

HONORS COLLEGE

Spring 2021 Course Descriptions



UMass Boston students presenting their Honors thesis research at the 23rd Annual Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference

Contents: Spring 2021 Honors College Courses

3	Honors 101 First-Year Seminars
7	Honors 210G Intermediate Seminars
9	Honors 290-level Courses
14	Honors 380 Junior Colloquia

Honors 101 First-Year Seminars for Spring 2021

Honors 101 (1): *Lions & Tigers & Bears, Oh My! Evolution: Pets & Zoo Animals (#9058)*

TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm

Steve Ackerman, Honors College

In this course we will discuss the evolution and domestication of our pets (and their forerunners): dogs (wolves); cats (lions/tigers); horses/zebras (horse antecedents); African buffalo & American bison (Bubalus); African and Asian elephants (Gomphotherium/Mastodon vs Mammoth); giraffes (okapi & deer & cattle & eumeryx /Eumeryx); bears (sun bear, black bear [American & Asiatic], brown bear [Kodiak/grizzly], polar bear, panda bear [giant & lesser]; sloth bear and spectacled bear). Plus: How & why tigers & zebras have stripes.

There are no exams in this course. There will be six writing assignments. Grades are based on attendance, submission of materials (topic, writing) on time, and class participation.

Honors 101 (2): *Homelessness and the Self-Perpetuating Cycle of Shame (#9059)*

TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm

Julie Batten, Honors College

Why has the number of people experiencing homelessness in Massachusetts more than doubled since 1990? Through relevant literature, films, and essays, this course will examine the shame that so often contributes to homelessness, and we'll also discuss current initiatives seeking to shift this self-perpetuating cycle.

When the Mental Health Systems Act was abandoned in the 1980s, unprecedented numbers of the nation's mentally ill were forced onto the streets. According to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) 9,493 high school-aged students in public schools are now experiencing homelessness on any given day in Massachusetts, and over 37,000 students of all ages are experiencing homelessness throughout the state. This course will investigate the changing face of homelessness over the past fifty years and question why college-aged young people constitute the fastest growing segment of this population today.

Together, we will examine the socioeconomic factors contributing to homelessness, as well as social justice programs and current public policy debates seeking to halt its rise. Guest speakers from area homeless shelters will contribute to the discussion. We will read *Evicted* by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Matthew Desmond, *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls, *No House to Call My Home* by Ryan Berg, as well as watching the award-winning documentary by Daniel Cross, *The Street*. Short weekly reading responses, lively debate, and your own profile assignment about a person experiencing homelessness will help us address our individual and collective responses to this national crisis. *This course can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.*

Honors 101 (3): *Unequal Colleagues: A History of Women in the Sciences (#9060)*

TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am

Lynne Byall Benson, Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies

According to historian Margaret Rossiter, "A woman scientist was a contradiction in terms—such a person was unlikely to exist, and if she did, she had to be unnatural in some way. Women scientists were thus caught between two almost mutually exclusive stereotypes: as scientists they were atypical women; as women they were unusual scientists."

This course examines, from a feminist perspective, the history of women's struggle to attain entry in the male-dominated field of the so-called "hard" sciences in the United States; among them those fields now referred to as STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Through reading, writing, and films, students will explore the connections between society's assumptions regarding the purpose of women's education, and the various barriers in addition to gender, such as race, faced by women who aspired to careers in scientific fields. In addition, this course will include an overview of those pioneering women scientists who paved the way for today's women scientists.

Readings include selections from *Blazing the Trail: Essays by Leading Women in Science* (2013) by Emma Ideal and Rhiannon Meharchand; *Women in Science, Then and Now* (2009) by Vivian Gornick; *Women Scientists in America:*

Forging a New World Since 1972 (2012) by Margaret Rossiter; and *Lab Girl* (2017) by Hope Jahren. Other readings as films will be assigned at the instructor's discretion. *This course can also count toward a major or minor in Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies.*

Honors 101 (4): Black Mirror: Technology, Media, and the Future (#9925)

TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm

Rebecca Fine Romanow, English

Black Mirror has been called “the most relevant program of our time . . . It doesn't imagine interstellar civilizations or post-apocalyptic scenarios. Instead, it depicts variations on a near future transformed by information technology — our world, just a little worse.” Film and television are primary cultural vehicles for reflecting how we see ourselves and other people and places, as well as our hopes, fears, and visions for our future. *Black Mirror* has become the touchstone for these imaginings.

We will watch six episodes of this groundbreaking series selected from its five seasons (2011 to present) and read a selection of Cyberpunk fiction that addresses, depicts, or argues with the future that *Black Mirror* presents. This course emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach with readings in literature, futurism, science, television and media studies, and related fields. Through close readings and viewings, we will focus on the historical, political, technological, and cultural influences that shape our expectations of the future, and the ways in which our current concerns reflect our anxieties and desires for what is to come.

