

Honors Core Courses – Spring 2013

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(Please consult Student Admin for the most up to date information on changes in course details, meeting times, instructors, etc.)

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AH 1030 - Interdisciplinary Approach to Obesity Prevention

Course# 6198, MF 11-12:15, Credits: 3 (CA 3: Science & Technology)

Instructors: Valerie Duffy (Allied Health Sciences)

Description: Obesity is considered a national epidemic and possibly a pandemic as it affects many developed countries around the world. This interdisciplinary course explores the biology of obesity, including genetic predispositions and behaviors that increase obesity risk (dietary, physical activity, social, and psychological); the obesigenic environment, including how communities are physically built as well as the economic relationship to obesity risk; and the policy and ethical implications for obesity prevention. Multi-level obesity prevention approaches that involve the individual, family, organization, community, and policy will be considered. The format will consist of common lectures, weekly discussions, hands-on activities, team projects, and synthesis of material presented.

Please note: some courses (including AH1030) are listed in PeopleSoft for first-year and sophomore Honors students. Any first-year and sophomore Honors students with junior-level credits will not be able to register for such courses automatically, but will have to request a permission number from the course instructor. The email request to the instructor should clearly state “I am a first-year (or second-year) Honors students with junior-level earned credits (54 or more anticipated at the end of this semester). Therefore, I request a permission number to enroll in [class number and name].”

ANTH 1001W: Anthropology Through Film

Course # 13232, TuTh 9:30-10:45, Th 11-11:50, Credits: 3 (CA 1: Arts &

Humanities/CLAS CA 1-E: World Cultures; CA 4: Diversity & Multiculturalism

[International])

Prerequisite: ENGL 1010, ENGL 1011, ENGL 2011, or ENGL 3800

Instructor: Robert Booth (Anthropology)

Description: This course introduces cultural anthropology through the medium of film. By studying and comparing the diverse experiences and viewpoints of people around the world, cultural anthropologists seek to explain why people in other societies hold beliefs and behave in ways that differ from our own. Cross-cultural comparisons also provide a fresh vantage point for studying our own society, making it possible to gain awareness of ideas and practices so basic to our personal experiences that they often seem natural.

Cultural anthropology studied through film opens up discussion of issues relevant to a wide range of humanities and human scientific inquiry pertaining to the politics and ethics of representation and what influence the conceptual, temporal, and spatial “frames” in which social researchers situate their topics of study may have on anthropological depictions of the human world.

In this course, students:

- Learn basic concepts and methods used by cultural anthropologists.
- Develop habits of critical viewing and reading based on the principle that both filmed and written accounts of other people’s lives are not unmediated reflections of reality, but representations crafted from the authors’ particular points of view and framed in ways that include certain ideas and evidence but exclude others.
- Hone observational, critical, and expository skills basic to how cultural anthropologists understand, describe, and analyze their surrounding world.

CLCS 1002 – 001 Reading Between the Arts

Course # 8028, TuTh 12:30-1:45, Credits: 3 (CA 1)

Instructor: Anke Finger (Literatures, Cultures, and Languages)

Description: In everyday reading of news media, humans are often exposed to a dynamic intermixing of media and arts as well as intermixing of images and stories about events around the world. This intermixing is also prevalent in the arts and cultural expressions such as cinema, theater, visual art, text, music, and computer and video games. In this course, students will explore, analyze, and unravel some of this intermixing. The course is an introduction to the semiotics and fluctuations of interart relations. In it, students will develop transferable multimedia reading skills in an effort to become interpreters of 21st century multimedia products. Much of the work will bridge natural sciences and the humanities.

Questions that will inform discussions, field trips, and work include: Are there similarities connecting the diversity of expression in various arts and media? Can one characterize the arts as an area of research comparable and equal to scientific inquiries? Does art, as a diverse world of signs, help humans recognize and understand reality? What can we learn about individual approaches to experiencing art and media when focusing on sensory perception?

