

Explore Honors:

HNR 102 - 001

The Song and the Story: Performance

MWF 9:00 - 9:50 am

Kyle Swensen

"Some days you write the song," wrote Texas singer/songwriter Guy Clark, "and some days the song writes you." In HNR102 - The Song and the Story, we will examine how popular songs tell stories about love and grief, desire and anger, despair and hope. We listen to, talk about, and do research on songs and songwriting with literary and narrative value-written and performed by artists from Bob Dylan to Paul Simon, Chuck Berry to Olivia Rodrigo, The Beatles to Taylor Swift-with the aim of better understanding how songs can be vehicles for story and how stories can be vehicles for songs. HNR102 courses are a blend of writing, public speaking, and honors-related learning. This section will ask you to write papers, perform speeches, and culminate in an April public project. Course assignments will build on and continue to develop skills learned in HNR101. This section of HNR102 is tailored for students interested more in the performative and musical aspects-chord progressions, album sequencing, story structure, narrative technique, etc.-of the course subjects.

First-year Seminars

Explore Honors:

HNR 102 - 002

Narrative Medicine

MWF 11:00 - 11:50 am

Casey Kuhajda

"Medicine," writes Siddhartha Mukherjee, "begins with storytelling. Patients tell stories to describe illness. Doctors tell stories to understand it." Story is crucial for medical professionals. This course will further examine the fundamental role of narrative and communication in contemporary medicine. How do stories shape medical outcomes? How could doctors communicate with patients more effectively? How should aspiring doctors use narrative to their advantage on their medical journey? These are some of the questions we will begin with in "HNR102 - Narrative Medicine."

All HNR102 sections at Northern Kentucky continue the HNR101 curriculum. HNR101 and HNR102 should be thought of as a block. HNR102 courses are a blend of writing, public speaking, and honors-related experiential learning. This course, intended for the Pre-Med Honors Learning Community, will ask students to write papers, perform speeches, and culminate in an April group public speaking project. "HNR102 - Narrative Medicine" will include a week of medical simulation at the St. Elizabeth's Outpatient Simulation Center as well as a visit to the University of Kentucky College of Medicine - Northern Campus. Course assignments will build on and continue to develop skills learned in HNR101.

First-year Seminars

Explore Honors:

HNR 102 - 003

Health Practices Around the World

TR 1:40 - 2:55 pm

Gannon Tagher

Although many people consider the Western approach to medicine the best way to approach health, this may not always be true. Different cultures have distinct outlooks on medicine, health, and what is important to the care of their community members. Throughout this course students will explore the health practices of different cultures around the world.

Students will investigate the five areas known as the “Blue Zones”, where there are more people that live to be 100 years old than anywhere else on Earth. We will delve into cultural health practices and health systems, comparing and contrasting them with those in the United States. Finally, we will learn about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and how they impact health around the globe. Through understanding difference in both health practices and health systems students will learn to take a different approach to both their own health and healthcare as we know it.

First-year Seminars

Explore Honors:

HNR 102 - 004

The Song and the Story: Design and PR

MWF 10:00 - 10:50 am

Kyle Swensen

"Some days you write the song," wrote Texas singer/songwriter Guy Clark, "and some days the song writes you." In HNR102 - The Song and the Story, we will examine how popular songs tell stories about love and grief, desire and anger, despair and hope. We listen to, talk about, and do research on songs and songwriting with literary and narrative value-written and performed by artists from Bob Dylan to Paul Simon, Chuck Berry to Olivia Rodrigo, The Beatles to Taylor Swift-with the aim of better understanding how songs can be vehicles for story and how stories can be vehicles for songs. HNR102 courses are a blend of writing, public speaking, and honors-related learning.

This section will ask you to write papers, perform speeches, and culminate in an April public project. Course assignments will build on and continue to develop skills learned in HNR101. This section of the HNR102 is tailored for students interested more in the technical and design aspects-music videos, sound production, album art, recording techniques, etc.-of the course subjects.

First-year Seminars

Explore Honors:

HNR 102 - 005

Servant Leadership and Civic Engagement

TR 10:50am - 12:05pm

Megan Downing

Servant leaders put people before power, enriching individuals and, in so doing, help to build better communities and organizations. This course explores leadership through the lens of servant leadership and as civically engaged citizens. The course will focus on building community by meeting basic human needs that mitigate food insecurity. Student-driven research and discussion on servant leadership as well as guest speakers and hands-on service opportunities will enrich the learning experience. Students will also engage in support of a local food pantry to build their understanding of non-profit and philanthropic community stewardship through experiential philanthropy. They will learn about the valuable programs the local non-profit offers that build community, battle food insecurity, and exemplify servant leadership in action. The experience will culminate in a student-driven grant award to support the partner non-profit. The grant funding for this unique approach to experiential philanthropy is supported by the NKU Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement and the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project.

