

UMBC Honors College

Seminars

Spring
2018

HONR 200-01: Hubris & Heroism: Three Quests for the 21st Century [7992]

Instructor: Steven McAlpine, Dept of Interdisciplinary Studies Thursdays 4:30-7pm; LIB 216M

Ancient myth through modern films such as *The Matrix* and *Harry Potter* tell the story of the ordinary man or woman who is called to an extraordinary journey. At the heart of our fascination with the heroic story is the belief that in each of us lies untapped potential to change the world, that we possess a latent power that only needs a call to action. Through the lenses of neuroscience (are we "hardwired" for heroic behavior?), psychology, mythology, philosophy (do heroes have a stronger ethical impetus?), theology and the arts, we will explore how the heroic journey is a necessary step in the construction of one's identity in order to answer the question, "who am I, and what am I called to do in the world?"

HONR 211: Great Books Seminar II [6721]

Instructor: Norman Prentiss, Independent Author Tues. 1-3:30pm; LIB 216M

This is a reading, writing, and discussion seminar. Each week we study a major work of literature produced in England, Ireland, France, Norway, Czechoslovakia, the US, among others; these include plays, novels, and short stories, all published between 1650 and 2000. We analyze characterization, plot, dialogue, setting, structure, theme, metaphor, and symbol. We ask the works to become our teachers. As we proceed, the books tend to entwine in a cultural field in which we meander: an inter-text, which they---and we---create together. Writing about literature and discussing it are arts in themselves, critical arts, which we endeavor to learn. Although we take up a large number of works in order to become acquainted with them, we read in as much detail as time permits. Our goal is never to reach consensus but rather to deepen our individual ways of engaging with each text and honing our interpretive skills.



HONR 300.01: US and International Climate Change Policy [2336]

Instructor: Ana Prados, Joint Center for Earth Systems Technology Mondays, 4:30-7pm; LIB 216M

This course examines climate change policy from a US and international perspective. The course includes an introduction to climate change science, policy and current social attitudes towards climate change, as well as an analysis of current climate change policy instruments (e.g., EPA regulation, the UN, and the Paris Agreement), carbon trading agreements, and renewable energy and transportation policy. We will also examine climate adaptation, equity considerations, and the future of climate change policy. The course will include visits to or from key legislators, regulatory agencies, and/or attending legislative sessions relevant to the class topics and student projects.



HONR 300-02: Biology of Obesity [5707]

Instructor: Sarah Leupen, Dept of Biological Sciences Mon/Wed 10:00-11:15am; ITE 241

Everyone has very specific ideas about obesity: what makes some people fat and some people thin, whose "fault" obesity is, the degree to which it is a personal vs. societal problem, and so on. In this course, we will explore the physiology of energy metabolism along with issues of psychology, human behavior, free will and consciousness, the food system and economics, and sociology and politics (among others) to gain a more nuanced and multi disciplinary view of obesity. Students will draw on these different disciplines in team work, reading responses, analysis of scientific papers and literature reviews. No prior experience in biology is required.

HONR 300-03: Race, Poverty, & Gender in Baltimore [5708]

Instructor: Jodi Kelber-Kaye, Honors College Wed. 4:30-7 pm; LIB 216M

Social categories of race, class and gender provide structure for and organize people's lives. These categories intersect with one another, reinforce one another's effects, and can, at the same time, cut against one another. In this course, we will explore how these main social categories operate in the lives of people living (or who lived) in Baltimore. We will first explore how race, class, poverty and gender are defined and then examine how they operate and interact within the context of Baltimore. As any city with a unique history, Baltimore provides a location through which we can examine social phenomena like block busting (neighborhood segregation), health disparities, food access, proliferation of crime and drugs, the judicial system, and more. Students will be engaged with projects in Baltimore. Some short papers and a longer final presentation/paper that incorporates the Baltimore work will be required.