This is a student-driven course where each student will lead the class discussion once on selected episodes/readings. This course will require one shorter mid-semester essay (3 - 4 pages), and a larger final essay (5 - 6 pages), as well as discussion forum postings on *Black Mirror* and cyberpunk fiction of your choice. The emphasis on improving critical writing will be reflected in the “building” of the final essay through revisions of the discussion reflections and shorter midterm essay.

Honors 101 (5): The Scandalized Subject: A Story of the Self in Literature, Film, and Theory (#9964)

MWF 9:00 - 9:50am

Christopher Craig, English

While artistic, philosophical, and religious examinations of the Self have developed over the centuries, ranging from the mythological to the theoretical, the quest to interpret the Self remains. This course considers a number of artistic and theoretical approaches to the Self through a variety of literary and visual texts from the turn of the 20th century to our own historical moment. It examines how the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves position the Self against its dialectical Other—often the monsters we imagine or the technological monstrosities we create—in order to substantiate and at times deny our own existence.

In this course, students will be assigned to read four novels and five to seven theoretical essays and will watch three films. Weekly student participation is required, along with two formal class presentations. Students will also write three essays. Essays one and two will range from 750 to 1,000 words in length. Essay three will include a research component and should not exceed 2,500 words. In preparation for essay three, students will submit a prospectus and bibliography.

Honors 101 (6): Poverty and Psychology: What Does It Mean to Be Poor? (#10203)

MWF 11:00 - 11:50am

Kathryn Kogan, Psychology

This course will examine the complex and multidimensional phenomenon of poverty in the United States, focusing on the psychological experience of being poor, its associated stressors, and how being poor impacts lives throughout the life span. The interplay among poverty's psychological impact, social stigma, and the social institutions that both contribute to poverty and seek to assist those in poverty will be explored. What are the multiple pathways through which families and individuals become impoverished? How does poverty shape one's psychology and coping strategies? How do psychological, institutional, and social factors interact as the individual or family struggles to survive? How do people escape poverty?

Through readings, documentary films, class discussion, and the insights of guest speakers, we will explore these questions and seek to appreciate the meaning of poverty, while examining the role that social policies and institutions play in creating and maintaining poverty. A life-span perspective will help us to focus on the particular experiences of poverty for families with young children, adults with mental illness, and the elderly.

In addition to regular attendance and active participation, students are expected to bring questions/ideas that emerge from the readings. Students will write short reflections (2 - 3 pages) in response to readings and films, connecting them with other course materials. Students will be allowed one re-write option per assignment for the first two essays. Students will also arrange and attend a day of volunteer work at a local agency or church serving the poor and prepare a 10-minute oral presentation including a PowerPoint. An alternative project may need to be substituted depending on COVID safety. *This course can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.*

Honors 101 (7): Performance, Heritage, and Identity (#10451)

TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm

Christopher Fung, Anthropology

This class examines the way in which communities and individuals use notions of heritage and performance to express and debate issues of identity. We will examine several case studies to explore how and why people in particular communities enact particular forms of heritage, and the political, social, and economic contexts in which these acts are placed.

In the spring semester, the case studies will be: 1) Kapa Haka (traditional Maori performing arts) from Aotearoa/New Zealand; 2) The use of ceremony as political action by Water Protectors at the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota in 2016; and 3) West African Mande-style drumming and dance in West Africa and in North America.

The course will use a mixture of academic articles, websites, and online videos. For the Standing Rock portion of the course, it will be helpful if students have Facebook accounts. Assignments will consist of four reaction papers (1 to 1.5 pages each), a website analysis (3 pages), and two long-form blog posts (structured as educational resources of 3 to 5 pages each).

Honors 101 (8): Sports and Global Affairs (#11474)

TuTh 8:00 - 9:15am

Ellen Milimu, Global Governance & Human Security

Can we leave politics out of sports? Should women receive equal pay? Are video games real sports? Today, it seems sports are highly associated with social, economic, and political issues of the world. Has this always been the case? Sports have existed as a social activity and developed as a form of human and country relations throughout history. In 2020 alone, sports can be seen in global issues such as racial injustice protests in the USA and the COVID-19 economic impact on the 2020 Olympic Games. Personal aspects emerge, too, like sexual identity and sports.

This course will explore the connection of sports in global affairs throughout history to answer the questions above. It will trace instances where sports collide with social, political, and economic issues around the globe since the creation of states in 1648. It will also identify how global issues have impacted the development of sports and how sports have shaped global and national issues from the margins.

