**HONORS FIRST YEAR INQUIRY SERIES**

EXCITING SPRING 2021 COURSE OFFERINGS FOR FIRST-YEAR HONORS STUDENTS

HONR1310-01: **Reimagining Everything: Systems Thinking and Social Change**

*Rebecca Riccio, Department of Human Services, CSSH*  
Times: Mon, Thurs / 11:45am-1:25pm | CRN: 37942

This class will explore how systems thinking can provide insights into complex and dynamic problems like climate change and systemic racism and inequality. Students will use systems mapping techniques to visualize their emerging understanding of persistent social problems and examine approaches to addressing them that disrupt conventional models. Case studies will include mutual aid networks and community-based safety.

HONR 1310-02: **Water in the Environment**

*Malcolm Hill, Department of Marine and Environmental Sciences, COS*  
Times: Tue, Fri / 8:00-9:40am | CRN: 37951

What do howler monkeys in Costa Rica; Australian bauxite miners; people in San Francisco; indigenous people, ship captains and wind surfers on the Columbia River; people charging their cell phones in St. Malo, France; people keeping up with building subsidence in Mexico City; and farmers along the Nile River, all have in common? Their health and economic well-being hinges in important ways on local, national and international approaches to protecting, and exploiting, water resources. Costa Rica’s National Parks program in the 1970s protected many of its high mountain peaks to ensure watershed protection for the future. Australia ships bauxite to Iceland, to be refined into metal, using Iceland’s hydropower resources. Hetch Hetchy Valley was almost a part of Yosemite National Park, but San Francisco prevailed in a power struggle within California, to dam the valley for a water supply for that city. The Columbia River drains 7 US states and British Columbia, an extensive dam network has modified the flow to capture water for hydropower, control the water depth to permit deep-water ships to operate, but at the cost of making barriers to salmon migration which impacts the livelihood of indigenous Americans who have traditionally fished as an economic mainstay. The Rance River dam traps seawater upstream at high tide, and lets it out on the falling tide cycle, it can generate electricity on both rising and falling tides. Groundwater pumping since the 1850s in Mexico City has caused surface subsidence in the deep lakebed sediments the city is built on. Nile River farmers used to have their fields flooded seasonally which brought fresh nutrient-rich silt, but today’s network of dams is designed not to ‘waste’ floodwater so other ways of maintaining soil fertility are an outcome. We will take a project-based approach to studying problems like these, to learn the science behind the issues, and the approaches to policy making that either seem to have been effective or not effective from the perspective of particular interest groups. “Water in the environment” will be our theme, and we will work together as a class to identify a number of specific study areas.

HONR1310-03: **Creating a Happier World**

*Yakov Bart, Department of Business, DMSB*  
Times: Mon / 5:00-8:00pm | CRN: 37984

Why are some people and societies happier than others? From ancient times, this question has been explored across multiple scientific disciplines and research areas. This interdisciplinary course introduces happiness research and focuses on relevant economic, political, psychological and societal issues concerning happiness and well-being. We will review the metrics and methods used to measure happiness, investigate qualitative and quantitative data to contrast drivers of happiness across multiple countries, and discuss various strategies for improving individual and societal well-being.

HONR 1310-04: **Examining Family Business Dynamics through Film**

*Kimberly Eddleston, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, DMSB*  
Times: Tue / 5:20-8:20pm | CRN: 37991

Family businesses are the predominant form of business around the world. Yet, because of the inextricable link between the family and business, there is much diversity in their goals, values, and how they are managed. Most unique to family businesses is the central role of the family and its influence on the business. An instrumental tool to discover, identify, and evaluate family relationships and family business dynamics is film. In this course, students will learn to critically analyze and evaluate family relationships and family business dynamics through the examination of various television shows and films and how they reflect research and theories. By watching, analyzing, and discussing these films, the complexities of family businesses will come to life, offering students a unique glimpse into how family relationships impact their business, and in turn, how the business affects family relationships. By utilizing television shows and films, students will also have the opportunity to diagnose the roots of family conflicts and see how having a “healthy family” helps to ensure a “healthy business.”

