UMass Boston students presenting their Honors thesis research at the 23rd Annual Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference.
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HONORS 101 First-Year Seminars for Spring 2022

Honors 101 (1): Art and Science (#6692)
MWF 12:00 - 12:50pm
Steve Ackerman, Honors College
Victoria Weston, Art

This interdisciplinary first-year seminar brings science into dialogue with art. Works of art will serve as catalysts for topics in biology plus art history-based analysis. There are many now extinct plants, flowers, and vegetables and fruits that we know only from paintings. We will explore these paintings for both their biological and art aspects.

Dutch painting, for instance, provides us access to a tulip variety now extinct and one whose much-valued coloration derived from a plant virus. Indeed, many colorful flowers exist because of variegation (patterns). Chinese painting introduces a whole vocabulary of plant symbolism rendered in highly diverse styles, the plants themselves then subject for their botanical uniqueness.

This course will require three short response/impact papers (1-2 pages each), two research essays (3 pages and 5 pages, respectively, plus references), along with at least one field trip to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (students will choose whether to use the museum visit as the basis for either a response paper or a research essay). An oral presentation will also be required at the end of the course.

Honors 101 (2): Homelessness and the Self-Perpetuating Cycle of Shame (#6693)
TuTh 8:00 - 9:15am
Julie Batten, Honors College

Why has the number of people experiencing homelessness in Massachusetts more than doubled since 1990? Through relevant literature, films, and essays, this course will examine the shame that so often contributes to homelessness, and we’ll also discuss current initiatives seeking to shift this self-perpetuating cycle.

When the Mental Health Systems Act was abandoned in the 1980s, unprecedented numbers of the nation’s mentally ill were forced onto the streets. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) 9,493 high school-aged students in public schools are now experiencing homelessness on any given day in Massachusetts, and over 37,000 students of all ages are experiencing homelessness throughout the state. This course will investigate the changing face of homelessness over the past fifty years and question why college-aged young people constitute the fastest growing segment of this population today.

Together, we will examine the socioeconomic factors contributing to homelessness, as well as social justice programs and current public policy debates seeking to halt its rise. Guest speakers from area homeless shelters will contribute to the discussion. We will read Evicted by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Matthew Desmond, The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls, No House to Call My Home by Ryan Berg, as well as watching the award-winning documentary by Daniel Cross, The Street. Short weekly reading responses, lively debate, and your own profile assignment about a person experiencing homelessness will help us address our individual and collective responses to this national crisis. This course can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.
Honors 101 (3): “Knowing” in the Internet Age (#6694)
MWF 11:00 - 11:50am
Daria Boeninger, Psychology

How do we know what we think we know? What tools, resources, and approaches can we use to assess the trustworthiness and quality of an information source online? What are some known “tricks of the trade” in the realms of agnotology (creation of doubt/mistrust) and disinformation? How might our personality, values, or sense of group belonging influence what we believe—and what information we are even open to hearing? How can we have genuine and helpful dialogue with people whose views and understanding of the world are very different from ours?

This class will tackle these questions and more, bringing in multi-disciplinary perspectives and expertise to help us be able to more effectively evaluate the information that we and those around us are bombarded with daily. We will hear from a number of guest experts. As with all first-year seminars, this course also will introduce its members to a range of campus resources, with visits from representatives of various UMB services, institutes, and programs.

In this first-year seminar, students can expect regular class preparation (reading or viewing assigned material) for small-group discussion, activities, or guest visits during class, at least a couple group assignments, and occasions to practice public speaking (giving oral presentations in class). You also will write two required papers (5+ pages), with a third being optional.

TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm
Rebecca Fine Romanow, English

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.” Film and television are primary cultural vehicles for reflecting how we see ourselves and other people and places, as well as our hopes, fears, and visions for our future. Black Mirror has become the touchstone for these imaginings.

We will watch six episodes of this groundbreaking series selected from its five seasons (2011 to present) and read a selection of Cyberpunk fiction that addresses, depicts, or argues with the future that Black Mirror presents. This course emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach with readings in literature, futurism, science, television and 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.

This is a student-driven course where each student will lead the class discussion once on selected episodes/readings. This course will require one shorter mid-semestern essay (3 - 4 pages), and a larger final essay (5 - 6 pages), as well as discussion forum postings on Black Mirror and 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 discussion reflections and shorter midterm essay.

