Beats and the 60s Counterculture (2 sections)
Kevin Burke

In the midst of the prosperity and social stasis of the 1950s, the bohemian phenomenon of the Beat Generation rose as a challenge to conventional American mores. In novels like On the Road (Jack Kerouac) and Naked Lunch (William Burroughs), and poems like “Howl” (Allen Ginsberg), Beat writers challenged norms of sexuality, drug use, and spirituality through experimental literary and artistic work. The challenge extended to gender and racial norms in the work of poets like Diane DiPrima and LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka). The countercultural movement expanded in the 1960s with the anti-war movement, the beginnings of the women's and gay liberation, and the Black Power and environmental movements. The effects of the beats and the 60s counterculture continue to be felt today in art, music, literature, and film, as well as in current protest movements. This course will examine the cultural upheavals of the 1950s, 60s, and 70s that continue to reverberate in our society today. Texts to be considered will include the Portable Beat Reader, Tom Wolfe’s Electric Kool Aid Acid Test, Hunter S. Thompson’s Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas, and works by Germaine Greer, Eldridge Cleaver, Gary Snyder. Attention will also be given to art and music, and to the writing from the political and social movements of the time. Students can expect to complete several short papers on topics related to the countercultures of the 50s-70s, and a research paper and a multimodal presentation focused on the legacy of the countercultures in our time.

Detection, Justice, Crime, & Blood
John Jebb

This course will use writing about detection and crime as a way to discuss the issues that confront us historically and now – policing, race, coping with violence, just court proceedings. The course will begin with fiction from the history of the crime genre through today. Authors may include Edgar A. Poe, Raymond Chandler, Patricia Cornwell, and Chester Himes. We will also read journalism about actual cases, such as pieces of crime reporting that appeared in The New York Times, The New Yorker (e.g. articles by Malcolm Gladwell), and scholarly studies. For writing, we will begin with short essays about the readings, then move to longer pieces and research. In addition to these academic essays, our course will include the genre of the professional report intended for outside audiences and featuring multimodal design elements.
Social Change & Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (2 sections)
Tori Aquilone

Throughout history, Indigenous peoples and their knowledge have been marginalized in the shadow of white supremacy and Western hegemony. Scholars of the environmental humanities have begun to heed Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK) for its ability to challenge the Western ways of engaging nature, which are often inherently destructive. Students entering college in the 2020s may be aware of environmental issues, but may feel helpless or not fully understand how Western culture contributes directly to environmental catastrophe. This course explores IEK as a valid form of knowledge that can spur social change. The readings and discussions will center Indigenous writers such as Robin Wall Kimmerer, Luther Standing Bear, Winona LaDuke, Gregory Cajete, Leslie Marmon Silko, and Enrique Salmon. Major writing assignments include a nature-relationship narrative, in which students assess their relationship with nature. The class will also include a multimodal assignment, a “current situation analysis” in which students analyze a particular environmental concern in light of IEK, and a research project focused on the visions students have to co-create an ecologically sustainable future within their chosen major through the adoption of IEK.

Patriotism/Propaganda/Poetry
Paula Persoleo

This course will urge students to become part of the conversation between political agenda (i.e., encouraging patriotism through propaganda) and alternative viewpoints. Students will determine how rhetoric can reshape a culture’s ideology, specifically during the Counterculture Movement, the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, and the current worldwide fight for gender equality. Texts will include *The Portable Beat Reader, Words of Protest, Words of Freedom,* and *Washing the Dust from Our Hearts.* Students will also read and discuss relevant essays (including “A Change Ain’t Gonna Come” and “Why Afghan Women Risk Death to Write Poetry”), films, and music that speak to the dialog of protest. Assignments will include short essays that respond to, critique, and analyze the roles of these poets. A10-page research essay and a multimodal group presentation (that utilizes Screencastify) on a film or documentary based on a specific protest movement will demonstrate students’ understanding of the rhetoric of protest in a historical context.
Writing Water
Lowell Duckert

In a word, this writing course is all about flow. But how do writers engage with water’s multiple forms—as vapor, crystal, and wave? From plastic pollution, whale song, and lead poisoning, the subject is truly oceanic in scope. We will look at the various topics that writers cover—including animal rights, community resilience, and the global water crisis. Indigenous, Black, queer, and feminist voices promoting environmental justice will receive special prominence: such as Undrowned by Alexis Pauline Gumbs, “Unmoored” by Stacy Alaimo, and Waves of Knowing by Karin Amimoto Ingersoll. Weekly journaling exercises will encourage your own storying of water, be it at any source: from clouds, rivers, and coastlines, to reservoirs, trenches, and taps. To situate yourself within these local waters, you will use the Coastal Observer App developed by the Delaware Resilience Awareness Project (DelRAP) as an aid. Brief responses called “wetwords” will introduce you to leading scholars, activists, and artists while deepening your critical vocabulary. Ultimately, you will submit a well-researched, argumentative essay that engages a watery issue of your choice and proposes a “wetword” for future study. Since the State of Delaware has the lowest mean elevation in the country, you can expect an experiential learning component involving local environmental organizations. What we will ask throughout the semester is this: how does writing water help, or hope, to change the real conditions of our wet world? How may it usher in better, more livable futures for all aquatic creatures?

