Graduating seniors in the Honors College at UMass Boston at the 2016 Medallion Ceremony.
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Summer 2020 Honors College Course Offerings
(Summer Session 1, May 26th - July 9th, 2020)

Please note: If you’re interested in registering for either or both of our Honors College courses in Summer 2020, please email Jason.Roush@umb.edu directly, and he’ll be happy to add the course to your summer schedule. Also, please note that if you’re financially eligible for Pell Grants, you can visit your financial aid officer in Campus Center, 4th Floor, to discuss how Pell Grants can be applied to cover Summer 2020 courses by enrolling for a minimum of 6 credits in Summer 2020.

Honors 293 (01A): Sexual Identity and Society (#2196)
TuTh 10:00am - 1:00pm
Jason Roush, Honors College

Human sexuality is continually evolving within cultural contexts. Widespread social factors like education, economics, family, 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 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 closely consider include:

• community organizations and social events such as pride parades
• same-sex marriage equality and alternative families
• the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s and beyond
• changing conceptions of bisexuality and “heteroflexibility”
• social activism focused on issues of gender and sexual identity
• emergence/recognition of transgender identities and communities.

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 - 15 minutes) on that organization or social event will also be required. Active local engagement with community-based organizations will be highly encouraged, and we will plan to attend a relevant event together outside of class.

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

Honors 380 (01A): Anarchism: Theory and Practice (#2197)
TuTh 1:30 - 4:30pm
Todd Drogy, English

When you hear the word anarchy, what’s the first thing that comes to mind? Disorder, rebellion, destruction, chaos? Or freedom, spontaneity, gaiety, resistance?

In this course, we will explore the philosophy/practice of social anarchism, both as a political force 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 mutual 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. We will examine the impact of anarchism on science, agriculture, art, education, and economics/finance. Additionally, we will consider how anarchistic thought and practice have impacted pivotal cultural movements: abolitionism, labor, feminism, civil rights, the antiwar movement, the fight for LGBTQ rights, environmentalism, and Black Lives Matter. The complex relationship between anarchism and technology will also be explored.

Visit honors.umb.edu or call 617.287.5520 for more information
This is a discussion-based class, with a strong emphasis on class participation. Student will write some short reflections (500 - 600 words) on readings/films/discussions. One analytical paper (4 - 5 pages) will be due mid-semester, and a research paper (8 - 10 pages) will be due at the semester’s end.

This course fulfills the Honors Junior Colloquium requirement.

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**Fall 2020 Honors College 200-level Courses**

**Honors 210G (1): Learning Biology through Reading Fiction and Non-Fiction (#12767)**

*MWF 2:00 - 2:50pm*

*Megan Rokop, Honors College*

This course is designed to be an introduction to many current and relevant topics in biology, but with a twist – namely that these topics will be introduced and discussed as they come up in popular and highly regarded books written for non-scientists. In this course, we will use the reading of four books (including fiction and non-fiction), in order to guide our learning of topics in biology. Possible books might include: *Twisting Fate, The Collected Schizophrenias, A Life Everlasting, Mercies in Disguise, The Death of Cancer, Happiness, Crisis in the Red Zone, Doctor Dogs, High Price, and Perfect Predator.*

The instructor’s current plan for these books (though it is possible that these selections may change before the first day of class) means that our class will focus on the following topics in biology:

- Bioethics: DNA testing, “designer babies,” informed consent, and animal research
- Human disease: Cancers, infectious diseases (such as HIV and malaria), single-gene disorders (such as cystic fibrosis and Huntington’s), and common complex disorders (such as heart disease and schizophrenia)
- Discovering cures and treatments: Drug development, clinical trials, the cost of drugs, placebos, funding and patenting scientific discoveries
- Public health: Vaccines, antibiotics, and medicine in the US & around the world

This course will not involve textbook readings, exams, advanced calculations, or memorizing terms. The in-class activities will focus on class discussions, and your grade in this course will be determined by:

