

College-Wide Programs

Honors Program

Faculty: Arvanitis, Ball, Bennett, Carney, Compte, Dawley, Dickinson, Dumas, Fenwick, Fichner-Rathus, Friedman, Graham, Harrod, Ismail, Kamber, Knobler, Konkle, Landreau, LeMorvan, Li, McCauley, Naples, Pollio, Preti, Riccardi, Rockel, Rosman-Askot, Sepahpour, Smits, Steinberg, Sullivan, Tarter, Waterhouse, Winston, S. Wright

The purpose of the College's Honors Program is to provide enhanced challenge to excellent students, to develop these students' analytical and creative abilities, and to recognize significant academic achievements. Honors courses explore central themes in the development of civilization and the interrelations of world cultures. They meet liberal learning requirements, so honors students complete part of their requirements with courses exclusive to the Honors Program.

Prerequisite for all honors courses: Membership in the Honors Program or permission of instructor.

Students should take no more than two Honors courses in any semester.

Courses marked "interdisciplinary" below are team taught.

Requirements to Complete the Honors Program

- A. Five course units of HON courses, at least three course units outside the major. Up to three course units of Departmental Honors may apply. Consult the Director of the Honors Program in selecting courses.
- B. Cumulative grade point average: 3.0 or better.
- C. Average in honors courses: 3.0 or better.
- D. Foreign language proficiency: Third-semester college proficiency in any language, by course credit, proficiency examination, or high-school equivalency.

CHE 201H, 202H/Honors General Chemistry I, II

2 course units

(annually)

(formerly HON 201, 202)

A presentation of the laws and principles describing states of matter and the energy relationships among them. Practical applications of chemistry in such areas as organic, nuclear, biochemical, and environmental are included as are the historical and philosophical relationships between chemistry and other disciplines. Laboratory experiments are coordinated with the lectures.

HON 203/Issues in Philosophy

1 course unit

(every semester)

Study of several major philosophical issues such as: the nature of reality, the existence of God, free will, knowledge, and morality. Explores ways of rationally evaluating classical and contemporary arguments supporting different positions on those issues. Students learn to develop and defend their own views on the issues. Students taking this course may not also take PHL 100.

ECO 101H/Honors Principles of Economics: Micro

1 course unit

(annually)

(formerly HON 207)

An introduction to the analysis of price determination in product and resource markets under various market structures within the parameters set forth in a capitalistic system. A research paper is required.

- ECO 102H/Honors Principles of Economics: Macro** **1 course unit**
(annually)
(formerly HON 208)
An analysis of economic concepts and their application in an increasingly interdependent global economy. Contemporary problems of unemployment, inflation, and economic growth are considered. The role of government, especially fiscal and monetary policy, is discussed. Students taking this course may not also take ECO 102.
- HON 210/Women in Art and Literature** **1 course unit**
(alternate years)
Examination of major figures and works in women's art and literature. Comparison of women's productions in these media to determine common approaches, themes, and social/political concerns. Consideration of women's aesthetics and their male counterparts in a historical and political framework. Interdisciplinary.
- HON 212/Sex, Class, and Race: America in the 20th Century** **1 course unit**
(alternate years)
An examination of the ways sex, class, and ethnicity define, explain, and interpret American society through such disciplines as history, literature, and sociology. Interdisciplinary.
- HON 214/20th-Century International Women's Literature** **1 course unit**
(alternate years)
A historical, sociological, and psychological investigation into the role of women as examined by 20th-century women authors from different countries and cultural backgrounds. Consideration of how feminist perspectives on family, home, work, motherhood, emancipation, violence, and war are perceived and treated by women from different cultures and traditions. Interdisciplinary.
- HON 216/The Sociological Perspective** **1 course unit**
(annually)
Exploration of what makes social solidarity possible, how society shapes our sense of self, how social institutions such as religion, education, economy, and family affect our lives, and how society changes. Students taking this course may not also take SOC 101.
- HON 220/African Diaspora: Religion and Culture** **1 course unit**
(alternate years)
An analysis of the Caribbean, Latin America, and North America. The centrality of African religious values and world view to the sacred and secular expressions of the four locales, African religion's fusion with the cultural norms of Europe and the Americas, and the interrelationship of these values to African - people's "quest for freedom" will be stressed.
- HON 230/Islam in Comparative Perspective** **1 course unit**
(alternate years)
Background and formation of doctrine, law, beliefs, and practices; the life of the Prophet Muhammad; the nature and function of the Qur'an; Islamic mysticism; major movements and trends in renewal and reform. The dialogue between Islam and other traditions.
- HON 243/International Studies** **1 course unit**
(annually)
An examination of traditional, modern, internal, and external influences on Asian, African, and Latin-American societies in various stages of economic and political development since 1945.

