

## Honors 101- First Year Seminar Offerings for Spring 2010

**Honors 101 (1)**      *First Year Seminar: Understanding the Current Economic Crisis*  
MWF 1:00  
*Prof. Peter Spiegler, Economics Department*

The American economy is experiencing its most severe recession since the Great Depression, and it is affecting all of us. It is throwing people out of work and making it more difficult for them to find new jobs, it is throwing people out of their homes and making it more difficult for them to buy new homes, it is requiring enormous sacrifices of taxpayers in the form of multi billion dollar bailouts and stimulus packages...and it is also making some people very very rich. How is this possible? Why did it happen? Who could have stopped it? What should we do about it now?

In this course, we will seek to answer these questions and more by tracing the origins of the current crisis and critically examining the policy responses to it. Along the way, we will learn about how the financial system functions and how it affects the broader economy and all of us individually. By the end of the semester, students will be able to explain the role of the following things (among others) to their friends and family: mortgages, Fannie Mae, investment banks, mortgage backed securities, collateralized debt obligations, credit default swaps, the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. And most importantly, the course will be aimed at allowing students to be critical consumers of the ongoing coverage of the crisis, its aftermath, and the inevitable emergence of a new crisis sometime in the future.

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, we will be using lecture notes, newspaper and journal articles, and government publications. Graded work will include four papers (of increasing length as the semester goes along, with the final paper being 10-12 pages), and short weekly response papers during the weeks where no graded papers are assigned. There will be no midterm or final.

**Honors 101(2)**  
TuTh 2:00-3:15

**First Year Seminar**

*AND*

**Honors 101(3)**  
TuTh 12:30-1:45

**First Year Seminar**

*Prof. Doreen Drury, Women's Studies*

Prof. Drury will teach *both* sections (2) and (3) of Honors 101 for Spring '10, on the following topic:

***Dude, What's My Gender Identity?***

***Tomboys, Girly Men, Chicas Bonitas, and Gangstas – Analyzing Masculinity and Femininity in Contemporary U.S. Cultures***

There seem to be more ways than ever to style yourself as a man or a woman – or to *do* your gender. Yet, ideas about essential differences between “man” and “woman” continue to hold great power in U.S. society. Our lives are shaped by how well each of us conforms to – or rejects – dominant notions of masculinity and femininity.

This course will analyze the role of gender as a central element among the complex and sometimes conflicting factors that shape identities. We will pay special attention to the ways that race, ethnicity, age, class, sexuality, and nation shape our gender identities and are shaped by them. We will study images of “man” and “woman” that are sold to us through advertising by corporations looking for our business, as well as representations of gender in literature, film, and television. We will consider as well how expectations about gender are tweaked – and sometimes turned inside out – in alternative music, zines, and other sub-cultural spaces.

This course will also examine theories of how people acquire gender and we'll discuss what is at stake in each model. For example, what are the implications of theories that womanliness or manliness is determined by biology? Do these theories rationalize gender inequality? Can they prove that sexual and romantic desire is biologically based, genetic, natural? What does it mean to say that gender is “socially constructed”? What does it mean to talk about gender as “performance”? Do contemporary psychoanalytic conceptions that *all* genders are products of unconscious desire and dread help us understand not only marginalized identities, but dominant gender identities as well? How are gender and sexuality linked?

We'll consider as well the on-going political work of feminist activists to challenge the social, political, and economic constraints that ideas about gender place on women. In this work we will always focus on the ways that other key identity factors, like race/ethnicity and class for example, have been used to shape hierarchies *among* both women and men. Lastly, we'll study efforts and insights of new organizations to eliminate gender altogether and to end gender-based violence that plays a critical role in maintaining the status quo.

Reading will include fiction and memoir as well as scholarly writing in the fields of biology, psychoanalysis, sociology, feminist theory, cultural studies, and history. Requirements include: regular short papers based on the reading, active participation in our lively seminar discussions, and a final research paper on a topic of special interest to each student. There are no prerequisites other than an interest in these subjects, a willingness to consider new ideas, and a respect for views other than your own.

