Spring 2020 Honors College Course Offerings

Some reminders before you start:

- To graduate from the Honors College, you must have completed six HONR courses
- Unless you enrolled in Honors after your first semester, you are required to take:
  - HONR 104 Inquiry I
  - HONR 105 Inquiry II OR HONR 199 Symposium
  - HONR 132 Philosophy
  - HONR 145 Theology
  - Two of the four theme areas OR combination of theme areas / 0-credit study abroad (HONR 205, 206)
- Dr Roberts and Juliet are co-advisors along with those from your school. Feel free to make an appointment by emailing honorscollege@duq.edu if you need help.
- Enjoy that early registration benefit! 😊

HONORS INQUIRY II / SYMPOSIUM

HONR 105: Honors Inquiry II. 3 cr. This is the second of a two-semester course sequence focusing on a theme chosen by the Course Coordinator and approved by the Honors College. The 2020 Theme is “Memory and Revision.” Faculty from throughout the University will consider how that theme relates to their particular areas of research and expertise. Required "plenary" sessions will augment lectures and discussion. The course is intended to be taken in the student’s freshman year though other arrangements may be made for students whose courses of study do not permit this. This course OR HONR 199 (for qualifying students only) is required for all Honors College students who matriculate first semester freshman year.

Some HONR 105 faculty have offered descriptions for their individual sections:

- Dr. Jeffery Lambert – 01: Memory. Memory is an important subject in philosophy and psychology, with both fields offering diverse approaches to how it impacts our lives and our perception of the world. However, memory is first and foremost a personal experience. Therefore, this class will primarily use autobiographical writing assignments as a way to
interrogate the way one revises the past when given the task of retelling the past from one’s own unique perspective. This class will first investigate theories of memory from thinkers like Plato, Hume, and Merleau-Ponty. After this theoretical interrogation of memory, the course will focus on considering the impact of memory on autobiography; particularly in the cases of people of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community all of whom suffer social conditions which others might neither perceive nor remember or whose personal memories of self are inconsistent with society’s memory of them. In this way, by analyzing memory and revision in the construction of an autobiography, this class also addresses questions of identity and whether that identity is ever fixed or if it is always being revised.

- **Dr. Laura Engel – 02: Jane Austen and Popular Culture.** Jane Austen is everywhere. From film adaptations to youtube videos, action figures to pajamas, Austen’s writings, her legacy, and family history have now become a part of our cultural imagination. This course will consider Austen’s work in the context of popular culture. We will read Austen novels, and contemporary Austen spin-offs, watch film and television adaptations, and examine various Austen accessories, blogs, websites, and tourist attractions in order to ask why Austen’s narratives are still so engaging and relevant to 21st century audiences.

- **Dr. Kathy Glass – 03: August Wilson.** One of the most celebrated American playwrights of the 20th century, August Wilson (1945-2005) was known for his powerful renderings of African American culture, dialogue, and history. A Pittsburgh native and winner of two Pulitzer Prizes, Wilson wrote plays that enjoy enduring success among critics and audiences alike. This course highlights the Pittsburgh cycle, a group of ten major works (nine of which are set in Pittsburgh). Each play, seasoned with humor and grit, explores a critical issue facing black Americans throughout the twentieth century. Throughout the semester, students will read plays, analyze dramatic texts, write critical papers, listen to recordings, and discuss Wilson’s poignant masterpieces. In particular, this course will give you an opportunity to take the skills of persuasive academic writing that you developed in 104, and apply those skills to the analysis of dramatic literature.

- **Dr. Stuart Kurland – 04: Body and Mind in Shakespeare.** Building on ideas regarding human physiology and psychology, health, and disease going back to classical times, particularly those grounded in Hippocrates and Galen, this section of Honors Inquiry II will explore the plots and language of selected plays by William Shakespeare from the perspective of medicine. Topics for discussion, presentations, and essays, which will reflect modern as well as earlier health care practices and biomedical research, will reflect student interests. Possible topics may include ideas of the human, the natural and unnatural, sex and gender, human development and decline, life and death, wellness and disease, normality and deformity, personality formation, character, and race and identity—as well as more specialized topics like sexual desire, madness, hallucination, memory, and venereal disease. This class is not intended specifically for students in the College of Liberal Arts; the issues we will address may be of interest to students from
other schools, particularly Bayer, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Rangos. No specific prior knowledge of Shakespeare or English literature is assumed.