First-year Seminars

Explore Honors:

HNR 102 - 006

Parks: Places and People

TR 9:25 - 10:40 am

David Kime

A wise man once said, "Our National Parks are the nation's Honors College." Both feature interdisciplinary topics and methods, utilize hands-on, place-based experiential learning, and promote community service. Since 2007, both NKU Honors and the National Collegiate Honors Council have partnered with the National Park Service (NPS) to offer unique courses and study away programs for honors students. Not only the province of geologists and biologists, the NPS employs personnel and has park sites specializing in telling the stories of history, leadership, civil rights, visual & performing arts, literature, archaeology, industry & business, recreation, and, of course, wildlife & natural resources! This HNR 102 is open to any student from any major or career interest who wants to explore the diversity of our nation's parks, learn more about the operation of and opportunities in the NPS, and who want to research and plan their own National Park adventure! P.S. The wise man quoted above is also the course instructor.

First-year Seminars

Explore Honors:

HNR 102 - 008

Utopia and Dystopia

TR 1:40 - 2:55 pm

Casey Kuhajda

The idea of a political utopia has fascinated thinkers for centuries, from the founding fathers to crypto enthusiasts of today. The term "utopia" comes from Thomas More's 1516 work Utopia. This HNR102 section will begin with a consideration of the concept of utopia and its philosophical and historical roots. It will then move into a consideration of the concept of dystopia. How have utopian visions influenced social justice movements throughout history? How might dystopian texts serve as cautionary tales? Is it true that one individual's utopia is another's dystopia?

All HNR102 sections at Northern Kentucky continue the HNR101 curriculum. HNR101 and HNR102 should be thought of as a block. HNR102 courses are a blend of writing, public speaking, and honors-related learning. This course, intended for the Social Justice Honors Learning Community, will ask you to write papers, perform speeches, and culminate in an April group public speaking project. "HNR102 - Utopia and Dystopia" will include several experiential learning activities TBA. Course assignments will build on and continue to develop skills learned in HNR101.

First-year Seminars

Explore Honors:

HNR 210 - 001

Exploring Cave Science

(4 credits)

TR 10:50am - 12:05 pm

David Kime

***includes weeklong trip to Mammoth Cave National Park**

Cave science is an interdisciplinary field that includes geology, paleontology, hydrology, ecology, zoology, meteorology, and survey and mapping. In this class we will ask and investigate the questions such as where do caves form, how do they form, what are unique aspects of the low energy ecology of cave life, how does weather in a cave differ from on the surface, and how do researchers explore caves and address these questions. Typically, exploring such questions becomes intertwined with archeology, history, and management.

For instance, how does modifying a cave entrance create changes in humidity and condensation in the cave that then endangers archaeological artifacts and how can damage to the artifacts be mitigated? Can cave trail design be used to protect cultural and natural resources? This course will discuss these issues and learn the basics of several facets of cave science in the classroom. We will put the theory into practice by taking our own measurements and data with a series of lab activities during a required field trip to Mammoth Cave National Park during Spring Break. Field trip activities will include long hikes in the cave (up to four miles or more), navigating hills and long stairways (sometimes uneven), and the occasional short climb or crawl. We will be in the cave for several hours at a time each day. All activities are coordinated with Science & Resource Management Division of Mammoth Cave National Park.

The required field trip will depart NKU on Friday, March 1st and return to NKU on Thursday, March 7th. We will be staying in a bunkhouse facility (with full plumbing) operated by the national park and will be collectively cooking our meals. Hiking boots that provide ankle support are required for the field trip. Please discuss with David Kime and seriously consider if this is the experience you want have and that you are fully able and willing to participate in the Spring Break field trip.

Natural World Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 210 - 002

**Viewing Our Natural World through the
Lens of Science (4 credits)**

MW 9:25 - 11:45am

Kristina Bielewicz

This combined lecture and laboratory course will guide you through the natural sciences such as physics, chemistry, biology, geology and meteorology as they relate to how our world works. We will delve into various relatable topics such as laws of motion, thermodynamics, green energy, weather, vaccines, and GMO's. You will learn how to navigate scientific articles with ease and perform simple science experiments with confidence in the classroom. We will engage in fun activities on campus such as a visit to the Haile Planetarium and an interactive campus hike. You will develop and present a simple science project as a small group as well as present an independent research project on the topic of your choice.