- Attendance & class participation
- Nine short (300-word) writing assignments
- A 1500-word paper on a topic of your choice relating to the 1st book
- A 1500-word paper on a topic of your choice relating to the 2nd book
- A 10-minute oral presentation on a topic of your choice relating to the 3rd book

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

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**Honors 210G (2): Innovators And Their Creativity And Their Loneliness (#12768)**

*TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm*

*Steve Ackerman, Honors College*

Innovations and entrepreneurship are hallmarks of humanity since time immemorial. What determines or effects innovation/innovators? Some innovators have been considered "unique"or "loanners". Why are they outliers? Why do they not fit into social norms or do not follow prescribed conventions? For these innovative men and women their genius was concurrent with their loneliness and often associated with ADD and ADHD. They also are characterized as “thinking, fast and slow”.

Most people assume that innovation occurs only in science and technology. Not correct. We will discuss men and women who had creative genius in business, invention, science, technology, music, recreation, etc. These discussions will include investigative student research prior to each session. We will discuss the innovations that Michael Jackson introduced into music, the innovations that Clarence Birdseye brought to food, the prescience/innovation of Franz Boas to mentor women when others excluded them and together they invented cultural anthropology, Effa Manley who not only was the first women to own baseball clubs (in the Negro league) but she innovated baseball marketing and competitiveness, Henry Ford and the assembly line, John D. Rockefeller forming the first mega-monopoly, how innovative decisions are made (Daniel Kahneman & Amos Tversky: *thinking, fast and slow*), Barbara McClintock (in my opinion the greatest scientist of the 20th century) for her inventing techniques used in cytology and genetics as well as her intellectual leaps into regulatory biology and mobile elements, Rachel Carson who summoned the environmental movement, Jane Goodall who fomented animal science, Ada Lovelace who in the early 1850s...
helped develop the computer forerunner, Grace Hopper who developed computer programming and languages, Walt Disney and Ub Iwerks who invented movie animation, Charles Darwin who explained (a concept known to the ancients) as natural selection, Monet and Renoir and Van Gogh and impressionist painting, Lise Meitner who discovered nuclear fission, Rosalind Franklin who refined and defined X-ray crystallography, Frank Ramsey who revolutionized economic thinking, Billy Beane who championed moneyball in baseball, etc.

There are no exams in this course, just student writings. There are six writing assignments. Three will be response papers; a 2 page paper in response to articles sent to you (and posted on Blackboard) or movies for you to watch on your computer. There are also three research papers of 3 pages, 3 pages, and 5 pages. Students select their own topic related to the course and approved by the instructor. None of the papers are graded but editorial comments will be returned to students. If a re-write is requested it is without penalty. Grades are based on attendance, submission of materials (topic, writing) on time, and participation.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.

**Honors 210G (3): Democratic & Fascist Currents in U.S. Popular Culture: From Chaplin’s Tramp to Donald Trump (#12769)**

TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm  
Joseph Ramsey, English

In 1936, Charlie Chaplin’s “Little Tramp” captivated American moviegoers, as an icon for the “little guy” being kicked around in *Modern Times*. Four years later Chaplin satirized the rise of fascism in *The Great Dictator*. Eighty years after that, Donald Trump, a billionaire real estate mogul and “reality TV” star — famous for popularizing the phrase “You’re fired!” — became President of the United States. What has changed? And what does popular culture (film, television, music, print and digital media) have to do with it? How does what appears on the screen interact with and shape society? How does popular culture help us to understand how the USA has gone, so to speak, “from Tramp to Trump”?

Some describe the rise of Trumpism to a new kind of “fascism.” Is this a useful way to frame our situation today? Where does “democracy” end and “fascism” begin? How truly *democratic* is American democracy in 2020? In this course, through a mix of theoretical readings and popular culture viewings, we will pursue the question of how critics and creators have understood notions of “fascism” and “democracy,” and consider the ways their work still resonates today (or doesn’t).

