

HONORS FORUM COURSES

Fall 2013

HF-200.001 **Social Psychology** **1 Credit**

Add-on to PS 205: Social Psychology

C. Moss-Racusin

Every other Wednesday 6:30-8:30

Social Psychology uses science to understand the complex ways human think, feel, and behave in social situations. Thus, anything that humans do is fair game for investigation by social psychology! In this Honors Add-On, we will consider behaviors that are outside the scope of the primary course, including romantic partner growth, moral disengagement, gendered language, seating choice and humor in romantic contexts.

HF-215.001 **Peer Health Education** **3 Credits**

J. McDonald

Monday 12:30-2:30

This course builds on concepts covered during Peer Health Education by guiding students through the process of promoting health and wellbeing among the Skidmore student body. The course is student-driven and allows the opportunity to further delve into specific areas of study that are of particular interest to each student. Students will design, implement, and evaluate programs and outreach education in a variety of topics relevant to the lives of college students including alcohol and substance use and abuse, sexual assault, eating disorders, stress, mental health, sexuality, and other topics commonly addressed by peer counselors and health promotion professionals. In addition, students will continue to build on leadership and communication skills by serving as peer counselors on the Skidmore campus.

HF-273.001 **Sex, Gender-Civic Engagement** **1 Credit**

J. McDonald

Wednesday 11:15-12:10

This group independent study provides an opportunity for students to obtain intensive training in the areas of sexual misconduct, sexual health, sexuality, and gender and to apply their knowledge and skills through service learning experiences. The semester will begin with a weekend-long training designed to prepare students to work within the Center for Sex & Gender Relations and to serve the campus community as anonymous peer-to-peer sexual misconduct reporting resources. Additionally, students will build their knowledge related to sexual health, sexuality, and gender identity and will develop the skills necessary to begin the service learning component of the course. The course adds to the Honors Forum offerings with its challenging material and leadership opportunities.

HF-300.001 **Paleoclimatology Practicum** **1 Credit**
Add-on to GE 311
A. Frappier
TBA

An honors seminar for more advanced students centered on a topic, research project, or other academic activity pertinent to one of the academic disciplines.

Prerequisites open to junior and senior Honors Forum students and other highly motivated students with advanced standing, appropriate course background, or permission of the instructor.

HF-215.001 **Peer Health Education** **1 Credit**
J. McDonald
Monday 1:30-3:30

This course builds on concepts covered during Peer Health Education by guiding students through the process of promoting health and wellbeing among the Skidmore student body. The course is student-driven and allows the opportunity to further delve into specific areas of study that are of particular interest to each student. Students will design, implement, and evaluate programs and outreach education in a variety of topics relevant to the lives of college students including alcohol and substance use and abuse, sexual assault, eating disorders, stress, mental health, sexuality, and other topics commonly addressed by peer counselors and health promotion professionals. In addition, students will continue to build on leadership and communication skills by serving as peer counselors on the Skidmore campus.

HF-315.001 **Adv. Peer Health Education** **1 Credit**
J. McDonald
TBD

An expansion of concepts covered in Peer Health Education by allowing students to fine tune their health promotion and peer counseling skills. Students will select specific areas of interest and will work closely with other Peer Health Educators and the instructor to plan, implement, and rigorously evaluate outreach programs on campus. The course will focus on building leadership and communication skills and on deepening the expertise of the students on college health related issues.

Prerequisites HF 215 and permission of the instructor.

Not for liberal arts credit. May be repeated for credit.

CH385 **Research Methods in Chemistry** **4 Credits**
TBD

An opportunity for students to engage in chemical research in collaboration with a faculty member. Emphasis is on the development of analytical and technical expertise in chemical research. Students meet weekly for one hour of discussion but work independently with their individual faculty mentor in pursuit of their research. Students make an oral or poster presentation of their results to the Department.

This course earns 4 credits overall, but only one 1 credit is designated as Honors. This one credit can count toward the total of 7 credits or as one of your 3 HF experiences.

