



Winter Term 2020 Course Descriptions

Important notes to consider when registering for courses:

1. Honors Colloquia = Only HNRS 300 level courses satisfies the colloquium/colloquia graduation requirement.
2. HNRS T480 courses do not satisfy the colloquium/colloquia graduation requirement but do count toward Honors credit.

Please see your course requirements for the year you entered the Honors Program here:

<https://drexel.edu/pennoni/honors/academics/requirements/>

Honors Colloquia

HNRS 301

Instructor: Scott Knowles

Course Title: Slow Disaster Field Station

Day/time: Wednesday, 2-4:50PM

Description: The idea of a “slow disaster” is a way to think about disasters not as atomized events but as long-term processes linked across time. Sometimes the linkages are documented through a written record, at other times the record recedes into the land, the archaeological record, or into the atmosphere. The slow disaster stretches both back in time and forward across generations to indeterminate points, punctuated by moments we have traditionally conceptualized as “disaster,” but in fact claiming much more life, health, and wealth across time than is generally calculated.

This course serves a field station to document and act on the slow disaster of environmental pollution in the Delaware Valley. The class will work closely with scientists, engineers, planners, elected officials, community activists and historians to create a Slow Disaster Archive, documenting and preparing useful information for community action in the spirit of mutual aid in the face of disasters that affect us all.

HNRS 302

Instructor: Jennifer Ayres

Course Title: Oral History and Memory

Day/time: Monday, 6-8:50PM

Description: Please note, this is a community-based learning course. For this class, Drexel students will be learning about community archives and learning about the qualitative research method of Oral History. *Why community archives?* As Jeannette Allis Bastian urgently reminds us, “A community without its records is a community under siege, defending itself, its identity, and its version of history without a firm foundation on which to stand” (2003). It is of vital importance to get the experiences and lived realities of marginalized members of American society entered into the historical record before these accounts are lost. Community-Based-Learning classes offer students the opportunity to engage with their peers and different members of the community who they might not get to meet and interact with in everyday life.

Every other week we will visit the John C. Anderson Apartments senior living facility in downtown Philadelphia, to get to know the residents, discuss issues pertinent to their communities, and conduct a series of interviews. For final projects, students will generate collaborative final projects that address themes that emerge out of their interviews and these creative final projects will be shared with the senior residents. Ultimately, final projects will create public scholarship and community knowledge about lesser known Philadelphia histories and our course will serve as a memorial to the elders’ legacies.

HNRS 303 001

Instructor: Cordelia Biddle

Course Title: Writing History

Day/time: Friday, 11AM-1:50PM

Description: How did it feel to live in Washington, DC when the British burned the city to the ground in 1814? What enabled the first Suffragists to cope with misogyny and prison? What was it like to stand beside Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma, Alabama in March 1965? Who were the family members and/or colleagues supporting and encouraging global heroes, and what were their motives?

In this writing class, you’ll discover how best to use research materials in order to drill deeply into the historical context of your subjects and time periods. You’ll also learn to include contemporaneous culture and commerce. Advertising, and tastes in art and literature speak volumes about societal desires. *Writing History* encourages exploration and interpretation as students seek to understand and give meaning to life events. Weekly writing assignments will be supplemented by commenting upon other students’ weekly submissions, and discussing assigned nonfiction works. By the course’s conclusion each student will have completed a biography consisting of 8,000 - 10,000 words.

HNRS 303 002

Instructor: Robert Watts

Course Title: Life Narratives

Day/time: Tuesday/Thursday, 9:30-10:50AM

Description: The stories we tell about our lives are not simply the results of our experiences. Our stories fundamentally shape, order and add meaning to our experiences. In this course, students will learn to develop, discover and tell their own life narratives in front of an audience of encouraging and helpful peers.

Don't think high-pressure "performance" class. Think instead of a class that encourages you to find your distinctive voice, your distinctive themes and your confidence as a storyteller of your life. And expect to

be surprised: sharing a powerful life story is as thrilling and revealing for the storyteller as it is for the audience. To prepare you, we'll read about classic structures of stories, and we'll examine the subtle, nearly invisible choices storytellers make in deciding what to include in their narratives as well as where to end their narratives.

Because this is Drexel, students will also practice telling the kinds of life stories they can use during job interviews--stories of success, failure, lessons, transitions. All along the way, students will explore and experiment with techniques that experienced storytellers call on to calm their fears and anxieties. As time allows, we will outline how to write the kind of life-narrative essays required for graduate and professional school applications.