Students will be expected to write weekly response papers (1 - 2 pages) to prepare for in-class discussion, as well as a final research essay (10 - 15 pages focused on a specific popular culture work or trend. Students will also be expected to watch an hour or two of media content outside of class time per week, and to read challenging, relevant critical texts.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.

**Honors 210G (4): The #MeToo Movement in Film and Literature (#12771)**

TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm  
Carney Maley, Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

We will begin the course with a brief history of the #MeToo movement starting with Anita Hill who put sexual harassment on the map in 1991, followed by activist Tarana Burke who created a space for women survivors of color in 2006, and finally the New York Times reporters who, in 2017, first broke the Harvey Weinstein story that ignited a movement.

Using an intersectional feminist lens, we will examine how #MeToo evolved from survivors sharing their stories of harassment and abuse on social media to a more organized movement for social and economic justice. What role does race, class, gender, and sexuality play in whose stories get told? How do these aspects of our identity determine whose stories are believed? Whose voices are still missing from this movement?

Through memoirs, essays, and documentary films, we will look at how the #MeToo movement is represented through contemporary non-fiction forms of popular media. Are Hollywood survivors depicted in the same way as women in the service industry? By exploring narrative films, short stories, and novels, we will analyze how fictional texts can complicate and illuminate everyday issues of power and consent in a way that is not always possible in the context of the workplace or courtroom. What can these visual and written texts tell us about the ways that the movement and survivors themselves have been depicted? Students will write short responses to their “book group” book, do an oral presentation, and write 3 essays analyzing both written and visual texts.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.
Honors 291 (1): Literature and Biopolitics (#3425)
MWF 11:00 - 11:50am
Avak Hasratian, English

We live in an age defined by the fragility of human and non-human life and the dependence of both on limited resources. “Biopolitics” describes this process: we are changing into collectively generic masses and bodies that are not equally individuated. Some humans can be animalized and perish, whereas others are elevated. Between the two extremes is life itself, and this is where “biopower” operates.

This is not a purely “negative” phenomenon. Biopower, to quote the man who coined the term, “is the power to make live” as it “literally ignores death” (Foucault, Society Must Be Defended, pp. 247 and 248). As a result of power’s retreat from death and the advance of life, we must wrap our heads around this fact: “[T]oday we may be living in the most peaceable era in our species’ existence…. [This is] an unmistakable development, visible on scales from millennia to years, from the waging of wars to the spanking of children” (Pinker, The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined, xxi).

At no time in the history of our species have as many humans been alive, and living generally better, longer lives, more or less free of the constant threat of violent death.

In this same spirit, short fiction, novels, television, and films pick up on these ideas, not to show us how hopeless life is, but rather the opposite. Rather than give in to cynicism or pessimism, art turns against the forces of dehumanization and de-individualization, because imagining our own destruction is a lot better than experiencing it. Course assignments will include creative writing, critical papers, and class presentations.

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.

Honors 291 (2): The Argentine Tango: Dance, Music, and Culture (#3426)
TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm
Mary Oleskiewicz, Performing Arts

In the late 19th-century, urban lower classes developed the tradition of the dancing the tango in Buenos Aires, Argentina. European immigrants and descendants of African slaves contributed their customs and rituals to what became a distinct national identity. Through the singer Gardel, tango was transported to Paris in the 1920s and danced by the upper classes. The Argentine dictatorship (1976 to 1983) forbade the sensual tango, but it continued to be danced covertly, only increasing its appeal. In the decades since, tango has become a global phenomenon, connecting people of diverse backgrounds and transcending stereotyped notions of gender identity.