Natural World Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 310 - 001

Decoding Artifacts with Chemistry

MWF 1:00 - 1:50 pm

Patrick Hare

This course introduces students to the ways that chemistry enhances the study of material remains from historical sites and objects. Students will consider the intersections of analytical chemistry, history, archaeology, spectroscopy, and materials science as they learn about a range of objects and sites that span hundreds of thousands of years and come from around the world and the Cincinnati area. In addition, student groups will choose both a local object or site to research and a method to share the results of that research. While there is no lab component, students will have the opportunity to spend some time in the chemistry department learning about techniques and instruments used in archaeological studies.

Natural World Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 311 - 001

The Machine that Changed the World

MWF 12:00 - 12:50 pm

Richard Fox

This course gives students to examine computing from a technological and social perspective to view not only how the computer has changed but how those changes have impacted all aspects of our lives. Students will address topics including the history of computing; the use of hardware, operating systems, programming and programming languages; the creation of the Internet; and the development of local area networks. In addition, students will consider the evolution of the computer user and the impact computers have had on society with an emphasis on shifts in employment, computer-related threats, and the rise of social media. We will focus on current and future computing trends including artificial intelligence, the cloud and quantum computers.

Natural World Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 220 - 001

It's Only Rock and Roll, but I Like It

TR 9:25 - 10:40 am

Burke Miller

This course invites students to consider popular music of the rock era and its role in challenging societal norms, promoting social change, and reflecting cultural shifts, from the civil rights movement to countercultural movements and beyond. Students will practice both empirical and theoretical methods to examine the origins, development, and significance of this music within the broader context of historical, political, and social movements as well as its impact on issues of race, gender, class, and identity. Students will develop critical thinking and analytical skills through the examination of primary sources, critical readings, music analysis, and multimedia materials.

Objectionable Materials

Some of the songs and other sources we use in this class may contain profane and demeaning language, prejudices of many sorts, sexual references, violence, and other aspects that may be offensive. Although objectionable aspects will be omitted as much as possible, please consider taking a different course if you are offended by the uncensored expression of American popular music.

Society Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 320 - 001

Community Problems, Real Solutions

TR 1:40 - 2:55 pm

Amanda Brockman

This course will provide a theoretical, empirical, and applied approach to solving social problems. Students will learn and critically apply social theory to social problems of interest to them. Students will also understand the scope of social problems at various levels with a special focus on the community. A key component of this course will be the formation of meaningful relationships with community organizations so that students can not only see firsthand how others are working to solve social problems but become involved in this important work as well.

Society Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 320 - 002

Forbidden History

MWF 11:00 - 11:50 am

Brian Hackett

Join us in exploring some of the taboo subjects of history, things that nobody mentions but almost everybody is curious about. For example, did you know that prostitution was once a legal profession listed in the US Census? Or that the Cincinnati area was once a major resource for stolen corpses for medical study, including the body of the father of a later president? The evidence is all around us! This course will explore these and other subjects, and will culminate in a small exhibit and the possibility of a ghost hunt with paranormal professionals at a local historical site.

Society Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 321 - 001

Screening Rome: How Film Shapes History

TR 1:40 - 2:55 pm

Kathleen Quinn

Students in this course will investigate the medium of film as a reflector and shaper of history. The study of Mediterranean antiquity has long relied on contributions from archaeology, ancient historical and literary texts, and the art and architecture of the Greeks and Romans as a means to understanding how they thought about and organized their world. Today our understanding of "classical" antiquity is increasingly influenced by modern media, particularly film and television which, thanks to compelling visual imagery and engaging celebrity actors, has become a powerful mechanism for storytelling. Ancient Rome (far more than ancient Greece) has a long and storied history in film. In this class we will explore: how film studios have portrayed Roman antiquity over the past 100+ years; how directorial and production choices affect our understanding of the past and present; whether arguments about "truth" in cinematic portrayals matter; and how we can best appreciate the mingling of history with fiction. In doing so, we will (spoiler alert!) learn about ourselves as Americans and about other cultures around the globe that have used Roman history—especially its politics, ethics, and clashes with other cultures—for their own purposes in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Society Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 230 - 001

Book Technology & the Reading Brain

TR 10:50am - 12:05 pm

Tamara O'Callaghan

The advent of digital communications has prompted questions about how change in the technology of the book affects authors, readership, intellectual property, the business of publishing, and even the reading process itself. This course introduces students to topics such as orality and writing systems; book production from wax tablet to medieval manuscript to printed page to digital interface; the development of printing; the concept of authorship; copyright; censorship; the economics of book production and distribution; libraries and the organization of information; print in other formats (comics/graphic novels, newspapers, magazines, advertisements, etc.); readership; and the neuroscience of reading.

Students will explore how "book" technologies influence, and are influenced by, diverse cultures and how reading communities form, transform, and perpetuate themselves. Students will have the opportunity to play with old and new technologies - from goose-feather quills to a vintage letterpress to 3D printing and laser cutting.

