Fall 2011 Honors Course Offerings

HONR300L111
Honors Ethics
Joseph Campisi
Slot 14: TR 3:30-4:45
Core Distribution Area: Ethics

**Description:** In this course, students will reflect upon and critically evaluate a number of fundamental moral questions as they are broached in some of the major ethical theories (utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics, rights-ethics, care-ethics, etc.).

*Besides Honors, this seminar satisfies the College's CORE Ethics requirement.*

HONR310L112
Versions of the Self: Myth and Memory (The Hero's Voyage)
Robert Lewis
Slot 11: TF 2:00-3:15
Core Distribution Area: Literature

**Description:** Myths are “maps of meaning.” They chart the course of the human spirit’s perennial search for enlightenment and wholeness. Arising out of communal and personal memory, they appeal to our inchoate desire for a heroic life. This course will examine some representative theories of the nature of myth and explore a number of texts, classic and contemporary, that embody this quest for heroism.

Readings will include a selection from classic works like the Epic of Gilgamesh, The Odyssey, the Metamorphoses of Ovid, The Confessions of St. Augustine, and The Romance of Tristan and Isault; as well as examples of modern autobiographies like C.S.Lewis’s *Surprised by Joy*, or Vladimir Nabakov’s *Speak, Memory*, or Dorothy Day’s *The Long Loneliness*. Also readings on the theory of myth, e.g., from Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*.

Students will compose a research paper on one or another myth, applying the theories learned in the course. And they will write an autobiographical essay embodying some aspect of their own search for meaning.

*Besides Honors, this seminar satisfies the College's CORE Literature requirement.*

HONR311L111
Versions of the Self: Youth in Transition from School to Work
Ryan Kinlaw
Slot 9: TF 12:30-1:45
Core Distribution Area: Social Science

**Description:** What are the expectations and concerns of adolescents and young adults as they prepare to move from formal schooling into the workforce? What other transitions do youth face, and how do they influence the school-to-work transition? Do motivation and performance in school predict satisfaction and success on the job? Does education always open doors? How are decisions about careers made? Is the pursuit of a job “all about the money” for most youth? What opportunities and obstacles do young people face as they prepare for participation in the labor force?
What are the consequences of holding part-time jobs? These are some of the questions to be considered in this course as we examine and discuss scholarly and popular materials which address this transition point in identity development. We will explore factors related to school motivation and performance, influences on the career decision-making process, and topics pertaining to workforce preparation and participation.

*Besides Honors, this seminar satisfies the College's CORE Social Science requirement.*

**HONR310L111**  
*Versions of the Self: Blues History and Blues Poetry*  
*Lea Graham and Steven Garabedian*  
*Slot 4: TF 9:30-10:45*  
*Core Distribution Area: Literature*  
OR

**HONR312L111**  
*Versions of the Self: Blues History and Blues Poetry*  
*Lea Graham and Steven Garabedian*  
*Slot 4: TF 9:30-10:45*  
*Core Distribution Area: History*  
OR

**HONR320L111**  
*Art of Culture: Blues History and Blues Poetry*  
*Lea Graham and Steven Garabedian*  
*Slot 4: TF 9:30-10:45*  
*Core Distribution Area: Literature*  
OR

**HONR322L111**  
*Art of Culture: Blues History and Blues Poetry*  
*Lea Graham and Steven Garabedian*  
*Slot 4: TF 9:30-10:45*  
*Core Distribution Area: History*

**Description:** This is an interdisciplinary course in History and English that will study the historical and artistic development of Blues music and Blues poetry. As a distinct musical and cultural formation, the Blues emerged out of black working-class communities of the U.S. South in the early 1900s. Over the course of the twentieth century, it extended beyond its race and class origins to become a national and even an international phenomenon with an expansive reach into modern popular music and poetic expression. Widely disparaged in the dominant culture upon its appearance, the Blues is now the subject of an entire school(s) of academic thought.

In this course, we will learn what constitutes Blues music and its history, and how Blues poetry intersects with it. We will also ask how Blues poetry differentiates itself from Blues song lyrics and question why and what effect that has on its reading. Additionally, we will examine where the two disciplines overlap: How does Blues History enter into and/or inform Blues poetry? How does the content and structures found in Blues poetry capture the thinking or mood that comes out of Blues History and the history of North America? We will use historical texts by classic and contemporary authors and the work of poets such as Sterling Brown, Langston Hughes, Etheridge Knight, Sterling Plumpp, Cornelius Eady, Lucille Clifton, Terrance Hayes and others. Also, we will listen to Blues music regularly as a way to examine how the art form itself is informing, connected with or even dissonant to its history and the art of poetry.
Course requirements: Weekly informal written responses to the reading and/or music, a take-home midterm exam, a final researched paper and presentation, and consistent engaged participation.

*Besides Honors, this seminar satisfies the College's CORE Literature or History requirement.*

**HONR320L112 (**Cross-listed with Global Engagement course HONR340L111) **

*Art of Culture: The Literature, Film, and Culture of Hispanics in the U.S.*  
*Irma Casey*  
*Slot 15: MW 5:00-6:15*  
*Core Distribution Area: Literature*

**Description:** This course will provide a basic appreciation and understanding of the culture of Hispanics in the US. We read the writings of Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Dominicans in the US and see film by and about them. Although the experiences of these groups may be different, their creations give a vision of their lives and what binds them together in the US.