HON 260/Crime and Punishment in Literature**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

Examination of the history of crime and punishment as revealed in literary works spanning Western civilization. Study of the relationships and conflicts between individual conscience and legal codes, legal and moral crimes, and crime and social value; exploration of the ethical issues suggested by these conflicts and relationships.

HON 270/Human Rights**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

An analysis of the historical development and philosophical basis of the concept of human rights. Among the central questions treated in the course are: What are human rights? What justifies the claim that there are such rights? What specific rights are included among the basic human rights? What are the major human rights problems in the world today?

HON 272/Philosophy of Religion**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

An examination of various topics connected with religious belief including the definitions, types, and the extent and nature of religious belief, plus the grounds of religious belief. Students taking this course may not also take PHL 250.

HON 280/Creative Computing**1 course unit**

(annually)

An examination of the outer limits of the nature and capabilities of the computer. Producing and creating music, art, and literature using a computer. The computer and the mind, artificial intelligence, programs that learn. Explorations, simulations, and experiments using a computer. No prior computer programming experience presumed.

HON 302/Political Argumentation**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

The course is designed to prepare the citizen to judge the quality of arguments advocating public policies. Students will study and practice a variety of methods from the policy sciences, political theory, and rhetoric for evaluating the factual and value statements composing political argumentation. Numerous case studies will be examined.

HON 311/The Passing of the Indian in the 19th Century United States**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

From the viewpoint of the Indians, the course will survey the harassment, dispossession, and the near extermination of diverse 19th-century Native American societies by the invading European-Americans.

HON 316/Environmental Quality and Public Policy**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

Prerequisite: Junior standing or permission of instructor

An analysis of major environmental problems and related public policies that demand a global perspective. The study of culturally shaped environmental attitudes, applied to extant and potential future conditions, will permit appreciation of other cultures' needs and value systems and their attendant public policies.

HON 321, 322/Honors Organic Chemistry I, II**2 course units**

(annually)

Prerequisite: Honors General Chemistry or General Chemistry with permission of the instructor
A study of organic chemistry exploring modern concepts of bonding, synthesis, and reactivity with emphasis on computer-aided molecular modeling and spectroscopic methods including NMR, IR, and MS.

HON 326/Frames of Thought

1 course unit

(alternate years)

This course explores the strengths and limitations of natural automatic problem-solving processes of the mind, and explains formal deductive and non-deductive reasoning processes. The goal of this course is to foster improved formal and informal reasoning in planning, decision making, and argument construction, and in the evaluation of claims and evidence in the arguments of others.

HON 328/Systems of the Brain

1 course unit

(alternate years)

This course explains current basic cognitive neuroscience. Cognitive neuroscience is inherently interdisciplinary: it draws on neuroanatomy and neurophysiology, psychology and neuropsychology, computer cognition, and cognitive anthropology. The course explores eight key systems of the brain: vision, auditory, somatosensory, attention, memory, reasoning, language, and emotion. The course considers the brain basis of our human sociability, intelligence, deception, humor, consciousness, and conscience.

HON 332/Nation and Culture in Modern Latin America

1 course unit

(alternate years)

This seminar examines the historical period of nationalism in Latin America that followed the wars of independence from Spain. Intellectual and cultural debates about the nationhood in two exemplary cases, Argentina and Peru, will be studied. Class lectures and discussion will focus on issues of identity, tradition, language, and representation that form the core of the ideological currents of Latin-American nationalism. Readings will come from a variety of sources including histories, essays, testimonials, and literary texts, and will include theoretical questions as well as specific historical material. Interdisciplinary.

HON 333/Literature, Culture, and Authenticity

1 course unit

(alternate years)

In examining a wide variety of literary and cultural texts (everything from Elvis imitators to the “true” biography of Martin Luther King, Jr.), this course will explore vexing questions of authenticity. Works that promote their own authenticity will be read alongside works that challenge notions of “authenticity,” “authorship,” and “authority.”