HNRS 304 001

Instructor: Steven Weber

Course Title: Networks in the Information Age

Day/time: Monday/Wednesday, 12:30-1:50PM

Description: This course will seek to help students better understand the meaning of the term network as used in the modern information age. Examples of networks from diverse fields will expose students to their incredible breadth, and qualitative description of subtle concepts common to all networks will expose students to their surprising depth. Anticipated topics include i) power laws in networks, ii) network externalities, iii) the price of anarchy, iv) small world networks, v) computer networks, vi) blockchain and cryptocurrency, vii) network security, viii) network coding, and ix) network epidemics and viral marketing. While many of these topics are typically presented using mathematics, the course will seek to develop an accurate qualitative but (essentially) non-mathematical understanding of these concepts.

HNRS 304 002

Instructor: Dimitri Papadopoulos

Course Title: Math and Politics

Day/time: Wednesday, 6-8:50PM

Description: To what extent can social choice, fairness, power, and conflict be quantified? With another major election on the horizon, it seems like a good time to ask such questions. In this course, we'll explore a variety of political and social topics through the lens of mathematics. Though this mathematical lens, we will find new ways of thinking about familiar topics and, hopefully, challenge some of our assumptions and intuitions in an effort to better understand the world in which we live.

HNRS 305 001

Instructor: Nancy Fee

Course Title: Sacred Pilgrimages

Day/time: Thursday, 6:30-9:20PM

Description: This course will interrogate the roles art and especially architecture play in shaping the nature, experience, and semiotics of a selection of sacred pilgrimages of different faith and cultural traditions. Inversely, we will examine art, architecture, and some aspects of material culture through the lens of pilgrimage, pilgrim experience, and faith. We will explore how pilgrimage can engage the senses

and how walking and ambulation can be vehicles for meditation and discovery, the expression of devotion, and communion with others. We will consider a recent rise in interest in some sacred pilgrimages on the part of fitness and travel enthusiasts as well as those seeking a respite from hectic and digitally-immersed lives.

Sacred pilgrimages are inherently paradoxical. While the built environment and act of making a pilgrimage are grounded in the physical, earthly realm, the notion and experience of pilgrimage are more intangible and metaphysical. We will study both these aspects of pilgrimage and the liminal space between them. In our discussions, we will aim to pose open-ended questions and probe the ways in which we interpret the material, exploring how we might move from more descriptive accounts towards more nuanced interpretations. The main objective of this course is to help students develop the historical knowledge, visual literacy, and close reading skills that will better enable them to critically interpret sacred pilgrimage art, architecture, practice, and experience.

HNRS 305 002

Instructor: Flavia Padovani

Course title: Knowledge and Injustice

Day/Time: Tuesday/Thursday, 12:30 pm - 01:50 pm

Description: The past few decades have seen the beginning of a new reflection about knowledge. Feminist philosophers and other social theorists have argued that gender as well as other social factors influences knowledge. This course will explore in what sense these factors affect the formation of knowledge and of our understanding of the world, and also in what sense these factors can lead to epistemic injustice. We will discuss various positions in contemporary (especially feminist) theory of knowledge that emphasize, more generally, how systems of power are incorporated into and actually shape knowledge production, and that try to build alternative theories to promote wider epistemic social justice.

This discussion-based, cross-disciplinary course will provide Honors students with a diverse and unique perspective on a topic that will challenge them to think beyond the box. It will enrich their academic experience by allowing them to think critically about what “having knowledge” means, and on what kind of (often invisible, yet harmful) consequences can derive from an unthinking approach to knowledge.

HNRS 306 001

Instructor: Sandra Parks

Course Title: Exploring East Asian Culture Through Dance

Day/time: Tuesday/Thursday, 2-3:20PM

Description: This course focuses on the main principles and essence of the cultures in East Asia including China, Japan, Korea, and their subcultures. Through text, video viewing, course discussions and reflections, students will learn and investigate how these cultural ideas influenced different dance forms from the historical, economic, social, and aesthetic context. Students will observe and learn different dance styles and the different cultures from East Asia to understand how these dances emerged.

Students will explore different dance forms from theatrical dance to ritual movements and classical dances to commercial dances.