This course offers a thorough introduction to the culture and history, music and dance of one of Latin America’s most intriguing art forms. Classes meet in UMass Boston’s new state-of-the-art dance studio in University Hall, with spectacular views overlooking the ocean and Boston’s skyline). We will study tango music, lyrics, films, images, and literature from the early 20th-century to the present. The instructor, an expert in performing both the dance and the music, will provide weekly, progressive dance lessons in social tango, in which everyone will learn to lead and follow. We will sample Argentine culinary traditions, experience workshops and presentations by experts in folkloric dance, and learn about thrilling Gaucho (cowboy) traditions such as boleadoras (throwing weapons). Assignments will include films, reading, journal writing, practicing tango, and a term paper (10 pages) or 3-minute partnered dance presentation (or other approved project). No prior dance experience is required!

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.

Honors 292 (1): American Theaters of War & Empire: Hegemony, Culture, Resistance (#3427)
TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm
Joseph Ramsey, English

The dictionary definition of a “theater of war” is “the entire land, sea, and air area that is or may become involved directly in war operations.” In this course, we will study the history of American military action and its consequences for the world in this literal sense—beginning with the settler colonial violence of the 15th to 17th centuries but focusing especially on US wars of more recent times, from 1898 to the present. We will also however attend to that other meaning of the word theater: studying war and empire as staged performance. In the USA, one might argue that various forms of staged performance have made the entire population “directly involved in war operations.” American culture relentlessly seeks to enlist us in the project of U.S. militarism and empire—from the military flyovers that start our sports championships, to the statues and mascots erected across this land for conquerors and colonizers.
What have been the underlying political and economic motives driving US foreign policy and how do these compare with the officially declared aims of leaders? What have been the global and domestic effects of these military ventures, from declared wars, to “police actions,” to occupations and covert regime changes? How has the reality of war and empire been shaped, framed, and distorted, by the various “stages” of American culture? From cartoons to popular music, from film and television to contemporary digital media, what role has culture played in revealing or concealing the nature of US military actions abroad? On the other hand, how have those seeking to challenge the ruling hegemony of US war and imperialism gone about their resistance, and what has been the role of culture in that contending project?

Students will be expected to take an active part in class-discussions, responding to both historical and critical readings as well as weekly viewings of both documentary and dramatic media. There will be bi-weekly two-to-three-page critical response papers, as well as a 10-page research paper, on a topic of each student’s choosing. This paper will be presented to the class during our last week.

This course fulfills a Humanities (HU) distribution requirement.

Honors 292 (2): The Ethics of Wealth & Poverty (#12772)
MWF 12:00 - 12:50pm
Mickaella Perina, Philosophy

What constitutes wealth, and what constitutes poverty? How are wealth and poverty experienced domestically and globally? Ideas of wealth and poverty evoke various economic and existential conditions; in this course, we will explore the material and moral considerations associated with such conditions and some of its immediate consequences. Are large wealth inequalities damaging to democracy? What constitutes a fair economy? What are our obligations to the poor?

This course will focus on how philosophers have grappled with these issues and how social movements have addressed them. Its main goal is to help students explore ethics and examine original assumptions and core beliefs about poverty, wealth, and inequality. Course topics will include income inequality, extreme poverty, the significant gap between the rich and the poor, and social mobility.

First, we will examine these issues from the perspective of philosophers and ethicists who see these problems mainly as a matter of distribution of resources. Second, we will study arguments defended by those who conceive of these problems as matters of justice and human rights and argue for an obligation to secure the social and economic rights of the poor. Third, we will consider these issues as great asymmetries of economic and political power requiring radical economic, social, and political change.

The format of class meetings includes lectures, films, and group discussions. The approach will be interdisciplinary and include readings from philosophy, political economy, law, women’s, gender and sexuality studies, and environmental studies. There will be a midterm paper and a final paper (5 - 8 pages each), and shorter assignments.

This course fulfills a Humanities (HU) distribution requirement, and it can also be counted towards the Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity Minor.

