

HON 1010 Ideas and Society Descriptions by Instructor

Daniel McInnis

About the Course:

HON 1010 is an incredible opportunity for our first-year students to actively explore contemporary issues and theories. The main goal is to encourage students to become more visually literate by the end of the term. We explore issues of representation within photography, meaning in visual imagery, and the concepts behind valuation (art, labor, and ourselves). We also explore the act of looking, and how image interpretation informs our attitudes toward consumption and the environment.

Our sections of HON 1010 are unique in that we want to make sure the students have a proper balance of participation and knowledge gathering. One of our goals is to make sure each student enjoys a safe space for discussion surrounding timely issues. Covering areas that involve visualities, such as photography, film, and social media, allow students a voice from the “get-go.” As they’ve already had experiences with these types of media, another goal is to refine and expand the awareness they hold.



About the Instructor:

My undergraduate degree focused on both film and photography (both production and theory). Motion pictures (especially documentaries), hold a special place in my heart. My graduate work focused more on still photo images, and I have continued as a practicing photographer during my mid-career. I’ve been fortunate to show my work nationally and internationally, including a recent five-museum tour conducted by the Smithsonian Institution’s National Portrait Gallery. I continue to work with the Jesup Scott Honors College on UToledo’s Visual Literacy initiatives.

My outside interests overlap with my practice and teaching. I love keeping up with best practices in teaching, especially as they relate to technology. Finding places where art, communication, and science overlap is much more of a focus since coming to UToledo. I have amateur interests in both astronomy and meteorology, and have a deep respect for the natural sciences. When I can, I love to travel, and to spend time with my wonderful family.

Mary Templin

About the Course:

The theme of my HON 1010 course is “Who Am I and What Am I Doing Here?” It will focus on questions of identity and purpose, both in a larger, philosophical sense and in terms of our own actual lives. Human beings have been asking these questions for thousands of years; we will explore some of the many answers that have been proposed and will offer some answers of our own.

Starting with some of the creation myths that different cultures have produced to explain human origins, in the first half of the class we will read and discuss a variety of philosophical, religious, scientific, and literary texts from the past that offer competing models of human nature and explanations of human behavior. In the second half of the class, we will turn to more contemporary aspects of identity and purpose, including gender fluidity, studies of how the brain works, and the role of technology and media in the development of identity. We will also consider how all these theories apply to our own sense of self and the decisions with which we are currently faced. Students will write two short papers as well as weekly responses to the reading and will participate in a variety of small-group activities and class discussions.



About the Instructor:

I am a Senior Lecturer and have been working in the JSHC since 2002. I earned my Ph.D. in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, specializing in 19th-century American Literature. I am the author of *Panic Fiction: Women and Antebellum Economic Crisis* (2014), a study of novels about economic panic and loss by American female authors of the 1830s-1850s. In addition to teaching HON 1010, I teach HON 1020 (Innovation and Society), HON 2020 (Multi. Lit.: The North American Experience), HON 2030 (Multi. Lit.: The Non-European World), and HON 4950/4960 seminars on Utopia and the Harlem Renaissance.

In my free time, I like to travel (mostly in the U.S. and preferably by train), do puzzles (word, number, and jigsaw), garden, spend time with family, and, of course, read.

Alysha Cook

About the Instructor:

My sections of HON 1010 will focus on the idea of the monstrous. Despite the simple title, monsters are often complex, transforming right along with society. Furthermore, the notion of monsters and the monstrous challenge us. We will explore the ways that fictional monsters reflect society's ideas about others versus ourselves. After evaluating various forms of literature and media, we might question what it means to be human and understand how cultures create fictional monsters as ways to define what it means to be civilized.

Students who are enrolled in my sections of HON 1010 guide the course by creating the questions and topics that will help us navigate each class period's discussion connected to a reading or movie/documentary, allowing them to create an environment that is both influenced by their personal and academic interests and is challenging. It is the goal of these discussions to encourage your peers to think about new ideas and gain new perspectives. While I often bring ideas and questions to the table during these discussions, successful and meaningful discussions flourish when you and your peers take the lead.



About the Instructor:

I have been a Rocket since 2006, when I began as a College Credit Plus student, enrolled in both high school and college courses. I went on to earn my B.A. and M.A. in English Literature at UToledo and haven't left since! Along with being an instructor in the JSHC, I am also the Programming Coordinator for the Honors Learning Community. I sincerely consider UToledo my second home! As a student, I was particularly interested in works from the Medieval and Renaissance periods, focusing my writing and research on gender, marginalized peoples, and mental illness. While I certainly bring those ideas to the classroom, I am also interested in all things pop culture: anything from music to movies and memes. As a proud Toledoan, I also make an effort to help students who participate in the Honors Learning Community discover the wonders of Toledo, including Toledo Symphony Orchestra concerts, Toledo Mud Hens and Walleye games, the Metroparks, the Toledo Zoo, and much more.

Outside of work, I spend a majority of my time with my family – my husband Patrick, who I actually met in a Shakespeare course here at UToledo and who is also a teacher, and our one-year-old daughter, Willow. As a family, we enjoy listening, singing, and dancing to our large record collection and spending as much time outside as possible. If I'm not spending time with my family, you can find me painting, reading books about the history of food, baking, or binge-watching entirely too many shows at a time.

Catherine Chengges

About the Course:

My section of HON 1010 is titled, "Intertextuality: A Twice-told Tale." We will look at pairings of works that tell the same story from different points of view. Just as in life, this approach reminds us that our personal perspective influences opinions and judgments, which are often challenged and even changed when someone else introduces a different perspective. An example of one of the course pairings is the Old English epic *Beowulf* (circa 1000 CE), which includes the hero's victory over the mindless monster Grendel, and John Gardner's *Grendel* (1971), which tells the background, thoughts, and motives of that monster. The course's other pairings will be via a specified combination of books and film versions, which students will view outside of class. In addition to discussing the material, students will be required to write weekly e-mails about our material, to do an in-class presentation on an assigned pairing, to write a research paper on that assigned pairing, to meet for a one-on-one conference about the draft of that research paper, and to participate in regular in-class group workshops.



About the Instructor:

I have been teaching for the Honors College at UToledo since January 1999. Since 1993, I have been an administrator in the Department of English Language and Literature. Too, since 1997, I have compiled the annual "Checklist of Welty Scholarship" for the internationally-circulated *Eudora Welty Review*, which focuses on the 20th-century Mississippi writer (1909-2001). In 2014, I was awarded a College of Languages, Literature & Social Sciences Dean's Recognition. More recently in 2019, I was again honored – this time with an Outstanding Staff Award for my work as Administrative Coordinator in the Department of English Language and Literature.