HNRS 307

Instructor: Eric Kennedy

Course Title: X-Men

Day/time: Online

Description: This course will offer a survey of Marvel's X-Men, a line of superhero comic books starring a rotating team of "mutants," from the book's origins in the early 1960s to contemporary releases. We will read major comic storylines, written and illustrated by a range of authors and artists, to experience firsthand the evolution of X-Men through the decades. We will supplement these primary sources with journal articles, think-pieces, and class discussions analyzing the themes, cultural influences, and changes in the comics (and film) industry that have shaped the X-Men over the years. Special attention will be paid to the creative, editorial, and business decisions that take place behind the scenes, greatly influencing the final outcome of the book. The course will also ask students to get creative, putting themselves in the role of editor, author, or artist to complete assignments.

Great Works Courses

HNRS T480 001

Instructor: Melinda Lewis

Course Title: In Cold Blood

Day/time: Tuesday, 5-5:50PM

Description: Before *Serial, Dr. Death, or Dirty John*, there was Truman Capote's 1966 non-fiction novel *In Cold Blood*. The nonfiction novel about the horrific murder of the Clutter family in Holcomb, Kansas and details the lives of the culprits Richard Hickock and Perry Smith. *In Cold Blood*, in part, revolutionized the ways in which crime narratives could be told, focusing less on the facts and grisly details of the actions and the "who-done-it" nature of the plot, but of the significance of the rupture and significance these events have on members of the community and the nation as a whole. The book also presents the problematic nature of this type of storytelling – with ethical quandaries regarding storytelling, using actual murders for their literary potential, and nature of bias. In this course, we will discuss *In Cold Blood* as an example of the genre's flexibilities, true crime's significance as a genre, and Truman Capote's authorial impact on what was considered a "trashy" genre.

HNRS T480 002

Instructor: Lynn Levin

Course Title: The Odes of Pablo Neruda

Day/time: Wednesday, 9-9:50AM

Description: Awe inspiring in their celebrations of the ordinary, Pablo Neruda's elemental odes describe a tuna, a postage-stamp album, his socks, an artichoke, the dictionary, the Americas, and hundreds of other things, places, ideas, and people. The great Chilean poet Neruda (1904-1973), winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1971, wrote three volumes of elemental odes, 225 odes in all. We will read

Margaret Sayers Peden's *Selected Odes of Pablo Neruda*. Coursework will combine week-by-week readings of the poems, brief weekly posts, and short (10-12 minute) partner presentations on the life of Neruda and other topics.

HNRS T480 003

Instructor: Jennifer Yusin

Course Title: The Symptom II: Bodies of Knowledge

Day/time: Monday, 2-2:50PM

Description: What does a symptom tell us? What can we learn from symptoms? How much do biology and culture influence how we experience, speak about, and interpret symptoms? This course builds on the ways different disciplines—from biology, to physics, to sociology, to philosophy—use particular definitions of the word 'symptom' to establish their specific fields of knowledge. In so doing, we will explore how symptoms describe and narrate in their complexities, new relations between our bodies and the spheres they occupy. We will consider how symptoms raise new questions and connections that help us to transform how we think about and constitute our different types of cultural and political bodies (gender, racial, economic, etc.).

HNRS T480 004

Instructor: Sheila Sandapen

Course Title: Dr. Faustus

Day/time: Wednesday, 10-10:50AM

Description: "The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus", more commonly referred to as "Dr. Faustus", is Christopher Marlowe's most well known work. The play considers how far a man will go to achieve his ambitions of knowledge and power... and considers what it truly means to make a "deal with the devil." In this class we will read the play, examine the story's social and historical context, and consider its influence on literature. There will also be a screening of *Doctor Faustus* as performed at the Globe Theater.

HNRS T480 005

Instructor: Lloyd Ackert and Paula Marantz Cohen

Course Title: War and Peace

Day/time: Monday, 3-4:50PM

Description: This course will tackle Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, one of the most acclaimed and influential novels of all time. Set between 1805 and 1820, the book is a profound treatment of Russia's involvement in the Napoleonic Wars and a human drama about family life among Russia's privileged aristocratic class. It also explores the social conditions facing large portions of the country's impoverished peasant population, setting the stage for the unrest that would culminate in the 1917 Russian Revolution. The aim of the course is to probe the sweeping historical facts that the novel incorporates and to help you appreciate the breadth of Tolstoy's philosophical insight and literary genius. Though the book is quite long, we will structure the course to give students the flexibility to engage the work's internal complexity and external contexts as fits their schedules. The instructors, Dr. Lloyd Ackert, an expert in Russian and Soviet history, and Dean Paula Marantz Cohen, a specialist in nineteenth-century literature, will help you navigate the subtleties of this great work.