Honors 293 (1): The Biology and Psychology of Being a Dad (#3428)
TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am
Randy Corpuz, Honors College and Psychology

What does it mean to be male? What does it mean to be a father? Are these terms defined biologically, or do culture and society play a role in their development? How and why are “males” and “fathers” in American society different than in other cultures, and across history?

Despite the perceived benefits that fathers afford to offspring, only 5% of mammals have any sort of paternal care. Within the human species, the levels of paternal care observed across cultures (and throughout history) are extremely variable. What accounts for this variability? We will explore how adult males face a tradeoff between putting effort toward mating (e.g., pursuing sex) or parenting (e.g., spending time with children), and how one’s childhood environment plays a major role in how this tradeoff is managed.

If the ultimate “goal” of reproduction (from a biological and evolutionary perspective) is to ensure that children survive, why is fatherhood so variable? How has evolution shaped the biology and psychology of reproduction (i.e., mating and parenting)? How can an evolutionary perspective on male behavior aid in our understanding of fatherhood in the 21st
In combining readings from neuroscience, anthropology, and biology with materials from literature, history, and art, students will gain a multifaceted appreciation for the complexity of male behavior.

This interdisciplinary course is highly interdisciplinary. The class will include lectures, class discussions, two oral presentations, several short writing assignments (1 - 2 pages), and a final paper (approximately 6 - 8 pages). The final paper will require students to integrate material from a broad range of disciplines. Students will be encouraged to include material that they find outside of class to add to the breadth of their final papers.

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

**Honors 293 (2): Digital Health: A New Frontier for Health Care (#3429)**

MW 4:00 - 5:15pm  
Mario Portugal Ramirez, Global Governance & Human Security

The world today is globally interconnected as never before; data easily crosses continents in fractions of a second, allowing us to have multiple sources of information. Concerning health, technological developments bring new possibilities to the processes of health care and disease treatment in ways that allow scholars and practitioners to talk about digital health. Thus, thanks to these technologies, physicians and medical laboratories can share information, suggest therapies, and recommend actions to improve personal and community health. In addition, patients can access medical information and produce data about their own health in real time, in order to enhance the healing and recovery process.

This course is an introduction to the new sub-field of digital health. The course will combine seminar-style class discussions and mini-lecture sessions. As a final semester project, the student will propose an idea to create a product or service related to eHealth technology. This course aims to provide students from different backgrounds with the critical and analytical skills to understand the advantages, challenges, and weaknesses of digital health.

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

**Honors 293 (3): The U.S. Healthcare System (#3430)**

TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am  
C. Eduardo Siqueira, School for the Environment

This course provides students with an overview of contemporary health care in the United States and Massachusetts. It will prepare them for professional roles in the delivery of healthcare, as health educators, as well as better informed consumers of health care. The nature and function of the healthcare system in the U.S. will be described and analyzed. The course examines major U.S. healthcare programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, and the healthcare reforms proposed in the last few years, such as Medicare for All and the Public Option. The course will also cover the social, political, economic, ethical, professional, and technological forces that impact the U.S. healthcare system.

Students will read a book and several articles related to healthcare system topics. Assignments will include a midterm comprised of a few questions to be answered at home, a final paper or group project, and a presentation on readings throughout the semester.

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

**Honors 293 (4): Warrior Culture and Return to Community(#4106)**

Friday 1:00 - 3:45pm  
Paul Dyson, English

Modern societies (and many historical societies) with standing militaries have developed programs and methods of training citizens to prepare them for wartime service. Whether they enter military service voluntarily or by conscription, new members of the military undergo some kind of “basic training” sequence that not only conditions them physically but also, quickly and forcefully, socializes them to function as members of a fighting force. After military service, there is a corresponding deculturation and re-culturation as the individual returns to “civilian” life. In this course, we will examine how societies create military culture and how their military cultures shape them. We will focus on military culture in general with an emphasis on the transition from civilian to soldier and from soldier back to civilian. We will also examine the commonalities among military cultures—tightly-knit family-like structures, strict hierarchies, emphasis on individual sacrifice for the safety and success of the group—and discuss the relationship between military culture and war itself.
We will be looking at a wide array of materials: documentary films, interviews with veterans, military training manuals, speeches, recruitment advertisements, and more. Course work will include two major papers and weekly journal entries. Though we will be in remote mode, we will make every effort to engage one and other in lively class interactions through such features as discussion groups and breakout rooms. Your collective engagement with the material of the course will create an enriching learning experience for you and your classmates.

