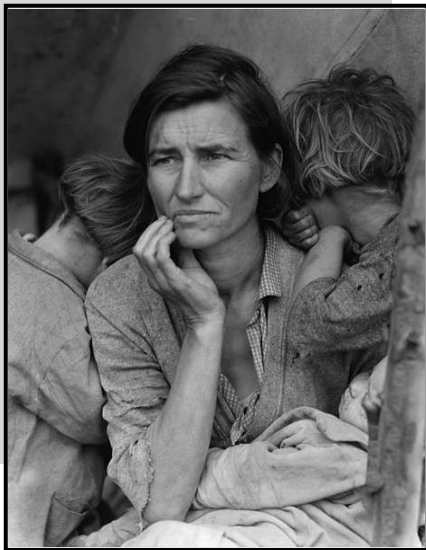


Honors College Seminars

Spring 2012



HONR 200-01: An Economic Perspective on the History of the American Family

Instructor: William Lord, Dept. of Economics

This course examines from an economic perspective the fundamental elements of American family life: family formation; the division of labor in and between home and market; fertility; investments in child development; the consequences of family dissolution; the relationship of the family to the broader community; and mortality, provision for old age and intergenerational transfers of wealth and debt. The class will survey these topics from the colonial era to the present day. Class participation is expected. Course performance is also assessed on two short data-driven exercises, two conceptual papers, and two exams.

HONR 200-02: The Embodied Mind: Culture and the Neurological Body

Instructor: Seth Messinger, Dept. of Anthropology

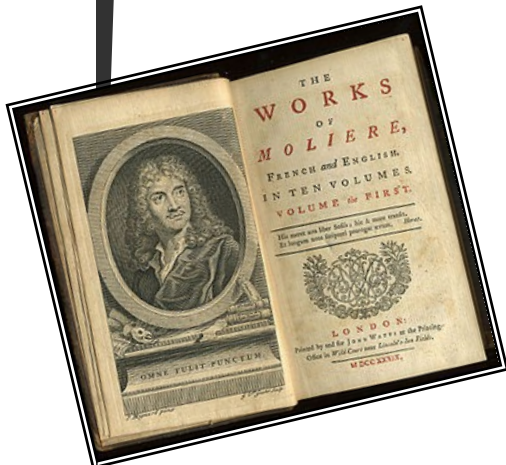
In this course we will be studying what I am calling the neurological body. Our focus will be on the way that the brain has come to play a central role in American ideas of health and well-being. To accomplish this we will read texts from a variety of disciplines in order to demonstrate the socio-cultural foundation for the brain's centrality in the west.



HONR 211-01/02: Great Books II

Instructor: Ellen Handler Spitz, Honors College Professor of Visual Arts

This is a reading, writing, and discussion seminar. Each week we study a major work of literature produced in England, Ireland, France, Norway, Czechoslovakia, the US, among others; these include plays, novels, and short stories, all published between 1650 and 2000. We analyze characterization, plot, dialogue, setting, structure, theme, metaphor, and symbol. We ask the works to become our teachers. As we proceed, the books tend to intertwine in a cultural field in which we meander: an inter-text, which they---and we---create together. Writing about literature and discussing it are arts in themselves, critical arts, which we endeavor to learn. Although we take up a large number of works in order to become acquainted with them, we read in as much detail as time permits. Our goal is never to reach consensus but rather to deepen our individual ways of engaging with each text and honing our interpretive skills.



HONR 300-01: Computation, Complexity, and Emergence

Instructor: Marie E. desJardins, Dept. of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering

This course will explore the nature and effects of complexity on natural and artificial systems. Complexity arises in these systems from many sources, including self-similarity, parallelism, recursion, and adaptation. Through these mechanisms, simple local behaviors and patterns can produce complex, intricate, and often fascinating emergent global behaviors that arise in diverse areas. Students will do several computer-based and written mini-projects, give presentations, and complete a final term paper. This course is also cross-listed as CMSC 491. **NOTE:** You must have completed MATH 150, or have a Calculus placement.



HONR 300-02: Understanding HIV & AIDS

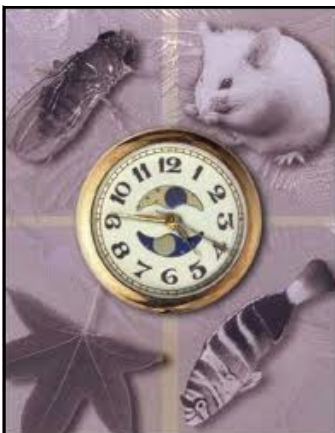
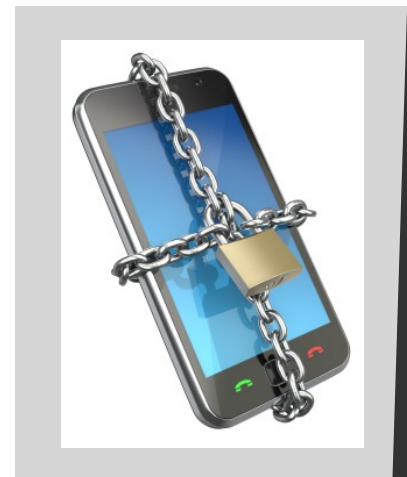
Instructor: Jodi Kelber-Kaye, The Honors College

This course will focus on the ways in which HIV and AIDS are understood in the US, both in terms of their domestic presence and global manifestations. We will examine biological, policy, artistic, and activist ways of producing knowledge about the virus, and how those knowledges, or understandings, depend on each other for meaning. We will also be looking at how these knowledges are interdisciplinary and, while they depend on each other for their meanings, those meanings are often contradictory or even ultimately untrue. Readings will come from all of these disciplines, but no particular expertise in any of them is required for this course. Besides reading, there will be short and longer writing assignments, and a group project that includes an intervention in cultural expressions of HIV and AIDS.

HONR 300-03: Security and Privacy in a Mobile, Social World

Instructor: Anupam Joshi, Dept. of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering

In a world of ubiquitous social computing, social networking sites can be accessed from anywhere and at any time. The technology that makes these practices possible is impressive, but little attention has been paid to the social and public policy issues, especially those relating to security and privacy. In this course we investigate these and related issues by examining case studies in which privacy and security were violated; assessing the legal and regulatory frameworks designed to protect them; and studying the efforts of the research community in this area. No technical background is required for HONR 300, but the use of either social media systems or smart phones is assumed. There will be two short papers, a group project, and an exam. This course is cross-listed as CMSC 491. **NOTE:** You must have completed CMSC 421.



HONR 300-04: Biological Clocks

Instructor: Sarah Leupen, Dept. of Biology

All living things can count time. Bats know when to come out of their caves and hunt, birds begin to sing just before sunrise and know when to migrate south for the winter, and plants open up their flowers at just the time of day that their preferred pollinators are active. In people, everything from body temperature to the incidence of heart attacks changes over the course of the day. **Why?** This course examines the nature of biological clocks, why organisms have them, and how they function. Evaluation will be based on team work, reading responses, the analysis of scientific papers, and a literature review. No prior experience with biology is required.