Honors 101 (5): The Scandalized Subject: A Story of the Self in Literature, Film, and Theory (#7518)
TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am
Christopher Craig, English

While artistic, philosophical, and religious examinations of the Self have developed over the centuries, ranging from the mythological to the theoretical, the quest to interpret the Self remains. This course considers a number of artistic and theoretical approaches to the Self through a variety of literary and visual texts from the turn of the 20th century to our own historical moment. It examines how the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves position the Self against its dialectical Other—often the monsters we imagine or the technological monstrosities we create—in order to substantiate and at times deny our own existence.

This course requires weekly class participation, along with two formal class presentations. Students will also 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 should not exceed 2,500 words. In preparation for essay three, students will submit a prospectus and bibliography.
Honors 101 (6): Poverty and Psychology: What Does It Mean to Be Poor? (#7742)  
TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm  
Kathryn Kogan, Psychology

This course will examine the complex and multidimensional phenomenon of poverty in the United States, focusing on the psychological experience of being poor, its associated stressors, and how being poor impacts lives throughout the life span. The interplay among poverty’s psychological impact, social stigma, and the social institutions that both contribute to poverty and seek to assist those in poverty will be explored. What are the multiple pathways through which families and individuals become impoverished? How does poverty shape one’s psychology and coping strategies? How do psychological, institutional, and social factors interact as the individual or family struggles to survive? How do people escape poverty?

Through readings, documentary films, class discussion, and the insights of guest speakers, we will explore these questions and seek to appreciate the meaning of poverty, while examining the role that social policies and institutions play in creating and maintaining poverty. A life-span perspective will help us to focus on the particular experiences of poverty for families with young children, adults with mental illness, and the elderly.

In addition to regular attendance and active participation, students are expected to bring questions/ideas that emerge from the readings. Students will write short reflections (2 - 3 pages) in response to readings and films, connecting them with other course materials. Students will be allowed one re-write option per assignment for the first two essays. Students will also arrange and attend a day of volunteer work at a local agency or church serving the poor and prepare a 10-minute oral presentation including a Powerpoint. An alternative project may need to be substituted depending on COVID safety. This course can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

Honors 101 (7): Culture, Heritage, and Performance (#7964)  
MWF 1:00 - 1:50pm  
Christopher Fung, Anthropology

This class examines the way in which communities and individuals use notions of heritage and performance to express and debate issues of identity. We will examine several case studies to explore how and why people in particular communities enact particular forms of heritage, and the political, social, and economic contexts in which these acts are placed. In the spring semester, the case studies will be: 1) Kapa Haka (traditional Maori performing arts) from Aotearoa/New Zealand; 2) The use of ceremony as political action by Water Protectors at the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota in 2016; and 3) West African Mande-style drumming and dance in West Africa and in North America.

The course will use a mixture of academic articles, websites, and online videos. For the Standing Rock portion of the course, it will be helpful if students have Facebook accounts. Assignments will consist of four reaction papers (1 to 1.5 pages each), a website analysis (3 pages), and two long-form blog posts (structured as educational resources of 3 to 5 pages each).

TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm  
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.
Honors 210G (1): Learning Biology through Reading Fiction and Non-fiction (#10182)
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 three books (including fiction and non-fiction), in order to guide our learning of topics in biology. Possible books might include: Lightning Flowers, The Collected Schizophrenias, Cured, The Inheritance, Perfect Predator, Epic Measures, In Pain, When Death Becomes Life, and Happiness.

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.*

Honors 210G (2): Refugee and Migrant Crises: How Can We Respond to Forced Migration? (#10183)
TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm
David Sulewski, Global Governance and Human Security

More than 80 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide, the highest number ever recorded since the end of World War II. Recent crises on the world stage—from the Syrian conflict to extreme violence and poverty in Central America and the US withdrawal from Afghanistan—have triggered mass movements of people that at once generate an outpouring of support as well as elicit fear and closed borders. How can we respond to the challenges of forced migration?

