Honors Seminars: Spring 2012

HONR 122 Culture, Cuisine, Film and Food - Food offers more than sustenance: expression, power, social position, and many levels of satisfaction. How is this revealed in cultures other than your own? Through viewing and discussing films such as Chocolat, My Big Fat Greek Wedding, Eat, Drink, Man, Woman, and The Big Night, we will discover tastes, preferences and attitudes of other cultures toward food. Preparing and consuming food of many cultures are part of this course. Vegetarians are encouraged and will be accommodated.

HONR 123 The Science and Psychology of Harry Potter - JK Rowling's world of witchcraft and wizardry provides a window into the human psyche and the mysteries of science. Required reading will include "The Science of Harry Potter," "The Psychology of Harry Potter," and assorted scrolls available through your Blackboard portal. Students and their housemates will conduct two 15-minute presentations on topics related to: the magical appeal of magic; aerodynamics of Quidditch; time travel and time turners; traveling with Portkeys and Floo Powder; the unnatural biology of magical creatures; teenage angst, friendships, and romance; psychological defense mechanisms, death, and grief.

HONR 126 The Practice of Yoga - Have you ever wanted to be as tall as a mountain or as graceful as a peacock, to fly like a bird or leap like a monkey? All this is possible in the age-old tradition of yoga. This seminar will introduce students to the ancient discipline of personal development that balances body, mind, and spirit. Students will learn physical postures as well as methods for relaxation, yogic breathing, and meditation that promote health, reduce stress, improve alignment and balance, and increase strength and flexibility. The seminar will also provide an introduction to the history and philosophy of yoga.

HONR 108 Recipe of a Murderer - Have you ever wondered what makes some people capable of murder and others not? Could your neighbor or your best friend have a dark and murderous side? In this course we will delve into the minds of some of the world’s most infamous serial and mass murderers and explore what makes otherwise seemingly normal people become ruthless killers. Using popular fiction and film, we will examine the many theories of violence that have developed throughout the ages and some of the world’s most heinous killers.

HONR 137 American Gothic: Films of David Lynch - The films of David Lynch give us a gorgeous and disturbing view of the shiny surfaces and tenebrous murk at the heart of American life. Stylish like Hitchcock, more daring than Tarratino, Lynch’s movies are as unique and (wonderfully) perverse as your most stunning dreams. In this course we will watch and discuss Lynch’s movies with appropriate divergences into dream interpretation theory, the world of sexual and social deviance, and Hollywood (the world of deviant dreams).

HONR 139 Get Crafty! - Take crafting to the next level by mapping out a project that activates your hands and mind. Your project can be designed to deepen an existing skill or experiment with something new like knitting, felting, weaving, soft sculpture or rug hooking. We will visit a craft show, artisan's studios and talk with professionals about the business of selling crafts. The course will culminate by elevating the status of craft arts by installing a show of our completed works.

HONR 172 Maple Syrup: The Real Thing - The method of producing maple syrup is one of the things in our society that has endured even in today's culture of constant change; fundamentally it’s the same process Native Americans used centuries ago. The study of maple syrup is a way to investigate a variety of disciplines. This class allows for an introduction and discussion of them as well as cooking with maple syrup. Additionally, field trips to local producers, restaurants and festivals helps the students explore the local community.