

## Honors Core Course List: Spring 2014

Last updated 1/13/2014

Please consult the Student Administration system for the most up-to-date information about course availability, instructors, meeting times, etc.

Course	Meeting Times	Content Area
<a href="#">AH 1030: Interdisciplinary Approach to Obesity Prevention</a> <b>CLOSED</b>	MF 11:00-12:15	CA 3
<a href="#">AMST 1700: American Landscapes (Torrington campus)</a> <b>18 seats left</b>	MW 11:15-12:30	CA 1
<a href="#">ANTH 1001W: Anthropology Through Film</a> <b>CLOSED</b>	MW 11:15-12:05; W 12:20-1:10	CA 1; CA 4-Int; W
<a href="#">BME/CSE/MCB/PNB 1401: Computational Molecular Biology</a> <b>001D: 10 seats left</b> <b>002D: 7 seats left</b>	001D: MW 11:15-12:05; F 10:10-11:00 002D: MWF 11:15-12:05	CA 3
<a href="#">CLCS 1002-001: Reading Between the Arts</a> <b>1 seat left</b>	TuTh 12:30-1:45	CA 1
<a href="#">ECON 1107: Economics, Nature, and the Environment</a> <b>CLOSED</b>	MWF 9:05-9:55	CA 2
<a href="#">ECON 1108: Game Theory with Applications to the Natural and Social Sciences</a> <b>CLOSED</b>	TuTh 11:00-12:15	CA 2
<a href="#">ENGR 2243: Nanoscience &amp; Society</a> <b>2 seats left</b>	MW 4:00-5:30	
<a href="#">HEB/JUDS 1103-002: Literature and Civilization of the Jewish People</a> <b>3 seats left (HEB)</b>	MW 4:40-5:50	CA 1, CA 4
<a href="#">POLS 2062: Privacy in the Information Age</a> <b>CLOSED</b>	Tu 4:00-6:30	
<a href="#">POLS 3412-002X: Global Environmental Politics</a> <b>2 seats left</b>	TuTh 2:00-3:15	
<a href="#">SOC 1701: Society in Global Perspective</a> <b>CLOSED</b>	TuTh 12:30-1:45	CA 4-Int*
<a href="#">WGSS 2105W: Gender and Science</a> <b>CLOSED</b>	TuTh 2:00-3:15	CA 4-Int; W

### AH 1030: Interdisciplinary Approach to Obesity Prevention

**Instructors:** Valerie Duffy

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.

*AH 1030 is restricted at the catalog level to freshmen and sophomore Honors students. If you have achieved junior-level standing during your first two years, please email [honors@uconn.edu](mailto:honors@uconn.edu) to receive an override for this course. The email should clearly state your standing in Honors and at UConn and that you would like to enroll in AH 1030.*

## **AMST 1700: Honors Core: American Landscapes (Torrington campus)**

**Instructors:** Christine Reardon, Richard Testa

*Topic to be announced.*

## **ANTH 1001W: Anthropology Through Film**

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

**Instructor:** Robert Booth

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.

## **BME/CSE/MCB/PNB 1401: Computational Molecular Biology**

**Instructors:** Ion Mandoiu, Craig Nelson, Daniel Schwartz

This course is an introduction to computational genomics through lectures, computer lab exercises, and mentored research projects. Started in 1995 by the completion of the first genome sequence of a free-living organism, *H. influenzae*, the genomic era has already led to hundreds of complete genome sequences deposited in public databases and many more genome projects at various stages of completion. The huge amounts of available genome data are revolutionizing biomedical research, but fully exploiting them requires powerful computational and statistical methods. The main objective of the course is to provide students with a general understanding of the field of computational genomics, including current problems and research. Students will become familiar with fundamental molecular biology concepts and computational techniques, and will learn how to use the Matlab bioinformatics toolbox for solving problems in genomics. No special knowledge of

programming or biology is required, and students from diverse intellectual backgrounds are encouraged to join the class.

### **CLCS 1002-001: Reading Between the Arts**

**Instructor:** Anke Finger

In everyday reading of news media, we are often exposed to a dynamic intermixing of media and arts as well as an 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 and transmedia. The course is an introduction to aesthetics, semiotics and structures of interart relations. Students will develop transferable multimedia reading skills in an effort to become interpreters of 21st century multi- and transmedia 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; and if so, how? Does art, as a diverse world of signs, help us 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**

**Instructor:** Olivier Morand

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.

## ECON 1108: Game Theory with Applications to the Natural and Social Sciences

**Instructor:** Vicki Knoblauch

Introduction to game theory examines applications in the natural and social sciences and technology, which may include electric power auctions, evolutionary biology, and elections. The course is an opportunity for students to begin to think strategically about many types of problems found in science, social settings, and even university life.