In this course, students will gain an understanding of the causes of forced migration, the international legal instruments designed to uphold the rights of forced migrants, and the organizations that assist them. Looking to current events, we will explore legislative, policy and ethical responses to forced migration. Primary narratives and guest speakers will help to center the perspectives and voices of displaced individuals and class activities will engage students to reflect on how to respond to forced migration globally, nationally, and locally.

This is a discussion-based class with a strong emphasis on participation. Readings include scholarly articles, graphic novels, textbook chapters, essays, and multimedia. Assignments include short reflection papers (~2 pp) and an individualized semester-long project that may relate to one’s major/area of interest and will culminate in a final paper (~8 pp) and presentation. Finally, we may have the opportunity to interact with refugee resettlement agencies and (im)migrant advocacy groups and explore *what might be possible* to support the needs and aspirations of refugees and other migrants in Boston.

*This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.*
Honors 210G (3): The #MeToo Movement in Film and Literature (#10184)  
MWF 11:00 - 11:50am  
Carney Maley, Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies

This course begins with a brief history of the #MeToo movement, starting with Dr. Anita Hill, whose experience compelled the country to confront issues of sexual harassment in the workplace in 1991, followed by community organizer Tarana Burke, who coined the term while working with young women survivors of color in 2006, and finally the New York Times reporters Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, who first broke the Harvey Weinstein story that ignited a movement in 2017.

Using an intersectional feminist lens, we will examine how #MeToo evolved from survivors telling 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 heard and believed? Whose voices are still missing from this movement?

Using memoirs, essays, and documentary films, we will examine how the #MeToo movement is represented through contemporary non-fiction forms of popular media and not just in depictions of Hollywood women, but also those in the tech industry, criminal justice system, and professional sports. Through narrative films and short stories, we will analyze how fictionalized texts can complicate and illuminate everyday issues of power and consent in a way that is not always possible in the “real life” context of workplace policies or courtrooms.

Course assignments will include participating in a memoir book group, two persuasive essays, a final class presentation, and a final paper on the topic of your choice.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.

HONORS 290-level Courses for Spring 2022

MWF 9:00 - 9:50am  
Frederick Stubbs, Performing Arts

This class investigates how individual instruments imitate, extend, and amplify the human voice, and how instruments in their collective ensembles identify communities and ideas of consonance and harmony. Some of these ideas of ensemble, symphony, and live performance have been de-emphasized as music is increasingly created and arranged on new digital platforms. Still, musical instruments tell a unique set of stories when we examine their intersection with human faculties, biology, technology, and socio-cultural systems.

Our readings draw from Art and Music History, Physics, Geography, and Ethnomusicology to examine a spectrum of instrument traditions, including those associated with Europe, West Asia, China, and Indonesia. Readings include information on modern production methods using the Digital Audio Workstation and MIDI computer language for music. Assignments include listening from many eras and regions, research, and elementary design projects engaging students with a series of creative and experimental challenges. Student writing will entail three reading/listening responses and a research paper or summary. Grading will depend on attendance and participation, together with thoughtful self-evaluation.

Our class will host guest speakers and instrumentalists, and we will access several local and national instrument archives. Students are invited to attend local concerts, remotely or in-person, conditions permitting. This course is recommended for those with an interest in the ineffable feelings and meanings that music summons and how that comes about.

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.

Honors 291 (2): Optimism! (#8115)  
TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm  
Avak Hasratian, English

Politicians and their media servants sell us for-profit stories of crisis. Likewise, we see in academia a mode of “critical thinking” that leads to one of two dead ends: either the “crisis” is so deep that there’s no climbing out (fatality), or it’s so encompassing that only demolishing all systems will fix it (impossibility). The words “critical thinking” are vital to our academic mission. But sometimes, those words and the content they refer to — death, disease, conflict — can lead to
This course’s gambit is that there is no crisis except for the crisis of “critical thinking” itself. We’ll change its meaning with optimism and hope, grounded in facts, evidence, and enlightening aesthetic experiences using fiction, non-fiction, film, and fine art. True, in absolute numbers there is plenty of suffering. Also true: Life is better for more people now than at any point in human history, and it continues to improve despite occasional regressions.

