

Spring 2016 Honors Colloquia Descriptions

(For second-, third-, and fourth-year students who are pursuing University Honors)

****Policy note:** These Colloquia are available for students who are pursuing **UNIVERSITY HONORS**. Students who are pursuing Departmental Honors (i.e., research or creative project and Thesis) may enroll in a Colloquium on or after Wednesday, January 13, 2016, if seats are still available at that time. Departmental Honors students who do not adhere to this policy will be dropped from Colloquia. The Honors College enforces this policy to ensure that there are enough seats available for students who are pursuing University Honors. (If you are pursuing BOTH Departmental and University Honors, then you may enroll in Colloquia with no restrictions.) Thank you for your understanding and compliance.

You may repeat Colloquia courses, provided the class topic is different. For example, you could take both **HCOL 40043 Nature of Society: “Creative Problem Solving and Storytelling”** and **HCOL 40043 Nature of Society: “Society through Media”** because the specific class subtopics are not the same.

Nature of Society: Creative Problem Solving and Storytelling

HCOL 40043–660 (34507) (3 credit hours)

M – 2:00-3:50 PM

Dr. Stacy Grau and Dr. Tracey Rockett

Everyone is creative, and solving the world’s most pressing problems (and small problems) requires innovation. This course will introduce students to human centered design – design thinking – made famous by Stanford’s D School and IDEO. We will work through the design thinking process and then apply it to solving problems. This course thrives on cognitive diversity – so everyone can contribute. We will learn all about different ways to think about creativity and also learn ways to tell a compelling story and how it works with design thinking.

On Human Nature: Giving and Philanthropy

HCOL 40023–670 (34496) (3 credit hours)

M – 3:00-4:50 PM

Dr. Ron Pitcock

Students will gain an understanding and appreciation for the meaning/importance of philanthropy and will participate in real philanthropic endeavors. Students will research Fort Worth nonprofit organizations, visit and conduct interviews, develop memorandums, and ultimately, in Scharbauer Hall’s Debate Chamber, argue the merits of each charity. Students taking the course will come to a consensus on which charities to support. The work in this course will affect real lives in meaningful ways, and students will discuss and make moral judgments as they engage in micro-decisions while considering macro-consequences. Students will direct and control a donor-funded gift to the course; it is up to the students’ collective wisdom to grant it responsibly. At the end of the semester, the class can give the entire amount to a single charity or divide the amount among a maximum of three charities.

Note: *Students taking this class are required to attend sessions with guest speakers from noon -1:00 p.m. on some Fridays during the semester (4-5 meetings).*

Nature of Society: Digital Identity and Storytelling

HCOL 40043–670 (34509) (3 credit hours)

MW – 3:00-4:50 PM

****This class will begin in the second 8-week term of the semester.****

Dr. Beata Jones

In this course, students will explore their digital identity – the sum of all digitally available information about an individual. We will discuss how our digital identity can be intentionally shaped by the stories we tell, and how it is also shaped by the perceptions of others. We will examine a variety of digital spaces and how the choices we make in those spaces might affect our physical lives. Discussion topics will include friendship, intimacy, privacy, trust, influence, reputation, and personal brand. Students will use a variety of online tools, including Digication ePortfolio platform, to re-shape their digital identities.

Note: *This course requires students to create a profile and “friend” classmates in all social media spaces analyzed in class.*

Nature of Values: Empathy

HCOL 40033–674 (33299) (3 credit hours)

M – 3:30-5:20 PM

Dr. Wendy Williams

In this seminar, students explore and experience empathy in its individual, interpersonal, and civic modes. Readings in literature, psychology, sociology, and philosophy supplement students' semester-long service-learning projects, which involve 15 hours of service with a local community partner. During class meetings, we discuss readings and service-learning projects to the end of synthesizing both a coherent theory of empathy as well as a practical understanding of it.

Honors Interdisciplinary Inquiry: A Day in the Life of the Trinity River

HSPR 40000–655 (3 credit hours)

T – 2:00-4:50 PM

Dr. Andy Schoolmaster

This interdisciplinary course will address the unique physical, chemical, economic, social, legal, ecological, geographical, historical, and geological dimensions of water that influence availability, accessibility, use, and users. Using the Trinity River Watershed of Fort Worth as a case study, students will examine factors contributing to the global freshwater crisis through a local lens and get the opportunity to have first-hand experience with water in the field, laboratory, and classroom. This course will include various field trips and contributions from additional faculty members including Don Jackson (Political Science), Gregg Cantrell (History), Ray Drenner (Biology), and Mike Slattery (Environmental Science), as well as other guest lecturers.

Nature of Society: Nature of Citizenship – Religion, Globalization, and Immigration

HCOL 40043–655 (31737) (3 credit hours)

T – 2:00-3:50 PM

Dr. Santiago Piñón

This course considers the enduring question: “*What is a Good Citizen?*” in light of globalization and immigration in North America. The political turmoil and globalization represent two different notions of what it means to be a good citizen. On the one hand, it can be viewed as patriotic, or as love of country. On the other hand, citizenship can be understood from a political liberalism perspective that takes a critical attitude toward all authority and may view liberty and citizenship as rights and duties that should be extended to all. By considering religious, political, and fictional texts, the class will evaluate and analyze various responses to the enduring question.

