

Rabinowitz Honors College Seminars

January 2025 & Spring 2025

** JANUARY 2025 SEMINAR OFFERING **

HUHC 21A H1 SHOW ME THE MONEY! FINANCE IN FILM AND (NON) FICTION

Professor: Andrew Spieler, Finance

MTWR 12:00-3:10PM (3-week course from 01/02 to 01/23)

CRN: 10106

Truth is stranger than fiction. The stories behind many business and finance films and books are both entertaining and instructive. The headlines blare of fraud at Enron and WorldCom but do not discuss the important role of capital markets in improving individual and global welfare. Surprisingly, movies (and often originally a book) like “Moneyball” while entertaining discusses the core concepts of valuation albeit in a baseball setting (and best actor nomination for Brad Pitt). These and other stories contribute to our collective understanding that finance is not about greed (but there is some!) but on helping individuals, investors and collectively nations improve their standard of living and quality of life. Students will gain an understanding that raising capital is necessary to fund new and critical technologies and start new ventures. Markets develop to more efficiently allocate capital and channel resources ultimately to its highest value use. This course provides an entertaining but important lens to view the important role of finance in modern times.

** The chair of the Finance Department has indicated this course may be counted as a departmental elective toward the completion of the requirements for Finance majors or minors.*

BOOKS

Freakonomics (Levitt and Dubner)

Moneyball (Michael Lewis)

Liar’s Poker (Michael Lewis)

The Millionaire Next Door (Stanley and Danko)

Fooled by Randomness (Nasim Taleb)

The Savvy Investor’s Guide to Building Wealth Through Traditional Investments (Baker, Nofsinger, and Spieler)

MOVIES

Moneyball

The Big Short

Barbarians at the Gate

The Smartest Guys in the Room

The Corporation

Trading Places

Wall Street

The Producers (Broadway show)

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** SPRING 2025 SEMINAR OFFERING **

HUHC 20A H1 LITERARY LONG ISLAND / READING LONG ISLAND

Professor: Kelly McMasters, English

TR 9:40-11:05AM

CRN: 21154

MASON 0223

*I too Paumanok,
I too have bubbled up, floated the measureless float,
and been wash'd on your shores,
I too am but a trail of drift and debris,
I too leave little wrecks upon you, you fish-shaped island.*

--Walt Whitman, "Fish Shaped Paumanok"

In this Honors Seminar, we explore the literary landscape of Long Island through a mix of multi-genre reading and writing exercises. This 118-mile stretch of land has inspired writers including Walt Whitman (Fish-Shaped Paumanok), F. Scott Fitzgerald (The Great Gatsby), Rumaan Alam (Leave the World Behind), Nelson DeMille (Plum Island), Colson Whitehead (Sag Harbor), Taffy Brodesser-Akner (Long Island Compromise) and Colm Toibin (Long Island). Together we will consider the island's iconic history (Native American origins, suburban sprawl, segregation, isolation, proximity to Manhattan, etc) and its impact on writers lived, worked, or simply located their work on the island.

** This course can be used as an English major / minor elective.*

HUHC 20B H1 THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON DRUGS

Professor: Emily E. Barkley-Levenson, Psychology

MW 9:40-11:05AM

CRN: 20169

HEGER 0101

This seminar will provide an accessible introduction to neuropsychopharmacology, the study of how drugs affect behavior and the brain. We will introduce basic concepts from neuroscience to discuss the mechanisms by which drugs enter the body, interact with the nervous system, and produce stimulant, depressant, hallucinogenic, and other effects. In addition, we will consider the definition(s) of what makes something a drug, the uses of mind-altering

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substances across human cultures throughout history, and contemporary debates surrounding medical and psychological treatments, legalization and criminalization, and stigma and social acceptance surrounding various drugs.

You do not need to have a science background to take this seminar, though having taken introductory psychology or biology will give you more context to understand some of the topics.

** This course can be used as an elective for the Psychology majors (both BA and BS), Psychology minor, Neurology BS, and Neurology minor.*

HUHC 20C H1 MUSIC AND DANCE IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME

Professor: Christopher Morrongiello, Music & Vimala C. Pasupathi, English

TR 4:20-5:45PM

CRN: 20395

HEGER 0101

"If music be the food of love, play on; Give me excess of it."

