UMass Boston students presenting their Honors thesis research at the 23rd Annual Massachusetts Statewide Undergraduate Research Conference
The Honors College Spring 2023 course descriptions packet includes:

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HONORS 101 First-Year Seminars for Spring 2023

Honors 101 (1): Mutagens and Carcinogens (#6683)
TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am
Steve Ackerman, Honors College

This course is for non-science and science majors to explore a variety of mutagens and carcinogens. Mutagens and carcinogens are chemicals, ultraviolet (UV) rays, radiation, etc., that can cause changes to how the genetic material is expressed. In these discussions, we will evaluate the methodology of the research and the data presented, in order to determine if the conclusions are warranted and reliable.

The course will begin with a non-technical discussion of how DNA damage occurs by addressing what a mutation is and the different classes of mutations. We will discuss how mutations can arise without changing the DNA sequence ("epigenetic changes") and how these changes can be passed on to subsequent generations even though the DNA remains conserved (transgenerational). We will discuss the Lenski experiments that are elucidating how populations change via natural mutations and confers advantages to select members of the population.

We will also consider the health dangers of plastic water bottles, canned and plastic enclosed foods, the components of plastic such as bisphenol A ("BPA" - BPA-free is not BPA free) and phthalates (endocrine disruptors), triclosan in antibacterial products, sunscreens, etc. We will also debunk the supposed harmful effects of high-fructose corn syrup.

Finally, we will discuss why chemotherapy uses mutagens and carcinogens for a good purpose (i.e. cancer treatment) although they are harmful, as well as why some current disease genes may have once been beneficial.

Students will write three short impact/response papers (2 pages each), one medium essay (3 pages) and one longer research paper (5 pages), and students will also give an oral presentation. The 3-page and 5-page papers will be on topics chosen by the student and should reflect their interests.

Honors 101 (2): “Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My!”: Pets and Zoo Animals (#6684)
TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm
Steve Ackerman, Honors College

This course will address 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, etc.), fish (freshwater and salt water), amphibia (frogs, etc.), reptiles (turtles, etc.). Plus, we will explore how and why tigers and zebras have stripes!

Students will write three short impact/response papers (2 pages each), one medium essay (3 pages) and one longer research paper (5 pages), and students will also give an oral presentation. The 3-page and 5-page papers will be on topics chosen by the student and should reflect their interests.
TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm
Rebecca Fine Romanow, English

This course emphasizes an interdisciplinary approach that focuses on futurism, science, television, 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.

We will watch episodes of the groundbreaking series Black Mirror selected from its five seasons (2011-present). 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.” In addition, we will view episodes of current streaming series like Love, Death + Robots and Years and Years. Our literary selections will be drawn from a wide variety of Cyberpunk fiction that addresses, depicts, or argues with the future that Black Mirror presents.

This is a student-driven course: 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 a collaborative reading project on 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 reflections and shorter midterm essay.

Honors 101 (4): Poverty and Psychology: What Does It Mean to Be Poor? (#7434)
TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm
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 (5): The Scandalized Subject: A Story of the Self in Literature, Film, and Theory (#7644)
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 read four novels, watch three films, and discuss theoretical essays. Weekly student participation and two formal class presentations are required. The first two essay writing assignments in the course will range from 750
to 1,000 words in length; the third and final essay assignment will include a research component and should not be more than 2,500 words in length. In preparation for the third essay, students will submit a prospectus and a bibliography.

Honors 101 (6): Heritage, Culture, and Performance (#7848)
MWF 11:00 - 11:50am
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 (7): Unequal Colleagues: A History of Women in the Sciences (#9181)
MWF 10:00 - 10:50am
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 210G Intermediate Seminars for Spring 2023**

Honors 210G (1): Learning Biology through Reading Fiction and Non-fiction (#9973)
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 (including fiction and non-fiction), in order to guide our learning of topics in biology. Possible books might include: *Lightning Flowers, The Collected Schizophrenias, Cured, The Inheritance, Perfect Predator, Epic Measures, In Pain, When Death Becomes Life, and Happiness.*

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): Warrior Culture and the Return to Society (#9974)**

**MWF 12:00 - 12:50pm**

*Paul Dyson, English*

Modern societies (and many historical societies) with standing militaries have developed programs and methods of training citizens to prepare them for wartime service. Whether they enter military service voluntarily or by conscription, new members of the military undergo some kind of “basic training” sequence that not only conditions them physically but also, quickly and forcefully, socializes them to function as members of a fighting force. After military service, there is a corresponding deculturation and re-culturation as the individual returns to “civilian” life.