HON 335/Women, Law, and Society

1 course unit

(alternate years)

The changing status of women in law and justice will be explored and interpreted in historical and legal perspective through analysis of attitudes toward women: cultural, sex role expectations, social and economic conditions, legislation, and court decisions.

HON 340/Italian Culture and Literature of the 20th Century

1 course unit

(alternate years)

This course concentrates on the Italian culture of the 20th century as reflected and represented in its literary production. Different aspects of contemporary Italian history will be discussed through readings representative of the different literary movements which have influenced the Italian cultural discourse of the past 100 years. Texts from various genres will be analyzed on the basis of their aesthetic significance.

HON 341/Italian Civilization through Literature**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

The course concentrates on the masterpieces of Italian literature from the Thirteenth to the Nineteenth century. Various aspects (philosophical, economic, political) of Italian civilization will be analyzed and discussed through its most significant literary works. Works of poetry, prose, and theater will be presented and investigated on the basis of their cultural value and their aesthetic significance. Particular emphasis will be given to the study of the connection between the works and the historical epoch they represent.

HON 344/The Holocaust in Art and Literature**1 course unit**

(occasionally)

Prerequisite: Junior or senior standing or permission of instructor

Study of the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews through the examination of art and literature by victims, survivors, and others including contemporary artists and writers who have used the Holocaust as a theme in their work. Interdisciplinary.

HON 345/Modernism in the Arts**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

An exploration and evaluation of “modernism” in the arts, scholarship, and criticism: (1) the impact of modern society on art; (2) the influence of Freud and Nietzsche on modern writers; (3) the relation between artistic movements (e.g., expressionism, impressionism) and literature; (4) artistic movements as manifestations of artists’ competition with the dominant middle-class culture.

HON 347/Paris Before the Great War**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

An exploration of the cultural and artistic crosscurrents—in fact the beginnings of modernism—in Paris from 1900 to 1914 including work by such artists as Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Braque, Gris, and Leger and literature by such authors as Colette, Apollinaire, Jacob, Stein, and Proust. Interdisciplinary.

HON 349/Cities and Sanctuaries of the Ancient World**1 course unit**

(alternate years)

An exploration of the major cities and sanctuaries of the Greek world from their foundations through the end of Roman rule. The course will examine various topographical, political, and religious aspects that shaped the foundation, growth, and development of these important ancient places. Various media, particularly architecture and decorative sculptural programs, will be examined in context with regard to their cultural, historical, religious, political, and/or artistic value.

HON 352/Artistic Reincarnations: The Aesthetics of Adaptation**1 course unit**

(annually)

Examination of the adaptation of works of literature or other art forms to other literary genres or art forms. After discussion of a variety of types of adaptation (e.g., novel to play or film, scripture to play, epic poem to novel, illustrations of novel or play, music for film or ballet), students create their own adaptations to be discussed by the class, as well as research and analyze adaptations of their own choice on which they write a research paper and give a class presentation.

HON 355/Biomedical Ethics**1 course unit**

(annually)

Biomedical ethics is an area of research lying on the border between medicine, biology, philosophy, and law that deals with questions concerning the ethical and social implications of the use of biomedical technologies in clinical practice and medical research. Topics in contemporary bioethics include: patient autonomy vs. medical paternalism, confidentiality, termination or withholding of life-saving treatment,

implications of new reproductive technologies, experimentation with human subjects, fetal tissue research, and just allocation in health care delivery. The course will also examine emerging issues such as eugenics, cloning, and genetic engineering. Emphasis will be placed on both the acquisition of theoretical and conceptual understanding, through course readings and lectures, and on the development of practical skills of moral reasoning and ethical decision making.

HON 370/Honors Topics

1 course unit

(every semester)

Study of varying topics, usually interdisciplinary, from appropriate historical, literary, philosophical, scientific, and/or theoretical perspectives. May be repeated when topic changes.

HON 375/This Year's National Election

1 course unit

(occasionally)

The course, which will be offered in the fall semester of even-numbered years to coincide with presidential and congressional elections, will place the unfolding campaign in historical context. Particular attention will be given to the role and function of political parties over time.

HON 476, 477/Interdisciplinary Independent Study

1-2 course units

Prerequisites: 3.0 average in HON courses and permission of departments and instructors

An intensive study of an interdisciplinary problem or subject through a close working relationship between the student and the instructor in more than one discipline.