

Honors College Seminars
Fall 2015

Course and Instructor	Instructor-supplied Abstract	Time/Place	Attributes
<p>HON 480 – 101</p> <p><i>Sermon: Text and Performance</i></p> <p>Dr. Robert Ellison, English</p>	<p>What is a “sermon”? We generally think of it as a Christian speech we might see on TV or hear at one of the churches that line 5th Avenue. But it’s so much more than that: there are also Jewish sermons; Islamic sermons; and secular, humanist, freethinking, and even atheist sermons. We’ll study all of these traditions in this course. We’ll start with readings in the history and theory of preaching, and move on to studying sermons in both written and video form. Two exciting features of the class will be guest speakers and student-driven content. We’ll hear from local clergy and lay leaders about what preaching looks like in their faith traditions, and communication studies professors will help us learn how to analyze and critique videos of sermons. Many of those sermons will be selected by the students themselves, which will bring good variety to our work and give the class a true “seminar” feel.</p>	<p>M-W 2:00 – 3:15</p> <p>WS 210</p>	<p>Literature</p> <p>Writing Intensive</p> <p>Multicultural</p>
<p>HON 480 – 102</p> <p><i>The Hows and Whys of Popular Fiction: Reading and Alternative Communication</i></p> <p>Britani Black, Psychology</p>	<p>There is nothing quite like reading a good book. The characters on the page seem to come alive and often manage to find a place in our hearts. In the very best books, that place in our heart can last a lifetime and often means revisiting our literary friends in pages of dog-eared and worn texts. What does it mean to “read” a “good” book? What themes lie within the text that connect across disciplines, be it psychological or otherwise? This course will explore these questions in the context of several types of popular fiction selected from across genres. In addition, students will discuss what it means for a book to be banned and will explore the implications of banning books. The purpose of this course is to attempt to re-define what can be meant when someone says, “I just read the best book...”</p>	<p>T-R 11:00 – 12:15</p> <p>OM 230</p>	<p>Social Science</p> <p>Writing Intensive</p>
<p>HON 480 – 103</p> <p><i>Lie to Me, Truly: Hybrid Nonfiction and Documentary</i></p> <p>Dr. Rachael Peckham, English</p> <p>Dr. Walter Squire, English</p>	<p>Can a lie ever be <i>true</i>? Can a fact be stranger than fiction? How do we tell the difference, and does it matter in art? This seminar examines works of nonfiction and documentary that draw their subjects from “real life”—though in a way that purposefully tests the lines that separate fact from fiction, authenticity from artifice, and reality from myth. How are we to understand a documentary that passes off re-enactments as real footage—or, on the flip side, a <i>mockumentary</i> that incorporates real archival material? What do we do with a book of serious literary journalism written <i>graphically</i>, illustrated by a political cartoonist? While we can't demand that Amazon or Books-a-Million create a new section for nonfiction that resists easy labeling (think Stephen Colbert's new coinage of <i>truthiness</i>), we <i>can</i> evaluate for ourselves how such books and films negotiate the truth, and why they matter.</p>	<p>T-R 12:30 – 1:45</p> <p>TTW W128</p>	<p>Literature</p> <p>Writing Intensive</p>

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<p>HON 480 – 104</p> <p><i>Constructing, Deconstructing, and Reconstructing the American Dream</i></p> <p>Dr. Brian Hoey, Anthropology</p>	<p>People raised in the United States have a widely shared vision of what constitutes the “American Dream.” At its essence, it is a powerful cultural symbol that promises upward mobility in exchange for hard work and commitment to a meritocratic order. What is the history of this understanding? How well does it fit actual life circumstances of young people within an economy transformed by globalization and technological transformations of the workplace? In this course, we will explore the cultural history of this key symbol in American life. In our exploration, we will critically examine the changing contemporary cultural, social, and economic context for the pursuit of “the good life.” We will search for ways that this foundational idea of American democracy may be challenged and expressed in new ways. Finally, what does it mean to you?</p>	<p>T-R 2:00 – 3:15</p> <p>SH 335</p>	<p>Social Science</p> <p>Writing Intensive</p>
<p>HON 480 – 105</p> <p><i>New Drug Development</i></p> <p>Dr. Elizabeth Murray, IST</p>	<p>New drug development is a complex process, involving both business and scientific decisions within a federally regulated market. This seminar will cover key components of the drug discovery process as well as the steps leading to full regulatory approval to legal permission to market the drug. The very important role of preclinical and clinical trials will be stressed as well as ethical issues of human experimentation, use of advertising, and cost of new drugs in the healthcare/insurance landscape. Student teams will present a class seminar on the discovery, development and marketing of a new drug introduction. Medical devices and biological therapies will also be discussed as well as herbal remedies and supplements.</p>	<p>M-W 4:00-5:15</p> <p>BBSC 125</p>	<p>Natural Science</p>
<p>HON 480 – 106</p> <p><i>American Popular Song in the Twenties and Thirties</i></p> <p>Dr. Charles Lloyd, Classics (retired)</p>	<p>In the mid-1920s composers created a form for popular songs that was to last for the next 40 years. By studying its patterns, its use in all popular entertainment venues, its social and historical context, and its singers, a clear picture emerges of what popular entertainment was like in the 1920s and early 1930s. Ruth Etting, in particular, was a recording artist, radio singer, Broadway and film star, whose work demonstrates how these songs were used and opens a window on American popular culture of this era. In her rise to fame, she performed for Al Capone in Chicago. In New York Flo Ziegfeld chose her as a Ziegfeld Girl, one of his famous American Girls. Her singing style set the standard for female crooners, and her torch song renditions, blues for white people, made her internationally famous—she was the top female radio vocalist four years running. She sang in forty short film subjects, forerunners of music videos. This writing-intensive course will explore the place of the song in American entertainment culture during the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression, the short subject as a means to celebrity, the art of the torch song, and the significance of crooning as an art form. To understand her formative era, you will interpret Etting’s music by singing it yourself.</p>	<p>M-W 5:00 – 6:15</p> <p>SM 107</p>	<p>Humanities</p> <p>Writing Intensive</p>

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<p>HON 480 – 107</p> <p><i>Natural Science in Literature: From H. G. Wells to Nabokov</i></p> <p>Dr. Victor Fet, Biological Sciences</p>	<p>A chance for future “betterment of human race” arguably lies in our endless enrichment through science and art – culturally inherited, and naturally selected, uniquely human tools. This seminar brings together scientists and writers from Victorian England to Communist Russia to the modern world. The major themes and authors are <i>Human Place in Nature</i> (H.G. Wells), <i>Making a New Human</i> (M. Bulgakov) and <i>Artist as Nature’s Coauthor</i> (V. Nabokov). “There is no science without fancy, and no art without facts”, maintained Nabokov who embodied a synthesis of these two fields. Students will read fiction and critical scholarship as well as learn basic mechanisms of modern science, especially as applied to human evolution and biology. The instructor’s own country of origin served in 1920-40s as a testing ground for “making a new human”, and Dr. Fet shares his observations of both Russian and Western cultures, bringing a unique perspective on this diversity.</p>	<p>T 4:00 - 6:20</p> <p>OM 230</p>	<p>Humanities</p> <p>Writing Intensive</p> <p>Multicultural</p>