God benevolently wants to stop evil, but simply lacks enough power to do so—and would such a deity still count as God? What is more central to what people revere: power or goodness? This class will explore these questions as we wonder whether the idea of God is compatible with the existence of evil, looking both at classical sources as well as philosophical responses to the Holocaust. Significant authors include Leibniz, Voltaire, Kant, Hannah Arendt, Levinas, and Hans Jonas. We will close the course with a discussion of Cormac McCarthy's dystopian novel *The Road*, which poses the question of what goodness is still good for at the end of the world.

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Arts and Humanities

Nietzsche and Political Thought

Professor William Winstead
HONR 2054:82 - 3 Credits
CRN: 77381
T 3:30-6:00 PM
Fulfills: ESIA: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities
Equivalent Courses: PSC 2991

Nietzsche is a fierce critic of modern politics and a strong advocate of the agonistic politics of the Greek city-state. 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.

Buddhist Meditation and Contemplative Practices

Professor Eyal Aviv
HONR 2054:M80 - 3 Credits
CRN: 75969
TR 11:30-12:45 PM
Fulfills: ESIA: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities
Equivalent Courses: REL 3100

In recent decades meditation had gone from an esoteric practice to a mainstream technique of self-transformation. Bill Clinton, Sting, Katy Perry, Helen Mirren, Jerry Seinfeld and many more sing its praises (sometimes literally). But what is meditation and how does it work? Why would people subject themselves to a strict regiment of "doing nothing" in times where there is so much to do? In this course we will focus on Buddhist meditation. We will begin the course by discussing the meditation movement in the West and the recent boom in scientific studies of meditation. Meditation is often described as a value-free exercise, one that is as secular as Tai-chi or Yoga poses but what is lost when we secularize the practice? To answer this question, we will examine some of the critiques of modern meditation practice. We will then explore together different styles of Buddhist meditation, learn about the religious world from which they emerged and what purpose they serve in their traditional context and highlight the radical demand they put on us. Finally, for fun, we will also practice some of these methods in class.

Jane Austen: Literary Icon

Professor Maria Frawley
HONR 2054W:11 - 3 Credits
CRN: 73767
M 12:45-3:15 PM
Fulfills: WID, CCAS: 19th Century Literature Elective (English Department), ESIA: Humanities, SEAS: Humanities

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Arts and Humanities

This course focuses on the literary achievements of Jane Austen and her continuing relevance to our own culture. Our reading will include all of her novels (from *Northanger Abbey* through *Persuasion*); in addition, we will explore film adaptations of her work and her presence in popular culture. Understanding the social and historical contexts that shape Austen's work will be a major preoccupation, and to this end we will explore the ways her fiction expresses values associated with neoclassical literature while simultaneously responding to the more revolutionary tenor of the Romantic age in which she wrote. Among our many topics for consideration will be the ways Austen responds to social hierarchies in Regency England; the relationship between gender ideology, "conduct book culture," and Austen's representations of women's lives; Austen's views of national identity in the era of the French Revolution; and Austen's innovative narrative and linguistic techniques. Students can expect to come away from this course with a solid grasp of the social, historical, and literary contexts of Austen's fiction; with greater appreciation of the stylistic achievements of her fiction writing; and with the ability to critically assess how and why Austen's works have been received and adapted over time.

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Contract Courses

Contract Courses

Honors Internship

Chosen by student
HONR 2182:10 – 0 to 4 credits
CRN: 73287

Please see an Honors Advisor for further information.

Honors Undergraduate Research

Chosen by student
HONR 2184:10 – 0 to 4 credits
CRN: 70842

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: 71806

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.

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Senior Capstone and Thesis

Senior Capstone and Thesis

Honors Senior Thesis

Chosen by Student

HONR 4198:10 – 3 to 4 credits

CRN: 71009

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.

April Capstone - Brief History of Humankind

Professor Eyal Aviv

HONR 4199:10 - 1 Credit

CRN: 72805

T 5:00-6:50 PM

The class will meet on March 29th, April 5th, April 12th, and April 19th. This capstone experience will focus on mankind as “homo--sapiens.” We are accustomed to think of ourselves as “humans,” a category separate from all other living things. But what would we learn if we viewed ourselves as a scholar from another planet would? What if we studied our history as just one species out of many rather than the center of creation? In the four meetings we will read one book by Yuval Noah Harari titled Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind. The book explores challenging yet fascinating questions: One hundred thousand years ago, at least six different species of humans shared the Earth with us. None of them was more important than gorillas, wolves of fireflies. Yet, today homo--sapiens control the whole planet. What turned us from insignificant animals to the rulers of the planet? Where did all other humans go? Why did we invent gods or money? What makes the modern period so different from the pre--modern one? Does history have a clear trajectory and is there justice in our world? These are some of the central questions we will address together. Sapiens will offer answers that are surprising and tantalizing and will serve as a fertile ground for thought provoking conversations.

February Capstone - Woody Allen and Philosophy

Professor Mark Ralkowski

HONR 4199:11 - 1 Credit

CRN: 73510

R 5:00-6:50 PM

This class will meet on February 4th, February 11th, February 18th, and February 25th. This capstone will be devoted to a philosophical study of four films by Woody Allen. Each week you will be asked to watch one of his movies and read a short article related to it. Our discussion topics will include big issues like love and death, sex and friendship, music and art, morality and religion, self-knowledge and authenticity, personal identity and the meaning of life. We won't be able to cover all of these topics, and we certainly won't be able to watch or discuss all of Woody Allen's films. Instead, the idea will be to use a few films and readings to have four great discussions.

February Senior Capstone: Time

Professor Bethany Kung

Spring 2016 Course Descriptions

Senior Capstone and Thesis

HONR 4199:12 - 1 Credit

CRN: 74040

F 12:00-1:50 PM

This class will meet on February 5th, February 12th, February 19th, and February 26th. Augustine famously said: “What then is time? If no one asks me, I know what it is. If I wish to explain it to him who asks, I do not know.” “What then is time?” During our four meetings we will approach this weighty question from a multi-disciplinary perspective. We will ask questions like is it inside our head? Is it real or an illusion? If it is real, is it real only now in the present or do past and future exist as well? Also - what does time mean for our lives when time is seen as commodity that can be treasured or wasted?

March Senior Capstone: Pleasure

Professor Joseph Trullinger

HONR 4199:13 - 1 Credit

CRN: 75465

T 6:10-8:00 PM

This class will meet on February 23rd, March 1st, March 8th, and March 22nd. Everyone wants to be happy—but not everyone agrees about what makes for a truly joyful life. What else could be more important, then, than coming to terms with what pleasure is in the first place, and sorting out how we ought to see our bodily desires? In this course we'll explore the timeless idea that nothing in life is more valuable than pleasure (also known as hedonism). This course will not be an endorsement or a condemnation of hedonism, but rather an opportunity for you to come to an informed conclusion of your own about the life of pleasure. We will discuss a variety of classical and contemporary views on hedonism, beginning with Epicurus' point that immortality would make a joyful life impossible, and ending with the 20th century philosopher Herbert Marcuse, who sees hedonism as a life-affirming alternative to today's dead-end consumerist culture.