

# UMBC Honors College Seminars

Spring  
2016

## **HONR 200-01: Ethics and Public Policy** [2413]

**Instructor:** Simon Stacey, The Honors College Mon. 1-3:30; LIB 216M

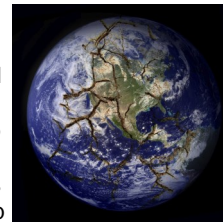


In this course we examine some of the moral issues that arise in public life. The course begins by reviewing frameworks for thinking about ethical issues in public policy, and then deals with questions concerning the means employed to implement public policy, questions concerning the ends policy should serve, and questions concerning the appropriate roles of public officials. Readings include classics of political and moral philosophy, case studies and some contemporary journalism. Issues may include the official use of violence, terrorism, toleration and its limits, deception and politics, multiculturalism, capital punishment, abortion, welfare, health care, affirmative action, and perhaps others. Short presentations will be required, participation will be emphasized, and students will write several short papers.

## **HONR 200-02: The Chemistry of Global Climate Change** [7324]

**Instructor:** Steve Mang, Chemistry and Biochemistry TuTh 10-11:15; LIB 216M

Climate change is among the greatest problems facing humanity, and an understanding of the physical and chemical processes causing this change is vital to crafting effective solutions. In this course, we will study several chemical processes that occur in the atmosphere, and the ways in which these processes can change the climate. We will also investigate the way these changes are seen in society, and some proposed technical and policy solutions. You will be expected to read articles from popular science magazines and from peer-reviewed journals, and to work in groups to analyze and discuss these readings. The chemistry content of the course will be at an "educated layman" level; no previous chemistry experience is required.



## **HONR 211-01: Great Books Seminar II** [7940]

**Instructor:** Ellen Handler Spitz, Honors College Wed. 4:30-7; LIB 216M



Each week in this reading, writing, and discussion seminar, 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 entwine 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: Cultures of Childhood** [2426]

**Instructor:** Ellen Handler Spitz, Honors College Tues. 4:30-7; LIB 216M

This class will explore changing notions of childhood, changing representations of children, cultural artifacts for children, children's aesthetic lives, and, above all, literature and media designed for children. A major interpretive lens throughout the seminar will be child psychology, among others.



## **HONR 300-02: Biology of Obesity** [5408]

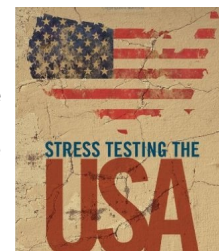
**Instructor:** Sarah Leupen, Biological Sciences MW 10-11:15; TBD

Everyone has very specific ideas about obesity: what makes some people fat and some people thin, whose "fault" obesity is, the degree to which it is a personal vs. societal problem, and so on. In this course, we will explore the physiology of energy metabolism along with issues of psychology, human behavior, free will and consciousness, the food system and economics, and sociology and politics (among others) to gain a more nuanced and multi-disciplinary view of obesity. Students will draw these different disciplines in team work, reading responses, analysis of scientific papers and literature reviews. No prior experience in biology is required.

## **HONR 300-03: Stress-Testing the U.S.** [6136]

**Instructor:** John Short, Public Policy Wed. 4:30-7; Performing Arts & Humanities Building, Room 123

Crises and disasters reveal, like nothing else, the fracture lines within a society. In recent years the US has experienced The War on Terror (2001-present), a financial meltdown (2008-09), ongoing wildfires in the West and the riots in Ferguson in 2014. In this class we will explore the settings, causes, consequences and representations of these four recent events to see what they reveal about the fracture lines, strengths and weaknesses in US society. We will use a multiple perspectives approach in which we view issues of power, class, race, money, globalization, the meaning of patriotism and citizenship, environmental issues and media influences. We will draw on a wide variety of material including government reports, newspapers and media reporting, academic books and papers, personal accounts, reminiscences and cover a variety of perspectives from policy makers, participants, victims and pundits. Students will be encouraged to draw on different disciplinary perspectives for their essays and oral presentations.