This course proposes that we face the facts of progress not with glossy idealism or wretched pessimism but with hope; that we explore sympathy and empathy; and that we try and understand how, aesthetically, the results will raise our spirits. Readings and viewings may be selected from Steven Pinker, Michael McCullough, Angus Deaton, Hans Rosling, John Mueller, Ron Bailey, Mike Schellenberger and rational environmentalists, James Payne, Kwame Anthony Appiah, PG Wodehouse, Carson McCullers, and Nathanael West. Assignments will include reasoned attempts to become an optimist, and multi-genre hybrid experiments that demonstrate the relationship between aesthetic enlightenment and optimism.

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.

TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm
Diane D’Arrigo, Honors College

Who can afford a college education, and who can’t? Who gets to go to college, and who doesn’t? What gets taught in college, and what doesn’t? These are all issues with a broader social, cultural, historical, political, and economic context. Come explore the great transformation of American higher education since WWII and discuss the more recent evolution of colleges and universities, as well as many current hot topics.

Course topics will include a review of major societal changes and their influence on the increased democratization of higher education such as: the impact of the GI Bill, the civil rights movement, women’s movement, student protest movements, and changes in public policy. Using both primary and secondary sources, we will discuss relevant court rulings, state and federal legislation, and various institutional histories. Additionally, we’ll explore the origins of UMass Boston, and students will consider its place within the broader history of the American higher education system. Finally, we will review current trends and debates taking place in higher education such as: affirmative action, student debt and the financial aid system, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, college rankings, on-line learning, free speech on college campuses, the value of a college degree, how higher education is funded, and current public policy proposals that impact a variety of those issues.

This seminar will emphasize lively intellectual discussions and individually chosen research topics with both individual and group support. Grading criteria will include attendance, class preparation and participation, and a variety of writing assignments and research projects including: an institutional history paper (written on an institution of your choice), reflection papers, an oral presentation, and a final research project.

This course fulfills a Humanities (HU) distribution requirement.

Honors 292 (2): The World of Hip-Hop: History and Practice (#8676)
MW 4:00 - 5:15pm
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.
TuTh 8:00 - 9:15am
Randy Corpuz, Psychology and 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): Poverty and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (#8248)
TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm
Shymaa Allam, Global Inclusion & Social Development

Poverty has become an important focus of academe and policy in the last 50 years and has been identified as the most pressing global issue. This urgency was reflected in having the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stipulating that dealing with poverty is their number one goal. SDG Goal #1 seeks “an end to poverty in all its forms everywhere,” a challenge for the world’s leaders to focus the efforts of nations on crucial issues confronting humanity.

This course aims at challenging the common understanding of poverty as resulting from bad life decisions, character flaws, or lack of morality. The course will discuss the multi-dimensions of poverty and explore the decision-making processes of people who are poor. We will start with how those who are poor define poverty and what their aspirations are. Then we will move to the decisions that those who are poor have to make regarding food, health, and education. Finally, we will consider what types of social and economic systems create the conditions that contribute to poverty, and to what extent the decisions of those who live in poverty have an impact on changing these systemic structures.

Readings on course topics will provide materials for short response papers and discussions. A group project for the mid-term will be submitting a short essay and presenting on SDG #1 (“no poverty”) in a specific region. A final paper on a topic of the student’s choice requires the student to explain how this topic is related to poverty and the United Nations’ SDGs.

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 (#8249)
TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm
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 one short paper (1.5 pages), one medium essay (3 pages), and one longer essay (5 pages) and give one oral presentation (15 minutes). The papers and oral presentation should reflect the student’s 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 (2nd edition), by Risdon N. Slate, Jacqueline K. Buffington-Vollum, and W. Wesley Johnson.

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

Honors 293 (4): The U.S. Healthcare System (#8692)
TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm
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 health care, and also as health educators, as well as better informed consumers of health care. The nature and function of the health care 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 health care 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. health care 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 term.

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): Dance and Music of Latin America and the Caribbean (#8111)
TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm
Mary Oleskiewicz, Performing Arts

This course will survey diverse dance and music traditions of Latin America and the Caribbean. There is both a practical and an academic component to the course. Students will learn, hands-on, a variety of (beginner-level) dances, such as bachata, salsa, and samba no pe. Additional dance styles may include tango and cumbia. The music of these and many other dances will also be studied. For context and historical background, readings will trace impacts and influences of diverse forces such as colonialism, immigration, slavery, politics, religion, and globalization. Students will learn to recognize important musical instruments associated with different styles, and a certain emphasis will be given to the development of listening skills to recognize and compare different each type of music. As we study each style, our focus will shift from origins and traditions to how the style has become manifest in or has influenced popular culture in the U.S. and globally.