## Honors 200-level Courses for Spring 2010

### **Honors 242**      *Cold War: The Asian View*

MW 4:00-5:15

*Prof. David Hunt, History*

The Cold War, which dominated international relations from 1945 to the late 1980s, is often portrayed as a bipolar confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. But it should also be seen as a phase in the twentieth-century history of all the world's peoples, who could not ignore and who and were often deeply affected by the clash between the great powers and who tried within the room for maneuver available to them to chart an independent course. Honors 242 examines the dialectic between big power politics, as embodied in the projects of the Americans and the Soviets, and aspirations for autonomy among Asian populations. It begins with an examination of events that brought about an end to World War II in the Pacific. From there we will turn to the post-war history of Japan up to 1952, when U.S. occupation of that country came to an end. We will also explore the histories of Korea and Vietnam, two countries occupied by the Japanese during the war, then rocked by revolutionary movements in August 1945, and profoundly affected in the following years by the efforts of U.S. leaders to combat what they took to be the threat of international communist totalitarianism. Throughout the semester, we will try to understand the ways that the American struggle against Asian revolutions helped to shape post-war life in the United States in ways that lasted throughout the Cold War era -- and down to the present day. Here is a (partial) reading list for the course: Gar Alperovitz, [The Decision to Drop the Atomic Bomb](#); David Marr, [Vietnam 1945](#); John Dower, [Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II](#). Students in Honors 242 will write three medium-length papers, each graded 25%, with the other 25% depending on classroom participation.

*This course can be used to fulfill a Humanities (HU) or Social/Behavioral distribution*

### **Honors 290 (1) Addiction**

MWF 12:00

*Prof. Alexia Pollack, Biology*

What is addiction? How do drugs such as methamphetamine, heroin and nicotine affect the brain and cause addiction? Why is addiction so difficult to cure? We will explore these fundamental questions by learning about the structure and organization of the brain, the mechanism of action of drugs of abuse, and the nature of changes that take place in the brain following exposure to drugs of abuse. There will be two lecture hours per week and one hour each week for student group work and class discussions. The reading materials include the course textbook, Psychopharmacology, and science articles from the New York Times and The Economist. In addition, we will be reading two non-fiction accounts of addiction: "Tweak" by Nic Sheff and "Beautiful Boy" by David Sheff (son and father). There will be four in-class examinations testing your knowledge and understanding of the underlying biology. There will multiple short (1-2 page) written assignments about the non-textbook reading materials. As a class, we will also develop and create an Addiction website geared towards educating Middle School students; each student in the class will be responsible for developing a piece of this web site. Please note: students MUST have a solid foundation in general biology (Bio 111 or the equivalent) prior to enrolling in this course.



*This course can be used to fulfill a Natural Science (NS) distribution requirement.*

## Honors 290 (2) *Revolutionary Ideas in Physics*

TuTh 9:30-10:45

Prof. Arthur Eisenkraft, *Physics*



Physics is a peculiar but highly successful way of looking at the world. Many people had seen apples fall from trees to the Earth, but it took an Isaac Newton to recognize that the Moon is also falling to the Earth but never hits. Most people think that everybody's clock goes tick-tock at the same rate. It took an Albert Einstein to predict that individual clocks can move forward at different rates.

Why do we believe in these strange ways of looking at the world? What do we accept as evidence that Newton and Einstein were right? In this introduction to physics, we will explore 15 revolutions in thought. We will use historical accounts to get a sense of the breakthroughs in thinking that led to these developments. We will conduct simple experiments to better understand the concepts underlying these models of looking at the world. We will explore why we are willing to give up common sense for predictive power.

New knowledge provides new metaphors which assist us in finding meaning in our lives. As our understanding of physics concepts grows, we will critique and develop metaphors in art and literature that gain new meaning through the interpretation of physics models.

*This course can be used to fulfill a Natural Science (NS) distribution requirement.*

## Honors 290(3) *Land, Law, and Indigenous Rights*

TuTh 11:00-12:15

Prof. Amy Den Ouden, *Anthropology*

Taking an interdisciplinary approach that draws from critical theory and empirical analyses in anthropology, law, indigenous studies, and political theory, this course will examine the construction of, and debates over, law and policy concerning the land rights of indigenous peoples from the early period of European colonization to the present. We will be concerned to understand the historical development of a discourse on indigenous rights in terms of both local and global articulations, and from the perspective of diverse indigenous peoples and nations--as well as specific indigenous land struggles--in the Americas, New Zealand, and Australia.