The course will borrow from various fields of study such as Economics, Political Science, Gender, Media Studies, and International Relations. Together we will read, brainstorm, and discuss sports from different perspectives. This allows students to apply their creative, critical, and analytical skills in class discussions. Guest speakers will contribute to class discussions. Assignments will include journal entries (500 words) and a midterm essay (1,000 words), which will then be developed into a longer final essay (1,500 words). *You don't have to be a sports fan to enroll in this course!*

Honors 101 (9): “Workin’ for the Man Every Night and Day”: Artistic Expressions of the Working Class (#12665)

TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm
Jeslyn Medoff, English

John Lennon once famously wrote (and sang): “[They] keep you doped with religion and sex and TV/And you think you’re so clever and classless and free . . . A working-class hero is something to be.” In this course, we will examine the lives of “ordinary” working people in America in the 20th and 21st centuries. Though primarily focused on fiction and autobiographical writings, we may also consider other art forms like film and music. The course will emphasize class discussion and teamwork, focusing on developing clear writing, careful reading, and critical thinking skills. There will be two papers (5 pages each), one text-based essay exam, an interview project, and at least one oral presentation. A number of guest speakers will visit. There will be no midterm or final exams in the course.

As we consider the broader historical and cultural contexts of our texts, we will also focus on conducting close readings, carefully examining the language of the work in question. At the same time, we will investigate some of the elements that make up a literary work: point of view, structure, tone, dialogue, theme, narrative technique, and characterization. In the process of so doing, members of this class will develop their critical and communication skills as readers, as writers, and as students of literature. A major goal of this course is to practice the following habits of mind essential to university-level educational success: Careful reading; Clear writing; Critical thinking; Information literacy and technology; Working in teams; Oral presentation. *This course can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.*

Honors 101 (10): Global Social Action and Cultural Humility (#12666)

MWF 1:00 - 1:50pm
Caitlin Ferrarini, Honors College

In this course students will explore how they can take action to address some of the world’s most pressing social challenges—sometimes without even leaving their home. The course is guided by the concept of cultural humility, which involves taking on the curious role of learner when building trusting relationships with diverse people. This is a key leadership skill for those who wish to engage in global social action.

During the first part of the course, we will cultivate culturally humble leadership skills such as: critical self-reflection, recognizing and challenging power imbalances, understanding implicit bias, cross-cultural communication, and active listening. In the second half of the course, we will look at cultural humility in our civic lives including topics such as social action and global citizenship. We will ask if the concept of global citizenship is useful or exclusionary? And we will examine global social action through the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Through guest speakers, we will learn how different organizations and professional fields encounter the course topics.

The weekly expectations include readings/videos, short written or video reflections, and active participation. The three larger assignments include: midterm (5 pages), final presentation (10 minutes), and a final essay (5 pages). *This course can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.*



Connect with us on our social media platforms by clicking on the above icons!

Honors 210G Intermediate Seminars for Spring 2021

Honors 210G (1): Learning Biology through Reading Fiction and Non-fiction (#12667)

MWF 2:00 - 2:50pm

Megan Rokop, Honors College

This course is designed to be an introduction to many current and relevant topics in biology, but with a twist – namely that these topics will be introduced and discussed as they come up in popular and highly regarded books written for non-scientists. In this course, we will use the reading of three books & three short stories (including fiction and non-fiction), in order to guide our learning of topics in biology. Possible books might include: *Breath from Salt*, *The Collected Schizophrenias*, *The CRISPR Generation*, *Cured*, *The Inheritance*, *Mercies in Disguise*, *Happiness*, and *Perfect Predator*.

The instructor's current plan for these books (though it is possible that these selections may change before the first day of class) means that our class will focus on the following topics in biology:

- **Bioethics:** DNA testing, "designer babies," informed consent, and animal research
- **Human disease:** Cancers, infectious diseases (such as HIV and malaria), single-gene disorders (such as cystic fibrosis and Huntington's), and common complex disorders (such as heart disease and schizophrenia)
- **Discovering cures and treatments:** Drug development, clinical trials, the cost of drugs, placebos, funding and patenting scientific discoveries
- **Public health:** Vaccines, antibiotics, and medicine in the US & around the world

This course will **not** involve textbook readings, exams, advanced calculations, or memorizing terms. The in-class activities will focus on class discussions, and your grade in this course will be determined by:

- Attendance & class participation
- Nine short (300-word) writing assignments
- A 1500-word paper on a topic of your choice relating to the 1st book
- A 1500-word paper on a topic of your choice relating to the 2nd book
- A 10-minute oral presentation on a topic of your choice relating to the 3rd book

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) distribution requirement.

Honors 210G (2): Innovators, Their Creativity, and Their Loneliness (#12668)

TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm

Steve Ackerman, Honors College

Most people assume innovation occurs only in science and technology. We will discuss men and women who had creative genius in business, invention, science, technology, music, recreation, etc. These discussions will include investigative student research prior to each session.

