Summer 2019 Honors College Course Offerings

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. 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. Concurrent enrollment required for Honors College students pursuing Honors College credit for two courses (together with HONR 205) total during Study Abroad.

HONR 275: Advanced Honors I. 0 cr. This course allows post-matriculation students to earn HONR credits for non-honors courses with the completion of independent projects, such as a professional blog, culminating in a portfolio of work.

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, virtually always in the context of their Honors Fellowship.

HONR 375: Advanced Honors II. 0 cr. This course allows post-matriculation students to earn HONR credits for non-honors courses with the completion of independent projects, such as a “white paper” or other informative material, culminating in a portfolio of work.

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.

Fall 2019 Honors College Course Offerings

REQUIRED HONORS COURSES:

HONR 104: Honors Inquiry I. 3 cr. Required. (Taught by 7-8 different English professors). This is the first of a two-semester course sequence focusing on a theme chosen by the Course Coordinator and approved by the Honors College. 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 is
required for all Honors College students who matriculate during first semester freshman year. Lecture.

HONR 132: Honors Philosophy. 3 cr. Required. (multiple sections, taught by different Philosophy professors). Philosophy, the love of wisdom, is a discipline for discussing deep 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 and is only open to them. Lecture. CPHI. Some of the faculty have provided course descriptions (check online for other sections):

- **03: Honors Philosophy – Way of Life, Knowledge, Personal Identity (taught by Dr. Kelly Arenson, Philosophy).** In this course we begin with the basic question, what is philosophy? In investigating this we look to Socrates, the quintessential philosopher of the ancient world and arguably of the entire Western philosophical tradition. Accounts of Socrates’ conversations and death will help familiarize us with the sorts of questions philosophers ask and how they ask them. Two of these questions are the focus of the remainder of the class. First, how do we know what we know? In answering, we will consider whether we can know anything about the external world, other people, and ourselves. Second, what is the nature of personal identity? Here we consider the role of psychology (e.g., your memories and thoughts) and biology (e.g., the functioning of your body) in determining what makes you who you are. The course draws on ancient and contemporary sources, as well as fiction and film.

- **04: Honors Philosophy- (taught by Dr. Fred Evans, Philosophy).** 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 a number of articles on “cosmopolitanism,” that is, global togetherness. We will ask: which of the three philosophers provides the most appropriate ethical basis 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.

HONR 145: Honors Theology. 3 cr. Required. (Multiple sections, taught by different Theology professors). 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. Some of the faculty have provided course descriptions (check online for other sections):

- **01:**
- **02: (A Comparative Theology of Inwardness (taught by Dr. Sebastian Madathummiyil, Theology).** “I’m spiritual but not religious.” Don’t you hear that often, when you are getting to know a friend or acquaintance and the topic turns to spirituality, meaning-making or pondering the immense mystery of this universe? “Being spiritual not religious” involves the discovery of a deeper, more fundamental and
authentic self. This quest for inwardness and retreat to one’s inner world is the defining characteristic of human being. This course will explore the religious views of human nature and purpose, particularly the idea of inwardness and awareness of the self in relation to something larger – be it God, Divine, Mother Nature or Nameless which has been a common theme in many religious traditions throughout history. The course will enable students to develop an outlook about inwardness informed by Christian, Hindu and Buddhist traditions.

- **03: Honors Faith and Atheism (taught by Dr. Marie Baird, Theology).** This course will familiarize students with traditional arguments from the philosophy of religion that seek to prove (or strongly support belief in) God’s existence. Equally, students will learn the major critiques of these arguments, along with the strengths and weaknesses of these counter-arguments. More generally, the course will show how religious claims, scientific advancements, and philosophical forms of argumentation may be brought in meaningful dialogue with one another.

- **04: Honors Theology: World Religions (taught by Dr. Kevin Mongrain, Theology).** 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, Shintoism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In addition to introducing students to these religious traditions, the course gives them the resources to continue reading, observing, and learning about these world 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.