Beginning with the initial European invasion of Native lands in the Americas in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century we will investigate how indigenous rights were assessed, obscured, and denied by European international law and colonial governments. European conceptions of “the Other,” and more specifically of “savagery,” were integral to the imposition and enforcement of a hierarchical scheme of land rights--and ultimately human rights--throughout and beyond the colonial period. Thus we will critique U.S. “Indian law” as a colonially-rooted cultural formation that has worked to normalize domination and justify the dispossession of Native American peoples; concomitantly, we will examine the ways in which indigenous peoples have challenged, subverted, and accommodated the externally imposed policies and practices that have targeted their lands and livelihoods. In the final segment of the course, we will focus on the global indigenous rights movement, and particularly the ongoing efforts of indigenous activists, leaders, and scholars to establish a universal Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This course will be run as a seminar, so attendance is mandatory and consistent class participation is crucial. There will be four short (3-4 page) analytical response essays, a midterm exam, and a final research paper (8-10 pages). Our readings will be drawn from the works of indigenous and non-indigenous scholars and activists. Reading assignments will also include articles from academic journals and information from websites focused on indigenous rights issues.

*This course can be used to fulfill a Social and Behavioral Science (SB) distribution requirement.*

## **Honors 290 (4) *Feel Me: The Art and Science of Empathy***

TuTh 12:30-1:45

*David S. Areford, Art Department*

From debates about the negative impact of popular culture to the confirmation hearings of Supreme Court justice Sonia Sotomayor, *empathy* – that is, the ability to identify with another person and fully comprehend their situation and feelings – has been a hot topic of late. This course approaches empathy through both the sciences and the humanities in order to understand its parameters and its impact on human behavior, as well as the cultural products that we use to express and explain ourselves. To what degree is empathy a “natural” part of being human? In what ways do the arts reflect, frame, encourage, and inspire empathy? How is an empathetic response intrinsic to every artistic experience?

The course will be divided into three modules. In the first module, we will explore scholarly studies of empathy (in humans and animals) produced by psychologists and neuroscientists. The results of this scientific work suggest that human beings are “hard-wired” for empathy. Although such conclusions are compelling, they prompt a series of queries about the lack of empathy in light of ancient and modern atrocities, from genocide and terrorism to recent gang violence in the streets of Chicago. What role does culture play in defining and encouraging empathy as a learned behavior? What role is played by religions and political institutions? These questions will be treated more broadly in the second module, in which the visual arts will be explored as a key way in which we structure and model empathy. Indeed, images are often at the center of important societal shifts resulting from political and social activism, including campaigns against child labor, anti-war protests, and the Civil Rights movement. Beyond these specific and very public intersections of image and experience, there is a deep-seated and personal need for images as substitutes and simulations for the reality of human interactions. In this regard, art’s inherent fixation on beauty and form may be a hindrance more than a help. The course will explore a variety of case studies, from late-medieval paintings and prints of the Passion of Christ to the infamous photographs of the prisoners at Abu Ghraib. In module three, students will present the results of their final research projects which will expand the course content in multiple directions.

Readings will include scholarly and popular articles and books, including Susan Sontag’s *Regarding the Pain of Others* and Stephen Eisenman’s *The Abu Ghraib Effect*. Students will complete a variety of short writing assignments, including a reading journal and two short papers (one on artworks at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and the other on the films of Krzysztof Kieslowski). A final research paper will allow students to explore their own interests and questions in terms of the course themes. 15% of the final grade will be based on preparation and productive participation in class discussions.

*This course may be used to fulfill an Arts (AR), Humanities (HU), or Social Behavioral (SB) requirement.*

## Honors 290(5) Music of the People: Gustav Holst, Ralph Vaughan Williams and the Establishment of 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Music

TuTh 12:30-1:45

*Jon Mitchell, Music*



This course deals with the roles of composers Gustav Holst (1874-1934) and Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) assumed in breaking away from continental European romanticism in order to establish a unique 20<sup>th</sup> century sound in British music. It includes not only their music but also their roles as composers and educators in an ever-shifting society.

Issues to be discussed include the following: (1) What was the nature of the art music of the British Isles between the late eighteenth and early twentieth centuries? (2) What was musical romanticism and what was its influence in shaping British musical thought? (3) Regarding the first two issues, in what ways were Holst and Vaughan Williams victims and beneficiaries of the past? How did they deal with it? (4) What roles did Holst, Vaughan Williams and their contemporaries play in the ever-changing societal and technological world of 1895-1934, a time period that included the British colonization of the late nineteenth century, World War I, the Roaring 20's and the Great Depression? (5) What roles did they play in a musical world that witnessed in this same time period post-romanticism, impressionism, expressionism, and other experiments? Are there parallels to 21<sup>st</sup>-century happenings?