ECON 1107 - Economics, Nature, and the Environment

Course # 11472, MWF 9-9:50, Credits: 3 (CA 2: Social Sciences)

Instructor: Olivier Morand (Economics)

Description: In this course students study the interactions between economies and their natural environment from global and historical perspectives. The course is multidisciplinary and synthesizes insights from various disciplines, including economics and the social sciences, geography, archaeology, history, and ecology, while emphasizing a scientific approach. Among the many topics discussed are the effects of geography and climate on economic development and income inequality, the impact of humans on their environment, the causes and consequences of environmental problems, the environmental collapses of societies, and sustainable development.

Beyond offering a solid understanding of the subject, this course aims to:
Illustrate that a multidisciplinary approach is critical to the analysis of most real-world problems.
Emphasize that the basis for our understanding of such problems (and for possible subsequent actions) is the scientific method. This involves:

- The systematic and unbiased gathering of data
- The identification of specific mechanisms within complex systems
- The testing of hypothesis and the formulation of predictions
- The design and implementation of laboratory or natural experiments
- Foster students' long-term interest in current research and recent findings in various fields, and to demonstrate that such research and findings are approachable even to non-specialists.

➡New Listing of Honors Core course

**ENGR 3195-006 Special Topics in Engineering: “Nanoscience and Society (Honors Core)”
Class #14271, 3 cr, MW 4-5:30**

Instructor: Bryan D. Huey (Chemical, Materials, and Biomolecular Engineering).

Recommended preparation: High school chemistry, physics, and biology

Description: Nanotechnology is already ubiquitous in our daily lives, including food packaging, automobile components, computer devices, and even toothpaste.

This course will introduce some of the science and technology behind such nano-enabled products, ranging from commonplace examples to seemingly science-fiction (we'll read some of that too). Weekly group and class discussions will address the opportunities, and costs, of these various advances. Societal implications to be considered include the environment, natural resources, 3rd world development, food security, the legal system, and human health. Optional tours of nanotechnology labs will also be offered. Regardless of your intended major, this class is an opportunity to learn what's the big deal about something so small: Even though a nano-sized Earth would only be about as large as an M&M, the manufacturing and application of this technology is already a ~\$20 billion annual market.

HIST/LAMS/PRLS 1570 - Migrant Workers in Connecticut

Course # 11177, W 2-4:30, Credits: 4 (CA 1: Arts & Humanities/CLAS CA 1-C: History; CA 4: Diversity & Multiculturalism)

Instructors: Mark Overmyer-Velázquez (History and El Instituto)

Description: This interdisciplinary Honors course examines the life and work experiences of migrant workers. Weekly sessions will combine short lectures and discussions of assigned readings, and the course will offer several guest lectures by university faculty and by practitioners in the field. The emphasis is on migrant workers – mostly Spanish-speaking from the Caribbean and Latin America, but with some attention to non-Spanish-speaking migrants (e.g., from Haiti) – in the United States with a significant focus on migrant workers in Connecticut. This seminar is introductory. We assume that most, if not all, of you are generally unfamiliar with much of the basic literature pertaining to migrant life and labor. The course is thus intended to provide a very broad and eclectic perspective on the world of migrant labor and experiences.

This seminar combines classroom and service learning as fundamental and equally valued elements of each student's experience. Service learning involves the student in on-site study and work with a variety of organizations in Connecticut that assist the state's migrant community. Students will travel on a weekly basis to organizations in Hartford and to farms throughout the area; consequently, they will need to arrange their schedules to accommodate 3 hour blocks to work plus travel time. The organizations may include: Hispanic Health Council (migrant health research); Hartford Public Library (ESOL and citizenship instruction); CT Council Against Domestic Violence (transcription work); Collegiate Health Service Corps or Connecticut Council on Occupational Safety and Health (COSH) in Newington, CT (farm worker health and labor education); and Greater Hartford Legal Aid (legal advocacy). Students are expected to dedicate 3 hours a week to on-site service work. Transportation may be available depending on your chosen site.

Brief Application:

Admission to the course requires a brief application. We want to see that you understand and are eager to work in both classroom and community settings. Please submit a paragraph (150 words max.) explanation of why you think you would benefit from and enhance this course and service learning opportunity. Applications will be reviewed in the Honors Program. Along with your paragraph, please send your name, student ID#, major, school/college, expected year of graduation, and preferred course registration (HIST 1570, LAMS 1570, OR PRLS 1570) to honors@uconn.edu. Permission numbers to enable registration for this course will be sent to accepted students.