In this course, students will learn: To recognize strategic behavior—and the potential for strategic behavior—in a variety of situations, for example, in social and political situations and even in the natural sciences. To solve games, use solutions to predict and explain behavior, and recognize and learn from the successes and failures of their analyses. How to work through a sequence of short directed projects to learn that choosing a topic for the Honors thesis is not quite as daunting as they may believe.

## ENGR 2243: Nanoscience & Society

**Recommended preparation:** High school chemistry, physics, and biology

**Instructor:** Bryan Huey

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. In this highly interactive course, 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 thus an opportunity to learn and discuss 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.

## HEB/JUDS 1103-002: Literature and Civilization of the Jewish People

**Instructor:** Stuart Miller

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the history, religion, and culture of the Jewish people. Special attention will be given to Jewish civilization as it is portrayed in the literature of the Jews. *No prior knowledge of Hebrew or Jewish culture is required.*

This course fulfills General Education requirements in Content Areas I (Arts and Humanities) and IV (Diversity and Multiculturalism). One of the main goals is to enable students to develop a keen understanding of who the Jews are and an appreciation of the diverse cultures and traditions that comprise Jewish civilization. The emergence of Judaic ideas and their influence on Christianity and western civilization will be especially emphasized. The so-called "Judeo-Christian" tradition is broken down so that students understand the values and ideas that both Judaism and Christianity share *as well as their distinctiveness*. Students get a taste of how the earliest, ancient rabbis thought

and how they succeeded in transforming a biblical religion into Judaism as we know it. Along the way, you will be challenged to think “talmudicly/midrashicly,” a critical form of analysis that may very well enable you to appreciate literary traditions belonging to other peoples and cultures in an entirely different light.

## **POLS 2062: Privacy in the Information Age**

**Instructor:** Kristin Kelly

Privacy is one of the most important concepts of our time, yet it is also one of the most puzzling. As technology makes information more accessible; academics, activists, policymakers, and citizens struggle to define (and redefine) the meaning of privacy. By providing a thematic overview of the topic of privacy from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, this course prepares Honors students for critical engagement with the many and diverse public policy, legal, and ethical debates that surround privacy.

The course focus will provide students with the opportunity to participate in weekly seminar discussions regarding the impact of technology on the ways in which privacy is conceptualized, valued, enacted, and protected.

Topics of analysis include, but are not limited to:

- The history of privacy
- Cultural variations of privacy
- Philosophical definitions of privacy and debates about the moral/ethical status of privacy
- Legal/constitutional interpretations of the right to privacy
- The impact of technology on the meaning of privacy

## **POLS 3412-002X: Global Environmental Politics**

**Recommended prerequisite or co-requisite:** POLS 1402: Introduction to International Relations

**Instructor:** Mark Boyer

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.

*Students with less than 54 credit hours and non-POLS majors will need to contact Mark Boyer (mark.boyer@uconn.edu) for a permission number, as POLS 3412 is coded as “open to juniors or higher” and generally only open to POLS students. He will be pleased to help Honors students get into the class.*

## **SOCI 1701: Society in Global Perspective**

**Instructor:** Shweta Adur

This course will introduce students to the sociological perspective on society in global perspective. The course will focus on the economic, social and cultural processes that shape the contemporary societies and help students understand the links between their personal experiences and larger social forces by focusing on the transnational social relationships in which they are embedded. Students will learn to think critically about the causes and consequences of social inequalities and the social construction of human life across the globe.

This class will include active learning, peer mentoring, debates on controversial topics, and engagement (via Skype and blogs) with scholars and students in other parts of the world to help students develop global sociological imaginations. Sources for course materials and topical coverage include sociology, environmental studies, political science, economics, social justice studies, Asian Studies.

*\* This course is currently in process of being approved as a CA 4-International general education course. The final decision is expected before the spring semester begins, but after registration.*

## **WGSS 2105W: Gender and Science**

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

**Instructor:** Laura Mauldin

This class will critically examine how social constructions of gender, race, class, sexuality, and disability shape science, medicine, and technology. We will consider the complex relationships between constructions of nature, science, objectivity, and the body to highlight how culture influences the theory and practice of different sciences, medical research, and technologies.

Some of the questions we will explore include:

How does science and technology influence everyday life? How are gender, race, sexuality and nation woven through the historical development of Western sciences? How has feminist science studies intervened or critiqued the construction of science, medicine and technology? Is there such a thing as a neutral or gender-free science? Is there such a thing as a feminist science?

We will focus particularly on the culture of science and power of scientific discourse. We will look specifically at how science is used to make claims about social differences, as well as examine the some social implications of medical technologies for women, e.g. how current medical technologies create novel, and even moral, demands and dilemmas for women. No scientific background or experience is required; only a willingness to critically examine both science and ourselves.