

The following descriptions are for topics courses that are being offered through the Honors Program in the Spring 2013. All other descriptions are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog. It will be updated as we receive more course descriptions.

Academic Writing

GSW 1120H (3) 1:00-2:15 TR; Felver

Course # 11801

Technology: Friend or Foe?

This course will focus on the predicament between humanity and modern technology. Some current research suggests that the more technologically advanced we become, the more we actually separate ourselves from one another. As communication gets easier and easier, we often find ourselves more physically isolated. We will investigate this potential irony and its many implications. Is something lost in the translation of email that isn't lost in a hand-written letter? Does facebook lead to more civic participation or more passivity? Does Google put all of human knowledge at our fingertips, or does it make us lazy and unable to think critically? What about regulation and privacy issues? What about smart phones? iTunes? A GPS? We'll research, debate, and ultimately stake out positions on these and other technology issues.

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Emotions and Life

PSYC 4400H (3) 11:30-12:45 TR; Cromwell

Course # 17788

The course is focused on affective science and affective neuroscience. The former area of interest is on basic properties of emotions and feelings. How have emotions been studied and what kinds of implications do these basic studies have for health and wellness. Comparative affective science is explored including work with animal models (e.g., rodents and nonhuman primates). The latter section of the course is focused on the biology and neurology emotion also using animal models as key to understanding the mechanisms that produce emotion. The course is a basic science course with an emphasis on comparative analysis but does have a substantial clinical and human section on the study of emotion and the brain basis of emotion as well.

HUMANITIES

Sexuality and Identity

ENG 4340H (3) 1:00-2:15 TR; Albertini

Course # 17783

American culture often treats identity categories as discrete: sexuality on the one hand, gender somewhere nearby, race or ethnicity on another hand, class somewhere else. But lived identities are more complicated and deeply intertwined, and a single term does not suffice to describe a life or a set of experiences. Literary and cultural productions (novels, stories, poems, films, television) can create spaces for more detailed explorations of the possibilities and limits of identity categories, and the exciting, strange, complex, or painful ways in which they intersect.

This course examines literary and cultural works since 1900 in order to interrogate the places where various identity categories intersect with each other and with the realms of sexuality, love, and desire. Our primary reading will focus on novels and stories but might also include film, poetry, and/or the graphic novel. Possible authors include Modernist and/or Harlem Renaissance writers such as Willa Cather, Henry James, Nella Larsen, and Richard Bruce Nugent; mid-century authors such as Vladimir Nabokov, Christopher Isherwood, and James Baldwin; and major contemporary authors such as Sherman Alexie, Jessica Hagedorn, Rabih Alameddine, Jeanette Winterson, Junot Diaz, and Adrian Tomine.

Cinema and Geopolitics

ENG 4850H (3) 6:00-7:15 TR; Begum

Course # 17560

This course addresses two distinct concepts, cinema and geopolitics, to examine the ways in which cinematic representations of national and cultural identity are both influenced by and can influence geopolitical aspects of power—the power that shapes individual and public perceptions about national and cultural discourses, the power to create and establish spatial relationships between peoples and nations, and to critique institutions and policies of world economies. It treats those aspects of the “geopolitical aesthetic” that emerges in the post- Cold War and post 9/11

world and contemporary film theory. Using a cinema –philosophy relationship developed by Gilles Deleuze the course will analyze feature and documentary films from such classics as *Battle of Algiers*, *The Deer Hunter*, and *Apocalypse Now* to more contemporary ones such as *Fog of War*, *No Man’s Land*, *Kandahar*, *Beautiful People*, *In the Name of God*, and *My Name is Khan*.

Assignments will include response papers on select films and the readings and a final group project in which students will have the opportunity to develop and create a short 10 minute film and a research paper that explores the themes discussed throughout the semester.

This course will be of interest to a variety of majors and minors from English, Theater and Film, Political Science, Communications, International Studies, Ethnic Studies, Romance Languages, and German, Russian, and East Asian Languages.

