

The following descriptions are for topics courses that are being offered through the Honors College in the Spring 2018. All other descriptions are listed in the Undergraduate Catalog.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Academic Writing**

**GSW 1120H (3) TR 2:30-3:45pm; Jones**

**Course # 11113**

#### **Special Topic: Detective Fiction and Critical Thinking**

This special section of H1120: Academic Writing will focus on developing and applying critical thinking skills as we explore the figure of the detective in popular culture. Students will read fiction and non-fiction texts dealing with the evolution of this iconic figure, from Edgar Allan Poe's Auguste Dupin stories up to Benedict Cumberbatch's Sherlock. Students will then write a series of researched essays and reading responses reflecting on how the reasoning approaches adopted by various detective characters utilize some of the same (or different) skills they have been learning in academic writing and critical thinking classes. To what extent do the characters demonstrate awareness of their own potential biases, evaluate evidence, and exercise intuition. Do they reason inductively, deductively, or use what C.S. Pierce called abduction? Using prompts such as these, students will compile a portfolio of rigorously developed essays, culminating in a large self-directed research paper.

### **Academic Writing**

**GSW 1120H (3) 9:30am-10:20am MWF ; Schulz**

**Course # 14075**

#### **Special Topic: Star Wars: The Impact and Influence of a Galaxy Far, Far, Away**

This section of GSW 1120 will be centered on students reading and writing about the impact that the Star Wars franchise has on popular culture, both as an influence and as a reflection of what audiences and creators value. The class will explore the different cultural, religious, gender, racial, and historical representations that exist within the films. Students will also have the opportunity, through the course's research project, to further investigate the impact that Star Wars has had on technology, film production, special effects, animation, merchandising, and the film/entertainment industry.

## **Honors Seminars**

### **Star Wars and the Power of Myth**

**HNRS 3000 (2) 11:30am-1:10pm R; Schulz**

**Course # 14146**

The course will explore mythic themes within the core Star Wars films, Episodes I-VIII, and the influence that the work of Joseph Campbell had on George Lucas' creation of the films. Students will be required to watch all seven previously released Star Wars films, as well as view Episode VIII, which is scheduled to be released in December 2017. The course will focus on discussion and interpretations of the mythic characteristics within the films based on additional readings and researching Joseph Campbell's theories on myth. Students will complete various writing assignments offering their own interpretations of the mythic qualities represented in Star Wars and how the myths represented in Star Wars have contributed to its world-wide popularity. As an ongoing course project, the class will chart the mythic journeys of Luke and Anakin Skywalker and students will be asked to construct a final project that analyzes their own personal journey to draw parallels between their own lives and the appeal that the mythic representations in Star Wars have on individuals.

### **Through the Eyes of Horror: Reading Stephen King in the 1970s**

**HNRS 4000 (2) 9:30-11:10 F; Diehl**

**Course # 16190**

This seminar will focus on King's debut decade: the 1970s. From Vietnam to Watergate to international terrorism to globalization and a wide range of social justice movements, the 1970s were marked by significant

(and often traumatic) shifts in the ideological and material landscapes of America. Who we were (both as individuals and as a nation), what we valued, and how we lived were all undergoing unprecedented and radical changes, not only causing rifts within the populace, but also producing great psychological and emotional anxieties within individual Americans. This seminar will take as a given the idea—much rehearsed in the scholarship around horror—that cultural productions within this genre tap into the collective fears and anxieties of viewers around extra-diegetic realities and will engage generally with the question: *How does King's imagined horrors reflect and perhaps help readers to cope with the "real" horrors that exist outside the pages of his fiction?*

### **Neurodiversity and Autism**

**HNRS 4000 (2) 10:30am-1120pm MW; Hewitt**

**Course # 17416**

This course would cover the concept of neurodiversity, using the lens of autism spectrum disorders. The neurodiversity movement seeks to raise awareness that neurodevelopmental disorders should not always be viewed as diseases that must be cured, a view known as the “medical model”. It is part of the larger disability rights movement. Many on the autism spectrum advocate that part of their identity includes autism, and that labeling features of autism as disease symptoms is demeaning. Some results of the movement’s efforts include having some role in changes made by the national advocacy group Autism Speaks away from the language of “cure” and “disease.” The concept remains controversial, especially among parents advocating for their children with autism. The role of labeling in access to services as well as in learned helplessness and self-fulfilling prophecies, as well as in social attitudes, will be examined.

Course content would include basic information about the nature of autism, including how it is diagnosed and some information on treatments, how public policy affects people with autism and their families, readings on the latest neuroscience and its contribution to understanding ASD, excerpts from memoirs and self-advocacy writings by people with autism and their families, and scholarly articles on the merits of the arguments made by neurodiversity advocates. We will view videos and video excerpts, including documentaries as well as popular media, that offer various viewpoints on ASD and consider how these differing views orient themselves relative to the medical model.

### **Special Topics in English**

**Studies in Children’s Literature: Social Justice Literature for Young People**

**ENG 4420H (3) 6:00-7:15pm MW; Hicks**

**Course # 17829**

**Description Coming Soon**

**Topics in Critical Theory: Reading and the Archive**

**ENG 4560H (3) 2:30-5:30pm R; Labbie**

**Course # 17898**

**Description Coming Soon**

**Topics in Film Theory**

**ENG 4850H (3) 1:00-2:15pm TR; Begun**

**Course # 17824**

**Description Coming Soon**

## **Special Topics in History**

### **History of the City**

**HIST 3910H (3) 11:30am-12:45pm TR; Forsyth**  
**Course Description Coming Soon**

**Course #17309**

## **Special Topics in Philosophy**

### **Marx, Nietzsche, Freud**

**PHIL 4800H (3) 1:30pm-2:20pm MWF; Landgraf**

**Course # 17823**

Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud are three of the most prominent, radical, and influential thinkers of modernity. For better *and* worse, they impacted 20<sup>th</sup>- and 21<sup>st</sup>-century thought, politics, and culture like few others. Our course will analyze a selection of original texts by these authors. We will focus on their philosophical views, the ethical implications of their writings, their critiques of religion, their differing political outlooks, and their analyses of modernity as an age that (contrary to its ambitions) has a tendency to alienate, promote violence, and proliferate feelings of discontent. The course will also examine the continued legacy of Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud with regard to contemporary philosophical, political, and cultural developments. Expect to be challenged! This class is combined with GERM 4800/PHIL 4800.

## **Special Topics in Psychology**

### **Good and Evil: Evolutionary and Social Psychological Perspectives**

**PSYC 4400H (3) 1:30pm-4:00pm W; Gordon**

**Course # TBD**

How has evolution shaped human nature such that humans are capable, under specific conditions, of perpetrating acts of horrific evil as well as acts of supreme compassion and altruism? What do scholars within social psychology say about the roles of basic categorization, unconscious influences on behavior, free will, and individual responsibility for evil actions that are strongly situational in nature? In this course we will read about and discuss racism, sexual violence, obedience to authority, organizational evil, prisons and prisoners, terrorism and terrorists, as well as forgiveness, helping in emergencies, volunteerism, and heroism. This course will be taught in the form of a seminar, with a heavy emphasis on discussion, participation, and the grading of written assignments.