



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

Honors College

Course Descriptions
Spring 2024

The Honors College Spring 2024 course descriptions packet includes:

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HONORS 101 First-Year Seminars for Spring 2024

Honors 101 (1): Our Fragile Earth (#6755)

TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am

Steve Ackerman, Honors College

This seminar explores issues that impact our planet today, and consequently also impact us. We will start with Rachel Carson's groundbreaking book, *Silent Spring*, an expose and a call-to-arms about the pesticide DDT and the harm it was doing to our environment, our animal and plant compatriots, and ourselves. Carson's book led to the formation of the Environmental Defense Fund and, later, to the Congressionally mandated Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We will also discuss Dr. Theo Colborn's book *Our Stolen Future* that exposed the danger of plastics, specifically BPA and phthalates which leach from plastics used to package liquid and solid foods for humans. Colborn's research about the Great Lakes environment demonstrated that top predator female birds, fish, mammals, and reptiles transferred human-made persistent chemicals to their offspring.

As part of this seminar we will include cross disciplinary scientific perspectives to discuss concerns such as contamination of all of our water supply by farm and industrial run-off, transgenerational genetics (how exposure to chemicals can lead to non-genetic changes in generations of offspring, fracking concerns, lead contamination, triclosan (the antibacterial in toothpastes), outgassing (shower curtain odor, new car smell), crumb rubber (artificial playing surfaces), electric vehicles, vertical farming, Earth systems (including: human interactions with Earth, how earth works sans humans, how change happens to Earth systems, temporal and spatial effects on Earth, acid rain, sensing networks, ecotoxicology, dead zones, deep sea (benthic) ecology, sea level rise, aquatic ecology, satellite imaging, sustainability), space junk, environmental policy and management, environmental law and policy, etc. Students will write short reflection papers (1 page each), two medium papers (3 pages each) and one longer research paper (5 pages), and give an oral presentation. The 3 and 5-page papers are topics chosen by the student and should reflect their areas of interest.

Honors 101 (2): Sexuality and Society (#6756)

MW 4:00 - 5:15pm

Jason Roush, Honors College

Human sexuality is continually evolving within cultural contexts. Widespread social factors like economics, education, family, geography, religion, and law shape how we come to perceive sexual identity and ourselves. In turn, sexuality is equally powerful in shaping society and social norms, both through organized political/community movements and through interpersonal relationships. How have our understandings of sexuality and gender identity shifted over the past fifty years? What will be the future of sexuality in coming decades?

Through historical readings and contemporary theory, along with films and other media, this course explores the changing social constructions of sexual identity and pivotal moments in LGBTQ history, as well as examining how heterosexuality and LGBTQ identities influence and interface with each other. Some specific topics that we will study and discuss include:

- community organizations and social events related to sexual identity
- same-sex marriage equality and alternative families
- the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the 1980s and beyond
- changing conceptions of bisexuality and "heteroflexibility"
- social activism focused on issues of gender and sexual identity
- emergence of transgender and intersexual identities and communities
- issues surrounding asexuality, consent, disability, race, and sex education.

In addition to writing some short in-class response papers (1 - 2 pages each) based on course topics, students will write one final essay of 5 - 7 pages on a relevant community organization or social event of their choice. A brief class presentation (10 minutes) on that organization or social event will also be required.

Honors 101 (3): Media, Technology, and the Future (#7439)**TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm****Rebecca Fine Romanow, English**

This course emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach that focuses on futurism, science, television, media studies, and related fields. Through close readings and viewings, we will focus on the historical, political, technological, and cultural influences that shape our expectations of the future, and the ways in which our current concerns reflect our anxieties and desires for what is to come.

We will watch episodes of the groundbreaking series *Black Mirror* selected from its five seasons (2011-present). *Black Mirror* has been called “the most relevant program of our time . . . It doesn’t imagine interstellar civilizations or post-apocalyptic scenarios. Instead, it depicts variations on a near future transformed by information technology — our world, just a little worse.” In addition, we will view episodes of current streaming series like *Love, Death + Robots* and *Years and Years*. Our literary selections will be drawn from a wide variety of Cyberpunk fiction that addresses, depicts, or argues with the future that *Black Mirror* presents.