We will discuss the innovations that Michael Jackson introduced into music, that Clarence Birdseye brought to food, the prescience/innovation of Franz Boas to mentor women and together they invented cultural anthropology, Effa Manley, the first woman to own baseball clubs (in the Negro league) and innovate baseball marketing, Henry Ford's & Walt Disney's false claims of innovation, how innovative decisions are made (Daniel Kahneman & Amos Tversky: thinking, fast and slow), Barbara McClintock (one of the greatest scientists of the 20th century) for her inventing techniques used in cytology and genetics and her intellectual leap about mobile elements, Rachel Carson who summoned the environmental movement, Jane Goodall/Dian Fossey who fomented animal science, Ada Lovelace who helped develop the computer forerunner, Grace Hopper who developed computer programming/languages, Charles Darwin who explained evolution, Lise Meitner who discovered nuclear fission, Mary McMillan who invented Physical Therapy, Rosalind Franklin/Florence Ball who refined X-ray crystallography, Frank Ramsey who revolutionized economic thinking, Mammie Smith who invented the blues, etc.

There are no exams in this course. The six ungraded writing assignments will be three response papers and three short research essays. Grades will be based on attendance, submission of materials (topic, writing) on time, and participation.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.

Honors 210G (3): U.S. Black Writing, Anti-Racism, and Social Transformation (#12669)

TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm

Joseph Ramsey, English and American Studies

Black writing has long offered a window into the fundamental workings of the US American social system. Emerging from the most historically oppressed sectors of American society, African American writers make available suppressed knowledge, social critiques, celebrations of life lived against the odds, freedom dreams, and reflections on collective attempts to transform the world. How have the literary strategies of Black writers evolved over time in conversation with social movements aiming to end racism, abolish oppression, and expand equality?

In this course, students will study a range of classic African American literary works in relationship to the evolving historical conditions that helped give rise to them. Readings will extend from the 18th century to the present, including work by Phillis Wheatley, Frederick Douglass, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Assata Shakur, Ava DuVernay, Ta-Nehisi Coates, and Bryan Stevenson. We will also examine a range of critical perspectives—from intersectionality to Marxism and Afro-Pessimism—entering ongoing debates about the evolving status of race, racism and anti-racism in US society. Critical voices will include those of Adolph Reed Jr. and Cedric Johnson, Theodore Allen and Robin DiAngelo, Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Michelle Alexander, #BlackLivesMatter activists, and more.

As this will be a discussion-based course, rooted in student writing and reflection, students will be expected to produce a weekly critical response (roughly 1-2 pages), and also to help lead class discussion. There will be two formal essay assignments, a short essay (1,500 words), and a final research paper (2,500 words).

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.

Considering the Pass/Fail option for an Honors course for the Fall 2020 semester?

Check out our student resources page to find out more information about the Honors College Pass/Fail option for Fall 2020 here!



Remember to speak with your Professor and advisor before making a decision!

Honors 290-level Courses for Spring 2021

Honors 291 (1): Weird Fiction (#10626)

TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm

Avak Hasratian, English

"Weird Fiction" is not traditional. It resists categorization and is distinct from the established conventions of Gothic, Detective, Fantastic, and Science Fiction, although it bears some resemblance to each of those genres. H.P. Lovecraft is the "founder" of "Weird Fiction," which combines ancestral, archaic, occult, and mystical remnants and residues that we have "left behind," together with weird science.

This course is designed to access, enliven, and cultivate your aesthetic sensibilities. Students will be able to both experience and reflect upon complex stimuli across a range of such formally definable yet nebulous genres as: the sense of space (architecture, a novel, and a film); the sense of time (short fiction and films); and the sense of smell (a novel, film, and actual smells). Doing so will enable you to experience and understand that art is everywhere, and that we can and should derive meaning from the very things around and within us that we might otherwise take for granted.

Assignments include reflections on hands-on site-visits, in-class experiments, and short essays.

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.

Honors 291 (2): "I Will Always Love You," and 1,000 Years of Constructs about Love (#10628)

TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am

Shannon McHugh, Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures

What is love? Or rather, what do we think love is? From the Beatles' "all you need is love" to Shakespeare's "whoever loved that loved not at first sight?" we are bombarded in our culture with preconceived notions about the nature of amorous affection. This course takes a transhistorical view of Western civilization, from the Middle Ages to the present, in order to trace and interrogate societal constructs about love.

This course will consider society and history through literature, so texts like Petrarchan sonnets, historical love letters, and excerpts from novels will make up the bulk of our reading. However, assignments will be drawn from multiple disciplines, as well popular culture, including song lyrics, Disney films, and reality television like *The Bachelor/ette*. Students will also participate in constructing a significant portion of the syllabus: based on your own academic and personal interests, we will explore portrayals and studies of love in additional fields (communication, natural sciences, etc.) and diverse media. Major assignments will be a combination of traditional research papers and creative projects.

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.

Honors 292 (1): Does College Matter? Access and Opportunity in American Higher Education (#10627)

TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm

Diane D'Arrigo, Honors College

Who can afford a college education, and who can't? Who gets to go to college, and who doesn't? What gets taught in college, and what doesn't? These are all issues with a broader social, cultural, historical, political, and economic context. Come explore the great transformation of American higher education since WWII and discuss the more recent evolution of colleges and universities, as well as many current hot topics.

