

## Fall 2022 Honors Course Descriptions for NSO

### Intellectual Traditions (as of 6/17/2022)

ALL courses in this section fulfill an **honors core** requirement AND general education requirements for Humanities (**HF**). Click [here](#) for the honors degree requirements.

#### **HONOR 2101: Antiquity and the Beginning of the Common Era (HF)**

This course examines a variety of texts and thinkers from earliest times to the beginnings of the Common Era, with a focus on the ideas that have had an enduring, foundational influence on our understanding of both ourselves and the world in which we live, and that have thereby become canonical works. Topics covered will vary by individual instructor, but may include: the idea of the hero, fate and death, the development of Christian and non-Christian religious traditions, the nature of the state, and the roles of men and women. Some typical readings are the Epic of Gilgamesh, Homer, Sappho, Greek tragedy, the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, Chinese Daoist (Taoist) texts, the Bible, and early Church fathers. The course stresses careful reading, critical thinking, and good writing. Students interested in knowing more about authors and themes to be covered are urged to attend the Honors Preview or contact the instructors directly.

#### **HONOR 2102: Flowering of the Common Era & the Threshold of Modernity (HF)**

This course explores the development of canonical literature, philosophy, drama, and theology from the beginnings of the Common Era to roughly the seventeenth century CE, during which time religious thinkers, poets, artists, and politicians formulated many ideas and values that still captivate people's imagination even today. Works discussed usually include St. Augustine, the Qur'an, St. Thomas Aquinas, Dante, Chaucer, Christine de Pizan, Machiavelli, and Shakespeare, but may differ somewhat from section to section according to the instructor's discretion. Themes that are covered may include: free will and divine justice, the concept of Nature, the Crusades and the conflict between Christianity and Islam, the notion of sin and hell, Renaissance humanism and secularism, and the Reformation. The course stresses careful reading, critical thinking, and good writing. Students interested in learning particular details of the texts and topics to be studied are urged to attend the Honors Preview or contact the instructors directly.

#### **HONOR 2103: The Rise of Modernity (HF)**

This class studies the "modern" period in which we live, as influenced by the Scientific Revolution, the Enlightenment, and/or other movements and periods. Readings are drawn from canonical writings in science, literature, history, and philosophy, among other genres. The course typically focuses on issues such as the development of modern science and technology, the tension between science and religion, the modern state and totalitarianism, the impact of evolutionary theory and developments in psychology on conceptions of the person, and so forth, subject to the individual instructor's discretion. Readings may include Galileo, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Jane Austen, Freud, Marx, Virginia Woolf, and Sartre, but will vary somewhat from one section to another. The course stresses careful reading, critical thinking, and good writing. Students interested in knowing more about authors and themes to be covered are urged to attend the Honors Preview or contact the instructors directly.

### **HONOR 2106: Reacting to the Past: the Middle Ages w/ Prof. Ginger Smoak (HF)**

This class uses elaborate role-playing games to learn about important moments in history and the political, religious, economic, and social forces surrounding them. The games this semester include Constantine and the Council of Nicaea, The Second Crusade, and Marlowe and Shakespeare. Students read classic and historical texts and engage in debates over such issues as the nature of God, just wars, and regicide.

### **HONOR 2108: Visual & Media Literacy w/ Prof. Brian Kubarycz (HF)**

This course will compare and contrast various historical systems of thought and practice with our own modern assumptions about mechanical causality and human agency. Basic concepts will be drawn from a variety of disciplines in the humanities and sciences. These will include: literature, philosophy, plastic arts, psychology, sociology, and science and technology studies. The aim of the course will be to gain an understanding of systems of meaning radically different than our own, as well as an appreciation of the capacities and limitations of our own scientific worldview.

The course will present Western modernity's mechanical metaphysics as the exception rather than the rule of human experience. An examination of historical materials and contemporary critique will serve to defamiliarize the status quo and reorient students to alternate ways of experiencing physical, mental, and social reality. The aim of this exercise is to help students gain a greater awareness of some of the fundamental assumptions which inform their understanding of their personal and professional lives, and to direct this new awareness toward responsible critical interventions in the present.

### **HONOR 2111: Poets & Philosophers (HF)**

Honors 2111 is taught by a literary historian and a historian of science, who will bring their varying perspectives to the large questions of human existence as first framed from 3000 BCE to the Roman empire. Important topics will include the benefits of change vs. stasis, the origins of substances and life, competing and changing bases for authority and claims to truth, and the way human social structures and values shape the pursuit of knowledge about the natural world. This class is the first in a series of three semester-long classes that will look broadly at the kinds of questions scientists and humanists ask and the limitations of both.

\*Super ITs are part of a three-semester sequence (2111 Fall; 2112 Spring; 2113, Fall) that will fulfill both IT requirements and the Honors Science requirement. To register and to receive "department consent," email [advising@honors.utah.edu](mailto:advising@honors.utah.edu). Must commit to all three semesters.

### **HONOR 2115: Community & Identity w/ Prof. Paul Ketzle (HF)**

This course in Intellectual Traditions considers network imagery from antiquity to the twenty-first century. "The network" may feel synonymous with the internet, but fantasies of interconnection over distance are far older than Facebook. We will begin by turning our collective eye to Christianity, whose notion of the corpus mysticum ("mystical body") describes both Christ's miraculous body and the group of believers constituted by that body. We will

proceed to trace what many have understood as the modern secularization of the network through technologies such as the printing press, the railway, and the computer. We will also turn our attention to the foundational role that textiles and women have played in our understanding. In taking up the digital and contemporary, we will consider not just the rise of social media (both generally and in specific iterations such as “Black Twitter”), but also of decentralized ledgers such as Bitcoin and Ethereum.

### **HONOR 2810: Gender, Performance & Performativity w/ Prof. Lynn Deboeck (HF)**

Utilizing primarily dramatic literature, including ancient and contemporary scripts, this course will explore how culture creates identity through and within performance. The intellectual tradition of scripting gender follows a parallel trajectory to that of the Western traditions of social construction and political influence and we will map these along with the effect performance has had on the *performativity* of gender itself. Gender is a construct that ties nearly every branch of society to another, using hierarchies, norms, and dogma to keep firm what is actually quite fluid within individual identities. This journey will examine what it has meant and will mean to continue the tradition of gender performance.

### **HONOR 2810: (En)gendered Ideas w/ Prof. Ginger Smoak (HF)**

This course will take a gendered approach to ways of thinking and acting in prescriptive and descriptive texts as a way of addressing topics such as patriarchy, feminism, power dynamics, property, religious doctrine, gendered health, sex and the body. It will provide a foundation for today’s focus on gender justice and equality. We will strive to answer questions such as: Is gender becoming an outdated notion? Why do gender roles emerge and how have these roles changed? Are gender roles based on essential “femaleness” and “maleness”? Are they socially constructed, biologically constructed, or both? Is it a binary or a continuum? What happens when these roles are transgressed?

This course stresses careful reading, critical thinking and good writing, creative exploration, and participation in the discussions. It also stresses independent thought and pushing yourself to examine and reexamine your beliefs, often past your comfort level.

## **Honors Writing**

**ALL** courses in this section fulfill honors writing, a core requirement, **AND** writing requirements for general education (**WR2**) OR bachelor’s degree (**CW**). Click [here](#) for the honors degree requirements.

### **HONOR 2211: Honors Writing (WR2)**

Writing in undergraduate academic contexts. Students practice analytical and persuasive writing that addresses various academic audiences in a research university. Emphasis on writing for learning, textual analysis, writing from research, and collaborative writing.