*Besides Honors, this course satisfies the CORE Literature requirement. This course may also be used to satisfy the ethnic/national literature requirement for the English major, elective credit for the English minor, and the Cultural Diversity requirement.*

**HONR321L111**  
*Art of Culture: Music that Built America*  
*Art Himmelberger*  
*Slot 10: MR 2:00-3:15*  
*Core Distribution Area: Fine Arts*

**Description:** This course will develop the student’s knowledge and appreciation of the creation, development and function of various genres of music and the music industry utilized over a 400 year evolutionary process, occurring congruent to the history and development of our nation. Historical periods and functions include: Purposes and utilization of music by the Puritans; Native Indians; other early settlers; exploratory expeditions; Colonial America; American Revolt and War for Independence; Federal Period and War of 1812, American Civil War, Post Civil War Band Activities and Entertainment Movement by the touring of Patrick Gilmore, John Philip Sousa and others, radio broadcasts of the Goldman Band, Romantic and 20th Century Orchestral Composers, Post Civil War American Broadway Musicals and other music theater activities to include 20th Century Broadway Musical development, Ragtime, Jazz, Big Bands and Blues development. The students will understand how this development of American Music paralleled the growth of our nation.

*Besides Honors, this course satisfies the CORE Fine Arts requirement.*

**HONR333L111**  
*Hudson River Valley Studies: Hudson River School*  
*Jan Mainzer*  
*Slot 7: TR 11:00-12:15*  
*Core Distribution Area: Fine Arts*
During the early 19th century, the first American art movement to gain international fame emerged in New York. Known as the “Hudson River School,” it celebrated the landscape of the Hudson Valley and the Catskills. This course will explore the art and ideas of the artists of the Hudson River School, the movement’s sources in earlier American and European Art as well as its influences on later artists.

*Besides Honors, this course satisfies the CORE Fine Arts requirement.*

**HONR342L111**  
Global Engagement: Revolutions in Morality and Science  
James Snyder  
Slot 14: TR 3:30-4:45  
Core Distribution Area: Philosophy/Religious Studies

*Description:* This class will investigate the nature and significance of moral and scientific revolutions. We will discuss some fundamental shifts in morality, and the implications these revolutions have had for the status of morality and our obligations to others. We will focus especially on the development of moralities that aspire to be global in their scope, and we will investigate the challenges that this presents to traditional moral theories. This will include a discussion of the ethics of globalization and cosmopolitanism, to name a few. We will also examine the nature of scientific revolutions, and investigate the emergence of the modern scientific culture. Along these lines we will discuss divergent conceptions of the role and aims of science, and examine the challenges that modern science, and specific scientific developments, presents to us and our world.

*Besides Honors, this course satisfies the CORE Philosophy/Religious Studies requirement.*

**HONR340L111 (**Cross-listed with the Art of Culture course HONR320L111)**  
Global Engagement: The Literature, Film, and Culture of Hispanics in the U.S.  
Irma Casey  
Slot 15: MW 5:00-6:15  
Core Distribution Area: Literature

*Description:* See the description for HONR320L111.

**HONR350L111**  
Science, Technology, and Society:  
Tracey McGrail  
Slot 10: MR 2:00-3:15  
Core Distribution Area: Mathematics

*Description:* Three hundred years ago, Pierre de Fermat posed a seemingly simple mathematical conjecture in the margins of a textbook, with a tantalizing claim to a solution but “no room” to give the details. Since then, many generations of mathematicians have studied this problem but failed to either satisfactorily prove or refute the statement. It was not until the mid-1990’s that a Princeton professor named Andrew Wiles produced a 200-page document settling the question once and for all. In this course we will explore the long and fascinating history of “Fermat’s Last Theorem”. No special mathematics background beyond high school algebra will be required.

*Besides Honors, this seminar satisfies the CORE Mathematics requirement.*
HONR351L111
Science, Technology, and Society: Medical Botany
Zofia Gagnon
Slot 9: TF 12:30-1:45
Core Distribution Area: Natural Science

Description: The course focuses on research and development of therapies for use in complementary/alternative and conventional medicines, utilizing natural plant products and their derivatives. Poisonous, medicinal and therapeutic plants, with an emphasis on their biologically active constituents, will be examined. The course will integrate basic human anatomy and physiology with the pharmacological effect of plant compounds on specific organs, allowing students to learn and understand the role of medicinal plants in the context of human health.

Besides Honors, this seminar satisfies the College's CORE Natural Science requirement.

HONR354L111
Science, Technology, and Society: Evolution and Literature
Judith Saunders
Slot 16: TR 5:00-6:15
Core Distribution Area: Literature

Description: This course will introduce students to the emerging field of Darwinian literary studies. Students will study background materials in evolutionary science sufficient to permit them to understand the principles upon which Darwinian approaches to literature are based (prior knowledge evolutionary theory is welcome but not expected). Primary texts drawn from a variety of periods, authors, and genres will provide literary portrayals of key issues such as mate choice, reciprocal exchange, parent/child interactions, sibling rivalry, cheating, and deception. In addition to examining the motives and behavior of fictional characters in the light of evolutionarily based predictions, we'll consider literature as an arena in which biological constraints on human choice may be challenged. We'll also take on some fundamental questions, such as the adaptive function of art itself: how can efforts devoted to aesthetic creation promote human survival?

Readings likely will include selections from William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, D.H. Lawrence, Ernest Hemingway, Langston Hughes, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Elizabeth Bowen, Somerset Maugham, Zora Neal Hurston, Dorothy Parker, John Updike, Edith Wharton, and others.

Besides Honors, this seminar satisfies the College's CORE Literature requirement, as well as the Theory Requirement (or 300-level literature course) for the English major. Note that the course may NOT be used to fulfill a Core Science requirement.