No previous dance or musical experience is necessary. All fundamental skills and vocabulary needed for this course will be taught from the beginning level, as part of the course. As a semester project, students will write an 8-page paper or produce an equivalent creative project, which could include a short dance presentation/video. Warm-ups and stretching will be incorporated into dance workshops in our amazing, state-of-the-art dance studio on the top floor of University Hall with a panoramic view of the entire Boston Harbor and the Boston skyline (appropriate attire for movement is recommended in this class).

This course fulfills a World Cultures (WC) distribution requirement.
Honors 294 (2): Women and Community Building (#8254)
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 shorts 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): Human Races (#10185)
MWF 10:00 - 10:50am
Steve Ackerman, Honors College

This course for both non-science and science majors combines biological, sociological, and cultural evidence to allay the notion that there are human races. In 1758, Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus gave the human species its formal name, Homo sapiens. He divided humans into races: red Americans, yellow Asians, black Africans, and white Europeans. He was not the first or last to do such categorizations. His pejorative descriptions of the first three designations were contrived to make white northern Europeans the “dominant” race.

Since that time the use of the word race has permeated our societies. It is not biologically correct; race is a societal construct. All humans are one race. We will deconstruct that there are biological human races.

This race prevarication predominates contemporary society. Nevertheless, people experience it and there are psychological and biological consequences for those impacted, and a psychology of abuse for the practitioners. Our societies are not ones of races but are ones of multiculturalism. We will discuss the biological evidence to understand why all humans have a multipartite (hodge-podge) genome of genetic blending that extends back millions of years and exhibits variation (alleles) reflecting population and environmental geographies.

We will investigate the sociological aspects on human culture of the use of “race” by analysis of social psychology, and discrimination, etc. Discussions will also generate an understanding of cultures and life through an emic approach that also examines social stratification. The US stands out as an interesting example because no one ever assimilates into American culture; rather, America assimilates you.

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 2022

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

Honors 380 (1): Science in All Colors: Diversity in the Scientific Fields (#7493)
TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm
Jesus Antonio Romo, Honors College

Scientific contributions by members of underrepresented groups have been largely ignored/unccredited 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 Trias, 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) Interact with a diverse group of active underrepresented scientists;
4) Learn how to create and maintain spaces to have discussions about intersectionality in STEM.

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 (2): The Wonderful World of Microbes (#7622)
MW 4:00 - 5:15pm
Josh Quinn, Honors College

What is a microbe? Are they good or bad? What role do they play in the environment and in human health? How do we know and how can we study organisms that we cannot see? Microbiology is a fascinating field that is shaping society, health, and technology, and we will examine how novel scientific discoveries, public perception, and bioethics have all played a role.

In this discussion-based, scientific skill-building class, we will learn about beneficial and harmful microbes and discuss the critical role that the scientific method plays in microbial research. We will cover topics ranging from the history of microbiology to the pioneering discoveries driving future technologies and their potential ramifications. Embracing complexity, our discussions will likely generate more questions than answers.

This class will have no exams and requires class participation. Just as 21st-century scientists do, students will consume information from a variety of sources (primary literature, news articles and stories, book passages), engage with contrasting opinions, and formulate their own ideas, hypotheses, and theories about the topics covered. Students will hone critical thinking, communication, and research skills through readings, class discussions, and multiple writing assignments and presentations. We will learn how to create and present an engaging scientific poster and seminar talk and will interact with scientists who study microbes to hear about their research and careers. Regardless of major, students taking this class can expect to gain an appreciation for how microbes are shaping the world around us and for using scientific thinking as a valuable tool.
Honors 380 (3): Anarchism and Order (#7965)
TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm
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 this course, we will explore the philosophy/practice of 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 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. 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.

This is a discussion-focused class, with a strong emphasis on class participation. Students will write four (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 semester’s end.

Honors 380 (4): Thinking about Climate Change (#8677)
Tuesday 12:30 - 3:15pm
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.