This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement, and it can also be counted towards the Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity Minor.

**Honors 294 (1): Global Social Problems: A View from the Global South (#3431)**

TuTh 8:00 - 9:15am  
*Linda Holcombe, Global Governance and Human Security*

Voices from the Global South are often muted, especially in the area of social issues. How do scholars from the Global South, including Native American scholars and scholars of color in the United States, frame social issues? How important is it to understand our own paradigm in working towards solutions?

In this course we will lay a foundation by learning and applying two main sociological paradigms and how these worldviews impact epistemologies, analyses, and actions in all areas of work and discipline. What are the consequences of each worldview on solutions to global social problems? Through these lenses we will examine the historical, political, and economic roots of global problems and struggles. Furthermore, we will engage with scholars from the Global South such as Walter Rodney, Samir Amin and Nawal el Saadawi to challenge the dominant Eurocentric framing of global issues and struggles.

This discussion-based, participatory course will focus on relevant readings, videos, and podcasts. The readings will drive our class discussions, supported by interactive and participatory activities during class. Student will write weekly reflections, which will be an important part of self-examination. Writing in this context will be used to explore, challenge, and articulate one’s own thinking around a topic without the public gaze. There will be a midterm research essay on an issue relevant to the student, accompanied by a class presentation. The final will be a presentation with an accompanying reflection. There will also be at least one guest speaker, depending on speaker availability.

This course fulfills a World Cultures (WC) distribution requirement, and it can also be counted towards the Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity Minor.

**Honors 294 (2): Culture, Narratives, and Migration (#3432)**

TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm  
*Jyoti Sinha, Sociology*

When we think of international migration, the most common images that come to mind are examples of south-to-north migration. Do we understand this phenomenon? Why do people migrate across international borders? How do we understand the politics of immigration? We'll begin with these questions and examine the policies that let some people in, while keeping others out. This course will introduce students to the major themes in migration like assimilation, acculturation, multiculturalism, and discrimination.

The course begins with an examination of the push/pull factors of migration by looking at the broader world of Global South migration worldwide, and how this migration produces a cheap labor force, which is so much required for the capitalist country. For a capitalist economy to function, its labor force must be maintained; that is, workers must receive a historically determined minimal day-to-day subsistence.

The course will also pay close attention to case studies from developing countries, particularly the experiences of migrants and their offspring. The liberalization of American immigration law in the 1960s provides a platform for continuing the discussion of push/pull factors of migration and sets the stage for a thorough examination of the 1960s migration of South Asian Americans from various states in the subcontinent (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal). Reference will also be made to Chinese railroad workers, as well as Latino and Caribbean workers, and we will trace their history. Assignments include an essay tracing an immigrant issue, an immigrant community analysis group project, a class presentation on any ethnic community’s issue, and a final research argument and bibliography.

This course fulfills a World Cultures (WC) distribution requirement, and it can also be counted towards the Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity Minor.
Honors 295 (1): Unheralded Women of Science (#12773)
Tu/Th 8:00 - 9:15am
Steven Ackerman, Honors College

This course will address the myriad forgotten women who contributed to science and society either directly or indirectly, but whom history has relegated to obscurity. We will omit those women who have received historical acknowledgment (e.g., Marie Curie). Although we will focus mainly on 20th century women-of-achievement, there are women of science dating back much farther than the 18th century.