CS-275H 001**Computer Science Research****1 Credit****G. Effinger**

An introductory exploration of research in computer science. The students, in collaboration with a faculty mentor, will participate in a research project in a particular area of computer science. The research projects may, for example, include designing new algorithms for computational problems, surveying the research literature, implementing existing algorithms from the research literature, or performing computational experiments. *Prerequisites* permission of instructor. Students may only take four CS275H courses in their careers and may take no more than two in any given semester. If two are taken in a single semester, each must be a different section. CS275H may not be counted toward the CS major. Must be taken S/U.

EN-105H 001**Writing Seminar II: Honors****4 Credits****M. Marx****What is Sustainability?****TU TH 11:10-12:30**

In this second decade of the twenty-first century, the buzzword is sustainability. We are all aware of and concerned about *sustainable energy*, but what about *sustainable mobility* or *sustainable manufacturing*? What does it mean when we talk about *sustainable Skidmore*? Is “sustainable,” as an adjective, the new “green,” a marketing ploy attracting lots of attention and admiration but signifying nothing? Or is sustainability a broader concept transcending the “triple bottom line”—environment, economics, and social justice—to point the way to survival in the new millennium?

In “What is Sustainability?” we will use the power of writing to interrogate the concept of sustainability. We will analyze competing definitions of sustainability and attempt to develop a definition of our own; we will analyze examples of sustainability to see how they respond to the ideal of the “triple bottom line”; and we will examine centers of sustainability on the Skidmore campus. Short exercises and formal paper assignments will be supplemented by readings from across the disciplines and supported by peer critiquing to enhance the revision process and to develop and refine our individual writing process and voice.

EN-105H 002**Writing Seminar II: Honors****4 Credits****M. Wiseman****The Land of Absurdity****M W F 10:10 – 11:05**

This course will take us into the land of absurdity, as mapped by fiction writers, filmmakers, poets, and playwrights. We will venture into regions of dark humor, charged outrage, searing satire, and profound silliness, with the aid of such guides as Samuel Beckett, Edward Albee, Franz Kafka, Nikolai Gogol, Lewis Carroll, Alfred Jarry, Donald Barthelme, Flann O'Brien, Eugène Ionesco, and the patron saint of serious exuberance, François Rabelais. We will see the absurd as brought to us on screen by Luis Buñuel, the Marx Brothers, Terry Gilliam, and Lindsay Anderson. Sinister, ludicrous, surreal, irreverent, or all of the above, these portrayals and explorations will help us to think about, and especially to write about, the absurdity we might find in our own lives. We will ask, How do these visions illuminate our own dilemmas? How, in other words, can absurd perspective help us to live? How does an appreciation of paradox deepen and free our thinking? How can chaos and incoherence be shaped—how is incoherence made coherent? Thus, the relationship between certainty and chaos, the disjunction between seeing and knowing, the blurred distinctions among sense, senselessness, and nonsense, the uses of satire, and the mingling of the sublime and the ridiculous will serve as

catalysts for our writing as well as for our discussions. Our writing practice will emphasize understanding and developing our own writing processes. Students will write frequent short papers of several types—personal, analytical, persuasive, reflective—and three substantial essays, submitted first as drafts and then in careful revision.

EN-303H 001

Hon. Peer Tutoring Project

4 Credits

P. Boshoff

M W 4:00-5:20

In this course students will receive the theoretical and pedagogical training to become peer tutors of expository writing. The readings and classroom discussions cover topics in discourse and rhetorical theory, composition pedagogy, and collaborative learning. Students will apply their developing knowledge of discourse theory and tutoring to their weekly meetings with student writers enrolled in EN 103: Writing Seminar I. EN 303H students receive four credit units for three hours of class and for their scheduled meetings with the student writers with whom they work. Course requirements include prepping EN 103 assignments, keeping a record of tutoring experiences, giving in-class reports on classical rhetoric, and writing an extensive term project focused on an area of interest related to peer tutoring, rhetoric, and/or discourse.

