

HONORS COLLEGE

HONORS COURSES

Course Descriptions

HON	201-202	Welcome to Thinking I and II	4/4
This sequence guides students through the transition to college-level work by engaging primary texts in literature, history, and philosophy from around the world and across epochs. Organized each year by a theme—e.g., authority and freedom, other worlds, friendship, crossing borders—the class helps students learn to develop their own views of the works assigned through deep analysis, and to write about their thinking in reasoned, mature prose (through short weekly writings, longer essays, and lots of feedback). The course is conceived as a conversation among students and the two professors about provocative ideas and disciplines in dialogue. Overall, students learn the foundational thinking, writing, and speaking skills for future Honors seminars, the rest of college, and life outside the classroom.			
HON	203	Welcome to Thinking III	4
This seminar guides students who have entered the Honors program by lateral entry admission through the transition to Honors by engaging primary texts in literature, history, and philosophy from around the world and across epochs. Organized each term by a theme—e.g., authority and freedom, other worlds, friendship, crossing borders—the class helps students learn to develop their own views of the works assigned through deep analysis, and to write about their thinking in reasoned, mature prose (through short weekly writings, longer essays, and lots of feedback). The course is conceived as a conversation among students and the two professors about provocative ideas and disciplines in dialogue. Overall, students learn the foundational thinking, writing, and speaking skills for future Honors seminars, the rest of college, and life outside the classroom.			
HON	211	Global Welfare and Justice	4
Economic inequality continues to increase throughout the world, putting more human beings in poverty. The 21 st century poses a significant challenge therefore to political and economic institutions to deal effectively and justly with this increasing economic inequality-as-poverty. This course explores the political and economic literature on distributive and economic justice, from classical sources to more contemporary sources such as liberalism, Marxism, feminism and cosmopolitanism, to better understand how we might eradicate poverty and economic inequalities through just institutional changes in the 21 st century.			
HON	212	Arts and Performance	4
Using a multi-disciplinary approach that emphasizes direct artistic experiences, this course explores the <i>what</i> and the <i>why</i> of both arts and performance. As in the creation of art itself, this seminar engenders curiosity, considers context, welcomes risk-taking, and fosters an environment that leads to openness and depth of connection. Primary sources include the specific artistic interests of individuals within the class as well as a variety of arts events within the Westminster and Salt Lake communities. Firmly committed to the idea that being an educated, active, and fully alive individual requires engaging with and critically/creatively responding to the arts, we examine a wide variety of artistic works in the visual arts, music, dance/movement, drama/theatre, as we explore essential questions related to the arts, to creation, to life. Students develop a sense of openness to unexpected possibilities through the recognition of the place for the arts in their lives.			
HON	213	Environment and the Space of Art	4
This course explores the intersection of art and the environment across a broad understanding of each sphere. Faculty and students will explore primary texts and experiences that lend an understanding to our place within the arts (visual, literary, sound, performative) and environment (natural, constructed, scientific). Topics might include, for example, unexpected nature, ecosystems and creativity, environmental and cultural changes, and the collateral ideas formed between art and nature. The state of Utah and the surrounding regions provide a remarkable backdrop for exploring these topics through field trips and study. Other learning activities—writing, conversation, and reflection—will offer students myriad ways to appreciate our place in environments and the space of art.			
HON	221	Science as Knowledge	4
When we hear someone say “That’s not science,” it sounds inherently dismissive. In this interdisciplinary seminar, we will discuss the special status often given to scientific knowledge relative to other forms of knowledge and explore the ways in which that status might help or hinder our ability to actually understand our universe. We will build on this discussion to critically evaluate the notions of certainty, authority, and progress that are often intertwined with scientific knowledge, as well as the degree to which scientific knowledge reflects the culture that develops it.			
HON	222	Science, Power, and Diversity	4
This seminar explores the relationship between scientific knowledge and power, especially as this relationship intersects with issues of diversity. Students will engage with major ideas and texts from the last century in the contemporary philosophy of science, science and cultural studies, and the natural and physical sciences. Epistemological and ethical issues in the production and dissemination of science knowledge are discussed, as are issues of race, gender, culture, and justice pertaining to science in society. Students will gain critical perspectives on popular contemporary scientific discourse by analyzing ideas from primary source texts, critical accounts of science, and scientific journalism.			
HON	231	Human Culture and Behavior	4
Why do people do the things they do as individuals, groups, or as a society? How does our culture and society shape human behavior? How does our behavior shape society? Are the answers to be found in genetics, socioeconomic status, gender, culture, and/or elsewhere? This seminar explores the intersection of human culture and behavior via the methods and perspectives of a variety of social science disciplines. The course examines topics as diverse as violence, law and crime, sexuality and sexual identity, and gender and racial injustice.			
HON	232	Data/Society/Decision-Making	4

<p>We are surrounded by data. Even when we're unaware of it, data informs key systems upon which we rely: transportation, politics, computing, medicine, and commerce, just to name a few. In this course, we seek to develop an understanding of the nature of data—what it is, how it is gathered and stored, what it purports to measure, and what it actually measures. Quantitative tools are developed to analyze data while simultaneously exploring the value and limitations of such analysis. The ultimate goal is to connect data to the process of making decisions, with examples from a variety of fields used to illustrate its successes and failures.</p>			
HON	300	Special Topics in Honors	1-4
<p>These seminar topics vary from year to year. They primarily focus on specific topics raised in the interdisciplinary Honors core seminars, e.g., "Reading & Writing the City" or "Humanitarian Law," but which are explored in depth in these seminars. May be taken more than once for credit. Departmental special topics courses may be cross-listed with these seminars.</p>			
HON	401	Directed Studies in Honors	1-4
<p>A tutorial-based course used only for student-initiated proposals for intensive individual study of topics not otherwise offered in the Honors Program and for student-initiated, interdisciplinary research projects. Prerequisite: consent of instructor(s), Honors director, and school dean.</p>			
HON	402	Senior Project/Thesis	3
<p>A self-directed project or thesis that covers a topic in the student's major discipline or of an interdisciplinary nature and therefore not covered under a single discipline-specific thesis course. Project completed with a supervisory committee of at least two faculty members: one as a lead sponsor/mentor and one or more as second reader(s). At least one of the sponsors or readers must be an Honors Program faculty member. Prerequisite: senior standing and consent of instructors and Honors director.</p>			
HON	403	Capstone Conversations	0-1
<p>This course provides a capstone experience that challenges students to reflect on the process of creating independent scholarship in an interdisciplinary learning context. Faculty and students will examine the diverse set of skills required to produce high quality independent scholarship, from the generation of project ideas, to project planning and implementation, to the presentation of their work in a variety of potential formats. At each meeting, students will discuss their progress and approaches to handling upcoming challenges on their independent capstone projects for their respective majors, receiving support, feedback, and input from their peers in other disciplines. In particular, cross-disciplinary conversations will encourage students to draw inspiration from colleagues in other fields and see how their research might have applicability to those fields. The capstone seminar will culminate with the presentation of their project to the Honors and College communities. This course is repeatable for credit.</p>			