In this course, we will examine how societies create military cultures and how their military cultures shape them. We will focus on military culture in general, with an emphasis on the transition from civilian to soldier and from soldier back to civilian. We will also examine the commonalities among military cultures — tightly-knit family-like structures, strict hierarchies, emphasis on individual sacrifice for the safety and success of the group — and discuss the relationship between military culture and war itself.

We will be looking at a wide array of materials: documentary films, interviews with veterans, military training manuals, speeches, recruitment advertisements, and more. Course work will include two short papers (5 pages each) with revisions, a longer final paper, plus a twenty-minute group presentation.

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

**Honors 210G (3): The #MeToo Movement in Film and Literature (#9975)**

**MWF 10:00 - 10:50am**

*Carney Maley, Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies*

This course begins with a brief history of the #MeToo movement starting with Dr. Anita Hill whose experience compelled the country to confront issues of sexual harassment in the workplace in 1991, followed by community organizer Tarana Burke who coined the hashtag while working with young women survivors of color in 2006, and finally the *New York Times* reporters, Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, who, in 2017, first broke the Harvey Weinstein story that ignited a movement.

Using an intersectional feminist lens, we will examine how #MeToo evolved from survivors telling their stories of harassment and abuse on social media to a more organized movement for social and economic justice. What roles do race, class, gender, and sexuality play in whose stories get told? How do these aspects of our identity determine whose stories are heard and believed? Whose voices are still missing from this movement?

Using memoirs, essays, and documentary films, we will examine how the #MeToo movement is represented through contemporary non-fiction forms of popular media, not just in depictions of Hollywood actresses, but also those in the tech industry, music business, and professional sports. Through narrative films and short stories, we will analyze how fictionalized texts can complicate and illuminate everyday issues of power and consent in a way that is not always possible in the “real life” context of the workplace or courtrooms.
Course assignments will include participating in a memoir book group, writing two persuasive essays, and giving a final class presentation, as well as writing a final paper analyzing a media text of your choice.

This course fulfills the Intermediate Seminar (IS) requirement.

HONORS 290-level Courses for Spring 2023

MWF 9:00 - 9:50am
*Frederick Stubbs, Performing Arts*

This course investigates how instruments accompany, imitate, extend, and amplify the human voice, and how collective music-making identifies communities, and establishes ideas of consonance and harmony. We also consider music created and arranged on new digital platforms, and how it might reinvent and contradict the traditional ideas of ensemble and live performance it is built on. The specialized tools for music tell rich stories that intersect with our human faculties, biology, technology, and socio-cultural systems.

Information and listening from many regions and eras encourage the formation of effective questions and class discussion. Readings draw from Art and Music History, Physics, Geography and Ethnomusicology to examine instrument traditions associated with Europe, West Asia, China, Indonesia and more. Readings include information on modern production methods using the Digital Audio Workstation and the MIDI computer language for music.

Assignments engage students with a series of creative and experimental challenges and design projects. Students in the course will write listening and film responses, and a research paper or summary. Thoughtful self-evaluation, attendance, and participation will be combined to determine grades.

Our class will host guest speakers and instrumentalists, and we will access local and national instrument archives. Students are invited to attend several local concerts, remotely and in-person, conditions permitting. This course is for those interested in the power of music to summon essential feelings and meanings, and how that comes about.

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.

Honors 291 (2): Optimism! (#7975)
TuTh 12:30 - 1:45pm
*Avak Hasratian, English*

Politicians and their media servants sell us for-profit stories of crisis. Likewise, we see in academia a mode of “critical thinking” that leads to one of two dead ends: either the “crisis” is so deep that there’s no climbing out (fatality), or it’s so encompassing that only demolishing all systems will fix it (impossibility). The words “critical thinking” are vital to our academic mission. But sometimes, those words and the content they refer to — death, disease, conflict — can lead to despair. This course’s gambit is that there is no crisis except for the crisis of “critical thinking” itself. We’ll change its meaning with optimism and hope, grounded in facts, evidence, and enlightening aesthetic experiences using fiction, non-fiction, film, and fine art. True, in absolute numbers there is plenty of suffering. Also true: Life is better for more people now than at any point in human history, and it continues to improve despite occasional regressions.