- Dr. James Purdy – 05: The Multiliteracies of Social Media, Gaming, and Virtual Worlds. A popular refrain of some politicians and the media is that time spent online—be it writing posts on social media, gaming, or participating in virtual worlds—disrupts social relationships, encourages violence, promotes poor communication skills, or, at best, wastes time. But what if there were beneficial outcomes of these activities? What if tweeting, gaming, and face booking were good for you? Operating from the belief that rich, extracurricular digital lives can promote effective literate practices, this course will engage you in analyzing and producing texts for the social media, gaming, and virtual worlds you inhabit.

HONR 199: Honors Symposium – Tutorial. 0 cr. With participation in the Undergraduate Research Symposium in April, honors students are permitted to receive honors credit for non-honors courses or in order to transfer an AP or CHS course from high school that fulfills the UCOR literature requirement. This course requires consultation and approval of the Honors College Director.

HONORS PHILOSOPHY

HONR 132: Honors Philosophy. 3 cr. Philosophy, the love of wisdom, is a discipline for discussing basic questions about ourselves and our world. Students read and discuss selected works by major figures throughout the history of philosophy; they are encouraged to think critically and to formulate their own answers to perennial philosophical questions. This course is required for all Honors College students. Lecture. CPHI.

- Dr. Zach Slanger - 01: Fictions, Fantasies, Fables, and Fibs: The Dissonant Structure of Truth. In this tutorial course, we will grapple with the difficult and fraught relation between truth and fiction. As narrating and narrativizing animals, we only ever access truth through fiction; truth is always mediated by and in fiction for human beings. This has implications of immense importance not only for philosophy, but also for literature, history, anthropology, sociology, politics, psychology, and art, in short, for the entirety of the humanities and human sciences. In order to explore this relationship, we will read, discuss, and apply philosophical and theoretical texts that address this paradox of the human condition:
  - Plato’s productive tension in the Republic between his expulsion of all artists and representers from his perfect city and his simultaneous use of fables, lies, allegories, similes, imagery, and myths to advance his argument
  - Oscar Wilde’s lament for the decay of lying in modern times and his claims that life and nature imitate art, rather than the other way around
  - Roland Barthes’s views on the mythologies that structure modern social life
- Friedrich Nietzsche’s arguments regarding the metaphorical nature of truth and knowledge and his typology of historical understanding
- Various visions of the future in utopian literature, philosophy, and politics
- Sigmund Freud’s theories about the structural role of fantasy in everyday life
- Performance studies’ stances on the roles played by narrative, performance, and representation in the social construction of identity
- Cindy Sherman’s illustration of the coincidence between identity, image, and imagination in her *Untitled Film Stills*

In addition to reading assignments, we will be developing a praxis of expressing truth through fiction in several creative projects in written and other media. The course will be more or less evenly divided between reading days, during which we discuss the readings and how they might be put into practice, and workshop days, during which students share with one another their projects and the results of their praxis.

• **Dr. Zach Slanger -02: Fictions, Fantasies, Fables, and Fibs: The Dissonant Structure of Truth.** In this tutorial course, we will grapple with the difficult and fraught relation between truth and fiction. As narrating and narrativizing animals, we only ever access truth through fiction; truth is always mediated by and in fiction for human beings. This has implications of immense importance not only for philosophy, but also for literature, history, anthropology, sociology, politics, psychology, and art, in short, for the entirety of the humanities and human sciences. In order to explore this relationship, we will read, discuss, and apply philosophical and theoretical texts that address this paradox of the human condition:

- Plato’s productive tension in the *Republic* between his expulsion of all artists and representers from his perfect city and his simultaneous use of fables, lies, allegories, similes, imagery, and myths to advance his argument
- Oscar Wilde’s lament for the decay of lying in modern times and his claims that life and nature imitate art, rather than the other way around
- Roland Barthes’s views on the mythologies that structure modern social life
- Friedrich Nietzsche’s arguments regarding the metaphorical nature of truth and knowledge and his typology of historical understanding
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• **Dr. Fred Evans -03: Philosophy and Global Unity in a World of Diversity.** The course will revolve around three major thinkers in the history of Western philosophy: Plato, Marx, and Nietzsche, but with lectures to fill in some of the historical gaps between ancient and modern philosophy. We will also read an important recent book on “cosmopolitanism,” that is, global amity. We will ask: which of the three philosophers provides the most promising basis or political ethics for unifying the diverse peoples and other inhabitants (animals, natural formations) of the globe? There are, of course, many twists and turns in the way I’ve formulated the question; and part of our task will be to sort them out.