**HONORS INTERDISCIPLINARY SEMINARS**

EXCITING SPRING 2021 COURSE OFFERINGS FOR UPPER-CLASS HONORS STUDENTS

Honors Interdisciplinary Seminars are described on the following pages. These courses are available to Honors students in their second year or higher. To achieve Honors Distinction, students must complete at least one such seminar between their second year and graduation.

HONR3310-05: **The Ethics of Philanthropy: What COVID-19 Can Teach us About our Responsibilities to Help Others**  
*Patricia Illingworth, Department of Philosophy and Religion, CSSH*

Times: Tues, Fri / 9:50-11:30am| CRN: 15643 | NUpath: SI, ER

Given the health and economic crisis created by COVID-19, globally and domestically, this course looks at the moral and human rights responsibilities of philanthropists and civil society. We will compare past giving practices with giving practices during COVID-19 to see whether donors have pivoted to meet the urgency of the pandemic. Using moral and political theories, law, and public policy, we will critically evaluate how donors contribute to the public good, and whether and how their giving practices can be improved.

HONR 3310-05: **Cold War Spies**

*Jeffrey Burds, Department of History, CSSH*

Times: Mon / 5:00-8:00pm | CRN: 34418

“There are very few reliable histories of espionage, and with good cause. The sources lie, are lost, are nonexistent, are withheld. Journalists (often) lack the patience, scholars (often) lack the clout to gain access, to stay the course, to outlast those who would with both good and malign intent seek to influence the writer’s conclusions.”

* Robin Winks, 1994

Commonly referred to as the world’s “second oldest profession,” espionage is an intrinsic part of the relations between communities, institutions, and states, and an essential basis for policy decisions by world leaders. Drawing from a wide variety of published and unpublished primary and secondary sources, supplemented by modern theoretical and social science perspectives, literature, and films, this course explores the history of espionage during the Cold War era (1943-1991) and its immediate aftermath, through a series of case studies. This lecture course will lead students through the history of covert operations over the past 50 years focusing on these sub-themes: the origins of the Cold War in War World II; the postwar battle for German scientists; Containment and Rollback; Operation Gladio, Venona and codebreaking; nuclear spies; defectors; proxy wars; insurgencies and counterinsurgencies; terrorism; technological espionage; cyberespionage; propaganda; the psychology of betrayal; and mind control (MKULTRA). Each student will make two presentations on themes/readings to be negotiated with Professor Burds. Students may write two short (5-7 page) papers, or one longer paper based on those presentations.

HONR 3310-09: **Creative Writing Workshop Online**

*Ellen Noonan, Department of English, CSSH*

Times: Does Not Meet (Remote Asynchronous) | CRN: 15785 | NUpath: EI, WI

Using language—writing, reading, etc.—is a social activity, one way to connect with others (past, present, future others)—and to document and, sometimes, to trouble, those connections. By thinking about and “practicing” language in this way, by adopting this approach, you will all see and practice how the rhetorical choices writers make are consequential, impacting not only the clarity of the sentences (an annoyingly persistent view of writing that reduces the complexity of writing (situations, circumstances, audiences, identities, genres…) to a simplistic exercise in skill building, i.e., learning the rules of a monolithic grammar), but also, and most importantly, the shaping of what is possible to think about, what is worth thinking about, what is worth writing about.

The courses within the NU creative writing program are not, in fact, focused on “skill building” or THE right way to write; rather, they aim to raise your level of awareness, to make you conscious of the complex social nature of writing and reading, their dynamism and power. In this course, we will be using the “frame” of connections and connectedness (and disconnections and disconnectedness) alongside the concepts of “translating,” “borrowing,” and “adapting” to think about the “tools” that writing uses to construct identities— personal, social, private, public: How do you (how might you) use writing to create a space in the world? How is identity crafted? How is identity understood by others (your readers, your audience)? What tools are at your disposal as a maker? How do you negotiate the myriad choices of purpose and audience and tone and style? These questions have many answers, which I hope to explore with you; there are also many more questions to ask, which will—along with generating lots of “writing”— be our most important class activity.