Some specific topics will include a review of major societal changes and their influence on the increased democratization of higher education, such as: the impact of the GI Bill, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, student protest movements, and changes in public policy. Using both primary and secondary sources, we will discuss relevant court rulings, state and federal legislation, and various institutional histories. Additionally, we'll explore the origins of UMass Boston and consider its place within the broader history of the American higher education system. Finally, we will review current trends and debates taking place in higher education such as: college rankings, online learning, free speech on

college campuses, the value of a college degree, how higher education is funded, student debt and the financial aid system, the COVID-19 pandemic and current public policy proposals that impact a variety of those issues.

This seminar will emphasize lively intellectual discussions individually chosen research topics, with both individual and group support. Grading criteria will include attendance, class preparation and participation, and a variety of writing assignments and research projects including: an institutional history paper written on an institution of your choice, short reflection papers, an oral presentation, and a final research project.

This course fulfills a Humanities (HU) distribution requirement.

Honors 292 (2): The Quantum Self (#11475)

TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm

Alioscia Hamma, Physics

Yumiko Inukai, Philosophy

Quantum physics, as “physics,” is about *nature*. What is “nature”? “Nature” investigated and described in Quantum physics does not seem to be something completely devoid of human, or human influence. In Classical Physics, Nature does not require to be observed by anyone. Quantum Physics requires that Nature must be something observed by “someone” who is a *free agent*. What is an *agent*? What does it mean for an agent to be *free*? What is *nature* in Quantum physics?

In this course, we set out to investigate the bearings of Quantum physics on the notions of nature, the self, the relation between nature and the self, human agency, and freedom. Since we necessarily confront with nature in our existence, it seems inevitable that nature influences what we can be, and vice versa. Indeed, there cannot be a purely mechanical vision of nature. Nature and we, humans, seem to be intimately connected in the concept of nature in Quantum physics. What kind of self is required, and allowed, in Quantum physics?

To tackle these questions, we will first go through an historical survey of the notions of self, mind, humanity and agency in different philosophical traditions and their connections to natural sciences. We will then explore the main concepts of quantum mechanics and their bearings on the questions of the self and nature.

This course fulfills a Humanities (HU) distribution requirement.

Honors 293 (1): Mating Psychology: The Nature and Nurture of Romantic Relationships (#10625)

TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am

Randy Corpuz, Psychology and Honors College

Why do humans invest so much time, energy, and emotion into romantic relationships? Why might these relationships sometimes cause such intense mental anguish and pain? Romantic love has been the focal point and inspiration for innumerable pieces of sculpture, paintings, literature, poetry, movies, and music throughout the scope of recorded history. From rock music to rap, lyrics on subjects like love, sex, breaking-up, and cheating appear to be the norm. Why do we care so much about mating?

The neuroscience of mating (in humans and other species) has become a growing field that has attracted attention across disciplines. Some of the recent questions this field has focused on include: What does “falling in love” look like in the brain? Why is an orgasm designed to “feel good,” and what is the psychological function of orgasm in either sex? What role do hormones like testosterone play in forming and maintaining long term relationships? Which components of romantic relationships differ across cultures?

Romantic relationships are governed by very specific psychological (and physiological) mechanisms. Throughout the course, we ask questions related to “how” and “why” this might be. This course will take an interdisciplinary approach to human mating. We will focus on research from neuroscience and evolutionary psychology. The goal of the course is to understand some of the factors influencing romantic relationships, such as biological, environmental, and cultural influences.

The class will include lectures, two oral presentations, short weekly reflections (1 - 2 pages each) and three APA-formatted research essays (6 - 8 pages each) spread throughout the course. Students will be asked to include material on romantic relationships (e.g., art, music, movies) that they find outside of class to be integrated with neuroscientific research.

This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement.

Honors 293 (2): Erased but Not Forgotten: Examining the Birth of International Relations in the United States (#10778)

MW 4:00 - 5:15pm

Krystal-Gayle O'Neill, Global Governance & Human Security

Everything has an origin story. The field of international relations (IR) is no different. There are varying accounts of its origin, some tracing it back to the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the thirty-year war that ushered in the birth of state sovereignty. Some attribute the origins to be a product of 19th century industrialization and imperialism. Regardless of its origins, IR has emerged as an interdisciplinary field that studies the interconnectedness of politics, economics and law on a global level. However, one thing is often missing from IR's origin story, especially in the U.S. – Race. Racism and colonialism were forces that set the global stage for the U.S. in the early 20th century. This affected the way that history and IR were taught and understood in the American academy. Evolutionary theory, social Darwinism, and racial anthropology dominated doctrines in IR, and racist attitudes informed research and were embedded in the newly formed field.

