



## Spring 2025 HON 400-Level Seminars

### **HON 410-1001**

**T/R 11:30-12:45pm**

**Modalities of Citizenship**

**Dr. Bryan Blankfield**

How does one perform citizenship? Moreover, how do different technologies shape and constrain the choices one makes when engaging in civic action? Presented from a rhetorical perspective, this course explores possible modalities for civic action. Offered during the 83rd (2025) Session of the Nevada Legislature, this seminar gives students a first-hand opportunity to study and participate in the legislative process.

Thanks to the generosity of the Investment Counsel Company of Nevada (ICC) and Founder and CEO Randy Garcia, students will travel to Carson City over Spring Break (March 18th through March 20th) to take part in legislative sessions and meet in-person with Governor Joseph Lombardo. Expenses for air travel to and from Reno, ground transportation to Carson City and back, as well as lodging and meals are all courtesy of the generosity of the Investment Counsel Company. This trip gives Honors College students a unique opportunity to play an active role in the legislative process, tracking the progress of bills and communicating with legislators.

Readings consist of scholarly writings on civic life, publics, and modes of citizenship, such as Freedom of Information Act requests, personal correspondence, public displays, and social media. Class discussions will be complemented by guest lectures from lobbyists and legislators. Together we will better understand our roles and responsibilities as citizens in the current age.

**Note:** Because of the class trip to Carson City for the 83rd Session of the Nevada Legislature, students must [complete an application for this course](#) by October 14th. As such, Honors College approval is required to enroll in this class.

### **HON 410-1002**

**M/W 1:00-2:15pm**

**Disrupting the Traditional Essay Genre to Inspire Change**

**Professor Mike Chin**

Throughout their college careers, students are tasked with writing essays that argue, analyze, and incorporate research. But what about the essay as a mode of self-expression, exercising the imagination, or affecting the way the writer and readers alike understand the world? In this course, students will read published essays that break norms in service of communicating unique messages of importance to the authors. Additionally, students will participate in an array of in-class writing exercises en route to crafting their own essays in original modes and formats geared toward addressing the issues they're most invested in, be it on a personal or more global level.

**HON 410-1003**

**M/W 11:30-12:45pm**

**Sport Psychology**

**Professor Christian Haugen**

This course examines psychological factors that affect sport performance, as well as how sport affects the psychological outcomes of participants. Emphasis will be placed on defining sport psychology and the subfields within the larger academic discipline, in particular understanding the history of the field as it relates to the current state of research and practice. The course will also define the roles of sport psychology professionals in both the performance enhancement and mental health services domains. Discussion of jobs and careers in sport psychology along with pathways necessary to obtain these jobs is introduced. Specific issues related to sport psychology professionals in the United States is also examined.

**HON 410-1004**

**F 8:30-11:15am**

**Resilience Psychology: Overcoming Obstacles to Achieve Success**

**Dr. Brian Udall**

Throughout this course, we will delve into the fascinating concepts of psychological resilience and behavioral persistence, exploring how thoughts, feelings, and behaviors define our ability to overcome personal and professional adversity. Using scientific inquiry and theoretical foundations, as well as metaphors from literature (e.g., *Ender's Game*), we'll uncover the mechanisms behind resilience, examining topics such as self-concepts, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and social support systems.

Together, we'll explore real-world applications, from managing stress and enhancing leadership skills to understanding ethical dilemmas and fostering personal growth. Welcome to a transformative learning experience that promises to equip you with the tools to thrive in the face of life's challenges. Let's embark on this journey together!

**HON 410-1005**

**T/R 1:00-2:15pm**

**The Graphic Novel**

**Dr. Tim Gauthier**

Progressively and steadily, over the last thirty years, the graphic novel has become recognized as an accomplished literary and aesthetic form. Beginning with Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics* and expanding to include narratological and historical approaches to the medium, students will be introduced to theories and concepts in order to develop a critical approach to these literary and visual texts. Adopting an interdisciplinary perspective, this course will examine a selection of works that define and refine the genre, from writers and artists such as Art Spiegelman, Osamu Tezuka, and Tillie Walden, among others. In the process, we will investigate and unpack themes (violence, politics, racism, illness, ethnic diversity) that remain central concerns of the graphic novel form.

