FALL 2019 Honors Seminars
Draft 1 - 2/27/2019

Notes: this is very definitely still a draft and there may be significant changes in the seminars available before it is time for you to register so please look for updated documents as the semester progresses.

You'll notice that some courses have an ! next to the general education code (e.g. [H!]). This means that this course is currently under review by the general education curriculum committee and we hope – and I stress hope – that they will be approved before you register. We need to be clear that there is no guarantee that this will necessarily happen. We will keep you updated on the fate of all those courses that have the!

**Entrepreneurial Value Creation in Society: Honors EEE 4010 CRN 69579 - Honors Area Social Sciences Gen Ed Code - if any [] Credit Hours [1] Per Bylund R 1845 - 1935**

This 1-hour honors seminar presents an intellectual framework for understanding the economic and ethical implications of the forces that promote or hinder the creation of value in society. In particular, students will engage in readings, discussions, and periodic interactions with guest lecturers, related to topics such as: individual liberty and responsibility, economic freedom, fairness and equality, scarcity and property rights, intellectual property, competition and anti-competition, cronyism and despotism, and globalization and free trade. The aforementioned topics will be examined and discussed within the context of governments, institutions, business entities, and consumers, and their collective impact on innovation, entrepreneurship, and advances in societal well-being. This seminar should be of interest to students from diverse majors and backgrounds. There are no pre-requisites.


Blending readings, films, music, art, guest lectures, and discussions to examine responses to the worst pandemic of our time, this course will trace the evolution of the HIV/AIDS epidemic from multinational and interdisciplinary perspectives. Be advised that the course contains sensitive and sometimes graphic materials related to sexuality, drug use, and the physical manifestations of disease.


This course, specifically designed for honors students, uses myths from Mesopotamia, Egypt and Canaan from the third to the first millennia B.C. as a starting point for considering the fundamentals of ancient polytheistic religions in these regions. We will also read some prayers, letters to gods and treaties to see how religion permeated ancient life. Along our journey, we will hone our writing skills. Students must have credit for ENGL 1313 or 1113 to register for this course. This course places religion and mythology within a historical context. The course is writing-intensive.
Future of Veterinary Medicine: Honors HONR 1000 CRN 62322 - Honors Area STEM Gen Ed Code - if any [] Credit Hours [1] Christopher Ross T 1400 - 1450

Future of Veterinary Medicine This seminar will focus on career opportunities for veterinarians in the 21st century. Veterinarians from several career areas will discuss with students the opportunities and training programs available to prospective veterinarians. Contemporary issues facing the profession will also be discussed.


Drawing For Life - This course will build drawing skills that can travel wherever you go, from the classroom to the boardroom to the field. The drawing assignments in this class will employ a variety of media and techniques, and will be complemented by discussions and theories of seeing and observation. This interdisciplinary, foundational approach to drawing serves all skill levels. Special bonus: never again be bored!


This course provides an overview of essential concepts and skills needed for success in navigating an increasingly uncertain and perilous information landscape. Awareness of, access to, and quality of information have demonstrable impacts on social, economic, academic, and political well-being. This course will address issues of access, use, creation, and dissemination of information and how it affects particular populations of people, with an emphasis on historically marginalized and underrepresented groups. Students will learn to locate, access, use, evaluate, organize, create, and present information effectively for personal and academic research needs. Students will examine biases within each of those paying particular attention to issues of race, gender, class, sexuality, ethnicity, and other personal, political, and socioeconomic factors. Students will also improve their understanding of authority and trust, value of information, the nature of scholarly conversation, and the nature of inquiry and exploration.


Historically, the discipline of physics is identified as the branch of science that seeks to discover, unify, and apply the most basic laws of nature. Most physics concepts find their way into science fiction, such as lasers and black holes. However, many ideas have their source in science fiction, prior to their real-world discovery. This course examines the physics of the probable and impossible and how science fiction (and even fantasy) breaks barriers and often introduces new groundbreaking ideas into our physical understanding of the universe. Science fiction often serves as a unique launching pad to discuss the boundaries of modern physics. In fact, much of the paradigm shifts in our physical understanding of the world come from imagining how the world might be. Many concepts were originally introduced in science fiction that have since become the foundation of our modern technology, such as aircraft, spacecraft, geosynchronous satellites, cyberspace, virtual reality, and weapons of mass destruction. Other concepts that found their origins in science fiction have recently been demonstrated in laboratories, including antimatter, teleportation, and cloaking devices. However, science fiction also explores many ideas that do not exist as science fact "yet," such as artificial intelligence, teleportation, faster-than-light spaceflight, and time travel. These concepts will be discussed from both a science fiction and science fact viewpoint and determine the difference between what is likely as well as the "probably impossible." Other concepts such as xenobiology and human transcendence will also be explored. Students will explore passages, synopses, and concepts from science fiction authors such as H. G. Wells, Arthur C. Clarke, Isaac Asimov, Philip K. Dick, Ray Bradbury, Octavia Butler, William Gibson, Neal Stephenson, and Vernor Vinge, among others.

