

University Honors Fall 2015

(for University Honors students; dept/college honors track students may take HON classes taught by faculty in their major/minor disciplines, space permitting)

Freshmen Seminars

HON 1515-101 Metamorphoses in Life: TR 9:30-10:45 AH 187 Dale, M.
Love & Death (20)

The stories we sit up late to hear are love stories. It seems that we cannot know enough about this riddle of our lives. We go back to the same scenes, the same words, trying to scrape out the meaning. Nothing could be more familiar than love. Nothing eludes us so completely. **Jeanette Winterson**, The PowerBook; *Q: What does love feel like? A: It's not a feeling; it's a relationship, a way of life.* **Martha Nussbaum**, philosopher, in an interview, The Guardian, October 2007; *True, death itself is nothing; but the thought of it is like a mirror. A mirror, too, is empty, without content, yet it reflects us back to ourself in a reverse image. To try to contemplate the meaning of my death is in fact to reveal to myself the meaning of my life.* **Herbert Fingarette**, Death: Philosophical Soundings; *The comfort that we can gain from the hard cruel truth of death is that life itself is wonderful, full of love and full of transcendental moments – that's what really matters.* **Jim Crace**, novelist; Love and death are oftentimes experienced as seismic upheavals in our lives; we are changed in puzzling, perhaps even mysterious ways by these two forces, sometimes delightfully and sometimes terrifyingly or painfully. In love, suddenly someone or something that perhaps we did not even know existed comes into our life and now is seen and felt as a presence we cannot imagine living without. In death, as the poet Gerald Manley Hopkins puts it, "I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day." How should we see and understand the experiences and transformations wrought by love and death? The question is especially important in a society that frequently trivializes love, and at times and in some circumstances, makes a death a spectacle of entertainment. **Possible Books:** Arundhati Roy, The God of Small Things; J.M. Ledgard, Submergence; J.M. Coetzee, Age of Iron; Muriel Barbery, The Elegance of the Hedgehog; Annie Dillard, For The Time Being; Anne Michaels, Fugitive Pieces; additional essays, short stories and poems.

HON 1515-102 Creativity in Life and Practice M# 3:30-4:45 AH 161 McLaughlin, T.
Creative Life and Practice is an exploration of creativity in the arts and in many other human practices: science, business and entrepreneurship, sports, education, and everyday life. We will read psychological and sociological explanations of creativity. We will see films and read novels that explore the lives of creative people. We will reflect on our own creative practices. We will attend arts programs on campus. And we will meet with creative individuals and groups on campus and in the community. Several short papers will be required, along with timely reading of assigned texts, attendance at several events outside of class, and participation in classroom dialogue. I'm looking for students with an open mind and with intellectual curiosity.

HON 1515-103 A Candle in the Dark

The Demon-Haunted World: Science and Critical Thinking. Fall Semester 2013. M,W. 2:00-3:15. In this class we will examine the question of what exactly is science and critical thinking. Science is not just a body of knowledge, it is a way of thinking about the world. Because we live in a world of 30 second sound bites and bumper sticker politics, critical thinking about issues is more important now than ever. We live in a civilization that is critically dependent on science, but we have a citizenry that has many basic misconceptions about how the world works. We will examine these issues with a combination of lectures, assigned videos, readings, etc. Active student participation will be a major component of the course.

HON 1515-104 Cyber Earth

This course addresses the dependency of global entities on cyberspace for issues such as economic productivity, social livelihood, and national security. Governments, industries, and individuals have become increasingly concerned about the safety and reliability of their information systems, but there remains great uncertainty about the true nature of risks and the best ways to address them. Other issues such as mobile finance, media and entertainment, future of the Internet and hyperconnectivity will be discussed in relation to a cyber earth.

HON 1515-105 Latin American Literature & Culture TR 2-3:15 AH 162 James, B.

This course is an introduction and survey of the major figures and literary trends in Latin America in the 20th and 21st centuries. This course will also seek to address concerns common to all literatures, including an understanding of the culture and geopolitical context of the works. Students will gain a better understanding of the region and an appreciation for the original languages of the literature studied.

HON 1515-106 Musical Pathways to Social Justice TR 2-3:15 AH 187 Mills, S.

What does an Appalachian fiddle or a Chinese gong have to do with social justice and human dignity? This course invites Honors students to visit the songs, dances and folkways of local and global musicians as we create pathways to global and cultural competence with an intentional focus on social justice. Community music and folklore events along with international music opportunities will serve as the backdrop to our educational experience with components of 1) community service, 2) cultural scholarship and 3) interactive music making for all levels of musical ability. No prior musical or dance experience is required, just a willingness to participate and encourage and explore cultural expression through folk music and the social justice scholarship surrounding these rich traditions.

HON 1515-107 The Common Good and Social Justice in the Modern World MW 2-3:15 AH 187 Behrent, M.

The goal of this first year seminar is to introduce students to some of the main paradigms for thinking about notions of the common good in philosophy and social theory. This will be the focus of the first part of the class. Special attention will be given to the proceduralist approach proposed by John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* and the capacities approach developed by Martha Nussbaum (*Frontiers of Justice*) Armatya Sen (*The Idea of Justice*). The second part of the class will examine some of the problematic ways in which projects aimed at the common good have played out in practice. William Easterly's *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* will be considered (along with other texts). Students will be asked to write a research paper in which they examine the practical relevance of the theories of the common good and social justice that we have considered.

HON 1515-108 pending

Sophomore Seminars

HON 2515-101 Memes, Genes, and Religion TR 11-12:15 Ellis, T.