This is a student-driven course: each student will lead the class discussion once on selected episodes/readings. This course will require one shorter mid-semester essay (3-4 pages), and a larger final essay (5-6 pages), as well as discussion forum postings on *Black Mirror* and a collaborative reading project on cyberpunk fiction of your choice. The emphasis on improving critical writing will be reflected in the “building” of the final essay through revisions of the reflections and shorter midterm essay.

Honors 101 (4): Beyond the Bench: Science and Activism (#7463)**TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm****Connie Chow, Honors College**

This interactive seminar invites students to examine and compare historical and contemporary examples of science (and STEM broadly) in action in the social and political worlds. In a world where developments in science and technology present possibilities and risks for humans and the natural world, how do scientists communicate scientific evidence, address skeptics, and mobilize others to create change? How do scientists and other STEM professionals wrestle with the role of Western science in causing harm? Should scientists advocate for themselves and colleagues within their profession? How (rightly) do they wield the power afforded by their professional and societal stature, within and beyond their disciplines?

We will explore, through role play, guest speakers and a variety of resources, issues from environmental conservation to climate change; genetic and chemical engineering; AI and robotics; eugenics and the precautionary principle; and others you want to learn more about. By considering the risks and triumphs of publicly upholding principles and challenging the status quo, students may discover how they might combine their intellectual and social concerns, no matter their chosen profession.

Students contribute weekly (ungraded) reflections. Assessed assignments include leading one class discussion; collaborative contributions to Wikipedia and or an archival project for *Science for the People*; either two short 5-page, interest-driven, research assignments that contribute to a final paper, or be involved in an action or service learning project, and a final presentation.

Honors 101 (5): Troublemakers: Political Subversion in Film and Literature (#7656)**MWF 2:00 - 2:50pm****Christopher Craig, English**

Novels and films have always been political, especially when they claim that they are not. They necessarily reproduce some of the cultural and political ideology that informs them. As commodities, for example, they advance the priorities of consumer capitalism and contribute to the hegemonic imperatives of the ruling class. How, then, do we interpret novels and films that criticize the economic and political system that produces them? Can novels and films that challenge dominant political assumptions become legitimate vehicles to engender social change? If so, what does this capability say about the socio-cultural power of subversive texts and the relationship between political ideas and literary and visual aesthetics? This course will consider these questions, along with many others, from a variety of theoretical perspectives, as it examines American novels and films that interrogate the complexities of life in the United States. Course materials may include novels by Leslie Marmon Silko, William Kennedy, Ann Petry, and Helena Maria Viramontes, as well as films directed by Ava DuVernay, Barry Jenkins, Martin Ritt, and John Sayles. Theoretical material will also be assigned.

This is a reading, writing, and discussion based course. It requires active daily participation, along with two formal presentations. Students will write three essays. Essays one and two will range from 750 to 1,000 words in length. Essay three will include a research component and will not exceed 2,500 words. In preparation for essay three, students will submit a prospectus and annotated bibliography.

Honors 101 (6): Activism in Indigenous Communities (#7855)

MWF 11:00 - 11:50am

Christopher Fung, Anthropology

This course examines the ways in which social and environmental justice activism is pursued in three different communities in three different continents. The three examples are Abahlali baseMjondolo (The Shack Dwellers' Movement) in South Africa, the #NODAPL resistance movement based in Standing Rock, South Dakota, and the Ihumatao Land Occupation in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

We will use a combination of scholarly and popular sources to examine the ways in which these particular examples of activism draw upon important ideas and values based in indigenous and marginalized communities.

Students will be assessed through several short written assignments, and a final project based on an in-depth exploration of a particular example of activism of the student's choosing, using concepts and approaches discussed in the course.

Honors 101 (7): Unequal Colleagues: A History of Women in the Sciences (#8917)

MWF 1:00 - 1:50pm

Lynne Byall Benson, Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies

According to historian Margaret Rossiter, "A woman scientist was a contradiction in terms—such a person was unlikely to exist, and if she did, she had to be unnatural in some way. Women scientists were thus caught between two almost mutually exclusive stereotypes: as scientists they were atypical women; as women they were unusual scientists."

This course examines, from a feminist perspective, the history of women's struggle to attain entry in the male-dominated field of the so-called "hard" sciences in the United States; among them those fields now referred to as STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Through reading, writing, and films, students will explore the connections between society's assumptions regarding the purpose of women's education, and the various barriers in addition to gender, such as race, faced by women who aspired to careers in scientific fields. In addition, this course will include an overview of those pioneering women scientists who paved the way for today's women scientists.

