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## HONORS

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Professor: Denise Despres, *Interdisciplinary Humanities*; George Erving, *Director*, Susan Resneck Pierce Professor of Humanities and Honors; Suzanne Holland, *Religion, Spirituality, and Society*; Aislinn Melchior; Alison Tracy Hale

Advisory Committee: Martin Jackson, *Mathematics and Computer Science*; Alisa Kessel, *Politics and Government (on leave 2021–22)*; Kriszta Kotsis, *Art and Art History*; David Latimer, *Physics*; John Wesley, *English*

### About the Program

The Honors Program offers a unique pathway through the university's required core curriculum—an eight-course sequence taken over four years that examines the intellectual traditions of the liberal arts as a tool for understanding our contemporary world and its historical origins. The Honors Program is not itself a major, but is taken in conjunction with any major. Honors students benefit from the rich conversations that build over their four years of shared academic, residential, and co-curricular experiences. Prospective students apply separately to the program (see the prompt for Honors on the Common Application), and admission is based upon prior academic achievement and demonstrated understanding of the program's curricular and residential features. First-year Honors students live in Regester Hall (along with many students who are not in the program) and have the option to continue living in Honors-themed residences thereafter. The program also provides an array of cultural events, including a film series, student-organized dinners, guest lectures, and trips to Seattle/Tacoma museums, theater, symphony, and opera.

Honors courses examine the scientific, social scientific, and humanistic ideas that have shaped our contemporary world. The program's course sequence culminates with an interdisciplinary study of "America" as an idea and an ideal. Honors seniors also research, write, and publicly present a thesis (normally in the student's major). After successfully completing the prescribed coursework and senior thesis requirements, Honors seniors graduate as Coolidge Otis Chapman Honors Scholars.

### Requirements

Honors students must meet the following requirements.

1. First year: SSI 194 (fall), HON 211 (spring)
2. Senior year: HON 401
3. A minimum of two of the following four courses, usually taken during the sophomore and junior years: HON 206, 212, 213, and 214. Students must complete a minimum of one course in Honors each Academic Year to remain in the program. Students may complete their remaining core curriculum requirements in Honors courses, through transfer credit, or by completing courses in the general University core curriculum (see The Core Curriculum), in consultation with the Director of the Honors Program.
4. Write and publicly present a senior thesis, normally in the student's major.

Once admitted to the Honors program, a student continues so long as they maintain a minimum GPA as established by the Honors Committee in all university work or until they resign from the program. The Honors faculty annually reviews the performance of Honors students to determine their continuance in the program. Dismissed students may apply for readmission upon evidence of satisfactory academic improvement.

### Course Offerings

Unless otherwise specified, each course carries 1 unit of credit and is offered at least once each academic year. Please see "Frequency of Course Offerings" on page 18.

**Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry.** *Students in Honors take SSI 1 194 or SSI 1 195 in Fall of their first year; they may register for any SSI 2 seminar in the Spring. See Seminars in Scholarly Inquiry in the Core Curriculum section of this Bulletin for course descriptions (page 18).*

#### SSI 1 194 Honors: Technologies of Power

#### Other courses offered by Honors faculty.

##### HON 401 What is America?

Satisfies the Connections core requirement.

#### Honors (HON)

**206 The Arts of the Classical World and the Middle Ages** This course introduces selected monuments of the ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman artistic traditions as well as artworks of the Early Christian, Byzantine, and Islamic cultures. The course examines a wide range of material—architecture and monumental decoration, painting, sculpture, as well as works of minor arts—to understand the role art played in various societies of the ancient and medieval world. Works of art are examined with particular attention to their original function, context, and intended audience in order to explore how they expressed political, social, and religious meanings. The course introduces key terms and principal methods of art historical inquiry. *Prerequisite: Admission to the Honors Program. Students may not receive credit for both ART 275 and HON 206. Satisfies the Artistic Approaches core requirement. Offered spring semester.*