Evaluation of student work will be based on your papers and/or in-class exams, one-page responses to selected “guide questions” intended to help you master the readings, a term paper linking our three philosophers and cosmopolitanism, participation in class discussions, and attendance. The books required for the course are listed below.

• **Dr. Fred Evans – 04: Philosophy and Global Unity in a World of Diversity.** The course will revolve around three major thinkers in the history of Western philosophy: Plato, Marx, and Nietzsche, but with lectures to fill in some of the historical gaps between ancient and modern philosophy. We will also read an important recent book on “cosmopolitanism,” that is, global amity. We will ask: which of the three philosophers provides the most promising basis or political ethics for unifying the diverse peoples and other inhabitants (animals, natural formations) of the globe? There are, of course, many twists and turns in the way I’ve formulated the question; and part of our task will be to sort them out.

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**HONORS THEOLOGY**

**HONR 145: Honors Theology. 3 cr.** Theology faculty offer classes each term based upon the faculty member's particular area of expertise and research interest. This course is required for all Honors College students and is only open to them. **Lecture.**

• **Fr. Radu Bordeianu – 01: Jesus Through the Centuries.** We will attempt an investigation into the identity of Jesus the Christ. We will insist on his Jewish, human, and divine identities as portrayed in the Bible, as well as visual representations of Jesus in various historical, geographical, and socio-political contexts by focusing on works of art through the centuries.

• **Dr. Bogdan Bucur-02: Early Christianity: History, Doctrines, and Practices.** The first five centuries represent, arguably, the most fertile era in the history of Christianity. Although it
started as an insignificant Jewish sect, was plagued by divisions within and confronted with a hostile and powerful political, social and cultural establishment, the Christian movement managed to survive and to thrive. It eventually engulfed the Empire, irreversibly shaped the language and mentalities of Antiquity, creatively altered the best that Greek philosophy had to offer, built institutions that endure to this day, created a rich material and spiritual culture, and marked a major turning point in human history.

In this course we examine the way in which early Christians articulated their theological claims by reworking doctrines, imagery, and exegetical, ascetical, and liturgical practices inherited from the rich and complex matrix of Second Temple Judaism; the creative adoption and adaptation of Greek philosophy and Roman jurisprudence; the effort to define doctrinal orthodoxy in opposition to heresy (especially dualistic and modalistic conceptions of the divinity); the gradual crystallization of a “holistic” view of self, the world, and God, in which biblical exegesis, doctrine, liturgy, and the inner life mirror, sustain, and determine each other.

- **Dr. James Bailey - 03:**

- Dr. Kevin Mongrain - 04: **Honors World Religions. What is a “religion”?** What are the major religions in the world? How do we understand them according to their own perspectives and historical experiences? These are some of the core questions we will answer in this course. The focus of the course is on introducing students to the major religions of human history (Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) and giving them the resources to continue reading, observing, and learning about the world’s religions for the rest of their lives. The aims of the course are: (a) develop a sophisticated understanding of the questions that arise when contemporary people discuss world religions; (b) form an appreciative contextual understanding of how different religions developed and how they understand the meaning of life and their role in history; and (c) begin thinking about the possible relevance of understanding world religions for living in this contemporary world of class struggle in a high technology economy, war, terrorism, global warming, and other the 21st century issues.

**THEME AREA: FAITH AND REASON**

**HONR 201: Honors Seminar in Faith and Reason. 3 cr.**

- **Dr. Jeffery Lambert - 01: Faith and Reason.** Faith and reason are sometimes understood as opposites; in this understanding, faith is often viewed as inferior to reason – Why take something on faith when reason provides certainty? However, this view significantly undercuts
the value of faith and overestimates reason’s ability to consistently provide certainty. This class will follow one of two main tracks (or some combination) based on student voting: The class will either focus on thinkers like Søren Kierkegaard and Albert Camus who discuss the relationship between faith and reason rather than compare and contrast their value and/or the class will consider the more pragmatic ways in which we all use a combination of faith and reason in our everyday lives. Either way, the goal of this course is to understand how faith and reason function collaboratively in our lives.