Readings include selections from *Blazing the Trail: Essays by Leading Women in Science* (2013) by Emma Ideal and Rhiannon Meharchand; *Women in Science, Then and Now* (2009) by Vivian Gornick; *Women Scientists in America: Forging a New World Since 1972* (2012) by Margaret Rossiter; and *Lab Girl* (2017) by Hope Jahren. Other readings as films will be assigned at the instructor's discretion. *This course can also count toward a major or minor in Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies.*

PLEASE NOTE: Honors College students are required to take an above-listed HONORS 101 first-year seminar, except for those students who transferred at least 30 credits into UMass Boston at the time that they matriculated to the university.

HONORS 210G Intermediate Seminars for Spring 2024

Honors 210G (1): Philosophy as a Way of Life (#12261)

MWF 2:00 - 2:50pm

Alec Stubbs, Philosophy

Philosophy is a discipline that tries to ask and answer questions about central human curiosities—what exists, what can we know, what is right and wrong, how should we treat others, how we organize society, and so on. Doing philosophy also requires the development of critical thinking skills, including the ability to analyze, understand, respond to, and construct arguments. While this course certainly will help you develop those skills, its intentions are more practically oriented. This course is designed to help you think through **how you ought to live your life** (bold claim - I know!).

By studying various philosophical traditions, from the ancient world to today, we will be examining how philosophers have argued how one ought to live their life. We will be taking a tour through philosophical history up to modern day in order to answer the following kinds of questions:

- What is the best way to live your life? According to what principles should you live?
- What does it mean to live according to a *way of life*?
- Is a good life one that is lived for ourselves, for others, or for both?
- What is the meaning of life? Does it have meaning?
- What are your values, and what kind of life do they require you to lead?

In many ways, this class will likely be quite different from most classes you have taken or will take. You will be asked to live in accordance with the philosophies that we study, to reflect upon your experiences, and to examine your own life with respect to these ways of life. These “spiritual exercises” are key to experimenting with different ways of living, different ways of interpreting the world, and different ways of finding meaning in one’s life. The intention of our course is to provide ourselves with philosophical tools for our toolkits of life.

We will be reading, viewing, and listening to philosophy from a number of different traditions: Epicureanism, Stoicism, Existentialism, and many more. Course outputs will include short immersive writing assignments, two argumentative essays, and a public philosophy presentation.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) distribution requirement.

Honors 210G (2): Grasping Fascism: Authoritarian and Democratic Currents in U.S. Culture and Society (#12262)

TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm

Joseph Ramsey, American Studies/English

The USA is supposedly a place where all are “free” and “created equal,” and where government is “by and for the people.” But, how truly free or equal are people in the USA today? In what ways does our society live up to its professed democratic ideals, and in what ways does it fall short, and why? What is it that keeps freedom and equality from being achieved for US Americans today?

Of late, since the rise of Trump, fears of “fascism” are often in the air. Is this a useful term for framing our current situation? How has “fascism” been defined throughout history, and how do those definitions resemble the present (or not)?

In this course, by reading social theory and viewing popular culture, from the 1930s to the present, we will pursue the question of how “freedom” and “fascism” have been represented. How has this struggle between democratic and authoritarian forces shown up on the Big Screen or on social media? And why does that matter? How has “pop” culture—from film and television, to music and memes—reproduced or challenged dominant views of the USA as “the land of the free,” and in doing so, opened up (or shut down) new ways of grasping society?

Students will write biweekly response paper (1-2 pages), in preparation for class discussion, and a longer critical essay (10-15 pages). Members of the class will also be expected to watch 1-2 hours of media each week, and to read challenging, thought-provoking critical texts.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.

Honors 210G (3): “The Personal Is Political”: Reproductive Justice on Film (#12263)**MWF 12:00 - 12:50pm*****Carney Maley, Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies***

The reproductive justice movement was developed by a group of Black women activists in the 1990s as a way to merge their advocacy for both reproductive rights and social justice issues. Using this intersectional framework, we will examine how ideas about reproduction have evolved in the U.S. from pre-*Roe vs. Wade* to the overturning of the Supreme Court case in 2022, to today. Reproductive Justice allows us to explore not only the evolution of abortion rights, but also the right for people to have children and to parent them in a safe environment. Therefore, we will investigate topics such as maternal healthcare, adoption, LGBTQ+ family building, new reproductive technologies, sterilization, and contraception. Students will read the works of legal scholars, activists, historians, and journalists to chart how people’s reproductive decisions are shaped not only by gender identity but also race, socioeconomic class, and sexuality.