HONR 3310-15: **Global Health: Art, Science, and Imagination**

*Richard Wamai,* *Department of Cultures, Societies and Global Studies*, *CSSH*

Times: Wed / 4:40-7:40pm | CRN: 34419 | NUpath: SI

While it might have been the case in past decades that a disease experienced in one country “stayed” in that country or continent, this is no longer the case (think: Ebola in Africa, Zika in South America, SARS in Asia, MERS in the Middle East, or COVID-19!). With today’s unparalleled global mobility, it’s quite clear that what happens in one nation does affects others— and this is particularly true when we consider infectious diseases. With greater understanding that our planet is a dynamic system, it is critically important that we acknowledge that a disease in one nation can have worldwide consequences, and we recognize a greater need for moral imagination. Global health provides a foundation and mechanism for identifying those factors that promote or threaten health in diverse contexts and with diverse populations, leading to implications for prevention, intervention, and hopefully, effective treatments. This interdisciplinary seminar provides a platform for curious students to explore the multifaceted new frontiers of global health in ways that span research, theory, practice, communication, and social action— the “art and science” of health— all while learning how a new disciplinary imagination and set of professions emerge.

HONR3310-18: **Platform Business Models**  
*Kevin Boudreau, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, DMSB*

Times: Mon, Thurs / 11:45am-1:25pm | CRN: 35577

Many of today’s leading enterprises are organized as platforms. It is important to understand these new forms of organization, not just from a business and technological standpoint, but also because they have the potential to shape society and the way people, businesses, and machines interact.

This course is an introduction to these key themes and ideas shaping organizations and competition, largely via platforms, as the economy digitizes. The course draws from latest research and goings-on in industry and society. The instruction will introduce economic concepts and strategic frameworks in the context of real-world problems to attempt to clarify and cement concepts. The applied problem-solving in the course will most often take the form of active group discussion of cases and strategic problems faced by leaders at platform organizations.

In completing this course, you should gain a series of tools and concepts to help you analyze and also to creatively design platform businesses. You should also become a more astute observer and critical analyst of the role of this new form of organization in the economy and society. Emphasis will be placed on strategic and economic frameworks. The material is designed to be accessible to students from a range of disciplinary backgrounds including business, engineering, computer science, economics, data science, design, science, humanities, health sciences, law, social science, and so on.

HONR3310-19: **Mind, Body and Heart: Emerging Trends in Health Psychology**  
*Irina Todorova, Department of Applied Psychology, Bouvé College of Health Sciences*

Times: Mon, Thurs / 11:45am-1:25pm | CRN: 35579 | NUpath: SI

Introduces the field of health psychology, which studies the role of psychology in health, illness, and healthcare. Topics include sustaining and promoting health, as well as experiencing illness and the body. Discusses focusing on people’s behaviors, perceptions, emotions, and understandings of health and illness, within the contexts of relationships and culture. The seminar also discusses how the theories and concepts of health psychology are instrumental in health promotion and prevention (including relevance to students’ own well-being). Specific themes include the biopsychosocial model of health; stress, coping, and social support; health-promoting and health-risk behaviors; behavior change theories and approaches; gender and health; health disparities; and the relevance of health psychology for health promotion.

HONR 3310-24: **Law, Public Policy and Human Behavior**

*Richard Daynard, School of Law*

Times: Mon, Wed / 2:50-4:30pm | CRN: 36227 | NUpath: SI

Many public policies and legal decisions rest on the assumption that each individual can best understand what would make himself or herself happy, and that governmental limitations on choice must therefore make people less happy. This seminar will challenge this “rational actor” model suggesting that it mis-describes human self-understanding and behavior. We will test this in a variety of contexts, including behaviors like eating, smoking and gambling, the behavior of various actors in the legal system including judges, juries, experts, eyewitnesses, and prosecutors, how we approach health, health care, and “informed consent,” and implications for the environment, global warming and the future of our species. Students are expected to participate actively in seminar discussions, and to write a paper testing “rational actor” assumptions in an area of their choosing.