On Human Nature: TCU Veterans at War and at Home

HCOL 40023–665 (31728) (3 credit hours)

T – 3:00-4:50 PM

Dr. Dan Williams

As part of the TCU Oral History Project, this colloquium will involve Honors students in a unique book project collecting and editing the stories of TCU students, faculty, staff, and alumni who have served in the United States Armed Forces. In collaboration with the TCU Press, the project editors, Ethan Casey, and April Brown intend to publish stories of TCU veterans representing the full range of their experiences from entering military to transitioning back into civilian life. Students will be involved in a wide range of activities: interviewing veterans and/or helping them write their stories, researching historical information and photographs, copyediting and proofing, and assisting in the design and production for the eventual book. Students will not only directly contribute to the book's development, but they will also be recognized for their contributions as Assistant Editors. From their involvement and experiences, students will gain unique insights into the effects military experience had on our TCU veterans.

Note: *This class with Dr. Dan Williams is repeatable for credit.*

Nature of Values: Women in Religion

HCOL 40033–665 (31736) (3 credit hours)

T – 4:00-5:50 PM

Dr. Claudia Camp

By looking at a variety of faith traditions from around the world, this course explores the impact of religion in general, and of various religions in particular, on the empowerment and self-actualization—or, on the other hand, the disempowerment and repression—of women. Is religion (are particular religions) good for women, bad for women, neither, or both? Students will analyze gendered power dynamics in religious beliefs and practices, examine how our cultural assumptions are shaped by media representations of religion, religions, and women, and learn about women's experiences in religious traditions outside our own comfort zones.

Nature of Values: Cultural Heritage – Ethics and Politics of Preserving the Past (2 sections)

HCOL 40033–681 (34505) (3 credit hours)

T – 6:00-7:50 PM

HCOL 40033–680 (34503) (3 credit hours)

W – 5:00-6:50 PM

Dr. Elisa Foster

With the recent targeted destruction of ancient artifacts and archaeological sites in the Middle East, the issues and ethics of cultural preservation have again come to the forefront of international conversation. The study of cultural heritage, broadly defined as physical signs of the human past that exist in the present, asks questions about how and why objects, architecture, and traditions should be preserved, protected, and presented, and how these choices influence the future of our global society. This course will examine cultural heritage from a variety of interdisciplinary vantage points, from tourism to public and legal policies to the impact of colonialism, armed conflict, and the environment, among many others. Students will have the opportunity to work on real-world, multi-disciplinary examples throughout the course and to visit local museums and other cultural sites in Fort Worth. To this end, this course asks the complicated question, "Who owns the past?"

On Human Nature: "Between a Rock and a Hard Place" – Human Resiliency in Action

HCOL 40023–674 (34497) (3 credit hours)

W – 4:00-5:50 PM

Dr. Amber Esping

This colloquium examines resiliencies that allow humans to endure and thrive in the most difficult of circumstances. This topic will be explored through various strengths-based lenses, including solution-focused counseling, positive psychology, existential psychology, developmental psychology, and education theory. Readings will emphasize empirical approaches to studying human resilience as well as representations of resilience in literary nonfiction and film. Students will explore and cultivate their own capacity for overcoming adversity.

Nature of Society: Society through Media**HCOL 40043–656 (33149) (3 credit hours)****R – 2:00-3:50 PM****Dr. Sean Atkinson**

This course examines society through the lens of recent works of multimedia. Multimedia, broadly construed, includes short internet videos, video art, art film, popular film, and opera. Despite these varied genres, the interaction of musical (or other sonic stimuli), visual, and textual domains contained within each allows for nuanced and multilayered views on many issues that impact global society, such as the role of technology, the environment, politics, and the human condition. Each individual instance of multimedia addresses these issues in differing ways and via different methodologies, resulting in a multifaceted look at society and how we all affect our surroundings in both subtle and profound ways.

Nature of Society: Europe Today – Uniqueness and Diversity**HCOL 40043–665 (34508) (3 credit hours)****R – 4:00-5:50 PM****Dr. Juan Carlos Sola-Corbacho**

This course is designed to help students understand the character and identity of 21st-century Europe: its moral and political values, its hopes, fears, likes and dislikes, and even its view of itself. In other words, the goal of the class is to construct a definition of 21st century Europeanness. Paradoxically, this European character is and has been historically determined by an unusual degree of ethnic, cultural, and political diversity. So, in our quest to define European identity, we will stress the importance of the two aspects that have most determined European history: its common character and its internal diversity. We will study European diversity by comparing European countries with each other, and we will try to define a common European identity by comparing Europe with the United States. In both cases, we will address themes such as education, family, work, the role of ethnic minorities, politics and government, culture, etc.

Nature of Society: History in the Making**HCOL 40043–680 (33203) (3 credit hours)****R – 5:00-6:50 PM****Dr. Claire Sanders**

When we think of the news, we think of what's happening in the world right now, the information that is current. The media, especially electronic media, gives us the ability to access information about events as they occur in real time. The term "breaking news" is often a misnomer; many news events have a history and are connected to events in the past. In this course students will identify current news items with a past and research the events of the past related to the current news items in an effort to gain a fuller understanding of the present.

Nature of Values: Democracy, Dissent, and Debate in the Workplace**HCOL 40033–660 (34499) (3 credit hours)****F – 2:00-3:50 PM****Dr. Johny Garner**

Having grown up in a democracy, many of us expect that our voices count, that our opinions matter. In many ways, that's true in almost every context. And yet, as students enter the workforce, some are met with a challenging circumstance—how to share ideas, suggestions, complaints, criticisms, and other types of feedback that may not always be welcomed. Students in this course will explore the nature of democracy, dissent, and debate in 21st century workplaces from a variety of perspectives. They will think about big questions of values at work and wrestling with the lived applications of those values all the while considering the enduring question of what democracy and critical thinking mean in a post-modern, corporate-ized society.