After successfully completing EN 303H, students are eligible to apply through student employment for the paid position of Skidmore Writing Center (Lucy Scribner Library 440) tutor. Students wishing to enroll in this course should possess excellent writing ability, knowledge of rules of grammar and punctuation, and effective communication skills. Students seeking enrollment must submit a professor's recommendation and a writing sample to Professor Boshoff or Wiseman; registration is by permission of instructors. Open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors in all disciplines and majors.

HI 110H

The British Empire

4 Credits

T. Nechtman

MWF 11:15-12:10

An introductory survey of the British Empire from its earliest beginnings in the sixteenth century through decolonization in the post-World War II era. Students will focus on the political, economic, cultural, and ecological causes and consequences of British overseas expansion. Topics include the ecological and biological impact of British imperialism; Elizabethan commercial expansion; the plantings of Ireland; early settlements in the New World and the impact on indigenous peoples; the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the plantation system in the Caribbean; the American Revolution and the end of the first British Empire; the ideologies of the British Raj in India; the "New Imperialism" of the late nineteenth century and the "scramble for Africa"; the transfer of technology and culture; and decolonization and the contemporary legacy of empire.

MA-113H 001

Honors Calculus II

4 Credits

G. Effinger

M 9:05-10:00 & W/F 8:40-10:00

A continuation of MA 111, Calculus I. Together these courses cover most of the traditional topics in single variable calculus. The Honors section of this course includes the addition of two two-week research projects and coverage of more sections of the text. The instructor will maintain high expectations for the students' contribution to their own learning.

MA 125H, 225H, 325H **Problem Solving in Mathematics** **1 Credit**

D. Vella

TH 2:10-3:30

Introductory level. Students will work collaboratively on problems posed in various undergraduate mathematics journals and other sources. Solutions to journal problems will be submitted to the journal editors for acknowledgment and possible publication. Problems are taken from all areas of specialty within mathematics.

Prerequisites QR1.

During fall semesters, students will have an opportunity to compete in the annual William Lowell Putnam Mathematical Competition.

May be repeated for credit. Must be taken S/U.

MA-275H 001 **Mathematics Research** **1 Credit**

G. Effinger

Exploration of a research topic in mathematics. The students, in collaboration with a faculty mentor, will participate in a research project in a particular area of mathematics which may be related to the faculty member's research program.

Prerequisites permission of the instructor.

Students may only take four MA 275H courses in their careers and may take no more than two in any given semester. If two are taken in a single semester, each must be a different section.

MA275H may not be counted toward the MA major. Must be taken S/U.

Monsters Project Cluster I: "Man/Eaters"

TU 3:40-5:00

HF 200 **Business Law 1** **1 Credit**

Add-on to MB-333

Business Law 1

C. Kopec

HF 200 **Medieval Monsters** **1 Credit**

Add-on to EN-229

Medieval Monsters

S. Wright

HF 200 **Ecology** **1 Credit**

Add-on to BI-241 001

Ecology

M. Richter

HF 200 **Marine Biology** **1 Credit**

Add-on to BI-140

Marine Biology

C. Domozych

This course will explore the monstrosity of predation. We will study man's love-hate relationship with big predators (Romanian bears, Australian crocodiles, Siberian tigers, and Indian lions), the epic monsters of Anglo-Saxon legend (*Beowulf*), archeological hoaxes that prey on the category of "Man," and psychopaths/sexual predators. In so doing, we will consider the biological, literary, anthropological, and psychological contexts of man-eaters. We will also examine Man himself as a literal and figurative "eater" of both the individual and civic/social structures (cannibal, serial killer, etc.).

We will use *Monster of God* as our primary text, alongside shorter readings related to specific topics. These readings will assist us in developing an understanding of how and why we create, tolerate, and/or become monsters. This endeavor will culminate in a final group project, to be presented to the Skidmore community.