Humanities Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 230 - 003

Moby-Dick and the Arts in the 21st Century

TR 12:15 - 1:30 pm

Robert Wallace

Moby-Dick speaks to the needs of our global community more than ever. Will we destroy the earth, the oceans, and today's living creatures in pursuit of power and profit? Will obsessive, narcissistic leaders destroy our hopes for healthy, multicultural human communities? How does A. I. help us decode sperm whale communication? Melville's 1851 novel addresses questions of ecology and survivability, of sexual identity and economic exploitation, and of cross-cultural collaboration and interspecies interaction central to the health and sustainability of life across the land and sea. Responses to the novel by visual artists, performance artists, composers, dramatists, filmmakers, scientists, and several generations of NKU Honors students will help us explore such questions in the novel, in the world around us, and in ourselves.

Humanities Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 330 - 001

Marginalized Kentucky Writers

TR 1:40 - 2:55 pm

Kristine Yohe

In this course, we will read, discuss, and write about selected works—fiction, nonfiction, and poetry—by diverse and often marginalized writers born in and/or based in Kentucky. We will study works by white LGBTQ+ writers including current Kentucky Poet Laureate, Silas House, as well as Willie Carver, author of *Gay Poems for Red States*. We will read and analyze works by some of the most influential members of the Affrilachian Poets (APs), including founding members Frank X Walker, Nikky Finney, and Crystal Wilkinson. We'll also address works by newer members of the AP collective, including Keith S. Wilson (an NKU alum), and Asha French. Some of these writers will visit us in person or via Zoom. We will explore how these writers negotiate their often-intersectional identities—including how Nikky Finney and Asha French are Black APs and lesbians—within a community that outsiders often stereotype, especially regarding race, sexuality, politics, and religious affiliation. We will investigate the layers in the term "Affrilachian" from its origins 30 years ago, when Frank X Walker invented it—fusing "African" with "Appalachian"—up to the present day when APs have expanded to include others in the wider region. We will examine how these artists embrace a range of sometimes-marginalized identities—including Silas House's collaboration with country singer Tyler Childers—while they engage with seminal themes of family, cultural history, social justice, rootedness in place, and more. Students will write literary analyses and make presentations, and they will create culminating final projects that embody a diverse range of forms and approaches.****

Humanities Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 331 - 001

Echo Stories Mapping Our World

MWF 11:00 - 11:50am

Rhonda Davis

This course is an introduction to the many ways the human-environment relationship is expressed. We will examine environmental stories and art from a variety of voices, cultures, and perspectives. Students in this course will also explore the important reciprocal role science and the humanities play in service to environmental sustainability and how that impacts the human-environment relationship. Through a mapping project, that could take many different forms (papers, projects, videos, art installations, etc.), we will also express our own environmental experiences, values, and culture.

Humanities Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 331 - 002

Border States: Real and Imagined

MWF 1:00 - 1:50pm

Casey Kuhajda

During the American Civil War, Abraham Lincoln declared, "I hope to have God on my side, but I must have Kentucky." Lincoln's wry commentary is a reminder of the strategic importance of our own border state during the Civil War. However, this class will expand the term "border states" beyond its 19th century meaning to access global themes. How does the drawing of borders shape life experiences? How are national borders complicated and subverted in the digital realm? What figurative borders do we construct in our heads? How do the spaces between us, shape our social, philosophical, and metaphysical existences? These are some of the questions we will begin with in "HNR331 - Border States: Real and Imagined."

Borders like the local Ohio River shape the life experiences of people who live near them. We are all creations of the maps on which we live. A history of redlining in many American cities means two children born miles apart are statistically projected to have vastly different economic and health outcomes throughout their lives. This inequality is only magnified by national borders. HNR331 will consider how boundaries and borders, real and imagined, shape identity, culture, and history. We will begin by discussing the Ohio River and Kentucky's status as a border state during the Civil War. We will then transition into considerations of international and figurative borders in order to consider how borders dictate the privileges and responsibilities individuals have as members of a global community.

Humanities Cohort

Explore Honors:

HNR 396 - 001

Honors Internship

MW 2:00 - 3:15 pm

Michele Adams

Want experience working in higher education/the public sector?

Consider taking HNR 396, our Honors Internship course!

HNR 396 is a 300-level class that can serve as an honors elective and counts toward your required courses. During the semester, you will: gain real-world experience by working with Assistant Director of Honors Admissions, practice recruitment techniques, strategies for organizational management, and communication skills

Apply these skills to your student organizations and keep them for your future career!

The work in this internship course is project-based and collaborative. Students will be able to develop and complete their own projects and ideas while improving the visibility of the Honors College.

Students who are interested should reach out to Michele Adams at adamsm23@nku.edu.

Topics Courses