Twelfth Night, Act I,i

In this unique interdisciplinary course, students will work with experts in historical performance and musicology, historical dance, and Shakespeare studies to explore the vibrant musical and theatrical culture in Elizabethan and Jacobean times. Taking as their starting point scenes laden with music in Shakespeare's plays, the instructors will reach behind the veil of allegory and metaphor to reveal important musical and theatrical traditions at work. Major composers, styles, and genres of music contemporary with Shakespeare will be introduced and placed within their social, cultural, theoretical, and political contexts. Masques, lute songs, madrigals, broadside ballads and popular tunes, consort songs, mixed consort music, rounds, and instrumental music will be introduced and illustrated often by live, in-class performances. Dance music will be discussed and taught from a musical perspective and through engaging movement workshops drawing on original choreographies in contemporary dancing manuals. Accompanying the course will be a full-length concert of music and dance from Shakespeare's time.

** This course counts towards the music history elective for majors and minors.*

HUHC 20D H1 PBL: CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES

Professor: Jase E. Bernhardt, Geology, Environment, and Sustainability & Kathleen A. Wallace, Philosophy

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MW 11:20-12:45PM

CRN: 21461

GUTH 0103

In this course we take seriously the conviction that Climate Change Challenges are just that – challenges that must be faced now because there isn't time to wait for graduation or anything else. We're interested in surfacing and pursuing practical ideas that could make a difference (large or small) in resolving this crisis. Project based learning is what it sounds like. The central focus of the course will be working with your peers on a project team to develop a solution to one of the many challenges posed by climate change. Climate change is a broad, interdisciplinary problem, and its solutions are too. At the start of the semester, we will work together to develop a common vocabulary in climate change and related topics, while also brainstorming potential project ideas, based on the different interests and insights of all class members. After those early weeks of the course, students will form teams, define the scope and goals of their project, and begin their work. Project teams will be supported throughout the semester by the course instructors, as well as special faculty consultants, who will be paired with groups matching their expertise. While the work and final outcomes for each project will likely look very different, by the end of the semester, each team will have developed their own unique ideas in helping society confront the issues posed by climate change. We encourage students from any and all disciplines to join this course, because only by leveraging all of our collective skills and perspectives can we hope to tackle such a complex and wide-ranging problem.

** The chair of the Geology, Environment, and Sustainability Department has indicated this course may be counted as a Geology, Environment, and Sustainability elective toward the completion of requirements for majors or minors.*

HUHC 20E H1 EMBODIMENT AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Professor: Robin K. Becker, Drama and Dance

TR 1-2:25PM

CRN: 21423

LOWE 0108

In this course we will explore the relationship of the body in movement to the creative processes of thought and perception. We will be working with the somatic practice Continuum, and with texts that support an inquiry into the role and meaning of the body. In this time of technological advancement and great speed, there is a tendency to disassociate from the slower sensory intelligence of the body. Western culture often views the body as a form to objectify in ways that are similar to how machines are viewed and understood. Continuum challenges that perspective and views the body as an unfolding creative process that is in a

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dynamic exchange and communication with all life forms. The body is primarily water, and at its essence, Continuum is an exploration of the properties and movement of fluid systems as they shape and form life both within the body and throughout the larger world. Texts for the course will include Engaging the Movement of Life by Bonnie Gintis, DO, A General Theory of Love by Thomas Lewis, M.D., Fari Amini, M.D., and Richard Lannon, M.D., and How Life Moves by Caryn McHose and Kevin Frank. The course will also include DVDs documenting current research on movement and perception. The movement practice Continuum in no way resembles a dance or movement class in which one is asked to learn a prescribed set of movements. No prior movement experience is required for this course. Instead, this course will offer a process of engaging one's own personal exploration of movement with the goal of becoming more conscious of the sensation of life as it unfolds into our awareness through the communication and expression of movement.

** The chair of the Drama and Dance department has indicated this course may be counted as a Dance elective toward the completion of Dance requirements for majors or minors.*

HUHC 20F H1 GODS, MONSTERS AND HEROES: THE ATLANTIC AS MYTHICAL SPACE

Professor: Alfonso J. García-Osuna, Romance Languages and Literatures

MW 11:20-12:45PM

CRN: 23625

DAVSN 0014

An introduction to ancient mythology through a comparative approach. This course will guide students in comparing the mythology and beliefs of several different cultures around the Atlantic shores, including ancient Irish, Welsh, Iberian, Scandinavian and American aboriginal traditions. We will also explore how ancient Mediterranean peoples -Greek, Egyptian- regarded those 'remote' cultures of the Atlantic. The readings and assessments for the course will be rooted in the relevant literature from each tradition, such as the Irish immrama and echtraí tales of travel to distant, fantastic lands. The course will therefore introduce students to short selections from texts from a variety of cultures, as itemized above.