- **05: (taught by Dr. Anna Scheid, Theology)**

**THEME AREA COURSES:** Courses from two different theme areas are required for honors students who matriculated first semester freshman year. Honors students may take all their theme areas as honors courses if they wish.

**Faith and Reason. TAFR. 3 cr.**

- **HONR 201-01: Seminar in Faith and Reason -: (taught by Dr. Zachary Slanger).** In this course, we will be discussing the question of what it means to be a human person. What are the fundamental aspects and structures of human experience? Where does the human person come from and where is the human person going? How does the human person orient itself within the world? Is there a meaning to human life and, if so, what is this meaning and how is it found? What distinguishes the human person from other forms of life (plants, animals, etc.) and from complex machines (robots, etc.)? What do human persons owe to each other, ethically,
and how ought human persons live together, politically? Where do identity and personality come from? What roles do faith, memory, duty, guilt, freedom, suffering, and education play in human experience? How ought one respond to oppression of the human spirit?

These and other questions will be discussed and explored through readings from the history of philosophy, viewings of the philosophically sophisticated HBO series Westworld, and written and other assignments.

- **HONR 201-55: Honors Tutorial in Faith and Reason – Heroes and Hallows (taught by Dr. Daniel Scheid).** Examines the works of philosophers, saints, and theologians from various faith traditions (particularly Christian and Buddhist) as their themes relate to the fantasy literature of J.K. Rowling (focused on Book 7, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows). This Faith and Reason course is in a tutorial format (HONR 301). The class will be divided into smaller groups which will spend some class times preparing readings and discussion questions, and then meet in small discussion sessions with the instructor.

- **HONR 301- Honors Tutorial Discussion Global Diversity. TAGD. 3 cr.**

- **HONR 202-02: Honors Seminar in Global Diversity - Exile and Migration In Latin American Literature and Film (taught by Dr. Eduardo Ruiz).** This course explores Latin American identities through considerations of exile and migration movements within Latin America and from Latin America to the United States. Issues of gender and human rights will also be explored. The goal is to challenge received Latin American stereotypes in the context of violence and the pressures of globalization. The working corpus includes literature, film, and essay writing. Conducted in English.

- **HONR 202: Honors Seminar in Global Diversity – Lesson in Leadership (taught by Dean Seth Beckman).** This course addresses “What Makes A Successful Leader?” and related topics, including: understanding leadership broadly, assessing leadership potential in yourselves and others specifically, and developing essential leadership skills (e.g., accountability, building effective teams, decision-making, establishing priorities, ethics, interpersonal skills, motivation, resiliency, self-awareness, time management, stress management, reciprocity of giving and taking, and understanding power and influence). Western Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh leaders—reflective of the diverse business, industry, and organizations within our city and region—will interact with the class throughout the term. Course activities include collaborative learning, discussion, experiential exercises, guest presenters and dialogues, and personal reflection and goal-setting. Diversity is an essential component of the course, in a variety of manifestations, including the crucial roles of cultural and social identities in leadership.

- **Social Justice. TASJ. 3 cr.**

- **HONR 203-55: Honors Seminar in Social Justice - (taught by Dr. Laura Engel).** Students have to also register for co-requisite tutorial section HONR 313. This course surveys contemporary
American and British women playwrights (1970-present) focusing on how plays by women have shaped current theatrical history, modes of performance, and feminist literary methodologies. We will read plays, see plays, and discuss plays with an emphasis on the relationship between text and performance. We will investigate issues of gender alongside questions of race, nationality, ethnicity, class, and sexuality. Assignments will include several response papers (2-3 pages), a group presentation, and a final project/paper to be developed during the course of the semester.