The course will also focus on how issues of reproductive justice are represented in American film from the 1990s to the present. Analyzing both narrative and documentary films in their historical context can provide important insights into how society views certain reproductive choices (i.e. what is considered acceptable, legal, dangerous, etc.), and how these individual and structural decisions change over time. Assignments will include an analysis of a contemporary film (of the student’s choice) and a final research project that investigates a current activist organization committed to one of the reproductive justice issues covered in the course.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.

HONORS 290-level Courses for Spring 2024

Honors 291 (1): Optimism! (#7973)**TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm*****Avak Hasratian, English***

We are capable of selfless, noble, and gracious acts and this course focuses on the beautiful good that humans do. The state of progress across many measures of wellbeing, from the health of humans to that of the environment, is great and still improving. Yet much of the intelligentsia, lots of politicians, and most media sell us selfishly profitable stories of fear and disaster. In our academic context, a mode of crisis-centered “critical thinking” leads to one of two dead ends: Either the “crisis” is so deep there’s no climbing out (fatality), or it’s so encompassing that only demolishing all systems will fix it (impossibility). This is depressing and unhelpful.

This course instead accounts for the centuries-long ongoing and massive rise in comfort and the amelioration of previously insurmountable problems. Life is better now than at any point in human history and it continues to improve despite occasional regressions. So let’s face the facts of progress not with glossy idealism or wretched pessimism but with hope; explore sympathy and empathy; and understand how, aesthetically, the results will raise our spirits. Readings and viewings are selected from Thomas Sowell, Steven Pinker, Michael McCullough, Immanuel Kant, Paul Auster, Michael Shellenberger, Harold Ramis and/or Pedro Almodóvar, and others. Assignments will include demonstrating (in 5 pages of writing) that almost everything is improving across a variety of metrics; reflecting (in 5 pages of writing) on the relationship between aesthetic enlightenment and unconditional kindness; and presenting (live, in class, in small groups) original discoveries of sources for optimism that speak to you!

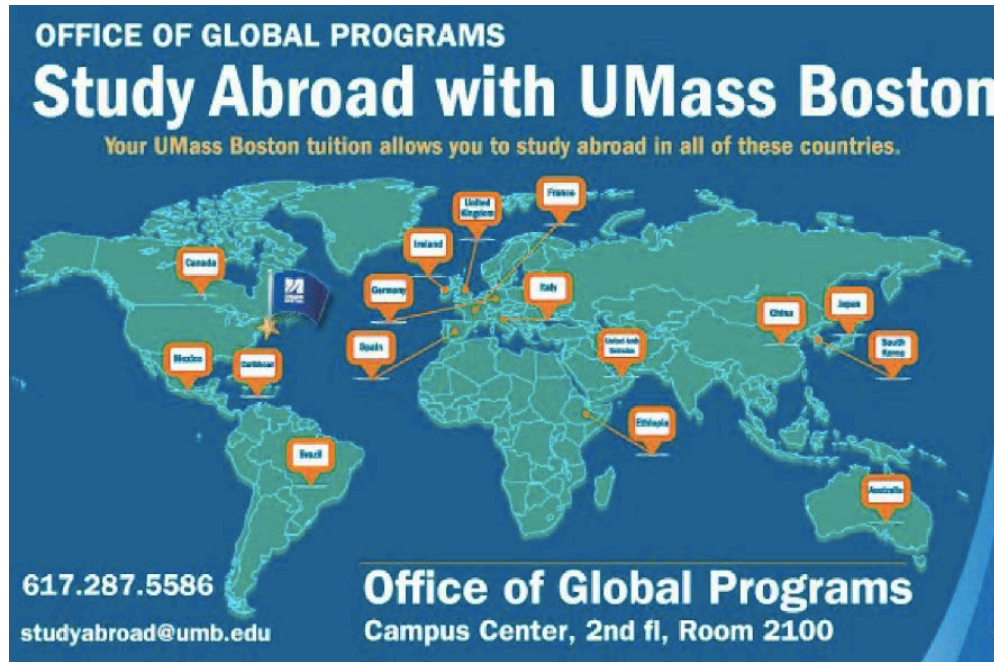
This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.