When and how was Stillwater founded? How is our city divided into neighborhoods, and what are some characteristics of each? How is Stillwater's history visible in the downtown area? How did we end up with a university here? What innovations in the arts, humanities, sciences, and/or business had origins or connections to our city? What are the characteristics or our natural environment and climate? How do people live, work, and travel, and what popular recreations does our community afford? How, and by what means, does our city tell stories about itself? This is just a small sample of the kind of questions we will explore as we learn to make the familiar unfamiliar by means of interactive, thoughtful engagement and experiences. This seminar will use a popular honors curriculum (City As Text) to explore the town we live in, as we undertake a series of excursions to see our urban, academic, and natural environments with fresh eyes. Students will work in teams to visit different parts of our city and to "read" what they observe and experience when we get out of the classroom and into the fascinating environments in which we live, work, and play.


This is a study of major U.S. Supreme Court decisions interpreting the First Amendment's freedoms of speech, press, and religion using a regular law school casebook as the primary text. Taught largely by the Socratic method employed in law schools, the seminar will introduce students to legal reasoning as well as some of the basics of law library research. [Enrollment in this seminar will be open only to first-semester freshmen.]

Flash Fiction: A Tiny Genre with a Big Impact (DH) HONR 1000 CRN 70780 - Honors Area Humanities Gen Ed Code - if any [DH!] Credit Hours [3] Stephanie Miller TR 1400 - 1515

Flash fiction is a subgenre of the short story characterized primarily by brevity: typically, the term refers to compositions of 1000 words or less. We'll read contemporary examples of the form by practitioners from diverse backgrounds and explore criticism on the genre, examining its intersections with related short forms and its ability to engage with complex social issues. Specifically, we'll look at flash fiction that negotiates issues pertaining to gender, race, ethnicity, and class in American society. A widely accessible genre with far-ranging content, flash fiction invites a large and varied readership; accordingly, this class welcomes students from all majors, assuming no prior experience of literature and assessing student learning via required posts to a course blog rather than through formal essays. The course will also be skills-based, cultivating analytical ability of use to students in all areas of study. Grades will be based on quizzes, homework, and classwork; the blog; class participation; and a final exam.

Practical Law for the Modern Citizen HONR 1000 CRN 70801 - Honors Area Social Sciences Gen Ed Code - if any [] Credit Hours [1] Bill Holmes T 900 - 9:50

The goal of this course is to give students an overview of the law. This is relevant for all citizens. It applies to social, legal, and career aspects of their lives. Finally, students will emerge from this class confident in their abilities, knowing that they have a better basis for meeting any challenge life or the law presents them. This survey will review excerpts from important ancient and historical texts which provided a basis for the foundation of American Law. In particular, there will be a focus on the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Furthermore, students will read representative examples of some of the most important speeches and legal arguments in American history.

This seminar examines a number of aspects of law and the American legal system including historic English origins, court operations (including small claims courts), principles of several areas of substantive law (contracts, property, torts, etc.), and the politics of the judicial branch as well as introductory-level legal research techniques.


Ethical Issues Across Cultural Perspectives: An introduction to reasoned methods of evaluating ideas and arguments as they pertain to ethical issues from a global perspective. Concepts including obligation, justice, and ethnicity from Lao Tzu, Maimonides, Kant, and Indian wisdom stories. Environmentalism, technology, and cultural knowledge. Team-taught by faculty from appropriate disciplines in a lecture and discussion format. For the Honors student.


In 1892, Lizzie Borden was accused of killing her father and stepmother with an axe. She was eventually acquitted, but her story had captured the American cultural imagination. This course will take a chronological approach to the history of the Lizzie Borden story as it evolves from news reports contemporaneous to the case through broadsides and early true-crime takes to fictionalized versions in the form of short stories, poems, novels, plays, a ballet, an opera, and multiple film versions. Specifically, we will consider how changing concepts of gender shape the way in which the story gets told in different media and in different moments in American history. Ultimately, we will ask what it says about American culture that - for better or for worse - we simply cannot let Lizzie go!

Don Juan: His Lives & Times HONR 2313 CRN 70593 - Honors Area Humanities Gen Ed Code - if any [H!] Credit Hours [3] Christopher Weimer TR 1230 - 1345

Don Juan: His Lives and Times - This course will follow the adventures of the archetypal Spanish seducer Don Juan from his first appearance on the Spanish stage in the 1630s to modern literature and film, studying how various cultures and eras have reinterpreted this figure over the last 400 years. The class will include works from Spain, France, England, Germany, Russia, and the United States, by (among others) Tirso de Molina, Molière, Mozart and da Ponte, José Zorrilla, Byron, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Pushkin, George Bernard Shaw, Kierkegaard, Freud, and Brecht.

The Early Modern World (H) HONR 2433 CRN 70601 - Honors Area Humanities Gen Ed Code - if any [H] Credit Hours [3] Priscilla Schwarz MWF 1130 - 1220

Interdisciplinary study of art, history, philosophy and literature from the late Renaissance to the mid-19th century. Team-taught by faculty from appropriate disciplines in a lecture and discussion format. For the Honors student.

The Early Modern World (H) HONR 2433 CRN 70602 - Honors Area Humanities Gen Ed Code - if any [H] Credit Hours [3] Perry Gethner MWF 1130 - 1220

Interdisciplinary study of art, history, philosophy and literature from the late Renaissance to the mid-19th century. Team-taught by faculty from appropriate disciplines in a lecture and discussion format. For the Honors student.

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Biology, Race, and Gender - Critical interdisciplinary investigation of relationships between biological theory (especially Darwinism) and social and ethical issues. Attention to views of alleged biological aspects of perceived racial and gender differences and attempts to implement these views socially, legally, and medically in the United States and elsewhere. This class is designed for upper class students - you should be in your third or fourth year in Honors to take it.