This course will introduce students to the arguments, texts, institutions, and contributions of white and black IR scholars in an effort to reconstitute forgotten historical dialogues and show the critical role played by race in the formation of IR in the U.S. The class will center around one primary text: *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations*, with additional visuals and texts to support the book. The format of class meetings includes lectures, films, guest speakers, and class discussions. There will be one midterm exam (multiple choice and short answer questions), weekly double-entry Blackboard posts on assigned readings (1-3 paragraphs), one 10-minute class presentation, and a final essay (5-10 pages).

This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement.

Honors 293 (3): Addiction, Mental Illness, and the Justice System: Responding to a Behavioral Health Crisis (#10779)

TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm

Rosemary Minehan, Justice (Ret.), Honors College

Across the United States, individuals with serious mental illness and addiction have traditionally faced complex systems of criminal and civil justice that have subjected them to incarceration, involuntary civil commitment to inadequate psychiatric and substance treatment facilities, and to the involuntary administration of psychotropic medication and other invasive treatments for mental illness and addiction. This course will explore how these specialized populations have been managed in the legal system and consider innovative initiatives occurring within the courts, executive agencies, law enforcement, corrections and healthcare that are changing the landscape of behavioral health and treatment.

Students will become conversant in the full panoply of legal issues surrounding the topics of mental illness and addiction including patients' rights, voluntary and involuntary hospitalization and medical treatment for mental illness and addiction, and will also explore issues presented in the criminal context including the use of psychological forensic evaluations, the insanity defense, competency to stand trial, and sentencing.

Students will write one short paper (1.5 pages), one medium essay (3 pages), and one longer essay (5 pages) and give one oral presentation (15 minutes). The papers and oral presentation should reflect the student's interest in the topics covered in the course. Students will be assigned readings from leading court decisions, state and federal statutes, and from the assigned textbook, *The Criminalization of Mental Illness: Crisis and Opportunity for the Justice System* (2nd edition), by Risdon N. Slate, Jacqueline K. Buffington-Vollum, and W. Wesley Johnson.

This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement.

Honors 293 (4): Conflict Analysis and Resolution: Conflicts Exist, So How Do We Deal with Them? (#11517)

TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm

Safiya St. Clair, Global Governance & Human Security

This highly interactive course will provide students with an overview of the field of conflict analysis and resolution. Drawing on readings from diverse disciplines (such as peace studies, psychology, criminology, and conflict resolution), the course will start with individuals as the building blocks of conflict before moving to the community, national, and international levels. We will also utilize various theoretical approaches to explain the causes of conflict and explore practical resolution methods. This course will use case studies, role-plays, films, and small group discussions to transform our class into a global and multicultural space.

We will delve into topics such as power, intercultural communication, active listening, and negotiation. Guiding questions include: What is a conflict? Why do individuals and groups make certain choices in conflict situations? What are some strategies used to resolve conflicts?

By exploring these questions, students will be able to apply what they learn in this course to their own experiences, use theories to explain why different conflicts occur, and develop strategies for resolving conflicts. Assignments include a weekly reflection paper (500 words) based on class readings, a short essay (1,000-1,500 words), a conflict analysis paper (2,000-2,500 words), and a group presentation on a conflict of your choice.

This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement.

Honors 294 (1): Music and Dance of Latin America and the Caribbean (#10624)

TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm

Mary Oleskiewicz, Performing Arts

This course will survey diverse dance and music traditions of Latin America and the Caribbean. There is both a practical and an academic component to the course. Students will learn, hands-on, a variety of (beginner-level) dances, such as bachata, salsa, and samba no pe. Additional dance styles may include tango and cumbia. The music of these and many other dances will also be studied. For context and historical background, readings will trace impacts and influences of diverse forces such as colonialism, immigration, slavery, politics, religion, and globalization. Students will learn to recognize important musical instruments associated with different styles, and a certain emphasis will be given to the development of listening skills to recognize and compare different each type of music. As we study each style, our focus will shift from origins and traditions to how the style has become manifest in or has influenced popular culture in the U.S. and globally.

No previous dance or musical experience is necessary. All fundamental skills and vocabulary needed for this course will be taught from the beginning level, as part of the course. As a semester project, students will write an 8-page paper or produce an equivalent creative project, which could include a short dance presentation/video. Warm-ups and stretching will be incorporated into dance workshops (appropriate attire for movement is recommended).

This course fulfills a World Cultures (WC) distribution requirement.

Honors 294 (2): Women and Community Building (#10784)

MWF 11:00 - 11:50am

Jyoti Sinha, Labor Resource Center

Sociologists who study gendered approaches to social movements have found that low-income women and women of color tend to approach community organizing, leadership development, and resident empowerment differently. The course will also look at the classic definition of community building: leadership development as a pursuit of solidarity and agency by adhering to the principles of self-help, felt need, and voluntary participation. Susan Stall and Randy Stoecker describe such a model as women-centered and collaborative, one that focuses on community building and self-transformation, while also recognizing structural barriers to equality and striving for equitable access to power for everyone.