**HON 410-1006**

**M/W 4:00-5:15pm**

**What If? Exploring Alternate History**

**Dr. David Schwartz**

Fiction is about imagining other possibilities. Alternate history (also alternative history or alt history) imagines a world in which a point of divergence (POD) leads to a different reality than the one we know. For example: what if the British had defeated the colonial rebellion in North America? A good alt history has a clear POD that creates a different world that tells us something about our own.

In this class, students will learn about the conventions of alt history, read several noteworthy examples of the genre, consider what makes a good alt history, and ultimately write their own alt history, short story, or other creative project.

**HON 410-1007**

**M/W 11:30-12:45pm**

**Philosophy of Well Being**

**Cheryl Abbate**

Much of what we do, we do to be happy. But what is happiness? And what ought we to do if we want to secure it for ourselves? And, more fundamentally, is happiness the only thing we should be aiming at if we want to live a truly flourishing human life? Or are there things other than happiness that are intrinsically valuable-- things that contribute to our flourishing even if they don't make us (maximally) happy, such as achievement, friendship, love, knowledge, and virtue? In this seminar, we will explore these and related questions. Essentially, our focus will be on "the good life." We will consider and debate competing theories about human flourishing, including hedonism, desire-satisfaction theory, and objective-list approaches. We will moreover discuss, evaluate, and explore practical tools that have been shown to increase subjective well-being, including gratitude practices, mindfulness, and naikan therapy.

**HON 410-1008**

**T/R 4:00-5:15pm**

**STEM Education: Helping Nevada's Students Compete**

**Professor Traci Viscosi**

For a college student passionate about shaping the future, this course offers a unique opportunity to make a tangible impact on the next generation. Dive into the dynamic realm of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and discover the tools to empower Nevada's young minds to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Through innovative teaching methodologies, real-world case studies, hands-on projects, and direct involvement in competitions, you'll gain the expertise to ignite curiosity, foster critical thinking, and bridge the educational gap. Join me in this exhilarating exploration and become a catalyst for change in Nevada's educational landscape while honing your skills for a future full of possibilities. Your commitment to this course culminates in a critical experience: participation in the Nevada Science Olympiad on **Saturday, April 5, 2025**. This event is a mandatory component of your coursework and an opportunity to apply what you have learned in a real-world setting. As part of this course, you will engage in various activities, including designing an event exam and supervising an event at the Nevada Science Olympiad competition hosted at the University of Nevada Las Vegas campus. Your journey to inspire, guide, and shape young innovators starts here, with the Nevada Science Olympiad serving as both a capstone experience and a testament to your dedication and growth. This course is ideal for STEM students who want to give back to the community.

**HON 410-1009**

**T/R 4:00-5:15 pm**

**Fight for Your (Water) Rights!**

**Dr. William Sipe**

It is time to fight for your (water) rights! Across the world and the US, people are realizing that fresh water is a vital and depleting resource. Uneven distribution, poor water management, pollution, and the climate crisis are each impacting the supply of fresh water. In this course, you will develop valuable argumentation and debate skills to tackle this life-altering issue. Approaching the topic from several different angles, we will use multiple methods and formats to sharpen critical thinking, collaboration, articulation and coalition-building. No prior debate experience is necessary.

**HON 410-1010**

**T/R 11:30-12:45 pm**

**Making of Modern Nevada**

**Dr. Michelle Turk**

Nevada is a state of contradictions. The state slogan is “Battle Born,” but soldiers never fought on its soil. It is politically conservative, yet allows legalized gambling and prostitution. Around eighty-five percent of the state is federally managed land that houses water, defense, and industrial projects, yet residents pride themselves on state sovereignty and individualism. It is the seventh largest state in geographical size, but has a population of only three million, ranking thirty-second in population nationally. This course is a critical examination of the economic, social, cultural, and political developments that created Nevada from the Native American nations to colonization by Euro-American settlers to recognition as a US territory, then state. Emphasis will be placed on how Nevada met 20th century challenges of modernization, water and energy demands, economic diversification, sustainable growth, and providing quality health care. Our class meetings will take a number of formats. Depending on the topic, either I will deliver a lecture or we will have a guest speaker. Other days, we will take a field trip, have student-led presentations, discussions, or analyze primary documents. Nevada is like no other state and is fascinating for historical study. This history is our present and contains important lessons for Nevada’s future.