The course will be set up chronologically, with each session dealing with both composers and parallel works. For each session, we will listed, read, and discuss the topic at hand as well as a number of related subtopics. Students will do additional research on certain aspects of two of the above issues and write two comparison papers. The course grade will be based on the two papers, class discussion and a take-home final examination.

Primary sources will include biographies written by people close to the composers (Holst's daughter and Vaughan Williams' widow), as well as those by various experts in the field. Recordings of Host, Vaughan Williams, and their contemporaries will be made available through the Naxos Music Library database from Healey Library.

*This course may be used to fulfill an Arts (AR), Humanities (HU), or Social Behavioral (SB) requirement.*

# Honors 380 - The Junior Colloquia Offerings for Spring 2010

## Honors 380(1) Junior Colloquium

### *Process and Politics in the Archaeology of Native America*

Tu 2:00-4:30

*Stephen W. Silliman, Department of Anthropology*

This course introduces students to the process and politics of research through the consideration of a multidisciplinary, politically implicated field of inquiry: the archaeology of Native North America. The course assumes no prior background in archaeology or Native American history and culture. Instead, the goal is to examine fundamental questions about how we construct or acquire knowledge through the particular venue of Native American archaeology. We will consider a variety of questions. What is history, how is it made, and who gets to tell it? What role does archaeology play – that is, why dig at all? How do researchers like archaeologists come up with research questions, and what larger forces make certain questions more appropriate, controversial, or answerable? What explicit and implicit assumptions are brought into the research process? Similarly, the course will consider the role of intellectual debates in research and how they might be resolved with method, theory, or data. For North American archaeology, these have frequently revolved around topics like Pleistocene animal extinctions, origins and migrations, rise of political inequality, development of agriculture, and ideas about culture change and continuity in colonial periods. In addition, the course will outline the extra-disciplinary factors that influence, inspire, and “interfere with” research. How and when do our research practices and results matter to people, and how are we accountable to those publics? In the case of North American archaeology, we will explore this through the question of who “owns” the past and its various material products, focusing on issues like the trafficking in ancient objects, the repatriation of human remains under federal law, the storage and/or return of recovered artifacts, and collaborative archaeology with descendent communities.



## Honors 380(2)

## Junior Colloquium

### *Unnatural Selection: Songs, Stories, Statistics and the Process of Research*

W 12:00-2:50

*Dick Cluster, Honors Program*

For thousands of years, humans have made up songs, sung them, and twisted them into new forms. We've told and retold stories. We've measured and counted things for purposes of comparison. In the early twenty-first century, following an academic tradition, UMB Honors Program students are asked to do major research projects embodied in senior theses showing mastery of the techniques of their disciplines. I think all four of these processes have something in common:



- All try to apprehend (sense, study, understand) and reproduce certain pieces of human experience or pieces of the world around us.
- Each process follows its own rules, conventions, and/or criteria as far as what pieces of experience or observation to select, what facets of these pieces to focus on, which of our senses to use, what kinds of “language” (numerical and aural and visual as well as verbal) to use in their reproduction, and what kind of response to try to produce in the hoped-for audience.

This colloquium will alternate between, primarily, a study of songs, stories, and quantitative analyses as ways to make sense of the world, and secondarily, an inquiry into the nature of academic research.

In our examination of songs, stories, and statistics, I'll choose the first two themes and the accompanying material from each genre. I'll also assign criticism and commentary on the assigned songs, fiction, and quantitative essays. The subject areas I'm thinking about are: 1) U.S. slavery and its aftermath; 2) Love and romance. My choices will tend to reflect my own tastes and interests, including no doubt a generational component (expect some Dylan). But -- as an interviewer once put it to singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen -- “those who marry the spirit of their own generation risk becoming widowed in the next.” So for the rest of the course, you as members of the colloquium will contribute your own themes, examples, and critical material.

In our examination of academic research, a variety of UMB faculty will visit for brief presentations and Q&A about the whys, wherefores, and how-to's of their own research. Students will write “research autobiographies” examining your own history of doing academic and other investigations. In finding and reading critical material on our “texts” in the three genres, you'll need to decide what work by other scholars or researchers is useful to you, what is not, and why. Finally, as part of the final paper assignment (see below), you will go through a staged process of defining, redefining, pacing, and presenting your research projects.

Assignments will include: finding and presenting material to the class; leading class discussions; reflective writing; and a final written research project analyzing an issue of your choice using relevant songs, stories, statistical analyses, and critical writing about these “texts.”

Students who've taken my Honors 101 on academic and other discourses will recognize some of the concerns of this colloquium, but I expect that the methods here will be very different.