We will study various forms of collaborative women's leadership globally, from the movement for justice in El Barrio in New York City to the Zapatistas movement, from the Combahee River Collective to Black Lives Matter. We will also consider local groups like the South Asian Workers' Center in Boston, which is mainly comprised of immigrant and low-income women who use a participatory democratic model. Comparative analysis with Global South movements will explore SEWA Bharat and Grameen Bank. Students will write three short essays of at least 5 pages each on relevant themes or organizations of their choice; a brief class presentation (10 - 15 minutes) on an organization or social event will also be required. This is an interactive course, so students will be expected to take an active part in class discussions, responding to both critical readings and documentary film viewings.

This course fulfills a World Cultures (WC) distribution requirement.

Honors 295 (1): Scientific History & Development: What Is Science, and (Why) Should We Trust It? (#12670)

MW 4:00 - 5:15pm

Reinmar Seidler, Biology

This course will take a historical look at the development of the collection of disciplines and methodologies that we call "science." Starting from its multi-cultural roots in ancient Greece, the Middle East, India, and China to the highly specialized world of modern science, we will learn about what the different approaches to science have had in common, how they have differed, and how they have built a coherent way of learning about the world. We will ask a series of questions about what science *is* and *is not*, what its powers and limitations are as a way of knowing; how it relates to the arts and religion; and how reliable it is as a guide to reality. In today's highly polarized political landscape, these questions have taken on new and urgent relevance. In the latter part of the course, we will focus on climate change as a flashpoint in contemporary debates about the value of the scientific enterprise.

A background in science is not necessary for this course, but an interest in the concepts and culture of science will be an asset! We will use a variety of materials to explore these questions, including excerpts from books about science, articles from scientific and historical journals, documentary movies, and other media. Authors may include E. O. Wilson, Stephen Jay Gould, Karl Popper, Naomi Oreskes, Elizabeth Kolbert, and others. Assignments will include two essays of at least 1,500 words each, shorter reflection papers, a weekly nature journal, and class presentations by students.

This course fulfills a Natural Sciences (NS) distribution requirement.

Do you have more than 75 credits?

Then it's time to start talking about your Senior Thesis!

If you have more than 75 credits, it's time to talk with your Honors College advisor about your senior thesis. All Honors College students are required to complete a senior thesis, including both a thesis paper and an oral presentation, or an alternative senior project.

For more information about how the thesis can connect with your major and how the process works, please see your Honors College advisor.

Honors 380 Junior Colloquia for Spring 2021

Students can take an Honors 380 Junior Colloquium after completing **at least two of their 200-level Honors requirements**.

Honors 380 (1): The World War II Internment of Japanese Americans (#9926)

Mon 2:00 - 4:45pm

Paul Watanabe, Political Science

Director, Institute for Asian American Studies

In early 1942, the United States government commenced the roundup and confinement of nearly 120,000 Americans of Japanese descent, citizens and non-citizens alike. Political, economic, legal, sociological, cultural, psychological, literary, and historical lenses will be utilized in our examination of this dark chapter in American life. The backgrounds and interests of the students in the course will play major roles in shaping our inquiry.

Although the internment experience is carefully considered, the course encompasses a broader range of experiences. For example, we will explore the early days of Asian and Japanese immigration to the United States, the battle for redress and reparations, and the current status of Japanese Americans specifically and Asian Americans generally. More general and critical concepts will be considered as well in conjunction with the internment experience. These central concepts include issues such as anarchy vs. society, justice vs. order, freedom vs. responsibility, individual rights vs. group interests, national security vs. civil liberties, and diversity vs. unity. Many of these discussions, of course, have gained even more urgency and attention since the events of September 11, 2001.

A willingness to engage in writing, research, and discussion will be critical. The major assignment in the course will be developing, researching, writing, and presenting a final paper (15-20 pages) on a topic related to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II.

This course may involve travel to California for a brief trip where we will visit Little Tokyo in Los Angeles and the Manzanar National Historic Site. If so, travel expenses will be covered for all students. Since the trip is uncertain due to the COVID19 pandemic – and could be either during the spring semester, summer, or fall semester of 2021 – preference for students admitted will be given to those who will be enrolled at UMass Boston through the Fall 2021 term. Enrollment in this course will be capped at 12 students

Honors 380 (2): Serial Narratives, Networks, and the Police (#10078)

TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm

Louise Penner, English

The mid-19th century and the 1990s each saw an explosion in the popularity and acclaim of serial narratives. In the 1830s and 1840s, novels with sensational content involving crime, poverty, and fraud drove a boom in print culture when they appeared in regular installments in literary magazines. Charles Dickens's contributions drove the serial novel's popularity. And in the late 20th century, HBO's series *The Sopranos* ushered in a "golden era" of serial television offered on paid TV, with former Baltimore journalist David Simon's HBO series *The Wire*, which is regularly named alongside *The Sopranos* as the best serial TV had to offer.