This course proposes that we face the facts of progress not with glossy idealism or wretched pessimism but with hope; that we explore sympathy and empathy; and that we try and understand how, aesthetically, the results will raise our spirits.

Readings and viewings may be selected from Steven Pinker, Michael McCullough, Angus Deaton, Hans Rosling, John Mueller, Ron Bailey, Mike Schellenberger and rational environmentalists, James Payne, Kwame Anthony Appiah, PG Wodehouse, Carson McCullers, and Nathanael West. Assignments will include reasoned attempts to become an optimist, and multi-genre hybrid experiments that demonstrate the relationship between aesthetic enlightenment and optimism.

This course fulfills an Arts (AR) distribution requirement.
MW 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.

Course 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, 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 students will 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: affirmative action, student debt and the financial aid system, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, college rankings, on-line learning, free speech on college campuses, the value of a college degree, how higher education is funded, and current public policy proposals that impact a variety of those issues.

This seminar will emphasize lively intellectual discussion and 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), reflection papers, an oral presentation, and a final research project.

This course fulfills a Humanities (HU) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

Honors 292 (2): The World of Hip-Hop: History and Practice (#8449)
MW 5:30 - 6:45pm
Jared Bridgeman (Akrobatik), Honors College

This course will introduce students to hip-hop in all of its complexity, through careful historical inquiry, rigorous analysis, and creative practice. The course combines interdisciplinary scholarly methods that comprise American Studies and cultural studies, with a strong commitment to exploring creative/practical challenges facing practitioners of the hip-hop arts. The instructor (Boston’s own Akrobatik, a 20+ year hip-hop veteran described by Billboard magazine as one of “hip-hop’s most politically conscious emcees”) will bring expertise in scholarly, creative, community, and performative work to the teaching of the class and will expect students to be committed to a type of hybrid inquiry that equally emphasizes scholarly and creative work. Students will read and discuss scholarly works (by historians, musicologists, sociologists, and so on), in order to more fully understand hip-hop’s complicated trajectory via assigned listening playlists.

Students will engage with scholarly, journalistic, and autobiographical writing as they begin their study of hip-hop history. Participation in workshops will focus on hip-hop’s many disciplines, or "elements", as students hone their own writing and artistic skills. Interviews of world-class artists and class field trips to studios, shows, and even hip-hop’s birthplace in the Bronx have been among the experiences of past participants in the course. Assignments will include an oral presentation on hip-hop abroad, a 3-page song analysis, and either a creative project (with scholarly annotation) or a research paper.

This course fulfills a Humanities (HU) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

Honors 293 (1): Inequality: Economics, Ethics, and Policy (#7972)
TuTh 8:00 - 9:15am
Sripad Motiram, Economics

In many parts of the world today, ordinary citizens are concerned about rising inequality, and social movements and political leaders have emerged in response to this. In the US, movements such as Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter and interest in socialism (particularly among the youth) can be seen in this context. Inequality has always been of interest to scholars and policy makers (at least in some countries), but this interest has been reinvigorated in our times. Our focus will be on inequality in the economic domain (income, wealth, occupations, etc.), but we’ll also focus on
broader dimensions like rights and freedoms. We'll discuss interpersonal inequality (among individuals) and group-based (e.g., class, racial) inequality. The course will strive to strike a balance in coverage between old/enduring debates and contemporary ones. We will discuss both theoretical ideas and how these can be applied in practice – through examples and assignments that involve real-world data and cases.

This course does not require prior coursework in any social science or humanities. Any ideas in economics (e.g., national income, economic growth) and statistics (e.g., random variable, density) that are needed, will be taught at the beginning. The course will introduce students to basic concepts in economics, in order to understand how inequality is conceptualized and measured, as well as addressing the ethical and moral stances on inequality. How does inequality affect our economic "performance" in our culture and through what channels? How can public policies regarding inequality determine pathways for our present and future?

This course will include lectures and class discussions, participation and class presentations, as well as mathematical and written assignments.