** This course will count towards major in Comparative Literature (BA) and the minors in Comparative Literature and World Literature.*

HUHC 20G H1 ALGORITHMS IN DATA SCIENCE

Professor: Kira Adaricheva, Mathematics & Simona Doboli, Computer Science

MW 4:20-6:10PM

CRN: 23626

BRESL 0029

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Students will learn to discover patterns and trends in data and to model data for insight and prediction tasks. The algorithms covered have wide applicability. The mathematics behind the algorithms will be explained to better understand how they work, why they terminate, and how computationally effective they are. The course includes a 2 hour laboratory where students will implement in teams the algorithms using Python. Some of the algorithms covered are: Newton-Raphson method, selection and merge sort, naïve Bayes classifier, K-nearest neighbor classifier, K-means clustering algorithm, regression using gradient descent, satisfiability of Horn formulas by Forward Chaining. Some background in mathematics and programming is recommended.

** This course counts toward Computer Science or Math technical elective.*

HUHC 20H H1 AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Professor: Bernard J. Firestone, Political Science

MW 11:20-12:45PM

CRN: 23627

RSVLT 0212

The war in Gaza has stimulated extraordinary interest in the general American public and has roiled America's college campuses in ways not seen since the Vietnam War. Notwithstanding the current, heightened interest in the politics of the Middle East, the region has been a longstanding preoccupation of American policymakers and a significant segment of the American public. Although the Middle East is characterized by a high level of political, religious, and ethnic diversity, many Americans tend to view the Middle East as an undifferentiated whole. This misreading of the region may explain why as much as American policymakers have invested enormous time and resources in the Middle East, our strategic goals have often appeared muddled and our policies not only ineffective but even counter-productive – including in the case of the war in Gaza. This course will examine American foreign policy toward the Middle East and attempt to explain what motivates that policy. We will explore several subjects, including the Palestine-Israel conflict, the effect of geostrategic concerns on our policies in the region, and the U.S.' attempt to balance our pursuit of democratic values with our interests in oil and strategic advantage. Requirements will include a midterm, final, and 4-5 pages final paper

** The chair of the Political Science department has indicated this course may be counted as an elective toward the completion of political science requirements for majors or minors.*

HUHC 21A H1 FINANCIAL CRISES AND PUBLIC POLICY

Professor: Edward Watson, Finance

M 2:40-5:30PM

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CRN: 23628
BRESL 0012

This RHC seminar examines the history of economic crises and financial bubbles, primarily in the U.S., and explores the role of public policy in causing and responding to these events. In this century alone, we've faced significant challenges like the Enron accounting fraud, the 2008 Great Financial Crisis (GFC), and the COVID-19 crisis. These events prompt ongoing reassessment of how public policy influences corporate behavior within a free market.

The course will analyze the evolution of public policies in a historical context to assess whether they lead to effective, lasting reforms or result in over-regulation that may contribute to future crises. A key focus will be the 2008 financial crisis, which offers insights into the cumulative impact of public policy, including the roles of agencies like the Federal Reserve, the SEC, and private institutions such as Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the rating agencies. The course will also explore how financial innovation can act as both a catalyst and a moderator of financial crises.

** The chair of the finance department has agreed to allow this course to count as a departmental elective toward the completion of the finance major or minor.*

HUHC 21B H1 GENERATIVE AI IN COMMUNICATION

Professor: Russell S. Chun, Journalism, Media Studies, and Public Relations
TR 1:00-2:50PM
CRN: 22746
BRESL 0202

This course explores the technology, potential use cases, and impact of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in the field of journalism and communication. This hands-on course gives students the opportunity to use a variety of generative AI tools for text, video, sound, and image to gain a better understanding of their abilities and limitations. Students discuss the potential applications for communication professionals and consider the emerging ethical issues. The course demands that students re-examine the nature of creativity, the role of authorship, and the relationship of media with truth and authenticity.

** The chair of the Journalism, Media Studies, and Public Relations department has indicated this course may be accepted as a journalism, mass media studies, or public relations elective.*