These serial narratives address provocative issues of their time: criminal networks, urban policing, government neglect, and poverty. They feature plots "ripped from the headlines" of urban newspapers. In this class we read serial narratives as a modern form of storytelling that's particularly rich for provoking analyses of urban life, its complex and fluid networks of neighborhoods, people, and institutions, and the efforts of city dwellers, including journalists, police, and the poor to observe and navigate those networks. Students will encounter literary and cultural theory focused on serial narrative, including systems and network theory, applying them to the course's primary texts. And they will in turn apply the insights our texts provoke to current efforts to address social problems within our own communities. Assignments will include a reading/listening/viewing journal and two essays of 6-8 pages each, one offering comparative analysis of serial narratives created in different modes, and the other applying concepts from literary and/or cultural theory to a serial narrative.

Honors 380 (3): Anarchism and Order (#10452)

MWF 1:00 - 1:50pm

Todd Drogy, English

When one hears the word anarchy, what's the first thing that comes to mind? Disorder? Rebellion? Destruction? Chaos? Or freedom? Gaiety? Spontaneity? Resistance? In this course, we will explore the philosophy/practice of anarchism, both as a political force and evolving expression of culture. We will trace the origins of anarchism, exploring its permutations through modern history and into the present. We will interest ourselves in the idea of the human, asking what it means to be *free*, what it means to be *equal*, and what it means to live in mutuality and reciprocity with others.

We will engage with multiple texts: essays, pamphlets, fiction, film, and music. Additionally, we will read chapters from Peter Marshall's *Demanding the Impossible: A History of Anarchism*. Our objective is to explore how anarchism has shaped and continues to shape the world around us. We will examine the impact of anarchism on science, agriculture, art, education, and economics/finance. Additionally, we will consider how anarchistic thought and practice have impacted pivotal cultural movements: abolitionism, labor, feminism, civil rights, the antiwar movement, the fight for LGBTQ rights, environmentalism, and Black Lives Matter. The complex relationship between anarchism and technology will also be explored.

This is a discussion-focused class, with a strong emphasis on class participation. Students will write four (500-600 word) Mini Essays on readings/films/discussions. You will also keep a journal of reflective, informal writing. A thesis-driven research paper (12-14 pages) will be due at semester's end.

Honors 380 (4): Cultures of the American Civil War (#10987)

TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm

Holly Jackson, English

Despite Walt Whitman's declaration that "the real war will never get in the books," Americans have produced a rich and still hotly contested archive of depictions of the Civil War. This colloquium will focus on the art, medicine, literature, material culture, and legacy of the most devastating and influential event in American history. Course readings will include novels, poetry, and political tracts; selections on nursing, mourning, and funerary practices; photography and journalism; and women's experience on the northern "homefront."

We will begin with the explosive 1850s, when guerrilla violence broke out in the streets of Boston, the halls of Congress, and on the Kansas prairie, examining in particular how Black-led activist movements won the eventual victory of abolition. We will learn how the South "won the peace" during Reconstruction and after, including the development of modern policing and prisons. We will look to our own moment with an analyses of Hollywood film and the ongoing interpretive battles waged in cities across the nation over Civil War-era monuments.

Short writing assignments will lead up to a final research essay incorporating textual analysis, scholarly sources, and primary documents, which you will draft and revise in peer workshops and with individual feedback. Class time will combine discussions, lectures, student presentations, writing workshops, and research practicums, including the use of online databases and archival work through local institutions as we consider the pivotal role of Boston in this period, though the battlefields were miles away.

Honors 380 (5): Health and Economic Impacts of Casino Expansion (#11476)

MW 5:30 - 6:45pm

Carolyn Wong, Institute for Asian American Studies

The Northeastern United States is witnessing one of the fastest expansions of casino gaming in American history. At the same time, many states have legalized on-line and in-person sports betting. Does the prospect of job growth and increased tax revenue from gaming industry profits offset potential harms to public health, such as putting more people at risk for problem or addictive gambling? What policies can protect communities from negative social and health effects of expanded gaming? Are some populations groups at greater risk for gambling addiction than others, such as low-income and minority persons, youth, and veterans?

In this course, we will examine these questions through an interdisciplinary lens, engaging each week with a set of readings on gambling from the different perspectives of public health, sociology, and economics. A selection of readings will describe global casino expansion, including developments in Canada, Australia, and East Asia.

To help prepare for a lively class discussion of our readings each week, students will be assigned to write several short response papers. A final project will consist of a research essay (15-18 pages) and a class presentation.



Honors College Dean's Office
University of Massachusetts Boston || 100 Morrissey Blvd, Boston, MA 02125
617.287.5520 || honors.umb.edu
Wheatley Hall, Fourth Floor, Wing 147