For more information about the course, please email Professor Overmyer-Velázquez, mark.velazquez@uconn.edu.

In the course, students will:

- Critically analyze the myriad forces and structures that shape migrants' lives
- Examine how an individual's family story is part of the larger history of migration in the U.S.
- Develop an understanding of learning through practice by engaging in and reflecting upon responsible and challenging service work in Connecticut-based migrant service organizations
- Learn about food and farming (what products are made locally and who in Connecticut's communities produce them)

MUSI 1005 - Music, Nature, and the Environment**Course # 5429, MW 3:30-4:50, Credits: 3 (CA 1: Arts & Humanities/CLAS CA 1-A: Arts)****Instructors: To be confirmed**

Description: This course focuses on the ways in which musicians in the “western art tradition” have engaged with nature and the environment through the creation and performance of their music. Both “nature” and “environment” are used in the title because there is a distinction between them. “Nature” can exist independently of mankind; there is nature even where there is no civilization, no interaction between man and nature. “Environment” is the positioning of civilization within nature, connoting the interaction between nature and civilization. For this reason, the course falls into two main parts.

First, students will explore examples of musicians who draw upon nature as inspiration, imitating and glorifying it. This process includes examining different kinds of music (songs, opera, orchestral music) from the late middle ages to the twentieth century. Then, students will study how music functions - past and present - as a mechanism for calling attention to the environmental dangers in an increasingly industrialized world, with growing populations, patterns of settlement, and production that threaten a fragile equilibrium between man and nature.

The course aims to introduce students to:

- The materials and form of music
- The many ways composers of “western art” music have represented nature in their vocal and instrumental music
- Recent music that speaks out in defense of the environment and incorporates actual sounds of nature

POLS 3412 - Global Environmental Politics**Course # 10044, TuTh 12:30-1:45, Credits: 3****Recommended prerequisite or co-requisite: POLS 1402: Introduction to International Relations****Instructor: Mark Boyer (Political Science)**

Description: This course is designed as a critical and intensive investigation of global environmental politics. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the topics at hand, students will need to understand concepts and relationships from the biophysical sciences, economics, and political science to grasp the complexity of the problems facing the global community today. Throughout the course we will focus on the seamless way disciplines overlap and are woven together into the fabric of scientific inquiry and into the search for solutions to vexing global environmental problems.

Please note: POLS 3412 is coded at the catalog level as "open to juniors or higher" but other students may contact Mark Boyer for a permission number.

SCI 1051: Geoscience Through American Studies**Course # 12502, TuTh 2-3:15, Credits: 3 (CA 3: Science & Technology)****Note: Not open to students who have passed GSCI 1050 or GSCI 1051****Instructor: Robert Thorson (Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, Anthropology, and Center for Integrative Geosciences)**

Description: Most Honors students start their first year of higher education with solid high school coursework in American literature and history, but limited exposure to geoscience. This Honors Core course taps the geology component embedded within American nature writing to help students learn how the earth works and what its history has been.

Particular topics of overlap between American studies and geoscience to be explored include Pilgrim settlement (coastal processes); Transcendentalist philosophy (glacial kettle ponds); Hudson River School (oxbows and waterfalls); and Manifest Destiny (canyons and mountain peaks). Captain John Smith, John Wesley Powell, Willa Cather, and Ursula Le Guin are among authors to be read. By combining SCI 1051 with a geology laboratory (GSCI 1052 taken concurrently or subsequently), Honors students can also meet the GEOC requirement for a lab science.

SCI 1051 was given the same number as the introductory geology course (GSCI 1051: Earth and Life Through Time) because it addresses the same geological content at the same level, uses the same textbook, and meets the same prerequisites.

In this course, students will:

- Become geoscience literate
- Understand that geology has a pervasive influence on human societies
- Realize that geoscience is a respected scientific career (with good job prospects) contributing to natural hazards, environmental assessment, and water, energy, and mineral resource development
- Realize also that a geosciences major provides a platform for graduate education in other non-scientific fields