*This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.*

**Honors 293 (2): Global Development and Human Security (#8092)**

MW 4:00 - 5:15pm  
*Aamir Yaqoob, Global Governance & Human Security*

What is development? How and on what basis is the world/society divided into developed and underdeveloped regions? What connections does development have with security and what does it mean to be secure? Who benefits from development and at whose cost? Is everybody secure in the developed world/society? This course will explore these questions and provide a collaborative learning environment in which we will (re)define “Development” and “Security” through a human centric approach. The course provides students with an exposure to the various understandings of development and security and scrutinizes the contemporary development narratives and practices.

Moreover, the course seeks to criticize the heavily economized version of development at local national and global levels while explaining how the development practice in both developing and developed regions of South Asia (India/Pakistan) and North America (the US) respectively tends to overlook and often undermine the human security concerns of the ethno-racial and religious minorities and marginalized gender identities. In order to familiarize themselves with the politics of development, students will choose a development project/sector in the country of their choice and evaluate its consequences for the marginalized communities.

The course aims to develop the ability among students to grasp a reasonably complex argument through critical reading and present the same in writing and through an oral presentation. With the use of various assignments that culminate in a final term paper, the course imparts skills to differentiate between textual and quantified data and develop a basic understanding of discourse and descriptive statistics.

*This course fulfills a Social/Behavioral (SB) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.*

**Honors 293 (3): Addiction, Mental Illness, and the Justice System: Responding to a Behavioral Health Crisis (#8093)**

TuTh 9:30 - 10:45am (via REMOTE instruction)  
*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 and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

**Honors 293 (4): U.S. Foreign Policy since 1898 (#8463)**
**TuTh 11:00am - 12:15pm**
*Paul Atwood, American Studies (Retired)*

Since the horrific events of September 11th, 2001, the United States has faced one foreign policy crisis after another. Many believe that we are in new territory in our relations with the rest of the world. But is this true? Standard American ideology maintains that our foreign relations are predicated on a desire to promote freedom, democracy, human rights, and a peaceful, stable world environment. And yet chaos reigns. The mass media imply that the crises facing the U.S. are the fault of those who wish us harm, but well-respected critics offer very different interpretations, even though their perspectives rarely reach mass audiences.

What does the history of American foreign policy over the last century or so have to teach us about ourselves and our interactions with other peoples and nations? Is it true that the United States has gone to war only reluctantly in opposition to the threats and aggressions of other states and individuals? Has Washington D.C. always fostered and promoted democracies and avoided conflict at all costs? Can we identify the underlying motivations and aims for specific policies carried out at different times? What may a critical examination of key episodes in the nation’s foreign affairs since the late 19th century to the present inform us about the present or what to anticipate for the future?

The key events to be explored are the Philippine War of 1899-1902, World Wars I & II, the Cold War (including the Korean and Vietnam Wars), and the current crises vis-à-vis the Islamic world and North Korea. Assignments include two short papers on assigned topics (5 pages each), a research paper (10 pages) on a topic of the student’s choice, and a Map Exam.

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

**MWF 11:00 - 11:50am**
*Balkissa Daouda Diallo, Global Governance & Human Security*

People migrate for various reasons: to find better jobs, to escape conflict, to reunite with family, to study, to find better opportunities, and so on. Migration is a global phenomenon, but most importantly a fundamental aspect of human history. Africa has a rich history of migration. This stems from forced migration during the slave trade, pre-colonial mobility regimes, and the impacts of colonization, and globalization. As such, while there is an important African diaspora around the globe, contemporary African migration is on the rise and take various forms. Within Africa, in the Americas, in Asia, or in Europe, many Africans are migrating for multiple reasons. This can be due to environmental, political, economic, and social factors.

To explore this trend, this course grapples with the following questions: What are African migrants’ characteristics? How do they migrate? And for what reasons? How do national/regional policies affect them? And what strategies do they adopt to integrate their host societies? We will also explore migration concepts/theories and apply them on certain cases. Our development and analyses of these trends will draw from driving forces of these movements: environmental (natural disasters, droughts, climate change, and pastoralism/resources), socio-political (conflicts, gender, social networks), and economic (labor, education, trade).
In this course, students will learn about these dynamics in different national and regional contexts. Through collaborative projects and presentations, we will explore African migration dynamics in the regions of Africa, Europe, Asia, and in the Americas. By the end of this course, students will build and strengthen their competency on international issues and African studies.

