

**AQUINAS SCHOLARS
Honors Seminars
J-Term 2016**

Date: Updated August 25, 2015

Note: All seminars are two credits.

Honors seminars are all published in the Schedule of Classes under IDSC. Honors seminars all have a course number of IDSC 480. The word "Honors" or an abbreviation of honors, such as "HONR," is at the beginning of the course title.

Please contact Erica Berglund at berg7582@stthomas.edu if you have any questions.

J-Term 2016

IDSC 480-1 (CRN 10066) – Honors International Film and Music

J-Term 2016 – TR 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Location: BEC 110

Faculty: Chris Kachian (Music Undergraduate) and James Snapko (English)

The purpose of this seminar is to explore the narrative connections between film and music. Films from all over the world will be addressed. The course begins with an introduction to film: its history and practice. Instructors provide the theoretical perspective to film, e.g. the language filmmakers use to create meaning - through editing, cinematography, acting, screenplay - coupled with examining key characteristics of orchestration, and the concept of sound as "interpretation". Some basic questions we will consider are: What do we learn about a filmmaker's creative decision-making through the marriage of film and music? How does the film score reinforce, amplify, identify, or fortify the film? What ideas or expressions are presented and prolonged with the music? How does music enhance these ideas? What issues are in conflict or opposition? How are they illuminated or resolved in the music? How does that influence the ongoing story? How does the musical language reflect the time period/setting of the film? How is it characteristic or unique? How does music reinforce, amplify, identify, and fortify the film? What film techniques are used to express the ideas and themes in the film without the aid of the music?

While there are many theoretical and critical approaches to analyzing foreign films and their music it is important to keep in mind that American cinema does play a role in investigating works from other nations. Simply put, Hollywood has been the dominant force in film for almost 100 years and most countries, if not all, are influenced by American made movies. That said, it's also important to analyze these films on their own aesthetic terms.

This course operates on the belief that formal analysis is a skill that is best developed through application and discussion. We will often focus the class around a step-by-step analysis of specific sequences, based upon mutual brainstorming as the primary teaching method. Students will be required to write and present on a relevant film and music research topic at the end of the semester.

IDSC 480-4 (CRN 10215) – Honors Heroes and Heroism

J-Term 2016 – MW 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Location: JRC 481

Faculty: Susan Stabile (Law School)

NOTE: This seminar will NOT appear in Class Finder as registration for an experimental seminar is controlled by the faculty member. Please contact Susan Stabile directly if you would like to be enrolled in this seminar.

Brennan Hill wrote, "No one is born a hero. Heroism seems to be a coming together of background, gifts, a mysterious and providential calling to meet a challenge, and a courageous and tenacious response."

What makes a hero? And why are heroes important? (Or are they?) How do we reconcile the great acts of heroes with their feet of clay? This seminar will explore such questions as we consider the lives of some figures of the present and recent past who have been given the label hero, men and women such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Oscar Romero, Martin Luther King, Dorothy Day, Nelson Mandela, and Helen Prejean. We will learn about the lives of figures like these – and what they teach us about heroism – through film, speeches and biographical writings.

IDSC 480-6 (CRN 10160) – Honors Math and Music

J-Term 2016 – TR 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Location: BEC 111

Faculty: Melissa Loe (Mathematics) and Douglas Orzolek (Music-Undergraduate)

Mathematics and Music, the most sharply contrasted fields of intellectual activity which can be found, and yet related, supporting each other, as if to show forth the secret connection which ties together all the activities of our mind. – H. Von Helmholtz

Music is the arithmetic of sounds as optics is the geometry of light. – Claude Debussy

At the most fundamental level, Mathematics and Music seem as different as two disciplines might be. Music is often related to the senses and aesthetics, while Mathematics is usually associated with reasoning and problem solving. And yet, it is often found that those who possess an excellent mathematical aptitude also have a strong penchant for the creation, performance and appreciation of music.

This seminar will investigate the relationships that exist between these two fields of study. Both involve patterns, structures, and relationships and both develop ideas of great beauty and elegance. Music has been used as a place to test mathematical ideas while mathematics can explain how sounds are created and how those sounds can be put together to make music. Using a variety of hands-on experiences from each field, as well as readings and discussions, students will explore these relationships and enhance their understanding of both areas.