**Monster Project Cluster II: “Natural v. Supernatural Monsters”
W 7:30-8:30 PM**

HF 200 Evolutionary Biology 1 Credit
Add-on to BI252E
A. Drake

HF 200 Spanish American Lit 1 Credit
Add-on to FS-212
Spanish American Lit
V. Lorenzo

HF 200 Theory and Meth of Religion 1 Credit
Add-on to RE-241
Theory and Meth of Religion
G. Spinner

HF 200 Greek Mythology 1 Credit
Add-on to CC200
J. Murray

There have always been monsters, and they are still very much with us. In simple terms, some specimens are not what we expected. While “anomalous creatures” can be explained as statistical (im)probabilities, they are often perceived as something more, as somehow strange, beautiful or terrifying. By eluding expected categories, anomalous creatures may be assigned a very special status, becoming monsters, marvels, or miracles. In this one-credit add-on, we explore how such classifications work, just as we reconsider the sense of awe and wonder that anomalous creatures evoke.

Through weekly meetings, students will discuss and critique different texts about “natural and supernatural monsters.” Students will use quantitative reasoning to study the occurrence of anomalous creatures/monsters from a scientific point of view. They will analyze how humans have interpreted and negotiated scientific evidence in a variety of cultures, belief systems, and time periods in order to explain or understand these monsters. Throughout this course students will engage with the scientific method and come to understand how it is used as a mode of inquiry. At the end of the semester, students will be required to present their findings; they will decide upon the medium in which they present their project.

Readings for “Natural vs. Supernatural Monsters” will be selected from the following:

- “On Monsters: An Unnatural History of Our Worst Fears” by Stephen T. Asma
- “The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark” by Carl Sagan & Ann Druyan
- “Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience, Superstition, and Other Confusions of Our Time” (Foreword & Chapters 1-3) by Michael Shermer with a foreword by Stephen Jay Gould
- “How We Know What Isn't So: The Fallibility of Human Reason in Everyday Life” by Thomas Gilovich
- “The return of Hopeful Monsters” by Stephen Jay Gould
- “Richard Goldschmidt: hopeful monsters and other ‘heresies’” by Michael Dietrich
- “Better off dead: the evolution of the zombie as post-human” edited by Deborah Christie and Sarah Juliet Lauro

- Ann Kessler Guinan, “A Severed Head Laughed: Stories of Divinatory Interpretation,” in *Magic and Divination in the Ancient World*, ed. Ciruolo et al
- Veit Rosenberger, “Republican Nobiles,” in *A Companion to Roman Religion*.
- Susanne William Rasmussen, *Public Portents in Republican Rome*.
- Carol Walker Bynum, “Wonder,” in *Metamorphosis and Identity*.
- Ambroise Paré, *On Monsters and Marvels*, trans. Janis Pallister.
- Ann Taves, “Special Things as Building Blocks of Religion,” in *Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*, ed. Orsi

Primary texts:

- *The Log of Christopher Columbus* (Christopher Columbus)
- Selection of *Exploration Fawcett* (Percy Fawcett)
- Selection of engravings on the conquest by Theodor de Bry
- *The Decapitated Chicken and other stories* (Horacio Quiroga)
- “A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings” (Gabriel García Márquez)
- “The Youngest Doll” (Rosario Ferré)
- “Chac Mool” (Carlos Fuentes)

Secondary readings:

- “The Monstrous Caribbean” (Persephone Braham)
- “The Maya ‘Cosmic Monster’ as a Political and Religious Symbol” (Karin Myhre)
- “Monsters, Messengers, and Mediators in the Popol Vuh” (Douglas Cameron)
- *The United States and Latin America: Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature* (Fredrick B. Pike)
- Selection of readings on the “Chupacabra” (from news reports to biology articles)