HONR 3310-25: **Say it Loud!: The Black Power Movement and Higher Education**

*Vanessa Johnson, Department of Applied Psychology, Bouvé College of Health Sciences*

Times: Mon, Wed, Thurs / 1:35-2:40pm | CRN: 37736 | NUpath: DD

This course explores the impact of the Black Power Movement (1965-1975) on American colleges and universities. Following a grounding in the history of the movement and its relationship to the Civil Rights Movement, students will explore the various impacts of Black Power on contemporary higher education. The course traces how the movement led to distinct ideologies, scholarship, practices, and terminology that provided new lenses through which institutions of higher education viewed Negros in terms of the preservation, transmittal, and enrichment of their culture by means of instruction, scholarly work, and scientific research.

HONR 3310-26: **Digital Civil Rights**

*Ari Waldman, School of Law*

Times: Tues, Fri / 3:25-5:05pm | CRN: 37737

This seminar focuses on how our most fundamental freedoms and liberties are affected by new and advancing technologies. Our reading will be a combination of judicial decisions, legal and sociological scholarship and more popular sources. The chief goal of this seminar is to get us thinking about the ways technology changes society, using civil liberties as a case study, with the hope that the discussions spark more complex theorizing about the effects of technology, particularly on marginalized populations and what, if anything, we can do about it.

HONR 3310-27: **Paradoxes and Puzzles in Contemporary Thought**

*Branden Fitelson, Department of Philosophy and Religion, CSSH*

Times: Mon, Wed, Thur / 10:30-11:35am | CRN: 37738

Every area of contemporary thought (from the sciences to philosophy, religion and the arts) faces its own distinctive paradoxes and puzzles. By examining these conundrums, we can gain deep insights into the nature (and philosophical foundations) of various disciplines. This course provides a novel and application-oriented introduction to modern philosophy and its relation to many other parts of inquiry. No background in philosophy (or the other disciplines discussed) will be assumed.

HONR 3310-29: **Enabling the Platform Economy with Computing Technology and Digital Business Transformations**

*Yakov Bart, Department of Business, DMSB and*

*David Kaeli, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, COE*

Times: Thur / 5:00-8:00pm | CRN: 37740 | NUpath: EI

The increasing digitization of the economy and the accelerating rise of platform-based businesses has been changing not just the kind of products and services that companies produce but fundamentally altering the way they generate value and deliver it to final customers. New computing technologies have allowed a variety of innovative business models to flourish, disrupting many mature industries and transforming the future of commerce, healthcare, transportation, lodging, energy, computing, and other industries. McKinsey experts believe that by 2025 over $60 trillion (about 30 percent of total world revenue that year) will be mediated by digital platforms, and yet only 3% of established companies have adopted an effective platform strategy. As the platform economy evolves, there are both new opportunities as well as new challenges that arise with heightened complexity.

This interdisciplinary course examines the platform economy through two different lenses. First, we discuss the underlying computing technologies that have emerged to support more convenient and cost-effective access to assets and resources via platforms and sharing mechanisms. Second, we examine the key economic drivers and building blocks of digital business transformations underlying the best practices of the platform economy and discuss how companies and governments can successfully take advantage of emerging multi-sided platforms and market-driven network externalities. We will explore both technological and consumer-based perspectives to highlight potential biases and discrimination arising in the platform economy and consider various approaches for establishing fair and appropriate regulations and policies to mitigate such issues.

HONR 3310-30: **Entrepreneurship in Health Sciences**

*Jack Reynolds, Department of Pharmacy and Health Systems Science*

*Bouvé College of Health Sciences*

Times: Tue, Fri / 8:00-9:40am | CRN: 37874

This course addresses principles of entrepreneurship and their applications in the health care industry, with particular relevance to health care ventures and technology. Students will consider the requirements, costs and benefits of various forms of financial options open to entrepreneurs. Presentations and discussions in the course will be led by accomplished entrepreneurs and practitioners who are engaged in health care teaching, research and business. Case studies will identify the challenges and rewards of successful entrepreneurial ventures that will set positive examples for budding entrepreneurs in leading change and innovation.