

AQUINAS SCHOLARS
Honors Seminars
J-Term 2020

Date: July 23, 2019

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.

J-Term 2020

HONR 480-01 (CRN 10174) - Honors Moral Heroes

J-Term 2020 - TR 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM Location: OEC 209

Faculty: Tonia Bock (Psychology) and Heidi Giebel (Philosophy)

What makes someone a moral hero? This seminar will explore the traits of moral heroes from two main perspectives: (1) philosophical accounts of the criteria for heroically virtuous character and (2) psychological studies of recognized real-life moral heroes such as those who rescued victims of the Holocaust. We'll apply these philosophical and psychological findings to contemporary biographies of (apparent) moral heroes.

HONR 480-02 (CRN 10130) - Honors Matrix of Connectivity: How We Bridge the Gaps?

J-Term 2020 - TR 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Location: BEC 111

Faculty: Ora Itkin (Undergraduate Music)

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

The purpose of this seminar is to broaden our perspectives through the practice and cultivation of interconnected thinking, a fundamental element of our personal and professional integration within diverse contexts of modern world.

Why, within a world of increasing connection, do we still find ourselves thinking in divisive terms? The answer lies in the gaps between learned concepts and lived experiences, disciplinary boundaries and the continuum of knowledge, discriminating mindsets and the polyphonic world.

Each class will take on the spirit of a philosophical forum, a laboratory, or an artist's workshop in order to integrate critical thought, scientific inquiry, and creative expression. You will be introduced to the significance of "polyphony" – *multivoicedness* – as a critical aspect of music that has deep implications on how neuroscience, psychology, linguistics, and philosophy view interconnected thinking and the mind itself. We will also explore how music and the performing media of theater and dance can help us balance the contradictory dualities (e.g., reality and illusion, self and other, essence and appearance) of the perception of the world around us.

Finally, as we transition from the abstract to the concrete, each of you will integrate multiple perspectives developed through the practice of interconnected thinking into one creative design: a symbolic "*matrix of connectivity*." In preparation of the matrix you will employ one or several creative media of your choice. Some of the examples are: a game, a multimedia composition, graphic design, dance, visual, audio collage, or mini-robot, among others. Your matrix will be supported by a written presentation (5-7 pages) with a detailed step-by-step explanation of how you integrated scientific, philosophical, and experiential perspectives into your design. Through the preparation and in-class presentation of this project, you will discover how creative expression, imagination, and interconnected thinking help us to engage with the world in a deeper way.

HONR 480-04 (CRN 10132) - Honors Contemplative Practices

J-Term 2020 - TR 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Location: JRC 481

Faculty: Susan Stabile (Law School)

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

Contemplation is a part of every spiritual tradition and is increasingly recognized as a helpful component of a liberal arts education and professional development. Even many who do not consider themselves religious engage in various forms of contemplative practices. Contemplation leads to greater self-awareness and compassion, as well as increased concentration and well-being. This course will introduce you to contemplative practices from different spiritual and humanistic traditions, giving you the opportunity to learn from your own experience of them. You will also learn from the writings of practitioners ranging from Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross to Thich Nhat Hanh and BKS Iyengar. Note that there will be a significant experiential and community based learning component to the course.

HONR 480-05 (CRN 10286) - Honors Improvisation and Mental Health

J-Term 2020 - 01/06/20 thru 01/17/20 - MTWRF 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Location: JRC 246

Faculty: Jim Robinson (Psychology)

NOTE: This seminar will NOT appear in Class Finder because registration for a one-professor seminar is controlled by the faculty member. Please contact Jim Robinson directly (jjim@tablesaltproductions.com) if you would like to be enrolled in this seminar.

The ability to tolerate ambiguity is essential to mental health. In this course, students will explore this premise by learning the fundamentals of improvisation and discovering how these skills can enrich their lives and make them more flexible, effective, and empathic, both personally and professionally. Connections to psychology, mindfulness, and collaboration will be emphasized.