**HON 410.1011**

**W 2:30-5:15**

**Outer Space Policy: Historical and Contemporary Challenges**

**Dr. Roman Lewis**

This course will address outer space policy issues facing state and non-state actors in the context of human imagination, technology, and an evolving strategic environment. An overview of space as an environment will be presented alongside its implications on the scope and depth of human space operations across time. The course will explore strategic choices facing spacefaring and non-spacefaring countries in their space-related activities, including the development of indigenous space programs and launch capabilities, dependence on state and commercial sector actors, economics and commerce, international cooperation, international space law, and national security. Through case studies, students will develop a comprehensive and critical understanding of how different theories/approaches apply to human interaction with the outer space environment and celestial bodies.

**HON 420-1001**

**M/W 2:30-3:45 pm**

**Songs of Pilgrimage**

**Professor Joe Svendsen**

Songs of Pilgrimage is an exploration of the musical practices associated with pilgrimage, journeys of spiritual and self- discovery, from throughout history and around the world. The course defines pilgrimage within a variety of contexts, surveying well-known and lesser known pilgrimages and the songs and musical practices that have come to be associated with them. The course has two main goals:

- A. Explore the connection between music and identity
- B. Articulate the similarities and differences in musical characteristics of diverse identity-building experiences, around the world and throughout history

**HON 420-1002**

**Asynchronous/ Web-Based**

**War-Looted Art: Acquisition & Restitution**

**Dr. Heather Lusty**

This course offers a survey-style approach to wartime campaign looting from Roman expansion to the contemporary world. The redistribution of fine art and other cultural heritage objects is most frequently accomplished through seizure during conflict. This course will explore systemic looting during times of war, post-war efforts to find and return that art, and today's restitution claims (against museums, individuals, and countries), introducing legal framework (on national and international levels) and industry remediation, using specific case studies of disputed artifacts. Students will understand the complex, intricately-linked issues in art provenance and restitution, and be equipped with the research and writing skills to articulate them.

**HON 420-1003**

**W 5:30-8:15 pm**

**AI and Possible Futures for the Arts: Exploring Computational Artistic Expression**

**Professor Yvonne Houy**

What are possible futures for the arts in the age of generative AI? In this no-prerequisite survey course that emphasizes hands-on explorations of emerging artistic techniques, you will gain a critical understanding of how art is created through digital and computational means, including AI machine learning, while examining works of art that are challenging historical notions of creativity and artistry.

We will examine the ethical implications of emerging technologies, including potential biases, privacy concerns, and intellectual property challenges associated with computational art, as we gain an informed understanding of the rapidly evolving technologies that are changing our lives.

Having your own laptop is helpful but not required.

**HON 420-1004**

**T/R 2:30-3:45 pm/ Web-Live**

**BIPOC Experience in the World of Dance**

**Professor Victoria Dale**

This course will explore the role of BIPOC in the development of various dance idioms of the World. Special focus is placed on the qualities of movement of select BIPOC artists and dance companies. Students will delve into the history of the struggle of BIPOC artists to have their works produced, their choreographic philosophies developed, and their impact on the dance movement vocabulary of other cultural forms.. The class will investigate how dance creation has been affected by historical eras of upheaval and oppression. There will be opportunities to create personal movements and digitally perform.

**HON 430-1001**

**Asynchronous/Web-based**

**Latin American: Politics and Culture**

**Dr. Joanna Kepka**

Latin America is a complex region filled with contrasts, failures, and possibilities. Its many countries share common origins in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies established in the 16th century, but have since followed at times parallel and at times divergent paths. While the colonial legacy of cultural origins and language unite the region, heterogenous local experiences and distinct national histories separate it into parts. Through the lens of cultural and political geography, this seminar offers an examination of Latin American cultures, politics, and societies. Using a variety of texts and films by the region's renowned authors and film makers, together we will explore the past and present through topics such as colonization, revolutionary and reformist movements, religion, violence, gender, ethnicity, and class.