Honors 291 (2): Vocality: Speaking, Singing and the Architecture of the Sonic Imagination (#7975)**MWF 11:00 - 11:50am*****Frederick Stubbs, Performing Arts***

In this course we will examine human phonation as the basis for both speech and music, for those who wish to exercise their own voices, as individuals and in groups. Our aim is to encourage the expression of important thoughts and truths through Song, Speech and in Writing. Vocality describes with language and song both the seen world of the actual and the unseen worlds built through observation, cogitation, hopes, plans or prayers. Using vocality as a metaphor for identity and will, when we Sing, Speak, Say or Write, we enact script and intention in the ultimate performative and political act; we stand up and be counted.

We will audit exemplars of song and speech and explore the texts and techniques they emphasize. We will borrow reading on subjects relevant to the human vocal apparatus, and vocal health, and we will read and hear musical and spoken texts from religious, historical and theatrical sources. We practice vocality through discourse and song, as well as regular exercises to train the voice and the ear. Our class calls for mandatory and timely attendance. Students fulfill four or five creative assignments which call for creative and analytic skills, engage with a research paper or project, and report to the class on one of these assignments.

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.



Honors 292 (2): The World of Hip-Hop: History and Practice (#8401)

TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm

Jared Bridgeman (Akrobatik), Honors College

This course will introduce students to hip-hop in all of its complexity, through careful historical inquiry, rigorous analysis, and creative practice. The course combines interdisciplinary scholarly methods that comprise American Studies and cultural studies, with a strong commitment to exploring creative/practical challenges facing practitioners of the hip-hop arts. The instructor (Boston's own Akrobatik, a 20+ year hip-hop veteran described by Billboard magazine as one of "hip-hop's most politically conscious emcees") will bring expertise in scholarly, creative, community, and performative work to the teaching of the class and will expect students to be committed to a type of hybrid inquiry that equally emphasizes scholarly and creative work. Students will read and discuss scholarly works (by historians, musicologists, sociologists, and so on), in order to more fully understand hip hop's complicated trajectory via assigned listening playlists.

Students will engage with scholarly, journalistic, and autobiographical writing as they begin their study of hip-hop history. Participation in workshops will focus on hip-hop's many disciplines, or "elements", as students hone their own writing and artistic skills. Interviews of world-class artists and class field trips to studios, shows, and even hip-hop's birthplace in the Bronx have been among the experiences of past participants in the course. Assignments will include an oral presentation on hip-hop abroad, a 3-page song analysis, and either a creative project (with scholarly annotation) or a research paper.

This course fulfills a Humanities (HU) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

Honors 293 (1): Mating Psychology (#7972)

TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm

Randy Corpuz, Psychology/Honors College

Why do humans invest so much time, energy, and emotion into romantic relationships? Why might these relationships sometimes cause such intense mental anguish and pain? Romantic love has been the focal point and inspiration for innumerable pieces of sculpture, paintings, literature, poetry, movies, and music throughout the scope of recorded history. From rock music to rap, lyrics on subjects like love, sex, breaking-up, and cheating appear to be the norm. Why do we care so much about mating?

The neuroscience of mating (in humans and other species) has become a growing field that has attracted attention across disciplines. Some of the recent questions this field has focused on include: What does “falling in love” look like in the brain? Why is an orgasm designed to “feel good,” and what is the psychological function of orgasm in either sex? What role do hormones like testosterone play in forming and maintaining long term relationships? Which components of romantic relationships differ across cultures?

Romantic relationships are governed by very specific psychological (and physiological) mechanisms. Throughout the course, we ask questions related to “how” and “why” this might be. This course will take an interdisciplinary approach to human mating. We will focus on research from neuroscience and evolutionary psychology. The goal of the course is to understand some of the factors influencing romantic relationships, such as biological, environmental, and cultural influences.

The class will include lectures, two oral presentations, short weekly reflections (1 - 2 pages each) and three APA-formatted research essays (6 - 8 pages each) spread throughout the course. Students will be asked to include material on romantic relationships (e.g., art, music, movies) that they find outside of class to be integrated with neuroscientific research.