**Monsters Project Cluster III: “Genetically Modified Organisms: New Monsters?”
F 2:00-3:00**

HF 200 Add-on to ES-352C N. Atalan-Helicke	The Politics of Food The Politics of Food	1 Credit
HF 200 Add-on to HI-217 E. Morser	American Environmental History American Environmental History	1 Credit
HF 200 Add-on to ES-205 J. Ness	Forest Conservation Forest Conservation	1 Credit
HF 200 Add-on to CS-106 002 L. Porter	Intro to Comp Sci I Intro to Comp Sci I	1 Credit

COURSE MEETING: Friday 2-3pm

DESCRIPTION. The students in this one-credit Honors Forum add-on will explore genetically modified organisms from perspectives that integrate history, biology, politics, mathematics and computer science. More specifically, they will explore 1) the current and historical practice and consequence of genetic modification in medicine, science and agriculture, 2) models of information selection, insertion and corruption (e.g., genetic algorithms, malware), 3) why the threat of GMOs "escaping" into nature is a concern, as well as evidence of context in which this has (and has not) occurred, and 4) why GMOs evoke particular socio-political responses in different cultural domains. The course will utilize a combination of readings, film, group discussions, lectures, and guest speakers to explore these topics, and will culminate in the presentation of collaborative, student-conceived projects that explore the intersection of these themes. More generally, the goal of the course is that students should 1) develop an understanding of the relevance of science to the human experience, especially in a rapidly changing world, 2) have an appreciation for how different individuals have interpreted and negotiated scientific evidence, 3) have an ability and willingness to engage and critique scientific information as presented to the general public in the press and elsewhere, to coherently communicate scientific knowledge in nontechnical but meaningful contexts, and to critically evaluate a claim, and 4) have a willingness to explore at the intersection of disciplines.

Monsters Project Cluster IV: “Constructed Humans”

TU 3:05-4:00

HF 200 Add-on to FI-363 B. Garbin	True Blood: Italian Literature True Blood: Italian Literature	1 Credit
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HF 200 Add-on to AR-227 D. Hall	Communication Design 2 Communication Design 2	1 Credit
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HF 200 Add-on to PY-207 003 J. Linz	General Physics I w/Lab General Physics I w/Lab	1 Credit
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HF 200 Add-on to CS-106 001 M. Eckmann	Intro to Comp Sci I Intro to Comp Sci I	1 Credit
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HF 200 Add-on to CS-230 M. Eckmann	Programming Langs Programming Langs	1 Credit
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The students who sign up for this one-credit Honors Forum add on will have the opportunity to study the topic of monsters from a variety of different perspectives (physics, art, foreign languages and literature and computer science.) The term *monster* has connotations that include the visual “abnormal form” as well as the behavioral “not normal or acceptable behavior”. Throughout history, people have envisioned the possibilities of creating artificial beings, or hybrid human/machine beings. Advances in science and technology have provided the means with which to realize this vision. The monsters that students in this cluster will consider, include both fictional and real “monsters”, ranging from Frankenstein to Cyborgs (hybrid Human/Computer beings).

Students will read essays, excerpts from fictional works, and view films. Class meetings will take a variety of forms including lectures, discussion sessions, and hands-on exploration. Topics discussed and taught in the class meetings will include elementary electronics systems that allow machines to communicate with the human world, computer vision systems for robots / cyborgs, the social and other implications of humans depending on digital devices, and a discussion of the fictional monsters portrayed in art, writing, and films versus the actual machine enhanced humans today. Students will also explore the avant-garde Futurist movement of early 20th century as a case of proto-cyborgism.

The students will be required to do all the course readings and viewings and attend all the class meetings. Early on in the semester, students will form interdisciplinary teams and propose a project related to the course material. Once the proposals are accepted by the faculty members, the student members of each team will work closely together to carry out their project throughout the semester. The projects students create may take almost any form as long as it contains scientific content and has a creative aspect to it.

The students in this cluster will read essays by Sherry Turkle and Donna Haraway, excerpts from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot*. In addition, students will watch the 1973 TV movie *The Six-Million Dollar Man* as well as portions from Stanley Kubri