Critical Thinking about Great Ideas

HNRS 2020 (3)

11:30-12:45 MW; Jones

Course # 11826

11:30-12:20 MWF; Kuechenmeister

Course # 11948

10:30-11:20 MWF; Emery

Course # 11952

11:30-12:45 TR; Browne

Course # 11953

4:00-5:15 TR; Diehl

Course # 11956

4:30-5:45 MW; Steel

Course # 11958

9:30-10:45 TR; Earley

Course # 15398

6:00-7:15 MW; Steel

Course # 17261

This course is required for first year students in the spring semester.

This course will focus upon analysis and integration of ideas related to the following: Judeo-Christian thought, Greek Humanism, Markets, Democracy, and Feminism. Questions addressed will include: What makes these areas of thought "great ideas?" What assumptions underlie these ideas? How do these ideas relate to each other? to contemporary issues? The course will emphasize active thinking and discussion, readings from primary sources (many "classics"), and frequent writing. *Required Spring semester for first-year students.*

Fate and Faith in a Postmodern World

PHIL 4800H (3) 6:00-9:00 T; Callen

Course # 17558

Recalling Nietzsche’s dictum that God is dead, Jean-Paul Sartre says that existence precedes essence – we have no purpose or meaning in life given by either God or nature. It is only a short step to the founding and paradoxical idea of postmodernism formulated by Jean-Francois Lyotard -- no meta-narrative, no story proposing to be authoritative for guiding human life as such, whether singly or together, is worthy of belief. This course will trace the dialectic of ideas from existentialism to postmodernism that increasingly reflects our existence *in* what may be called a postmodern world insofar as we behave as if the traditions and institutions we once accepted as fundamental and authoritative for human life are either dead or treated as unworthy of respect. We will examine critically the “documents” of postmodernism in philosophy and art, especially the novel (Don DeLillo, *White Noise*), architecture (evidence of which we find on the BGSU campus) and film (stressing the movies of the Coen brothers). We’ll see why it is critical to differentiate between postmodernism and deconstruction both philosophically and in art. The problem then is this: if a postmodern society is our fate, how do we find a fresh basis for believing that the good life, a *humanly* good life, is possible? Unlike Lyotard’s happy take on the postmodern (a pragmatic stance to value and meaning will do just fine), Jean Baudrillard’s darkly comic view is that we are stuck with a postmodern society and no pragmatic adaptations can save us from the nihilistic slow catastrophe that is trivializing and will finally destroy the socially real conditions of value and meaning in our once “human” life.

(As a substitute for The History of Contemporary Continental Philosophy, this course satisfies a history requirement for the major in philosophy.)

SPECIAL SEMINARS

Re-Reading the Classics: Stephen King 1973-1983

HNRS 3000 (2) 9:30-11:20 M; Diehl

Course # 13400

Stephen King arguably is one of the most prolific and most widely-regarded (at least among the reading public) American horror writers of all-time. Acknowledging King's lack of industry accolades over his lengthy career, one critic has noted that "Stephen King's legacy may well be measured more in nightmares than Pulitzers, but his contributions to the American literary landscape cannot be denied or dismissed." King has often implicitly (and self-deprecatingly) echoed this critic's assessment of his body of work, once even referring to himself as "the literary equivalent of a Big Mac and friends," alluding to the fact that he has sold nearly as many books as McDonalds has sold hamburgers. In fact, in the 1980s when King's career was at its height, the author penned "no less than seven of the top-25 best-selling novels of the decade."

This course will examine King's "contributions to the American literary landscape" by focusing on a ten-year period (1973-1983) during which King produced some of his most well-known and widely-read works. Over the semester, we will read select works from this period, including: *Carrie*, *Christine*, *Pet Semetary*, *Salem's Lot*, and *The Shining*. Each work was selected not only because it represents "classic King" (i.e., distinctive features of King's style that are being developed and refined during this early period of his career and that come to full maturity in later works), but also because it produced a filmic adaptation (certainly one strong indicator of the popularity and financial success of a given author's work). In addition to studying the literary texts, then, we will hold out-of-class screenings of the film versions and discuss the politics and poetics of adaptation.