A good starting place is in the 18th century with Gabrielle Émilie Le Tonnelier de Breteuil, Marquise du Châtelet (Émilie du Châtelet, Madame du Châtelet) who was a brilliant natural philosopher, mathematician, physicist, and author during the early 1730s. Several other women from the 18th and 19th centuries will be also profiled. Perhaps the best and most brilliant scientist of the 20th century was Barbara McClintock, a botanist, geneticist, and cytogeneticist who was both prescient and prophetic. Indeed, almost 30 years after her death, we are still implementing her visionary results to explain and expand contemporary discoveries about gene regulation and development. McClintock’s hypotheses were confirmed, leading to the awarding of a Nobel Prize in 1983.

Another example in our studies will be Mileva Maric, Albert Einstein’s first wife, who was responsible for his famous publications because it was she, a luminous physicist and mathematician, who checked his calculations and made corrections, prior to publication. Yet outside of the field of physics, she remains unknown.

There will be no exams in this course. Students will write three short research papers (3 - 5 pages each), three brief response papers to articles or films (2 pages each), as well as giving a class presentation.

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

Fall 2020 Honors College Junior Colloquia

You must have completed at least two Honors courses at the 200-level to take the Junior Colloquium.

Honors 380 (1): Considering the Opioid Epidemic: Disease, Race, and Health
Disparities (#1605)
Tuesday 9:30am - 12:15pm
S. Tiffany Donaldson, Honors College and Psychology

The current opioid epidemic and sharp rise in fatalities have received widespread media and political attention. In this course, students will learn basic pharmacological principles of drugs classified as opioids (e.g., fentanyl, heroin, morphine, oxycodone), including the behavioral and physiological effects, and how they contribute to the abuse potential associated with these prototypical pain medications.

This course will provide a historical overview of the treatment of addiction/addicts, current neuroscience knowledge about how the brain is impacted by drugs of abuse, as well as genetic and environmental factors that contribute to the development and maintenance of addiction. Finally, in this instance where opioid addiction is treated as a disease, readings and discussion will foster critical thinking regarding the interaction of race/ethnicity and class with approaches to treatment, victimization, and/or criminalization.

Students will share their experiences and perspectives to create works (i.e., collages, videos, ads, brochures; 20% of grade) that address critical issues associated with the current opioid crisis. This can take the shape of a comparative lens for media, political, and medical attention for another drug of abuse relative to opioids. In addition to these works, students are required to write reaction journals (20% of grade) to respond to prompts raised during weekly discussions (class participation, 10% of grade), write a short paper (5 pages) for a take-home midterm (20% of grade), and complete a culminating presentation (30%) focusing on a relevant topic of interest.
Honors 380 (2): Global Perspectives on Forced Migration and the Politics of Inclusion & Exclusion (#3424)
TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm
David Sulewski, Global Governance & Human Security

The number of people forcibly displaced worldwide due to instability remains at a historic high, and the broader issue of migration remains a priority for the global community. Through the exploration of different theoretical approaches to migration and refugee studies, this class will examine dynamics of inclusion and exclusion across the globe and within the US that shape humanitarian responses, as well as restrictive policies toward refugees and migrants. While also exploring the complex drivers of human mobility, we will foreground the agency of both those who are “on the move” and those who work either to welcome or exclude them.

This is a discussion-based class with a strong emphasis on class participation. Students will write several short reflection papers (1 - 2 pages) and give brief presentations based on the readings. Each student will choose an individualized semester-long research project that may relate to their major or other area of interest, which will culminate in a final paper (12 - 15 pages) and a presentation. Finally, we may have the opportunity to connect with and interview organizations and groups engaging with issues related to refugee resettlement, immigrant rights, and sanctuary in Boston.

Please note: for any students who previously took David Sulewski’s course Refugee and Migrant “Crises” (Honors 210G-03), this Honors 380 class will not be a repeat, but rather an opportunity to dive deeper into the topic. For those who did not, prior knowledge is not required, and ample time will be dedicated to covering basic concepts to ensure that the whole class shares the same foundation.

