

**AQUINAS SCHOLARS**  
**Honors Seminars**  
**Spring 2021**

**Date: January 28, 2021**

**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](mailto:berg7582@stthomas.edu) if you have any questions.

**Spring 2021**

**HONR 480-01 (CRN 24063) - Honors Extreme Survival: Who Thrives, Who Dies, and Why**

Spring 2021 - R 1:30 PM - 3:10 PM      Location: Online

Faculty: Britain Scott (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 Britain Scott directly ([bascott@stthomas.edu](mailto:bascott@stthomas.edu)) if you would like to be enrolled in this seminar.

Adrift at sea, stranded in the mountains, alone in the desert, lost in the woods...thankfully, most of us will never find ourselves in such a perilous predicament, yet there is much to be learned from the harrowing and inspirational stories of those who have. In this course we will explore why some individuals thrive and survive in extreme conditions while others flail and fail. You will learn about universal traits and individual differences in human psychology that can aid or impair our ability to successfully cope in crisis situations—and why these factors may matter more than expertise or preparedness. You will learn why people behave in bizarre and irrational ways when thrust into life-threatening circumstances. You will learn about anomalous and spiritual experiences that sometimes manifest in extreme environments, such as sensing the presence of an invisible companion. Most importantly, you will learn that the principles of resilience in acute survival situations apply also to meeting less dramatic yet stressful challenges in our demanding daily lives, as well as coping with prolonged global threats to survival, such as pandemics and climate change.

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**HONR 480-02 (CRN 24064) - Honors Improvisation for Life**

Spring 2021 - T 3:25 PM - 5:00 PM      Location: BINZ 119

Faculty: Christopher Kachian (Music) and Bernard Armada (Communication Studies)

In this course, we will study and practice the very human—but incompletely understood—concept of improvisation. Mostly thought of as “just make up stuff” or “fake it ‘til you make it,” improvisation, when thoughtfully implemented, is an integral aspect of agility and creativity in any human effort from management to music to sport to medicine to comedy.

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**HONR 480-03 (CRN 24065) - Honors Monsters: Fact and Fiction**

Spring 2021 - M 1:35 PM - 3:10 PM      Location: Online

Faculty: Jerry Husak (Biology) and Gordon Grice (English)

Monsters show us where we came from and where we may be going. Ever since Mary Shelley crossed science with fiction, monsters have been a uniquely powerful way to view the culture that made them

and the scientific possibilities that underlay them. In this seminar we will explore monsters of literature and film, focusing on their cultural relevance, why that relevance makes us fear them, and the biological inspirations for them. We will also explore some of the rules that, fortunately, prevent them from existing. Topics will include zombies, King Kong, Godzilla, Frankenstein's monster, werewolves, vampires, and aliens. The course will be structured around mini-lectures, student-led discussions of course readings/film viewings, a series of short writing assignments, and a final research project of the student's choice that synthesizes knowledge from the course.

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### **HONR 480-04 (CRN 24670) - Honors Praxis of Race and Racism**

Spring 2021 - W 3:25 PM - 5:00 PM      Location: Online

Faculty: Amy Finnegan (Justice & Society Studies) and Todd Lawrence (English)

In this seminar we will explore the difficult terrain of race and racism in our contemporary moment paying close attention to the history of how we got here. We will carefully consider the various levels upon which racism operates (internalized, personally mediated, and structural) in our society, employing useful theories such as critical race theory and concepts such as colorblind racism, while also focusing on how whiteness intersects with them. The purpose of this seminar is to provoke and facilitate critical analysis of race and racism in our society and institutions while also creating space for rigorous self-reflection. Unlike many discussions of race and racism in higher education, this seminar will interrogate the construct of whiteness and consider it as a factor that animates racist logics. Students will have the opportunity to examine how theories of race and racism could interact with their various fields of interest and will encounter creative examples of social change efforts to dismantle racism.

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### **HONR 480-05 (CRN 24066) - Honors Transportation and Race in the Twin Cities**

Spring 2021 - T 1:30 PM - 3:10 PM      Location: Online

Faculty: Rita Lederle (Civil Engineering) and Aura Wharton-Beck (School of Education)

This course studies the history of infrastructures and provides a critical lens to analyze the multi-dimensional factors related to race, class, and economics. This class uses bridges and highways as metaphors set the stage for examining the infrastructure and the impact on the culture of established communities in the United States. Incorporating a variety of materials including archival data, plays, readings, and engineering case studies including St. Paul's Rondo community, students will understand how the construction of transportation infrastructure dramatically altered the lives of communities. Students will explore how engineering concepts provide challenges and opportunities for addressing disparity in transportation today. The efforts to preserve the historical memory of displaced residents offers a new chapter in the narrative of what it means to call a place home.

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### **HONR 480-06 (CRN 24067) - Honors Music and Athletics**

Spring 2021 - W 1:35 PM - 3:10 PM      Location: Online

Faculty: Suzanne Schons (Music) and Lesley Scibora (Health & Exercise Science)

Music and athletics, two pervasive forces in American culture and worldwide, are both fields that require dedicated physical and mental practice over long periods of time to attain expertise, and in which performance experiences can range from exhilarating to excruciating. We will examine and compare processes and strategies used by musicians and athletes to practice and perform, factors

that make some performers exceptional at what they do, and look at research on how music is used as an aid to athletic performance.

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**HONR 480-07 (CRN 25449) - Honors Who Belongs? Identity and Immigration in Canada and France**

Spring 2021 - R 9:55 AM - 11:35 AM      Location: BEC LL07

Faculty: Renee Buhr (Political Science) and Ashley Shams (Modern & Classical Languages)

What does it mean to be American? Is being Canadian much different? Who are the French, *really*? Such questions about national identity and immigration are complicated and often reveal a messy combination of political, linguistic, social, gender, and legal elements. In the first part of this course, you will study theoretical frameworks that will equip you with the skills you need to probe deeper into discussions about ethnicity, immigration, gender, and the role of state. Then in the second part of the class, using a comparative approach, you will apply this knowledge to case studies focused on issues of immigration and national identity in Canada and France drawing on examples from pop culture and the media. These real life examples include excerpts from the Daily Show with Trevor Noah, political debates over religious symbols and dress, music videos, print advertising, and spoken word poetry.

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**HONR 480-08 (CRN 26137) - Honors American Healthcare**

Spring 2021 - M 3:25 PM - 5:00 PM      Location: ~~MHC 206~~ **Online**

Faculty: John McVea (Entrepreneurship)

and Daniel McLaughlin (Operations & Supply Chain Management)

This course will explore current issues in the American healthcare system such as high costs, variable quality, poor patient engagement, bad financial incentives and the slow deployment of advanced digital technology. Opportunities to preserve the essential character and advantages of the American style of healthcare will also be identified. Innovations to create new value at both the patient care and business systems level will be developed by students who will use innovation design principles to create potential system improvements.

On completion of the course students will:

- Understand the U.S. Healthcare System as an integrated system including, insurance, payments, delivery systems, drug manufacture and regulation
  - Explore the underlying causes and tensions which underlie the current 'healthcare crisis'
  - Explore the role of innovation, change and entrepreneurship in potentially solving some of the healthcare system problems
  - Become familiar through case studies with a number of local Minnesota healthcare innovators and employers
  - Be exposed, through classroom visits to leaders and innovators in Minnesota and national healthcare innovation
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