

HNUH - UNIVERSITY HONORS

HNUH218X Uprising, Riot, Revolt: Violence in Story and Theory (3 Credits)

How does violence connect to revolution? Is violence the result of lone wolf actors, oppressive social structures, or just blind fate? Is it a side-effect of revolution or its driving force? Is violence a way to fight injustice, or is it a problem of evil? Why is one person's uprising another person's riot? In this seminar, we will explore literature, politics, and religion to debate the meaning and causes of violence. By examining the writings of a prison psychiatrist, historians, activists, theorists, and theologians alongside classic and contemporary literary works, we will disrupt common understandings of violence. In conducting interviews with community members, engaging in classroom debate, and sharing ideas in a project-poster session, we will investigate violence in the UMD community and wider DC area, on-line and face-to-face, and propose ways toward revolutionary change.

HNUH218Y The Science, Economics, and Governance of Climate Change: The Need For An Energy Revolution (3 Credits)

Hardly a day goes by without some news worthy item being reported on Earth's changing climate. Often the stories are contradictory, tainted by parochialism and extremism, not only by the conservative and liberal media, but also by the camps of so-called believers and deniers. This seminar will begin with a review of the history of how decisions regarding human interactions with the environment have either doomed past societies to failure, or enabled long-term, sustainable success. Next we'll examine the science that underlies global warming, in a manner accessible to non-scientists, as well as the potential consequences of a rapidly changing climate. We will then discuss the economics of large-scale provision of energy by renewable resources, which will be needed to avert climate catastrophe. During the final few weeks of this seminar, students will break into three groups, representing various parts of the world, and negotiate an international plan to transition the world energy supply to renewable resources that emit little or no greenhouse gases.

HNUH228A Peace in our time? Conflict and Conflict Resolution in International Politics (3 Credits)

Is the world getting more peaceful? There are currently civil wars raging in much of the world and millions of people have fled these wars as refugees or internally displaced persons. Terrorist attacks kill thousands, and can occur in any corner of the planet. At the same time many actors use strategies such as peacekeeping, mediation, promotion of human rights and post-conflict justice to resolve conflicts and build peace. In this course, we will examine conflict, peace, and conflict resolution in contemporary international politics. We will interrogate concepts such as peace, conflict, and violence, the different forms that these phenomena can take, and how we can measure their occurrence. We will discuss theoretical explanations for why individuals and groups have disputes and why these actors choose to use violence (or not) in these disputes and examine these arguments in specific cases. We will analyze conflict resolution strategies such as mediation, peacekeeping, and human rights promotion both theoretically and empirically. This discussion will allow students to develop an argument for whether the world is getting more peaceful, why it is or is not, and what this could mean about the future of violence and peace.

HNUH228X How to Wage War Without Firing A Single Shot: A History of Soft Power and the Cold War (3 Credits)

If you close your eyes and think about war, the first images that pop into your mind are probably soldiers, battles, and military technology—NOT jeans, kitchens, and hockey! And yet, during the Cold War, it was precisely realms like fashion, sports, and music that, for many people of the time, came to define the conflict between the United States and the USSR. This course will explore soft power, or countries' ability to get what they want through attraction rather than traditional force, in the context of the Cold War.

HNUH238A Deliberative Democracy (3 Credits)

How do we change our politics, save democracy, and move beyond the "us vs. them" culture that divides us? This course begins with the premise that how we talk to one another and debate controversial issues can promote the public good or erode it in irreparable ways. Students in each class session will put principles of public dialogue into practice as they learn deliberative theories and skills that can help save democracy. Class readings will turn to historical case studies to frame the most controversial political issues we face today.

HNUH248X My Hometown, Our Wilderness: Ecology of Identity (3 Credits)

What has been the setting of your life? Suburbs? Cities? A farm? We may be used to thinking of environments as equal access across society, since everyone is free to visit our National Parks or spend a day at the beach. But there are striking ways in which identity affects our habitat. Race, class, gender, sexual preference, and other markers have strong influences on where we spend our time, what we eat, and how we work and relax. Suburbs, cities, wilds, and farms are not just physical places, they exhibit histories of social inclusion and exclusion. For example, the money and free time of affluent Americans serves as a portal to leisure spaces that would be inaccessible to working-class Americans who lack the ability to take time off, drive or fly long distances, and pay for it all.