This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement.

Honors 293 (2): Gender, Class, Ethnicity, and Leadership in U.S. Society (#8082)

MW 5:30 - 6:45pm

Karen Ferrer-Muniz, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

This course focuses on gender, class, ethnicity and leadership in US society. We will examine the dynamics and connections among classism, racism, and sexism in contemporary American society. We will explore the ways they influence and are influenced by the structure of leadership in our society at large; their effect on individuals; and strategies for personal and social change. We will examine leadership processes from a more precise, intersectional lens rather than studying the implications of one’s gender, class, or race in isolation. We will study strategies for addressing the underrepresentation of gender, racial, class and ethnic minorities, and other social groups in leadership in the US. Addressing the lack of diversity in leadership will be a crucial step toward tackling broader issues of social inequity in the US.

To successfully complete this class, you will need to adopt an active approach to learning. You will prepare carefully for each class session by reading the assigned material in advance of class and bring it to class with you so that you can refer to it during lectures and discussions. During class you will listen, take notes, ask questions, and participate in discussions.

Your grade in the course will be determined by: attendance, class participation, several 2-page writing assignments, a class presentation, and a final paper.

This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

Honors 293 (3): Addiction, Mental Illness, and the Justice System: Responding to a Behavioral Health Crisis (#8083)TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am (via **REMOTE** synchronous instruction)**Rosemary Minehan, Justice (Ret.), Honors College**

Across the United States, individuals with serious mental illness and addiction have traditionally faced complex systems of criminal and civil justice that have subjected them to incarceration, involuntary civil commitment to inadequate psychiatric and substance treatment facilities, and to the involuntary administration of psychotropic medication and other invasive

treatments for mental illness and addiction. This course will explore how these specialized populations have been managed in the legal system and consider innovative initiatives occurring within the courts, executive agencies, law enforcement, corrections and healthcare that are changing the landscape of behavioral health and treatment.

Students will become conversant in the full panoply of legal issues surrounding the topics of mental illness and addiction including patients' rights, voluntary and involuntary hospitalization and medical treatment for mental illness and addiction, and will also explore issues presented in the criminal context including the use of psychological forensic evaluations, the insanity defense, competency to stand trial, and sentencing.

Students will write two essays and give one oral presentation (15 minutes) on relevant topics of their choice. The essays and oral presentation should reflect the student's own interest in the topics covered in the course. Students will be assigned readings from leading court decisions, state and federal statutes, and from the assigned textbook, *The Criminalization of Mental Illness: Crisis and Opportunity for the Justice System* (3rd edition), by Risdon N. Slate, Jacqueline K. Buffington, and W. Wesley Johnson (2021).

This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

Honors 294 (1): World Cultures through the Lens of Digital Photography (#7971)

TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm (via REMOTE synchronous instruction)

Mary Oleskiewicz, Performing Arts

In this fun, creative, and hands-on course, students will learn the fundamentals of photography, including photographic composition, essentials of digital editing, and visual storytelling. We will focus our collective lenses on the richness of world cultures in the Greater Boston area using cell phone cameras, DSLRs, or mirrorless cameras. Choice of camera is the student's preference (cameras will not be provided). In addition to developing a good eye, students will learn the ins-and-outs of preparing a final image for printing. We will learn from photos of great photographers, and collectively view and discuss student photos during zoom meetings.

Assignments: Each student will attend and photograph at least one cultural event of their choice during the semester and will keep a class photo journal. After a period of photographic exploration in the field, each student will shoot and assemble a digital portfolio on some aspect of a particular culture (people, food, music, architecture, ritual, etc). In addition, each student will select one photo to be enlarged, professionally printed, and framed and matted (students will not bear this cost). We anticipate that the printed photos will be shown publicly on campus in a special class exhibit near semester's end. There will be no final paper or exams. Students may be asked to write a descriptive or personal, philosophical introduction to their digital portfolio.

No prior knowledge of photography is required. More experienced photographers are welcome. Each student will be guided, so as to improve from their current level. Final grades will be based on an individual's improvement, effort, growth, and willingness to take artistic risks with the subject matter.

This course fulfills a World Cultures (WC) distribution requirement.

