THE HONORS SEMINARS
Spring 2016

Listed below are the Honors seminars for Spring 2016. Each of these seminars satisfy Core, Pathway, and Major/Minor requirements. These seminars add great value to your general education at Marist, which is at the core of the Honors Program. Please contact Dr. James G. Snyder at james.snyder@marist.edu if you have any questions concerning these seminars.

Honors seminars are currently running under two separate section numbers on account of the requirements for the new and old program. Students can register for either section.

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COMMUNICATION IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS
HONR 325 and 396; T/R 11:00
Dr. Jen Eden
Pathway: Gender Studies, Public Health
Major/Minor: Communications Elective

Description: This course will focus on describing and explaining communication processes that occur within the context of close relationships tying together research from communication, family studies, and social psychology. Therefore, we will take an approach that emphasizes communication but also includes concepts and theories from other a variety of other fields. The course covers topics that should help you better understand how people develop, maintain, and end relationships, as well as how people cope with relational challenges. Learning how communication functions in close relationships, such as those between friends, romantic partners, and family members, can be an exciting and worthwhile enterprise. Topics covered will include processes that bring us together (attraction, love, affection, self disclosure, conflict) as well as processes that can tear us apart (infidelity, unrequited love, jealousy, fatal attraction).

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MEDIEVAL GENDER AND SEXUALITY
HONR 312 and 320; T 6:30
Dr. Janine Peterson
Core: History
Pathway: Medieval & Renaissance Studies, Catholic Studies, Gender Studies, Religion & Society
Major/Minor: History, Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Description: In the past no less than today, prevailing gender norms were informed by attitudes towards sexuality and the body, which themselves were determined by religious and cultural traditions as well as scientific and judicial ideas. This class will explore the construction of gender, notions about sexuality and sex difference, and how these ideas affected lived experience during the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance. We will explore the traditions, theories, and scientific ideas that profoundly influenced medieval and Renaissance conceptions of sex and gender, including courtly love, Galenic and Aristotelian medicine, the writings of Church Fathers, and humanism. Since these theoretical ideas could contradict, we will also look at the experience of men and women who lived within – or rejected – the boundaries of accepted behavior, from monks and nuns to prostitutes and male crossdressers. Students will
be encouraged to make comparative analysis of the historical past to the present to enrich our understanding of this topic.

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**Madness and the Arts**
HONR 346 and 391; M/W 5:00
Dr. James Regan
Core: Social Science
Pathway: Gender Studies, Public Health, Technology & Society
Major/Minor: Psychology

Description: This course considers abnormal behavior from a historical perspective and a review of contemporary diagnostic models for the classification of individuals with mental illness. It considers the concept of “madness” or “insanity” from a historical perspective. The concept of madness in today’s society will be discussed and a review of how madness has been portrayed from the following venues: Architecture, Literature, Art, and Media. In addition, there will be a review of current mental disorders as represented by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual 5 (DSM-5) published by the American Psychiatric Association. The course will view the etiology, course and diagnosis of abnormal behavior patterns. Implications for treatment that include psychopharmacology, psychological approaches and social aspects are included and, as such, a biopsychosocial approach to the subject matter is stressed.

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**Civic Engagement and Leadership**
HONR 341 and 395; W 2:00 and F 3:30
Dr. Melissa Gaede
Core: Social Science
Pathway: Public Praxis, Global Studies, Legal Studies
Major/Minor: Political Science

Description: Civic engagement consists of those behaviors, attitudes, and actions that reflect active membership in a community. This course introduces students to the principles and mechanisms of civic engagement and explores the role of leadership and leadership styles in the practice of civic engagement. The course examines how civic engagement can influence individuals and communities more broadly and will pay special attention to the role of non-profit organizations in addressing pressing social problems. Students will apply theory to practice in our local community and explore ways to expand their capacity for civic leadership and engagement. Students will participate in a community based learning (CBL) project off campus as a part of their coursework that relates to their field of study.

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**Environmental Literature**
HONR 351 and 370 (Natural Science) and HONR 320 and 380 (Literature); T/R 11:00
Dr. Richard Grinnell and Dr. Richard Feldman
Pathway: Environmental Studies, Public Health, Hudson River Valley Studies, Technology & Society
Core: Literature (sections 320 and 380), Natural Science (sections 351 and 370)
Major/Minor: English Upper-Level Literature, Environmental Policy Minor

Description: This Honors course will present students with a survey of environmental writing that brings together a variety of genres by observers of nature, environmental activists, fiction
writers, essayists, poets, politicians, and scientists. The course is designed to foster in students a greater appreciation for nature, and the ways it has been described by writers; to gain an understanding of the effect that this literature has had on our perception of the world and on governmental and social policy; to enable students to investigate their own relationship and responsibility to the natural world; and to place both reader and writer into the context of the world in which they live. From the scientific perspective, writings will be examined for their ecological and environmental context. Students will also learn the practice of nature observation and writing through the scientific practice of a field journal.

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ETHICS OF FOOD
HONR 200 and 365; T/F 12:30
Dr. Joseph Campisi
Core: Ethics
Pathway: Environmental Studies, Public Health, Technology & Society
Major/Minor: Philosophy

Description: We are all “moralizers.” Every day we make moral judgments concerning the character and actions of other people, and, in honest moments, we make such judgments about ourselves. Perhaps it is because moral judgments are so commonplace that their real basis is so obscure. When we do make such judgments, we generally rely on more fundamental principles or standards that we typically take for granted, if we recognize them at all. But where do such principles come from? Do they have any objective or rational basis? Are they purely subjective? Can they be justified? How? As soon as we raise questions like these we have adopted a critical stance toward morality. That is, we have entered the domain of ethics. Ethics then, in the philosophical sense, is simply the attempt to do, more critically and more systematically, what everyone naturally does in these reflective, questioning moments. In ethics one seeks to analyze moral concepts (such as “good,” “evil,” “right,” “wrong,” “duty,” etc.) and to justify moral principles and theories. Such inquiry is critical because it refuses to take accepted moral beliefs for granted and subjects them to the closest scrutiny. It is this type of inquiry that we will embark upon in this course as we analyze a few of the most influential ethical theories in the Western philosophical tradition. These will include ethical relativism, divine command theory, utilitarianism, deontology, rights ethics, virtue ethics, and the ethics of care among others.

Throughout the course we will also turn our attention to ethical questions surrounding food. In recent years, moral issues concerning food have started to attract a lot of attention. For example, countless restaurants and college campuses throughout the country are now offering vegetarian and even vegan options on their menus. Supermarkets make efforts to stock organic products and “fair trade” coffee.

Alongside our exploration of classical ethical theories, we will also examine various ethical questions involving food. What should “count” as food? Should we, for example, eat animals? Which ones? How should food be produced? Should we be concerned with the environmental impact of agricultural practices? What about genetically-modified food? Does such bio-engineering represent the means by which we can overcome food shortages and hunger or does it involve an unacceptable manipulation of “nature”? What responsibility do we have to feed populations that are facing food shortages? Etc. In exploring questions such as these, we will determine how various ethical theories inform or fail to inform the relevant debates.