Six Forms of Wisdom as Six Ways of Living Your Life

HNRS 3000 (2) 9:00-11:50pm W alternating weeks beginning 1/9/13; Browne Course # 17175

This course focuses on a single book—a difficult, powerful book, John Cooper's *Pursuits of Wisdom: Six Ways of Life in Ancient Philosophy*. It specifically highlights the assumptions, emphases, and unanswered questions in the thinking of Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, the Stoics, the Epicureans, and the Skeptics. The conflicting sets of ideas are old, and yet as fresh as the latest edition of *Wired*, *Rolling Stone*, or *The Daily Show*. Each has a particular approach to ethical reasoning. Each suggests how we should and should not live. In that regard it exposes us to six highly thoughtful alternative models for how to live in a manner that provides meaning and deep joy.

The course will be explicitly linked to oral and written communication, critical thinking and synthetic thinking. Students will have opportunities to speak and write both formally and informally over the course of the semester in an atmosphere of caring, but direct guidance about how to communicate more effectively.

We will approach each of the six suggested ways of living as arguments to be evaluated, not as automatically profound just because they have been around a long time. We will focus on the ambiguity in their suggestions and the problems in a way they go about substantiating their particular perspectives.

The course will begin by asking each student to choose one of the six ways of living as his or her benchmark from which to form reactions to the others. In other words, the first three weeks will be devoted to assisting each individual to become absorbed in one of the six perspectives. The idea is that when we get to Cooper's book, our discussions will be enriched by the special knowledge individuals bring as a result of reading the material from a particular initial frame.

African American Women and Political Change

HNRS 3000 (2) 2:30-3:20 MW; Jackson, N. Course # 17441

This course will examine U.S. Black women's involvement in affecting political change around issues of race, sex, and class inequalities from the turn of the twentieth century to 1970. Using the lives and careers of individual Black women, beginning with Ida B. Wells and ending with Shirley Chisholm, the course will investigate the ways in which Black women have impacted U.S. political structures, formally and informally (as critics and social activists).

The Graphic Novel

HNRS 4000 (1) 9:30-10:20 W; Kuechenmeister Course # 12385

This course will explore the genre of the graphic novel, as it has developed from Eisner's coining of the term in the 1970s, through McCloud's theorizing of the comic page as visual rhetoric, and following the history of the art form as it has been interpreted from the 1970s to today. As graphic novels are becoming more popular and more mainstream, this class offers a way to look critically at the genre, as well as providing a foundational understanding of the canon of graphic literature.

This class will ask students to read one graphic novel work per week, and focus on explaining their own analysis of how the work illuminates the genre, pushes boundaries, and/or moves the genre forward by looking at the ways in which

text and visual interact. Reading responses will be required each week, as well as a culminating critical argument paper in which the student will be asked to explore one title in depth from either a literary or a rhetorical analysis perspective. Teaching strategies will focus on class discussion, both whole-class as well as small-group discussion and in-class writing-to-learn activities, and will avoid lecture. One class meeting will host a special guest, Dr. Bobby Kuechenmeister, who does research on superhero comics and their connection to Greek myth.

Statistical Thinking in Sports

HNRS 4000 (1) 12:30-1:20 M; Albert

Course # 16362

This special topics course will introduce statistical concepts within the context of interesting questions in sports. We will read articles on rating the performance of players and teams, the existence of the “hot-hand” in basketball, baseball, and hockey, predicting the outcomes of games, and understanding the significance of unusual outcomes such as a perfect game in baseball. It is helpful, but not necessary, for the student to have some background in statistics at the introductory level.

Readings in Blood Coagulation Research

HNRS 4000 (1) Arranged; Brecher

Course # 16417

This seminar focuses on coagulation research and its relationship with alcoholism. Literature will be assigned from Dr. Brecher’s publications. Students will write a term paper on a mutually agreed topic.