

Fall 2024

HON 29X & 39X course descriptions

HON 294: IMPROVISATION IN ART & LIFE

Robert Wallace

Improvisation is one of the most important techniques used by artists in many disciplines. But as scholars have started to emphasize in recent decades, it turns out that improvisation is also one of the most important tools that humans can use to survive and thrive. This course will investigate the rich history of improvisation as a theory and practice in the arts and other aspects of human experience. Building on the recently founded discipline of Critical Improvisation Studies, we'll explore the history and contemporary understanding of improvisation from a variety of perspectives, including the arts (especially music, literature, and theater), politics, law, science, philosophy, and religion. Students will have the opportunity to investigate their own improvisatory practice as well as interact with guest artists and scholars. The Fall 2024 version of this course will be especially notable as we will tie-in activities with the 10th anniversary of Flagstaff's Inference Series (a performance series dedicated to presenting experimental, improvised, and otherwise uncategorizable art).

HON 294: WOMEN AND WAR

Jessica Strom

War is often associated with men and masculinity, as individuals showcase their power and pride to defend their causes. But women are just as much a part of war as their male counterparts. In fact, their activities and perspectives frequently allow us to see the many different sides of war that we would not otherwise see. In this course we will examine women and war in many settings including, but not limited to: women on the home and battle fronts; women's relationships with fathers, husbands, and sons during war; women and mourning; and women as the spoils of war. We will also look at a wide range of types of war: global war, civil war, and revolution. Readings in this course will include autobiographies, journals and letters, and scholarly articles, in addition to films and other images.

HON 294: THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE

Karl Krotke-Crandall

This course explores the movement of people through the processes of forced migration. It will examine the reasons groups of people move across the globe during periods of heightened tensions between differing social, cultural, religious, and political bodies. At the end of the semester, students in this course will be able to assess and understand the complex reasons for significant moments of people into the 21st century.

HON 340: FINDING PLACE IN NORTHERN AZ

Kevin Gustafson, Dawn Sutherland

What does it mean to have a sense of place, and how can one develop it through reading, writing, and painting? This course combines academic study place-based writing, and art to explore notions of place in general and some of the extraordinary qualities of northern Arizona's landscape. We will begin with foundational readings: theories of place and cultural mapping, examples of non-fiction place-based writing, and art (e.g., landscape painting) associated with place, and some theories of the relation between verbal and visual arts, exploring among others Native American and Euro perspectives. The heart of the course will be several required daily field workshops each focused on either writing or painting. Students will go into the field to develop the relation between hand, eye, and mind. At once academic and creative, this course is designed to help students develop both critical and creative skills. No previous experience with painting or creative writing is required.

HON 391: ART IN SOCIAL JUSTICE

Kara Attrep

This course examines the creative responses to current social justice issues (Black Lives Matter, the Women's March, DAPL, etc.). Through a socio-cultural and historical lens, we will explore the music, art, literature, and film that has developed from these movements. Ultimately, the course will lead students into our community to talk and learn from artists, filmmakers, authors, and musicians who, here in Flagstaff, Arizona, and beyond, have been involved in creative endeavors to bring attention to social justice issues. Students will also have an opportunity to engage in creative activities that address social justice movements.

HON 393: THE BIOLOGY OF CANCER

Melissa Schonauer

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the U.S., so everyone is affected by this disease in some way. In this class, we will dive into the molecular mechanisms of disease in order to better understand the causes of cancer as well as to investigate past, present, and possible future treatments for the disease. We will also look into how the field of cancer research began and how it influences the decisions we make as individuals and as a society.

HON 394: (UN)NATURAL DISASTERS

Rima Brusi

This course examines the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological tools employed by ethnographers across disciplines to study the production, shaping, and aftermath of disasters commonly labeled as "natural," such as hurricanes (cyclones), floods, and earthquakes. In this class, "ethnography" refers to research and writing characterized by sustained engagement with a specific place, event or culture. It privileges the meticulous exploration of daily life and utilizes a comparative, holistic approach that considers political economy, ideology, culture, history, and behavior. The course will delve into case studies primarily from Latin America and the Greater Caribbean region.