Fall 2022 Course Descriptions

Please refer to NOVASIS for the most up-to-date courses being offered in Honors for Fall 2022. Courses with the HON prefix, H sections (i.e.-H01), courses with Honors attributes on NOVASIS, and graduate courses count for Honors credit. Scheduling is not always correct, so you should always consult with NOVASIS for final course choices.

Honors Upper Level Elective Courses (3 credits)

**AAH 3009-H01  Material Culture & Art**

Dr. Tim McCall

*Attributes: Honors Seminar*

This seminar is an exploration of Material Culture through the lens of Art History and the recent ‘material’ turn in the Humanities. We cast our gaze on material culture and art long ignored by Art History – for instance the so-called decorative arts, plus a broad range of objects generated by and for the non-elite. This course engages with museum studies as well, and we consider the ways that objects are made, and displayed. We investigate various raw materials (and their cultural meanings), and we think through concepts such as materiality, stuff, fashion, things, and commodities to consider how objects and matter act and what sway they have on our lives. We will see that material culture does not merely reflect or illustrate history, but shapes it, and today activates and negotiates social networks and relations. We make things, but things make us.

We will examine how objects act (what agency they possess), what meanings we grant to or associate with them, and what demands they make on us. This course gives students the opportunity to critically examine the ideological frameworks and assumptions that underpin histories of art, objects, and things. Class readings range widely, both geographically and chronologically. Students are encouraged to apply lessons from the class to the historical materials, places, and problems that most interest them intellectually, and to engage both with today’s material culture and with that of the past. We will study, view, handle, and write about material culture of all sorts – from stuff in your dorm room to objects displayed in the Philadelphia Museum of Art – and we will speak to scholars and museum curators who do as well.
**HON 4800-001  THL: Shaping Adult Life**

Dr. Anna Moreland

*Attributes: Honors Seminar, Writing Enriched Requirement*

This course will address three main clusters around which students learn to shape an adult life: relationships, work, and leisure. The first segment on "relationships" will address how to find and maintain adult friendships. The "work" segment of the course will address issues in career and vocation as well as our attitudes toward money and possessions. The final segment of the course takes up the question of "leisure" in the modern world and asks how to feed the mind, body and spirit while building an adult life.

**HON 5700-001  PSC: Justice Seminar**

Dr. Emma Slonina

*Attributes: VSB Social/Natural Science, Honors Seminar, Peace & Justice, Political Science, Writing Enriched Requirement*

We talk a lot about justice, but we often seem to be talking past each other - especially when it comes down to specific questions of what is just in a certain situation. Is this because our overarching theories of justice are incompatible, or is this a symptom of some problem inherent to justice? In this class, we will examine different theories of justice, try to figure out if there’s such a thing as capital-J Justice, and apply different theories of justice to problems we are concerned about as contemporary citizens and human beings.

**PHI 2117-H01  HON: The Good Doctor**

Professor Sarah-Vaughan Brakman, PhD, HEC-C

*Attributes: Honors Seminar*

Medicine is an art as well as a science. The science is learned through study but the art must be learned through practice. What are fundamental components of the art of medicine? What are the habits of reasoning that lead to good diagnoses? What are the virtues of the good doctor and what does it take to become one? This course will focus on the culture of medicine, the process of becoming acculturated as a doctor, and the analysis of what dispositional attitudes are necessary for the moral practice of medicine. The course will draw on resources from philosophy of medicine and moral theory, as well as sociological data and theory, along with first person medical narratives to explore the themes of the course. Practicing physicians will visit throughout the semester to explore and share their practical wisdom on topics in the course.
PHI 2550-H01  Hon: Science, Tech, & Humanity

Drs. Angela DiBenedetto and Alan Pichanick

Attributes: Honors Seminar, Sustainability-Humanities Stem

We have now arrived at a critical moment in the history of scientific knowing and technological innovation. It is now possible, as a result of the progress we have made in uncovering the working mechanisms of the natural and physical world, that human nature itself will become an object not only of scientific inquiry, but of technological innovation as well. What does it mean for human beings to not only investigate human nature, but also to change it? What are the possible consequences? What kind of ethical principles should we use to justify our decisions about our human future? These questions demand not a technical discussion, but a philosophical one.

We hope to discuss these questions by first exploring science as a way of knowing and its relation (but not equivalence) to technological innovation. We then will examine in particular our pursuit of biotechnology as an instrument of human bettering or enhancement, by considering it under three aspects: the attitude it assumes; the means it employs; and ends it intends. This will lead to a discussion of personhood, love, and ethics in a futuristic (but not merely science-fiction) “post-human” world in which human beings may be enhanced in various ways to become “transhuman” (or more than human).

PSC 3165-H01  Black Politics

Frank Pryor

Attributes: Honors Seminar

This course is designed to provide undergraduate students with an overview of Black Politics and introduce several theories, approaches, and analyses of the African American predicament. This course also examines the dynamics of two of the most salient forms of Black Politics: protest activity and conventional electoral politics. There will be a special emphasis on the relevance of Black politics with the current emergence black activism following a Conservative political culture in the post-Civil Rights era as well as the significance of race-neutral politics practiced by the first African American President of the United States. Within this framework the course will analyze the character, functions, and influence of a new Black leadership, sociopolitical organizations, and examine the persistence of racial disparities in several public policy areas of significance faced by Black Americans.