Fall 2015 Honors Program Courses

HON 292 Censorship: Banned Books
TuTh 12:30 - 1:45 p.m.  (3 cr., ES=SS; class #8480)
Sam Gruenberg

In 2013, the American Library Association reported that there were over 300 challenges to various books on grounds that the particular books contained “offensive language,” were “sexually explicit,” or that the books were “unsuitable for age group.” Who is asking for books to be challenged or banned? What motivates organizations and individuals to ban books? What sorts of books or subject matter will find itself subject to controversy? These questions, and many more, will be discussed in this course as we investigate broader issues of censorship and free speech and as we read books that have been challenged or banned.

HON 291 Scholarships & Career Planning
MW 3 - 4:15 p.m.  (1 cr., ES=HUM; class #8473)
Joan Hawthorne  Meets: Sept. 14 - Oct. 23

This course provides first and second year students with hands-on preparation for scholarships and career planning. Students who complete this course will have developed plans for their progress through the academic, extracurricular, and personal growth opportunities available during college. They will have charted tentative paths for post-college, and clarified strategies regarding graduate school and/or starting a career. They will have gained insight into how people in gatekeeping roles (i.e., those who award scholarships, sit on grad program entrance committees, act in a hiring capacity) view various application strategies and tactics. Students who aim to prepare themselves for scholarship competitions will develop the skills and knowledge to do so. Those who aim for top opportunities for internships, grad schools, or careers will be similarly better prepared.

HON 393: Books You Should Read: And the Band Played On
T 3:30 - 4:20 p.m.  (1 cr, ES=MST; class #8481)
Sally Pyle

And the Band Played On by Randy Shilts is a critically acclaimed expose of how and why the US HIV/AIDS epidemic of the early 1980’s was allowed to spread unchecked as our health institutions ignored, or denied, the threat posed by this disease. Randy Shilts, an investigative reporter, brings to light how assumptions and bias delayed action on this disease, which is still spreading. We will look beyond the book to see how HIV and AIDS has affected Africa, the country of origin. Be aware, there are topics involved in this class that some people may find disturbing. If you feel you cannot be open minded towards the victims of HIV and AIDS then I do not recommend taking this course.

Honors 392: Books You Should Read: College (Un)bound
MW 2 - 2:50 p.m.  (1 cr, ES=SS; class #8472)
Emily Hill  Meets: Aug. 24 - Oct. 16

What is the value of a college degree if it leaves you with few job prospects in a tough economy and buried in debt? College (Un)bound asks the burning question on every prospective student, parent, and new grad’s mind. Student-loan debt in the United States crossed the $1 trillion mark in 2011. To say that the cost of a four-year college education is inflated on many campuses would be an understatement—and that education bubble is about to burst. Jeffrey J. Selingo, editor at large for The Chronicle for Higher Education and senior fellow at Education Sector, argues that America’s higher education system is broken and that the great credential race has transformed universities into big business. In this class, we will explore these issues as well as watch the 2014 documentary Ivory Tower that also questions the cost and value of a higher education in the United States. Through this class, we will try to answer the complicated question, “Does college matter?”

HON 382: Politics of Normal: Genocide, Cleansing and Segregation
MWF 10 - 10:50 a.m.  (3 cr, ES=SS & G; class #16620)
Linda Baeza-Porter

This course will look at how standard it is for human societies to use the power of ‘Normal’ to align atrocities with justice, liberty, and cultural survival. During the course we will explore not only the way that ‘Normal’ comes to be but, how ‘Normal’ impacts human political thought. We will explore this idea through history, memoir, and film.

HON 391: Imagining the Ancient World
TR 11 - 12:15 p.m.  (3 cr, ES=HUM; class #12351)
Burt Thorp

We will imagine the Ancient World by studying stories the ancients told—legends, folktales, myths, and epic narratives—in historical context. Selected readings will come from Ancient Greece, Ancient India, and the Ancient Near East. Our goal is to experience a connection with ancient minds, through close reading of texts and the use of historical imagination. A key topic will be values, where they intersect or overlap our own thinking and where they diverge. The course is thus a hybrid: history, literature, religion, mythology, and historical linguistics.
HON 391: Fairy Tales and Folklore, (3 cr, ES=HUM; class #8474)
MWF 1:00-1:50 p.m., Merie Kirby

Once upon a time people told each other stories to pass the time while doing evening chores and tasks. Adults told the stories, adults listened to the stories, and children who were, perhaps, supposed to be sleeping, listened too. Folk figures and fairy tales – John Henry, changelings, Snow White, Ashenputtel (you know her as Cinderella) – have been foundational to the imaginations of many authors and artists. The tales collected by the Brothers Grimm, those written by Charles Perrault and Hans Christian Andersen and others, drive our imagination in ways we don’t always recognize. In this class we’ll read early written versions of the tales, later versions, and modern interpretations, in addition to looking at how these tales appear in modern culture, and what our culture’s retellings might tell us about the times we live in. Our objectives and goals include gaining greater familiarity with a wider range of stories, including multiple versions of classic tales; seeing how tales and folk figures change over time and how these changes might relate to greater social and historical changes; and asking questions about the nature of fairy tales (are they progressive or do they promote the status quo? Are they really just for children?).

HON 395 - 01: Prospectus Development (1 cr., No ES; class #8469),
Mo 12:00PM - 12:50 p.m., Sally Pyle

Are you a junior considering writing an Honors thesis in the next year? While the notion of an extended senior project may seem overwhelming initially, the first step to a successful thesis is developing a sound prospectus, which is what this course is designed to help you do. In brief, Hon 395 will: help you gather your thoughts on thesis processes; suggest strategies for writing your prospectus (mapping crucial background information, developing a methodology, and clarifying the focus of your thesis, and so on); and engage you in some preliminary research. This course is recommended for students who plan on writing a thesis next year.

HON 489
Senior Honors Thesis
(ES=A,C), Sally Pyle

HON 399 Independent Study
TBA (1-4 cr., No ES; class #8470),
Sally Pyle
Form available on the Honors website.

HON 301 Honors Mode
TBA (1 cr., No ES; class #8477),
Sally Pyle
Can be used to enhance a course you are already taking by adding an extra “Honors” component. (Prerequisite: Standard course which Honors Mode complements; see department for approval.)

HON 250 - 01 Sophomore Portfolio Workshop
We 12:00 - 12:50 p.m. (1cr., No ES; class #8475), Robin David
HON 250 - 02 Sophomore Portfolio Workshop
Th 11:00 - 11:50 a.m. (1cr., No ES; class #8476), Sam Gruenberg

Classes meet August 24 - October 16

Are you ready to become a Full Member of the Honors Program? Are you wondering what the SHP really entails? The course gives SHP writers a chance to polish submissions by discussing and revising in peer groups. This eight-week class is open to all students planning to submit a portfolio.