HONR 300-04: Writing the 20th Century: Japanese Women's Autobiography [7958]

Instructor: Julie Oakes, Depts of Asian Studies and History TuTh 11:30am-12:45pm; LIB 216M

Female authorship has a long tradition in Japan, beginning over a thousand years ago with the invention of the kana syllabary--often referred to as the "woman's hand." This course takes as its foundation the notion that Japanese women, while not typically associated with the public sphere, have often served as Japan's historians through their autobiographical writings. Our focus is Japan's tumultuous twentieth century, which is often associated with war, peace and unprecedented economic growth. The women we will use as witnesses lived through these hallmark moments, but their stories allow us a more nuanced understanding of life during this century of unprecedented change. Throughout the semester we will read the autobiographies of one of Japan's first feminists, a Nihilist executed for her role in a plot to assassinate the emperor, Kyoto's last and most famous geisha, a witness to MacArthur's Occupied Japan, the daughter of a notorious yakuza gangster, and one of the twentieth century's most brilliant yet troubled artists.



HONR 300-05: Refugee and Migration Law [6331]

Instructor: Jeffrey Davis, Dept. of Political Science TuTh 1-2:15pm PUP 354

Right now almost 65 million people are fleeing their homes, driven away by persecution and wars--more than at any time since World War II. This seminar will engage the following questions: To what extent do international and domestic laws protect those fleeing their home country seeking refuge in another country? What is a refugee? What are the legal and political barriers to protecting refugees in the US? How do the legal systems in the US, UK and Germany treat those deemed to be undocumented immigrants? Also listed as POLI 439.

HONR 300-06: Civil Rights Literature [7256]

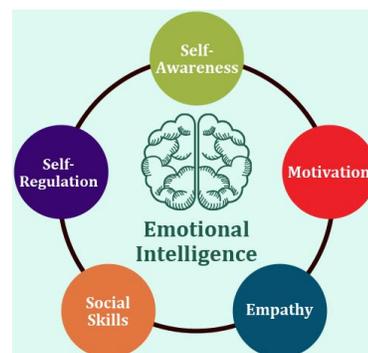
Instructor: Chris Varlack, Dept. of English Mon/Wed 10:00-11:15am LIB 216M

This course is aimed at expanding our knowledge and engagement with the civil rights debates by examining the speeches, essays, novels, stories and plays produced in response to inequities faced by underserved populations worldwide. This includes the struggle among African-Americans for equal protection under the law but also the struggle for young girls to receive an education in countries operating under a patriarchal system, among a variety of other interrelated issues.

HONR 300-07: Character is Destiny [8199]

Instructor: Simon Stacey, Honors College Th 1-3:30 pm: LIB216M

Emotional intelligence is increasingly being recognized as a crucial factor in professional and personal success and satisfaction. But measuring emotional intelligence, and figuring out which kinds of experiences (especially at universities) help develop it, is in its infancy. Almost all measurement of emotional intelligence relies on self-reporting (often unreliable) or observation (often time-consuming and expensive). In this experimental seminar, students will investigate emotional intelligence, and new ways to measure it, especially those that technology may make possible. We will review the research about the importance of emotional intelligence, and explore its various dimensions, as well as the work that has so far been done on measuring it. Students will learn the rudiments of learning assessment, and some basic research methodology. The culminating assignment of the course will be to choose (and justify the choice of) an aspect of emotional intelligence, and to develop, as far as possible, a novel tool or instrument to measure it.



HONR 300-08: Rhetoric at Work: Composing for the Professional World [8204]

Instructor: Chris Varlack, Dept. of English Mon/Wed 2:30-3:45 pm: LIB216M

This course will help students (a) identify their strengths, interests, ambitions, and goals and (b) prepare a portfolio of written materials to use for their professional futures, including applications to graduate and professional schools or internships and jobs. Students will develop a sense of the personal and professional paths and possibilities that they might want to consider. In addition, they will draw on established and state-of-the-art thinking about the process of writing and survey exemplary writing (such as conference proposals and scholarly articles) in a variety of fields in order to become familiar with the conventions, techniques, tools, and approaches to effective writing in the professional world. Ultimately, students will develop and revise a portfolio of work, from personal statements to research papers, reflection essays, and more while considering future avenues for research, presentation, and publication. In essence, this course will help students better understand rhetoric (the art of communication) from theory to practice. This course will satisfy the Honors College's Expository Writing class requirement for students who received AP or IB test credit for ENGL 100.

Honors College Applied Learning Experience Courses **See course schedule for details**

HONR 390: Reflections on Community Service Instructor: Jodi Kelber-Kaye

HONR 410: Honors Internship Instructor: Jodi Kelber-Kaye

HONR 400: Honors Independent Study Instructor: Jodi Kelber-Kaye