### **HONR 300-04: Race, Poverty, and Gender in Baltimore** [6137]

**Instructor:** Jodi Kelber-Kaye, The Honors College Wed. 1-3:30; LIB 216M

Social categories of race, class and gender provide structure for and organize people's lives. These categories intersect with one another, reinforce one another's effects, and can, at the same time, cut against one another. In this course, we will explore how these main social categories (race, class, poverty, gender) are defined and how they operate in the lives of people in the context of Baltimore. As any city with a unique history, Baltimore provides a location through which we can examine social phenomena like block busting (neighborhood segregation), health disparities, food access, proliferation of crime and drugs, the judicial system, and more. Students will be engaged with projects in Baltimore. Some short papers and a longer final presentation/paper that incorporates the Baltimore work will be required.

### **HONR 300-05: Psychology of Women** [7148]

**Instructor:** Nicole Else-Quest, Psychology Tues. 1-3:30; LIB 216M

In this course we will learn about the physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and political dimensions of the psychology of women. We will discuss and critique research methodologies and theoretical approaches and apply them to areas of psychology such as women's physical and mental health, lifespan development, victimization of women, achievement and work, women's sexuality, and emotion. We will also discuss the psychology of men and gender differences. Throughout the course, we will be mindful of variations in women's experiences stemming from marginalization and pathologization.



### **HONR 300-06: Shakespeare on Film** [7149]

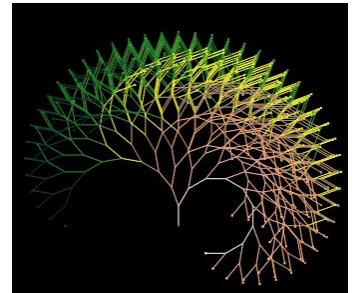
**Instructor:** Eve Muson, Theatre Thur. 1-3:30; LIB 216M

Shakespeare has been inspiring film makers all over the world since the very beginning of film technology. There are now hundreds of films that adapt Shakespeare's plays into different languages, and varied social worlds. Some films are celebrated for their faithfulness to Shakespeare, others criticized as violating the author's spirit and intent. Still others are worth watching precisely because in bending the original they alert us to the aspects of Shakespeare that we may not have paid attention to, or they tell us something new about our own world. Assignments will involve comparing printed play-texts with the various filmed versions and thinking about the choices made by 20th and 21st century auteurs.

### **HONR 300-07: Computation, Complexity and Emergence** [7151]

**Instructor:** Marie desJardins, Computer Science TuTh 8:30-9:45am; LIB 216M

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, section 04. NOTE: You must have completed MATH 150, or have a Calculus placement.



## **Honors College Applied Learning Experience Courses**

### **HONR 390: Reflections on Community Service** Instructor: Jodi Kelber-Kaye

This course provides opportunities for reflection of the principles and techniques of community service. Through a co-enrollment of PRAC 096, students are introduced to basic methods of community service, a background in the cultural, political, and social contexts of community service, and a forum for discussion of issues surrounding civic engagement and social responsibility. Students apply concepts and skills they develop to actual experiences in community service. **Permission required by the Shriver Center and Honors College.**

### **HONR 410: Honors Internship** Instructor: Jodi Kelber-Kaye

**This course offers academic credit for an internship.** During the semester, student interns perform a minimum of 120 hours of supervised tasks for a research, business, government, or non-profit agency. This course is repeatable for a maximum of 6 credits. **Preliminary authorization by the Career Services Center (Prac 098) and thereafter permission of the Honors College is required.**

### **HONR 400: Honors Independent Study** Instructor: Jodi Kelber-Kaye

**Independent study or research under the guidance of faculty mentor.** Course guidelines are available in the Honors College. This course is repeatable for a maximum of eight credits.