- **Dr. Kathleen Glenister Roberts – 55: What is Time?** This Faith and Reason course is taught in a tutorial format. We will take a multidisciplinary approach to the question “What is Time?” Course materials will represent perspectives from the natural sciences, philosophy, theology, anthropology and other cultural studies, and rhetoric. Students are evaluated on their contributions to tutorial sessions, short essays, and a group digital humanities project. This course fulfills the university core curriculum theme area in Faith and Reason (TAFR). **All students in this course must also enroll in a section of HONR 301.**

**THEME AREA: GLOBAL DIVERSITY**

**HONR 202: Honors Seminar in Global Diversity. 3 cr.**

- **Dr. Eduardo Ruiz – 01: Honors Seminar in Global Diversity - Mexican American/Chicano Literature (taught by Dr. Eduardo Ruiz).** The focus of this course is the analysis of history, culture, and literature of the Latin@/Chican@ experience in the United States. Issues of gender, race, national origin, and social class act together to shape marginalized groups in constant struggle to adapt and, at the same time, to preserve their cultural traits. The observed pattern of strategies of assimilation and resistance characterizes these communities as they negotiate their place in new cultural and linguistic environments.

- **Dr. Emad Mirmotahari – 02: Trends in Modern and Contemporary World Literature.** This class will use literary texts to explore the social and historical experiences of varying communities around the world. We will examine why and how literature is a useful and powerful tool to “listen” to, write, represent, and to engage the cultural, material, and political realities that connect us all over the world. Some of the topics we'll explore include globalization, migration, and collective trauma.
THEME AREA: SOCIAL JUSTICE

HONR 203: Honors Seminar in Social Justice. 3 cr.

- Dr. Eric Garrett - 55: Community Engagement Tutorial: August Wilson House. This course approaches social justice issues such as community trauma, poverty, and inequity head-on by working side-by-side with community members in the Hill District. The crux of the course is in event planning and community organizing; students will participate in the creation of events and art enrichment plans for August Wilson House. It is a tutorial, meeting for one hour per week during regular semester weeks of class. Students must also enroll in HONR 313 (0 credits).

- Dr. Nancy Pfenning – 61: Patients in Literature’s Pages. What does the novel Hunger, written by Norwegian Nobel prize-winner Knut Hamsun and published in 1890, have in common with Chapter 24 of Laura Ingalls Wilder’s book The Long Winter, written fifty years later? Both present wrenching accounts of the effects of starvation on the human mind and body. What do these works have in common with scientific reports on the effects of starvation? That remains to be seen, as students in this course explore symptoms of medical conditions from two very different types of source: portrayed compellingly in works of literature versus reported dispassionately in scientific articles. Both have their place in how we come to understand human mental and physical health, and serve to remind us that much can be learned from personal anecdotes, such as those from patients. We also see that a better understanding of a condition or disease goes hand in hand with a sense of empathy, which can play a critical role in people’s recovery.

Each week features presentations by two students, each of whom reports on what has been learned about the particular medical condition via those two types of work, then leads a class discussion afterwards. Specific topics include autism, war PTSD, screen addiction, OCD, cancer, Alzheimers, anorexia, and more. All the reading materials are loaned to class members free of charge for the duration of the semester. Most of the assigned works are short stories or excerpted chapters, as opposed to entire novels.

HONR 448W: Dr. Kristen Coopie and President Gormley- 01: American Presidents and the Constitution:
This class will examine the intersection between the presidency and the Constitution through a unique lens. During the 226-year history of the American Republic, each of the 44 men who have occupied the presidency has dealt with constitutional issues and crises that helped to define his tenure. Unlike most courses dealing with presidential powers that are organized by topics – e.g., domestic powers, war powers, foreign affairs, etc. – this course (and the related text) is arranged chronologically by president, from Washington to Obama. It examines constitutional issues confronting each president in the context of historical events taking place in the United States at the time. Key questions regarding the meaning of constitutional provisions and broad themes – such as race, war powers, national security, gender, etc. –
that have run across multiple presidencies are linked together to show how historical events during one presidency interrelate with and shape events in later administrations.

THEME AREA: CREATIVE ARTS

HONR 204: Honors Seminar in Creative Arts. 3 cr.

• Dr. Daniel Selcer-02: Thinking Through Art. What is art, and can it do to us or for us? In this class, we’ll explore and apply the tools of philosophical aesthetics and criticism to ask questions about art in relation to sensation, thought, and judgment as well as image, sound, and concept. We’ll first consider traditional aesthetic notions such as mimesis (representation or imitation), catharsis (release or purification), and kallos (beauty) by engaging the primary texts that articulate them, reaching back to the ancient Greek philosophical tradition and thinkers of the European Enlightenment. We’ll then turn to contemporary thinkers who critically engage the core intuitions behind classical aesthetics by considering how race, class, gender, and sexuality bear on aesthetics as well as considering the impacts of new technologies for artistic production (from the reproductive print to photography, cinema, digital-images, and the explosion of possibilities for aesthetic communication offered by new media platforms). We’ll also think through challenges associated with the fraught relationship between art and money; the possibility of using art to intervene in public space and collective discussion; and relationships between artistic and political representation. The course requires active participation in discussion, a reflection journal, an analytical paper, visits to various Pittsburgh art spaces (galleries, museums, studios, public installations, etc.), and a scaffolded final project connected with an on-campus art exhibition collectively organized by students in the class.