MWF 1:00 - 1:50pm
Todd Drogy, English

What does it mean to be human? Simone de Beauvoir’s statement that “to be is to have become” suggests that the concept of who and what we are can only be understood within the matrix of history, knowledge, and culture. Never has this been more apparent than in the present moment, when rapid developments in science and technology raise fundamental questions about human nature.

In this course, students will explore how our understanding of who and what we are is shifting beneath our feet. In particular, we will examine the scientific discoveries, technological innovations, and cultural practices transforming traditional conceptions of gender, sexuality, race, community, labor, and consciousness. We will also consider how fundamental conceptions of human nature are likely to change as science and technology continue to open doors to new realms of knowledge and experience.

Students will read a diverse array of scientific, technological, and philosophical texts, watch science fiction films, read science fiction texts, and listen to podcasts. Throughout the semester, we will return to the following two questions: How are advances in science and technology shifting our personal and collective experiences of being human? Also, how do cultural assumptions regarding human nature, combined with the economic pressures of capitalism, affect the trajectories of scientific inquiry and technological development?

Written assignments will consist of five short mini-essays, a reflection journal, and an in-depth research paper. Class participation, group work, and oral presentations are weighted heavily in this discussion-oriented course.

Honors 380 (4): Science in All Colors: Diversity in Scientific Fields (#4107)
Tu/Th 4:00 - 5:15pm
Jesus Romo, Honors College

Scientific contributions by members of underrepresented groups have been largely ignored/uncredited and in some cases erased from history. This course will focus on highlighting the diverse accomplishments and contributions of underrepresented scientists throughout history in a social and political context. Additionally, course participants will read
and discuss scientific literature published by these scientists, and read biographies to understand the historical context while they were conducting their groundbreaking work. Scientists we may cover include Dr. Helen Rodríguez Trías, a Latina pediatrician and women’s rights activist who experienced and fought discrimination and racism to become the voice of the less fortunate, and Dr. Carlos Juan Finlay, an epidemiologist whose work linking mosquitos to the transmission of yellow fever was dismissed and ridiculed by scientists of his time.

By participating in this course, students will:

1) Learn about underrepresented members of the STEM community, their contributions, and their challenges;
2) Learn how to properly read, analyze, and explain peer-reviewed scientific literature;
3) Be able to suggest follow up experiments to the scientific studies discussed;
4) Interact with a diverse group of active underrepresented scientists;
5) Gain an introduction to scientific writing.

Readings will include peer-reviewed scientific journal articles, 1-2 books/biographies, and supplemental materials. There will be weekly discussions, an oral presentation (10 minutes), and a major individual research report (12-15 pages). Additionally, we will have remote talks by underrepresented scientists, at least one cultural field trip, and several films.

**Honors 380 (5): On Theory (#4108)**
**Wednesday 9:00 - 11:45am**
Alexander DesForges, Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

This course will examine the functions and discourses of “theory” across a variety of disciplines, including the hard sciences, psychoanalysis, anthropology, and literary and cultural studies. Our aim is to assess the relative significance of theoretical thinking in the different disciplines, reflect critically on the pretexts for and consequences of defining one’s own project as theoretical, and consider the kinds of work that are specifically excluded from or generally understood as complementary to “theory.”

How is theory different from practice? Is it possible to identify a transdisciplinary mode of theorizing, or are the ways in which theories are created inevitably defined by the disciplines to which they belong? How do certain styles of thinking, speaking, or writing suggest to us that they aim to go beyond a data set, individual experience, or personal observation to make more general statements about the world? What is the relationship between theory and methodology? Is theory useful? What are its pitfalls? These are some of the questions that we will address.

Requirements include weekly short written responses, active participation in seminar discussion, and a final 12-15 page research paper. Preparation for the research paper will include an annotated bibliography and a brief presentation to the class on your work in progress.

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**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!