This course fulfills a World Cultures (WC) distribution requirement and can also be applied to the minor in Wealth, Poverty, and Opportunity.

Honors 294 (2): Dance and Music of Latin America and the Caribbean (#8097)
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 in our amazing, state-of-the-art dance studio on the top floor of University Hall with a panoramic view of the entire Boston Harbor and the Boston skyline (appropriate attire for movement is recommended in this class).

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

Honors 295 (1): Addiction: A Biological Perspective (#9976)
TuTh 4:00 - 5:15pm
Alexia Pollack, CSM Dean’s Office and Biology

**PLEASE NOTE: because the biological perspective on “addiction” is vast and encompasses many disciplines, our focus will be on underlying neurobiology and mechanisms of drugs of abuse. Therefore, students must have a solid foundation in general biology (Biol 111 or equivalent) prior to taking this course**

What is addiction? How do drugs such as cocaine, heroin, nicotine and alcohol affect the brain? Why is addiction so difficult to treat and to cure?

We will explore these fundamental questions through Team-Based Learning using the textbook Psychopharmacology: Drugs, the Brain, and Behavior (Meyer and Quenzer), in order to learn about the structure and organization of the brain, the mechanism of action of drugs of abuse, and the nature of the changes that take place in the brain following exposure to drugs of abuse.

There will be team quizzes for textbook chapters, and team and class discussions to secure understanding of underlying neurobiology. We will also read relevant articles from The New York Times and The New Yorker and two non-fiction accounts of addiction: Tweak (Nic Sheff, son) and Beautiful Boy (David Sheff, father). These texts will add depth and dimension to the topic, allowing us to consider the effect of drugs on individuals, families, and the role culture plays in drug use/abuse.

There will be three written assignments (2-5 pages in length), as well as two midterm exams. At the end the spring semester, each student will create a short oral presentation about addiction.

This course fulfills a Natural Sciences (NS) distribution requirement.
HONORS 380 Junior Colloquia for Spring 2023

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

Honors 380 (2): Making (and Breaking) the Central Dogma: A Critical Reading of Biological Literature (#7531)
MWF 3:00 - 3:50pm
Gonzo Gonzalez-Del Pino, Honors College

This course is an introduction to cell and molecular biology taught directly from the seminal scientific articles that both established and questioned our knowledge of life at its smallest scales. We will focus on one of the core tenets of biology on Earth: to survive and pass on their genetic material, living organisms must adhere to what is called the “central dogma” of biology – DNA is transcribed into RNA, which in turn is translated to protein. Although generally true, life is too complex to be thoroughly described by such a simple statement. The three goals of this class are to: 1) show how our understanding of biology is dynamic and ever-changing, 2) equip students with the tools to critically analyze scientific evidence, and 3) inspire students to formulate their own questions and design experiments to answer those questions.

In this course, we will not use textbooks and there will be no exams. Weekly class time will be split among three different learning modes – Day 1 will be an interrupted lecture placing the article in scientific and historic context, Day 2 will be a Socratic discussion addressing questions and difficulties with the article, and Day 3 will involve group conversations on experimental critique and design. Students’ knowledge and skill progression will be assessed via a weekly guiding worksheet, and the course will culminate with students submitting a one-experiment proposal on a topic of their choice and presenting it to their classmates.

Honors 380 (3): Anarchism and Order (#7849)
TuTh 2:00 - 3:15pm
Todd Drogy, English


In Anarchism and Order we will explore the philosophy/practice of anarchism, both as a socio-economic critique 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. More specifically, we will consider how anarchistic thought and practice have impacted the following movements: abolitionism, labor, land reform, feminism, civil rights, the anti-war movement, LGBTQ rights, educational reform, and environmentalism. The complex relationship between anarchism and technology will also be explored.

This is a discussion-focused class, with a strong emphasis on class participation. We will compose three (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 the semester’s end.

Honors 380 (4): The World War II Internment of Japanese Americans (#8450)
Tuesday 9:30am - 12:15pm
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. PLEASE NOTE: Enrollment is limited to 12 students, and the October 31st application deadline has now passed.