- HONR 313- Honors Tutorial Discussion

- HONR 203-02: Honors Seminar in Social Justice - From Black Lives Matter to Palestine – How U.S. Social Justice Movements & Political Philosophy Collide (taught by Prof. David Harris-Gershon, internationally acclaimed author and adjunct faculty in the Honors College). The best way to describe this class is to first share what Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote recently in Between the World and Me: “America believes itself exceptional, the greatest and noblest nation ever to exist, a lone champion standing between the white city of democracy and the terrorists, despots, barbarians, and other enemies of civilization ... I propose to take our countrymen’s claims of American exceptionalism seriously, which is to say I propose subjecting our country to an exceptional moral standard.”

In this class, we will accept Coates' proposition, subjecting the United States to an exceptional moral standard by exploring domestic social justice movements which reveal the oppression of citizens and the suppression of rights. We will also explore ways in which the U.S. has not lived up to said standard abroad, particularly in the Middle East, via policy positions and military actions. However, we will precede everything by first exploring the dominant political philosophies which have shaped our constitutional democracy and policy making, thus giving us a substantive backdrop from which to view social justice issues of today.

Creative Arts.

- HONR 204-01: Honors Seminar in Creative Arts - Enjoyment of Music – Pittsburgh LIVE (taught by Dr. Ed Kocher, School of Music). 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.

- HONR 204-02: THEA: Improvisation (taught by Dr. Jill Jeffrey). This course is designed to use the art of improvisation to strengthen skills in communication & collaboration, and find the natural impulses that make humans relate to each other, even in uncomfortable situations. Through hands-on formats, students will participate in various acting scenarios that broaden the ability to think on their feet, finding creative ways to move a moment forward. The art of improv will be used to demonstrate how humans use it on a daily basis to overcome unexpected
situations in the work, school, or home environment. Students will also learn that improvisation is not a limited theatrical form (i.e. comedy) and will be provided opportunities to create and workshop formats that focus on empathetic response to a variety of social situations.

- **HONR 204-61:** Honors Seminar in Creative Arts – Intro to Film (taught by Dr. John Fried).

**COURSES FOR STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD:**

- **HONR 205:** Honors International Study Abroad. 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. Concurrent enrollment required for Honors College students pursuing Honors College credit for 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. Concurrent enrollment required for Honors College students pursuing Honors College credit for two courses (together with HONR 205) total during Study Abroad.

**COURSES FOR STUDENTS ADMITTED TO THE HONORS COLLEGE AFTER FIRST SEMESTER FRESHMAN YEAR:**

- **HONR 275:** Advanced Honors I. 0 cr. This course allows post-matriculation students to earn HONR credits for non-honors courses with the completion of independent projects, such as a professional blog, culminating in a portfolio of work.

- **HONR 375:** Advanced Honors II. 0 cr. This course allows post-matriculation students to earn HONR credits for non-honors courses with the completion of independent projects, such as a “white paper” or other informative material, culminating in a portfolio of work.

- **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.

**COURSES FOR HONORS FELLOWS:**

- **HONR 295:** Honors Research. 0 cr. This course is reserved for Honors College students whose Honors Fellows projects have been formally approved. Students seeking the Honors Fellow
designation must take this course in conjunction with at least one 3-credit course that pertains to their Honors Fellows project. This course may be repeated.

- **HONR 395: Honors Fellowship. 0 cr.** This course is reserved for Honors College students whose Honors Fellows projects have been formally approved and who have successfully completed at least 18 credits of HONR credits or honors equivalent. Students seeking the Honors Fellow designation must take this course in conjunction with at least one 3-credit course that pertains to their Honors Fellows project. This course may be repeated.

**OTHER WAYS TO ACCUMULATE NEEDED HONORS COURSES (6 FOR BASIC, 10 FOR FELLOWS):**

- **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. The components of the Honors Senior Project include: -A research paper or creative work -A reflective paper, commenting on the main paper or work and the experience of preparing it -A discussion of theoretical context which may appear in either the research paper or the reflective paper -An oral presentation or defense of the main paper or work Students will present or defend honors projects before a faculty/student committee; and will submit an electronic copy of the final product of the Honors Senior Project to the Honors College office.