

## Fall 2009 Honors Seminars

### Honors Seminars – Humanities – HUM 2937

<i>Section #</i>	<i>Ref. #</i>	<i>Professor (Dept.)</i>	<i>Seminar Title</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Day, Time Location</i>
1	01828	Francis Cairns (Classics)	Senecan Tragedy	3 W	TR 9:30 10:45 DOD 205
2	05853	Bryan Cuevas (Religion)	Magic & the Supernatural in the Asian World	3 W	W 1:15 – 4:00 LAN 101
3	07602	Michael Broyles (Music)	Beethoven as Composer and Icon	3 W	TR 2:00 – 3:15 LAN 101
4	07603	Benjamin Koen (Music)	Sound, Meditation, and Healing	3 W,Y	TR 2:00 – 3:15 HMU N0126
5	07604	Frank D. Gunderson (Music)	Music & Human Rights	3 W, Y	TR 2:30 – 3:45 KMU 202
6	08274	John E. Kelsay (Religion)	Business & Human Values	3 W	MWF 11:15 – 12:05 LAN 101

### Honors Seminars - Social Science – ISS 2937

<i>Section #</i>	<i>Ref. #</i>	<i>Professor (Dept.)</i>	<i>Seminar Title</i>	<i>Credit</i>	<i>Day, Time Location</i>
1	08160	Will Slauter (History)	Intellectual Property in Historical Perspective	3 W	W 2:00 – 5:00 BEL 0007
2	08862	History	Latin American Revolutions	3 W	TR 2:30 – 3:45 HCB 0217
3	09279	Daniel Tope (Sociology)	Race & Minority Group Relations	3 W	MW 11:00-12:15

## Honors Seminars - Natural Science ISC 2937

Section #	Ref. #	Professor (Dept.)	Seminar Title	Credit	Day, Time Location
1	01956	Kevin Dixon (Biology)	Sustainability and Biodiversity	3 W	MW 3:35 – 4:50 BIO 0307

## SEMINAR COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### HUM-2937 Humanities Seminars

**Senecan Tragedy:** We shall be reading three Roman tragedies by Seneca the Younger, namely *Phaedra*, *The Trojan Women*, and *Oedipus*, using the translations of Prof. A.J. Boyle, which are universally esteemed for their accuracy and stageability. We shall study the plays in thematic and cultural terms, giving due attention also to plot and characterization. Seminars will involve play-readings, reports, discussions, and debates.

#### Required Texts:

For *Phaedra* A.J. Boyle (ed.) *Seneca's Phaedra. Introduction, Text, Translation and Notes* Soft Cover. (repr. Leeds 1992). ISBN 978-0905205-66-3.

(Available in USA from The David Brown Book Company, [www.oxbowbooks.com](http://www.oxbowbooks.com)).

For *The Trojan Women* A.J. Boyle (ed.) *Seneca's Troades. Introduction, Text, Translation and Commentary* (Leeds, 1994) ISBN 978-0-905205-88-5. Soft Cover.

(Available in USA from The David Brown Book Company, [www.oxbowbooks.com](http://www.oxbowbooks.com)).

For *Oedipus* Prof. Boyle has undertaken to provide us with his in-progress translation at the appropriate point in the semester.

**Magic & the Supernatural in the Asian World:** This seminar offers a comparative study of the forms and functions of magic, supernatural beliefs, and associated rituals in various societies across Asia, including especially India, Tibet, China, and Japan. Emphasis is on understanding such beliefs and practices within specific Asian social and historical contexts and broad comparisons with Western conceptions to derive critical insights into the significance of religious beliefs and practices in human life. Throughout the course sustained focus will be on the wide variety of academic approaches to magic as a cross-cultural category and the problematic distinction between the categories "magic" and "religion." A primary goal of the seminar is to introduce students to sophisticated and interesting ways of thinking, speaking, and writing about such topics, thus equipping them to think and write about other complex aspects of religions and cultures.

**Beethoven as Composer and Icon:** An examination of the music and the life of Beethoven, and what he represents as an icon in American culture. Musical experience is not necessary.

**Sound, Meditation, and Healing:** Throughout diverse cultures of the world, specialized sounds are employed as a means to access meditative states of consciousness. This is an experiential seminar that will draw from specific world cultures, indigenous, and contemporary practices that use extended low tone sounds in meditation. There are no prerequisites for this class.

**Music and Human Rights:** Music is extraordinarily powerful in its ability to communicate and persuade. Because of this ability, music is also inherently political. Political commentators, political leaders, and political organizations (from Aristotle to the Taliban), and politically-oriented musicians (from Bob Marley to Ani DiFranco), have long understood the power of musical expression to question, rally, cajole, pacify, and even destroy. For this reason, musicians throughout history and across the globe are often the first to speak out against the injustices of the world, and they are the first to be silenced. This course will investigate the dialogic role music plays worldwide in negotiating, consolidating, and questioning power between powerful macro-reaching political entities (corporations, nation states) and micro-locales (villages, regions, sub-cultures). Topics which we will discuss will include: music and globalization; music & colonialism, music and the nation state; music & resistance; music and cultural memory; music and gender; endangered musics; music and ownership

**Business and Human Values:** This seminar focuses on the intersection between business and human values. As the dictionaries have it, the former term usually signifies a commercial or mercantile activity engaged in as a means of livelihood, a commercial or sometimes an industrial enterprise, or dealings or transactions especially of an economic nature. Synonyms include commerce, trade, industry, and work. The latter term indicates questions about the value of business. Why do human beings think it important? What purposes does it serve? What norms govern, or ought to govern, the conduct of business? And so on.

In this seminar, we will approach the intersection of business and values through the reading and discussion of texts. We will discuss philosophical, religious, and historical writing about business, but our primary sources will be literary. That is, we will explore the ways novelists, playwrights, and poets depict human beings engaged in business. Students will be asked to reflect on the ways such depictions relate to contemporary stories of business people, in terms of success and failure, trust and betrayal, wisdom and folly—in short, the range of categories by which human beings try to sort out questions of ethics. Grades will reflect (a) regular attendance and participation; and (b) the quality of bi-weekly written responses (5-6 pages or 1250-1500 words each) to specific questions about course readings.

### **ISS-2937 Social Science Seminars:**

**Intellectual Property in Historical Perspective:** Where do our ideas about intellectual property come from and how do they matter to human creativity of all kinds? How do new technologies reconfigure the attitudes and practices of producers, distributors, and consumers? What rights belong to creators, individual users, and the public at large? These questions are hotly debated today as MP3 downloads slice into the profits of record companies and publishers worry about Google's ambition to provide free access to the world's books. This seminar will put intellectual property in historical perspective. We will begin with the construction of authorship and the development of copyright in printed books, spending several weeks on the eighteenth century, when many of our most fundamental ideas about ownership and rights first took shape. We will then move forward toward the present, stopping along the way to consider how different conceptions of intellectual property get established, contested, and modified in a range of fields, including literature, art, music and science.

## **Latin American Revolutions: TBA**

**Race and Minority Group Relations:** An introduction to sociological theories about dominant-subordinate relationships between groups. The social significance of minority status is emphasized. Concepts and theories are applied to the experiences of several nonwhite ethnic groups in the US, with special attention devoted to contemporary black-white relationships. The reemergence of white ethnicity is discussed in relation to the above.

## **ISC 2937 Natural Science Seminars:**

**Sustainability and Biodiversity:** We will examine the relationship between humans and the diversity of other living things on the planet. Topics will include the cultural, agricultural, and medicinal value of biodiversity; human impact on biodiversity, and the creation of sustainable ecosystems for humans and other forms of life.