**211 Metamorphosis and Identity** Students may choose one of the following sections:

**A.** This section of Honors 211 explores identity across the centuries through stories about metamorphosis. The nature of change reflects cultural, intellectual, and social differences that undergird these stories about "self" and "shape" from fifth-century Athens to twentieth-century Germany. The course examines how early cultures both anticipate modern ideas of individualism as well as radically diverge in their assumptions about human nature, personal and communal obligations, and change as a threat to or regeneration of order. All of the "stories", verbal and visual, reflect tensions and paradoxes through a highly conscious working out of the boundaries between the personal and communal, interior and exterior, private and public, animal and human, despite the fact that they do not share a view of "the individual" or "self" that corresponds to a contemporary (and thus diverse) sense of personal identity and autonomy.

**B.** This section of Honors 211 examines the biblical story of Adam and Eve, one of Western culture's key foundation myths, by following its preoccupation with forbidden knowledge in the works of authors ranging from the 17th-Century poet John Milton to contemporary women writers of the psychedelic movement, who like Eve, ingest forbidden wisdom-giving fruit. In doing so, we enlist the help of philosophers, neuroscientists, and psychologists to explore such questions as: Should certain kinds of knowledge be forbidden or is knowledge an unqualified good? Who should decide? What does it mean to be in a state of innocence, or of experience?

What aspects of the human psyche are involved in occupying these states and what kinds of knowledge are they capable of acquiring? These questions will in turn invite us to (re)assess what we understand to be the nature of reality and the deepest aspects of our human identity.

*Prerequisite: Admission to the Honors Program. May be repeated for credit. Satisfies the Humanistic Approaches core requirement. Cannot be audited. Offered spring semester.*

**212 Origins of the Modern World View** A study of the development of attempts by scientific thinkers to understand and explain the universe. The central theme is the development of astronomy and physics, but some mention is made of corollary studies in mathematics and other sciences. A major portion of the course is devoted to the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century and the work of Kepler, Galileo, and Newton. Another major portion concerns the development of twentieth-century physics, concentrating on relativity and the quantum theory as developed by Einstein, Bohr, Heisenberg, and others. *Prerequisite: Admission to the Honors Program. Credit for HON 212 will not be granted to students who have received credit for PHYS 105. Satisfies the Natural Scientific Approaches core requirement. Offered every other year.*

**213 Mathematics of Symmetry** This course uses the idea of symmetry as an invitation to explore contemporary mathematics. The roots of the mathematics of symmetry extend back to ancient times, and the current mathematical expression of symmetry was first developed in the early 19th century. The course explores both the history and mathematics of this development and traces where the key ideas have led from there, both mathematically and culturally. Emphasis is placed on how mathematics is discovered and how it fits into broader cultural contexts (including the work of M.C. Escher, fractals, and symmetry in fields other than mathematics). *Prerequisite: Admission to the Honors Program. Satisfies the Mathematical Approaches core requirement. Offered spring semester.*

**214 Interrogating Inequality** This course has as its subject matter the individual's relation to society and the relationships that arise among individuals, organizations, and institutions over questions of value. This course aims to enable the student to understand his/her relation to the social world considered as a web of complex and dynamic interrelationships among cultural, economic, psychological, political, ethical and social factors. To this end, the course examines various theories and methods used to analyze this social world, their embedded assumptions, and their application to a variety of contemporary social issues. *Prerequisite: Admission to the Honors Program. Satisfies the Knowledge, Identity, Power graduation requirement. Satisfies the Social Scientific Approaches core requirement. Offered fall semester.*

**401 What is America?** See Connections in the Core Curriculum section of this *Bulletin* for course description.

**495 Independent Study** Variable credit up to 1.00 unit. Independent study is available to those students who wish to continue their learning in an area after completing the regularly offered courses in that area. *May be repeated for credit up to 4.00 units. Cannot be audited. Cannot be taken Credit/No Credit.*

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