• Dr. Edward Kocher-03: Enjoyment of Music – Pittsburgh LIVE. This course leads to an understanding of how music’s basic elements, melody, harmony, rhythm and form, are used to communicate the composer’s expressive intent. The Enjoyment of Music: Pittsburgh Live is an experiential class. We will listen to a wide variety of music, and we will attend live performances on and off campus. There are four evening performances that meet outside of class time.

• Dr. Judith Bowman-55: Music, Language, & the Brain. This online course, with an associated tutorial meeting, investigates how we make sense of, and gain meaning from, music and language. It includes relevant concepts from the fields of music, music psychology, linguistics, cognitive neuroscience, and aesthetics. Readings and discussions focus on themes common to music and language, and highlight commonalities and differences. Themes include sound,
rhythm, and melody; symbol systems and meaning; music and language in the brain; and communication in music and in speech. With Tutorial sections as below:

- HONR 304-01, 0 credits, M 10-10:50 am. 221 COLH. Bowman, J
- HONR 304-02, 0 credits, W 10-10:50 am 221 COLH. Bowman, J

FOR SPRING BREAKAWAYS AND STUDY ABROAD:

HONR 205: Honors International Study Abroad I. 0 cr. Honors College students are strongly encouraged to study abroad. This online course structures reflection about the transformational nature of international study and how to effectively translate this transformation to future graduate school and employment opportunities. Students will complete a blog or journal as the assignment for the course. Concurrent enrollment required for Honors College students pursuing Honors College credit for one course during Study Abroad.

HONR 206: Honors International Study Abroad II. 0 cr. Honors College students are strongly encouraged to study abroad. This online course structures reflection about the transformational nature of international study and how to effectively translate this transformation to future graduate school and employment opportunities. Students will complete a creative reflective project as the assignment for the course. Concurrent enrollment required for Honors College students pursuing Honors College credit for a second course during Study Abroad.

FOR STUDENTS WHO ENROLLED IN HONORS COLLEGE AFTER FIRST SEMESTER:

HONR 275: Advanced Honors I. 0 cr. This course allows students to earn HONR credits for non-honors courses with the completion of independent projects, culminating in a portfolio of work. ASSIGNMENT: PROFESSIONAL BLOG

HONR 375: Advanced Honors II. 0 cr. This course allows students to earn HONR credits for non-honors courses with the completion of independent projects, culminating in a portfolio of work. ASSIGNMENT: PUBLIC-FACING INFORMATIONAL PIECE

HONR 475: Honors Portfolio. 0 cr. This course allows post matriculation honors students to earn HONR credits for non-honors courses with the completion of independent projects, culminating in a portfolio of work. ASSIGNMENT: COMPILE E-PORTFOLIO
FOR HONORS FELLOWS AND ENDOWED FELLOWS:

**HONR 295: Honors Research.** 0 cr. Prereq: Permission of Honors College Director. This course allows students to earn HONR credits for non-honors courses with the completion of independent projects, usually in the context of their Honors Fellowship.

**HONR 395: Honors Fellowship.** 0 cr. Prereq: Permission of Honors College Director. This course attaches to non-honors courses to designate honors credits resulting from reasonable progress toward an independent Honors Fellows project.

**HONR 495: Advanced Honors Symposium.** 0 cr. Prereq: Permission of Honors College Director. This course attaches to non-honors courses to designate honors credits resulting from completion of an independent Honors Fellows project. Students enrolled in this course are required to present their finished research at a research symposium, either at Duquesne University or at a professional academic meeting off-campus.

FOR SPECIAL CASES (WE MEAN THAT LOVINGLY):

**HONR 300: Honors Directed Readings.** 1-9 cr. Students engage in independent study and research with a faculty mentor. Permission from the Honors College director required. May be repeated for up to 9 hours credit. **Readings.**

**HONR 450: Honors Senior Project.** 3 cr. This course is an independent study, under the direction of a faculty member, within the student’s major field of concentration or other area of personal interest. The Senior Honors Project produces a work of significant scholarship or creativity, as defined by the discipline in which the study is pursued.