

AQUINAS SCHOLARS
Honors Seminars
Fall 2017

Date: September 1, 2017

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.

Fall 2017

HONR 480-01 (CRN 43417) – Honors Math and Music

Fall 2017 – M 3:25-5:00 PM Location: BEC LL03

Faculty: Chehrzad Shakiban (Mathematics) and Ora Itkin (Undergraduate Music)

This course is designed to motivate and stimulate creative thought with respect to the interconnections of Music and Mathematics as a reflection of unity and continuity of the world.

Music and Mathematics are great endeavors of human culture that originate from different poles of the human psyche. These two poles affect the path of human creativity and spirituality. The evolution and achievements of modern civilization in the arts and sciences lies within their boundaries.

This seminar will explore the modes of expression and application of creative thought through the practice of logical thinking, intuition and imagination. Connections and contradictions of music and math will be discussed as related to physical and aesthetic dimensions of time and space, geometry, symmetry and harmony, intensities, accidentals, beauty and meaning among others.

Consequently, we will show how music and mathematics are the intertwining symbolic languages expressing man's continuous creative attempts to comprehend the world.

HONR 480-02 (CRN 43418) – Honors Sports, Law, and Society

Fall 2017 – M 5:30-7:15 PM Location: MHC 211

Faculty: Steve Laumakis (Philosophy) and David Bateson (former Dean of Students, St. Thomas School of Law)

Sports seem to occupy a special place in American Culture. Major sporting events are regularly the highest rated television programs and tickets for those events routinely sell out. Why are sports such a huge part of our culture? This class will examine the philosophy of sports, why we play them, what meaning we derive from them and what role they should play in a well-ordered society. It will also examine the intersection of sports and law as it relates to how society regulates sports. What laws do we impose on sports? Do the teams and athletes involved in sports receive special treatment in our legal system?

HONR 480-03 (CRN 43419) – Honors Just Coffee

Fall 2017 – W 1:35-3:10 PM Location: MHC 211

Faculty: Michael Klein (Justice & Peace Studies)

NOTE: This seminar will NOT appear in Class Finder as registration for a one-professor seminar is controlled by the faculty member. Please contact Michael Klein directly (mcklein@stthomas.edu) if you would like to be enrolled in this seminar.

The coffee in your cup is a taste of global labor, trade, and environmental justice issues. Our highly caffeinated seminar will begin with Peace Coffee, a for-profit subsidiary of the non-profit Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy in Minneapolis. We will learn how coffee is transformed from a hard green stone to a flavorful roasted bean, including a lesson in "cupping" or tasting for quality. Then we'll follow the bean from its historic origins to its place in contemporary life. Through the coffee supply chain, we'll learn about economic globalization, labor issues in equatorial countries, and environmental issues; from tropical rainforests to songbird migrations through Minnesota.

The class will end with a study of the fair trade movement through your examination and presentation of a unique fair trade product. And of course, we'll drink a lot of coffee. (Please note: appreciating the taste of coffee is not a pre-requisite for the course, but it will enhance your educational experience.)

HONR 480-W04 (CRN 43420) – Honors Astrobiology

Fall 2017 – T 9:55-11:35 AM Location: MHC 211

Faculty: Gaston (Chip) Small (Biology)

NOTE: This seminar will NOT appear in Class Finder as registration for a one-professor seminar is controlled by the faculty member. Please contact Chip Small directly (gaston.small@stthomas.edu) if you would like to be enrolled in this seminar.

Astrobiology is the scientific study of the origin, evolution, distribution, and future of life in the universe. It combines the disciplines of microbiology, ecology, astronomy, geology, paleontology, and chemistry, to address fundamental questions such as:

- What is life?
- How did life on Earth get started?
- What special properties of the Earth and the Solar System make our planet habitable?
- What caused life to evolve into complex organisms instead of remaining simple?
- What is the history and future of terrestrial life?
- Is there life elsewhere in the universe?

This seminar will explore these questions and the diverse approaches that astrobiologists are using to try to find answers.