This course examines the role parasites and pathogens have played and continue to play in the origin, dissemination, and maintenance of religious beliefs and behaviors. It does this in two ways: 1) the course considers the possibility that religious beliefs and behaviors are viral sets of *memes* or cultural clusters of

ideas and behaviors that replicate themselves by infecting human minds, causing humans to behave in ways that may be detrimental to their biological and psychological well-being, and 2) the course examines the contrary claim that religious beliefs and behaviors serve a prophylactic function in the presence of actual, biological antigens. Pursuing these topics, the course employs an interdisciplinary approach, engaging research from anthropology, history, biology, psychology, and religious studies.

HON 2515-102 Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism TR 12-1:45 AH 161 Gallien, L.

This course will examine the roots of American chattel slavery in the nineteenth century. It will illuminate the economic connections of the slave trade from New Orleans to New York City. The issue of slavery in America has traditionally been considered a "Southern phenomenon." This course will challenge that singularity with the recent research of Edward Baptist (and others) who show the direct complicity that the United States, as an entire nation, made to the origins and advancement of slavery. The course will have regular guest speakers and area field trips to slave locations in North Carolina.

HON 2515-103 mymedia.myworld MW 2-3:15 AH 161 Pope, J.

This course examines multiple perspectives on how collaborative media such as facebook, instagram, twitter, etc., are changing the ways in which people produce and receive information. Drawing on multi-disciplinary theories and readings, students will be challenged to think critically about their personal use of collaborative media, how it informs their world view and frames their experiences. Students will also select a context of individual interest in which to analyze how collaborative media usage is used to create meaning and frame experience in that particular context. Reading list will include Sherry Turkle's Alone Together and Lowgren and Reimer's Collaborative Media: Production, Consumption and Design Interventions. Articles such as "All my Exes Live in Texts" from the popular press, etc., etc. (there's no shortage!). The interdisciplinarity will come from COM theory, science & technology readings, and the social sciences such as sociology.

HON 2515-104 Afro-futurism, Black Arts and Popular Culture T 5-7:30 AH 161 Troutman, S.

This course will explore, broadly, the production of African-American art. Beginning with an overview of the Black Arts movement, we will explore the political dimensions of Black art as well as aesthetics and technique. Theoretical dimensions, frameworks and themes - such as Afrofuturism, will be examined in relation to works of African-American poetry, visual arts, literary forms and other new media artistic expressions. Critique and analysis of how, when, where and why Black artists and their work manifest in popular culture (television, online spaces, film, music, etc.) are foundational to the course curriculum. Langston Hughes, Jimi Hendrix, Ava Duvernay, Kara Walker, Afropunk, Black Comix, are among a few of the Black artists and work we will consider.

HON 2515-105 Hunger in a World of Plenty World of Plenty TR 11-12:15 AH 161 den Biggelaar

Food: A basic human need. Most of us will take it for granted, and we rarely think beyond our next meal (we may not even think at all about the one we just finished). However, food is an inescapable part of the future, whether it will be a 'sustainable' future or not. The quest for more and cheaper (but not necessarily better) food will, therefore, remain of primary concern to human survival. To increase the production of sufficient food and ensure food security for all, few technologies have raised hopes as high as biotechnology.

This course will explore the issues of food production and consumption, the persistence of hunger and

malnutrition in a world of plenty, and the role of science, technology and policy in pursuing the elusive goal of 'Food security for all.' The course will use a collaborative learning approach requiring active participation of students in the learning process and the determination of the direction of our collective explorations.

HON 2515-106 Physiology and the world TBA TBA Smith, C & Merrit, E.

This is a seminar-based class which will examine the physiological and cultural aspects of health and physical performance in both humans and animals. Students will engage in group-based activities and discussion covering topics related to health and disease, cultural differences and physical characteristics in different populations. Students will have the opportunity to explore current global issues relating to the course topics.

Junior Seminars

HON 3515-101 Inventing Language(s) MW 3:30-4:45 AH 187 Lillian, D.
“**Conlanging** is the creation of constructed languages or **conlangs**, such as Esperanto, Lojban, or Klingon. A **conlanger** is someone who creates or constructs languages or **conlangs**” (www.conlang.org). In this class, we will explore what language is and what it takes to create a new language. For their first project, students will each investigate an invented language of their choosing and report on it to the class. For the final project, the class will collaboratively create a new language and define the parameters of a culture or community in which that language might be spoken.
Sample Texts: Adams, Michael. 2011. *From Elvish to Klingon: Exploring Invented Languages*. New York: Oxford University Press. Rosenfelder, Mark. 2010. *The Language Construction Kit*. Boston: Yonagu Books.

HON 3515-102 We Are Water MWF 9-9:50 LLR 365 Cockerill, C.
Water is a focal point for study and contemplation in disciplines ranging from art to zoology. This interdisciplinary course will look at water and the many places it touches our lives. It will discuss the ways we use water, abuse it, revere it, ignore it, and fight over it. In the US, our quality of life is entirely dependent on cheap, plentiful, clean water. We use it in vast amounts to produce power, grow food, and protect our health. The class will cover the intersections among our scientific understanding of water, our technological developments, and our cultural attitudes and subsequent behavior toward this elemental resource

HON 3515-103 Fermented Beverages of the World MW 3:30-4:45 Broyhill Sommer, S.
This course will explore different styles of fermented beverages from around the world focusing on wine, beer, and distilled spirits. Emphasis will be placed on historical background, unique environmental conditions, and opportunities for future development of traditional beverages. Geographical peculiarities of several regions as well as implications for society and economy will also be part of the course. The course will involve a mix of lectures, discussions, and exercises.

HON 3515-104 Medical Anthropology TR 12:30-1:45 BH 336 Keefe, S.
An examination of health, illness, and the treatment of disease from a cross-cultural perspective. Includes discussion of various theories of illness, types of healers, and the empirical basis for folk medicine and alternative forms of therapy.