**HON 430-1002**

**M/W 11:30-12:45 pm**

**Intercultural Communication**

**Dr. Ursula Kamanga**

This course will help students gain skills and knowledge on becoming competent and confident intercultural communicators. This course is designed to focus on the interaction of individuals across diverse cultures. Globalization demands that we communicate across cultures to enhance our functionality in diverse workplaces, living environments, and the globe. Students will explore their own cultural backgrounds to increase their sensitivity to other cultures by exploring a variety of topics including but not limited to cultural self-awareness, cross-cultural communication and adaptation, intercultural encounters in communication technology, and how intercultural communication manifests itself in diverse settings. To maximize their learning experience, students will benefit from understanding how the International Criminal Court operates and its importance in the justice system, conducting international peer interviews, writing a term analytic paper, and participating in discussion boards.

**HON 440-1001**

**F 11:30-2:15 pm**

**Managing with Power**

**Dr. Payal Sharma**

"Managing with Power" is an elective course designed to help you acquire the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to make a lasting impact in your career and in the world. Courses on power are among the most sought-after electives in top business schools and universities due to the simple fact that power dynamics are pervasive in organizations. Using a range of classic and contemporary theoretical and practical perspectives, we will together uncover lessons learned regarding what power is, how it is gained, maintained, and lost at work. Importantly, the class will facilitate your intellectual examination of power while sensitizing you to the related concept of privilege or lack thereof as a function of individuals' race, ethnicity, and/or gender. The course further incorporates guest speakers representing a range of industries and power perspectives, and is designed to be complementary to other course offerings in the Honors College and at UNLV.

**HON 440-1002**

**M 2:30-5:15 pm**

**Tribal Sovereignty and the Law in the United States**

**Professor Kostan Lathouris**

What do you know about indigenous tribes in the United States of America? What even is a tribe? Is it a socio-cultural entity, or a political-legal entity? What significance do these classifications even mean? What is federal Indian law and how does it differ from tribal law? How would you respond to someone saying that Native American tribes are conquered people and that the United States government owes them nothing different from what it owes to any other citizen?

These are just some of the questions that we will explore together during this course. No background knowledge is required, just a willingness to learn and participate in discussions and activities. This class is for anyone; however, it may be particularly interesting for those interested in law, government-to-government relations, history, civil rights, and environmental justice.

It should be noted that this class will not focus on a snapshot of what Native Americans looked like at a specific moment in time. Rather, this course will explore history as the context for the current challenges and successes that tribes have and are continuing to experience today. After analyzing historical and current Native American affairs, you will be asked to look forward and offer your own suggestions and predictions of what the future may hold.

**HON 440-1003**

**M/W 8:30-9:45 am**

**The Historic Westside**

**Professor Christie Batson**

Drawing on urban history, urban sociology, and urban geography, this course examines Las Vegas' very own Historic Westside neighborhood – the first and only African American community in Las Vegas. Unlike any other neighborhood in the city, the Historic Westside offers a unique neighborhood experience steeped in Black migration from the South, residential segregation, racial discrimination, African American culture, community resiliency, and gentrification. We will explore the neighborhood transitions of the Historic Westside from the 1920's to current-day and use the course materials to discuss the future of the community. The course will begin by exploring the oral histories of the very first African American residents in Las Vegas. Next, we will examine how early racial politics in Las Vegas set the course for uneven and unfair development of the neighborhood. We will apply theories of neighborhood change and geographic urban trauma to analyze how the Historic Westside both meets, and diverges from, traditional patterns of neighborhood development. We will interrogate the current redevelopment plan that the City of Las Vegas has implemented in its efforts to “renew” the Historic Westside and examine urban gentrification processes as they apply to the Historic Westside.

**HON 440-1004**

**T/R 2:30-3:45 pm**

**Promoting Social Justice Through Psychology**

**Professor Jennifer Rennels**

This seminar involves reading and discussing topics related to diversity (the “isms” many individuals experience) and issues of social justice. A main focus of the course entails learning how psychological research and applications of it can be used to study and decrease behaviors related to social injustice. During the second half of the semester, students will work in small groups to identify an issue in our community and develop a proposal for a community-based project aimed at promoting social justice that will include a way to evaluate the project. The goal is for you to gain an understanding of how psychological research can be used to promote social justice and serve community needs outside of a clinical framework.