Honors 294 (2): Women and Community Building (#8087)

TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am

Jyoti Sinha, Labor Resource Center

Sociologists who study gendered approaches to social movements have found that low-income women and women of color tend to approach community organizing, leadership development, and resident empowerment differently. The course will also look at the classic definition of community building: leadership development as a pursuit of solidarity and agency by adhering to the principles of self-help, felt need, and voluntary participation. Susan Stall and Randy Stoecker describe such a model as women-centered and collaborative, one that focuses on community building and self-transformation, while also recognizing structural barriers to equality and striving for equitable access to power for everyone.

We will study various forms of collaborative women's leadership globally, from the movement for justice in El Barrio in New York City to the Zapatistas movement, from the Combahee River Collective to Black Lives Matter. We will also consider local groups like the South Asian Workers' Center in Boston, which is mainly comprised of immigrant and low-income women who use a participatory democratic model. Comparative analysis with Global South movements will explore SEWA Bharat

and Grameen Bank. Students will write three short essays of at least 5 pages each on relevant themes or organizations of their choice; a brief class presentation (10 - 15 minutes) on an organization or social event will also be required. This is an interactive course, so students will be expected to take an active part in class discussions, responding to both critical readings and documentary film viewings.

This course fulfills a World Cultures (WC) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

Honors 295 (1): Race: Reality, Myth, and Science (#12264)

TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm

Steve Ackerman, Honors College

This course is a tapestry of interrelated subjects explaining how, when, and where we started our journey to become *Homo sapiens*. We discuss the use of the word "race" as applied to human history, and how DNA sequence variants render the conclusion that race is not biological. We discuss human evolution, from the first apes 48M years ago in Asia who migrated to Africa, to the Propliopithecines 30 million years ago, to the Miocene Pliopithecines / Dryopithecines 20 - 7 million years ago, to *Sahelanthropus-Ardipithecus-Australopithecus-Homo*. Genome mixing (introgression & admixture) among small isolated aforementioned groups progressed to modern humans. We address: when modern walking and throwing began; did the human line evolve first in Africa or in southern Europe; the out-of-Africa migrations starting with *Homo erectus* at least 1 M to 2 M yrs ago; the many migrations of *Homo sapiens* from Africa to Asia and Europe. These small groups interacted, producing genome mixing. There was introgression and admixture of *Neandertals & H. sapiens*, *Denisovans & H. sapiens*, *Neandertals & Denisovans*, and *Neandertals & Denisovans & H. sapiens*, affecting metabolism and immunity. More modern migrations of the last 7000 years result in contemporary genomes being an admixture of different geographic locales blended via introgression. The human genome has been a mixture for over 30 million years! Genomes of all animals have ~20,000 protein coding genes, but with different chromosomal arrangements. Human genome analyses define heredity patterns, population genetics, genetic drift vs gene sweeps, technological sweeps, etc. Between different groups the DNA base changes are not greater than those within a group, which (along with other evidence) leads to the conclusion that race is not biological.

We then focus on philosophical and societal consequences of using race as a discriminator of differences, how this leads to genocides, ethnic cleansing, slavery, and contemporary massive acts of discrimination across the globe. We will cover some of the classic philosophical work by Hobbes, Rawls, Weber, etc. The societal consequences of using race will be examined using data related to a number of social determinants (health care services, education attainment, housing, employment, incarceration) that adversely impact people of color. Invited guests representing people of color will play an important role in this course of study by sharing their stories related to the experiences they encountered when faced with acts of discrimination.

Students will have three major research/writing assignments (two 3-page essays and one 5-page essay) and three impact papers (responding to articles or movies posted online), plus an oral presentation at the end of the semester.

This course fulfills a Natural Sciences (NS) distribution requirement.

HONORS 380 Junior Colloquia for Spring 2024

Students can take an HONORS 380 Junior Colloquium after completing at least two of their 200-level Honors requirements.

Honors 380 (1): Anarchism and Order (#7549)

TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm

Todd Drogy, English

When One hears the word anarchy, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Disorder? Rebellion? Destruction? Chaos? Or freedom? Gaiety? Spontaneity? Resistance?

In *Anarchism and Order* we will explore the philosophy/practice of anarchism, both as a socio-economic critique and evolving expression of culture. We will trace the origins of anarchism, exploring its permutations through modern history

and into the present. We will interest ourselves in the idea of *the human*, asking what it means to be *free*, what it means to be *equal*, and what it means to live in mutuality and reciprocity with others.

