

AQUINAS SCHOLARS
Honors Seminars
Summer 2020

Date: Updated April 6, 2020

Note: All seminars are two credits.

Honors seminars are all published in the Schedule of Classes under HONR. Honors seminars all have a course number of HONR 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.

Summer 2020 - 2nd Session

HONR 480-01 (CRN 30167) - Honors Concussion and Sport: The Gray Area

Summer 2020 - TR 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM Location: Online

2nd Summer Session - 7/13/20-8/20/20

Faculty: Sarah Heimovics (Biology) and Paul Mellick (Health and Exercise Science)

Over the last 10 years, the impacts of concussions and head injuries on athletes has garnered more and more attention from the media, the athletes themselves, and concerned helicopter parents. This has led to increased debate regarding the safety of participation in football, soccer, hockey, and other impact sports. While the fields of neurobiology and sports performance view this issue through different lenses, a more complete appreciation for the complexities of concussion in sport requires an interdisciplinary approach. Thus, this course will explore the societal, epidemiological, behavioral, and physiological components of traumatic brain injury including concussion and chronic traumatic encephalopathy. Class discussion on these topics will be based on a combination of readings from peer-reviewed literature and popular science writing as well as documentary and feature-length films.

HONR 480-03 (CRN 30169) - Honors Dissecting the War on Drugs

Summer 2020 - TR 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Location: Online

2nd Summer Session - 7/13/20-8/20/20

Faculty: Jessica Hodge (Sociology and Criminal Justice) and Jessica Siegel (Neuroscience)

For almost 50 years, the United States has officially been fighting the War on Drugs. The War on Drugs is being fought across the country by law enforcement, politicians, scientists, and public health professionals. Although this war has been in place for nearly five decades, the country is no closer to ending the War on Drugs or achieving the goals of this war.

This course will be offered by a criminologist and a neuroscientist. We will examine the War on Drugs through a historical and contemporary lens. We will first examine how drugs affect the brain and behavior, and explore the science behind drug use and abuse. We will explore the history of the War on Drugs by examining the politics surrounding its inception, how specific drugs have been targeted throughout the years, and how both drug sellers and users have been managed within the criminal justice system and treated by society. We will also explore contemporary issues such the effects of mass incarceration on various communities, the movement towards the legalization of marijuana, and the changing political and legal attitudes toward the War on Drugs with the changing political administrations.

Students will not be expected to be trained in either criminology or neuroscience; this course will be presented in way that motivated and inquisitive students, even if not familiar with neuroscience or the criminal justice system, will be able to understand and engage in the material. Our goal is not for students to become knowledge experts in the fields of criminology and neuroscience, but for students to be critical thinkers of the complexities surrounding the topic. More specifically, students will leave this course with the ability to dissect information related to the War on Drugs.