We will engage with multiple texts: essays, pamphlets, fiction, film, and music. Additionally, we will read chapters from Peter Marshall's *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*. Our objective is to explore how anarchism has shaped and continues to shape the world around us. More specifically, we will consider how anarchistic thought and practice have impacted the following movements: abolitionism, labor, land reform, feminism, civil rights, the anti-war movement, LGBTQ rights, educational reform, and environmentalism. The complex relationship between anarchism and technology will also be explored.

This is a discussion-focused class, with a strong emphasis on class participation. We will compose three (500-600 word) mini-essays on readings/films/discussions. You will also keep a journal of reflective, informal writing. A thesis-driven research paper (12-14 pages) will be due at the semester's end.

Honors 380 (2): Thinking about Climate Change (#7856)

TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm

Reinmar Seidler, Biology

Climate change is the biggest challenge of the 21st century. The issue has just begun to figure a bit more prominently in the US media and public discourse, yet many of us are still confused about the details. We may feel overwhelmed by the apparent complexity of the climate problem, and by the technical nature of the arguments. However, this course requires no advanced scientific background. The emphasis will be on critical thinking, critical reading, imaginative engagement, and clear communication.

We will begin by examining the evidence for the claim that human actions are causing significant changes in global climate patterns. We will then explore some of the ways people from different backgrounds and different walks of life are thinking, talking and writing about climate change today – in America and in the wider world. We will focus especially on the “social imaginaries” around climate change, such as:

- how people see the future under expected climate change;
- how politics plays into our fears and imagination;
- how we can assess historical and current responsibilities for climate change;
- how climate questions compete with other issues in media and public awareness;
- how – armed with knowledge – we can help move society onto sustainable pathways.

Readings will include peer-reviewed scientific journal articles, book chapters, fiction, news reports, and supplemental materials. There will be weekly writing assignments, student presentations, group collaborative work, and a major individual research paper in which each student will analyze and report on a proposed solution to anthropogenic climate distortion.

Do you have more than 75 credits?

Then it's time to start talking about your Senior Thesis!

If you have more than 75 credits, it's time to talk with your Honors College advisor about your senior thesis. All Honors College students are required to complete a senior thesis, including both a thesis paper and an oral presentation, or an alternative senior project.

For more information about how the thesis can connect with your major and how the process works, please see your Honors College advisor.

Do you have less than 75 credits, but have thesis questions? See your Honors College advisor and they'll be happy to start the conversation sooner rather than later!

Honors 380 (4): The Complex Landscape of Refugee Resettlement: Transnational Migration and Concurrent Realities (#12265)

Wednesday 4:00 - 6:45pm

Chioma Nnaji, Global Inclusion & Social Development

Refugees, migrants, and immigrants all leave their homelands and journey to another destination. The reasons that they leave vary – natural disasters, political persecution, wars, famines, the everyday threat of violence, opportunities for a better life, to name a few. Their journeys are frequently fraught with unimaginable challenges and dangers. We will study the experience of refugees and migrants globally and in the United States. Turkey is the country with the largest number of refugees, hosting 4 million Syrians who fled the civil war in their country. The United States, by contrast, accepted only 25,000 refugees in 2022.

Refugees and migrants are resilient, and they carry with them assets of fortitude, courage, and determination. But as new entrants into a host country, they often don't speak the language of the host country and have to negotiate all the myriad agencies that exist to ensure that their lives are not in an endless state of flux. We will examine the international and national policies that regulate the resettlement of refugees and migrants. An intersectional approach that brings in questions of gender, politics, and power will inform our explorations.

Students in this course come from the Honors College and from the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department where this course fulfills a capstone requirement. Course expectations for Honors students will include an experiential component in which they will have to intern at a refugee-serving agency for 20 hours over the course of the semester. Other assignments will include interviewing staff at the agency on the nature and scope of their work, writing up an internship report on what they learned about the complexities of the refugee resettlement process, and articulating a research question with an accompanying annotated bibliography.

The students will be able to co-create parts of the syllabus, based on their experiential locations and interests.

*(PLEASE NOTE that **TEN** seats in this combined-section course have been reserved for Honors College students to take it as their HONORS 380 junior colloquium.)*