The Theory and Practice of Nonviolence
James Burns

In a world seemingly racked by war and violent conflict, there exists an alternative way of settling disputes. Nonviolence has a long (and effective) history in many parts of the world. The class will explore both the secular and religious origins of Nonviolence by examining writings by authors such as Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Leo Tolstoy, and Cesar Chavez. We will deal with those who are committed to Nonviolence as a principle, as a tactic, and as a personal practice. We will probe the connections of Nonviolence to contemporary political movements, such as feminism. We will see how Nonviolence is implemented, including specific examples drawn from different regions of the world. The class will allow us to develop critical thinking about the nature and efficacy of both violence and nonviolence, and discover ways that nonviolence can be employed to achieve meaningful objectives. Students will write papers on the three areas of focus and produce a multi-modal project that designs convincing political posters, culminating with a research project that may expand one of the three with significant research. The main text for the class will be Nonviolence in Theory and Practice by Barry Gan and Robert Holmes, along with other relevant materials from the instructor’s personal experience using nonviolence as a means of political change.
Writing About Work: The 9-5 on Page and Screen
Keerthi Potluri

In today’s economy, work is always on our minds – how to get it, how to avoid it, and how to make the most of it. To understand how we arrived here, this course explores writing about a broad array of work and industries, from finance, to retail, to writing itself. Starting with the mid-19th century and moving into the present, we’ll consider the representation of the modern workplace, ideas of prosperity and economic growth, and the moral and social lives of working people around the globe. We’ll also explore writing on speculative economies and possible futures for work. Covering a range of styles and genres, course texts will include Herman Melville’s short story “Bartleby, the Scrivener,” Studs Terkel’s oral history Working, Nikil Saval’s nonfiction book Cubed, and the recent film adaptation of Aravind Adiga’s novel The White Tiger, as well as several journalistic and philosophical essays by such authors as Barbara Ehrenreich and David Graeber. Together, we’ll think about how writing on work can offer us a way into each other’s lives and beliefs beyond the 9-to-5. Students will write weekly entries in a reading journal, a short personal essay about their own experiences on the job, one in-depth research paper that examines a topic related to the course, and a final multimodal project that can include visual and digital elements.

Protest Movements, Then & Now
Sean Lovitt

Each new generation is predictably accused by their elders of being “idealistic.” Young people’s political desires are routinely discounted as “unrealistic.” Yet, young rebels have often been at the forefront of protest movements that changed the world for the better. In this class, you will study several generations of young people involved in protest movements, from the 1960s to today. We will study some of the authors, writings, and depictions of movements, such as Civil Rights, Anti-War, Black Power, Feminism, Gay Pride, Environmentalism, Occupy, and Black Lives Matter. We will explore these movements through works of different styles and genres, including James Baldwin’s play Blues for Mister Charlie, the 2020 film The Trial of the Chicago 7, Assata Shakur’s autobiography, Edward Abbey’s novel The Monkey Wrench Gang, Alan Moore’s comic V for Vendetta, Claudia Rankine’s poetry, and the BLM documentary Whose Streets? Additionally, you will also have a chance to sift through a variety of independent media--newspapers, films, messageboards, podcasts—that activists have used to express their identities and opinions. Your written work for the class will consist of a profile of a protest movement, a research paper on a topic of your choice, and a podcast or zine.
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Paying Attention
Michael Harris-Peyton

This course joins essential skills of argumentative writing--responsible research, clear writing, and good rhetoric--with a particular emphasis on identifying and managing the needs of audiences, capturing those audiences’ attention, and using that accumulated attention to achieve desired outcomes. We will likewise push the boundaries of your critical reading skills: Knowing when a text is well-written is the first step, but the ethics of making and consuming texts--and especially the fine line between “earning attention” and “sensational clickbait”--are critical in a world where digital distribution and reading habits direct our limited attention to texts without thinking of the consequences of “spending” that attention. The course explores the theme of attention as a commodity that is spent, based on readings like Tim Wu’s The Attention Merchants, Jonah Peretti’s “Notes on Contagious Media,” Michael Goldhaber’s “Attention Shoppers!” and a selection of primary texts, including ads, propaganda, social media posts, and popular-if-dubious “guides” to social media clout. We will work on producing your own arguments and inspiring your gathered audiences to action, i.e. spending attention effectively. Assignments include analyzing rhetoric, identifying audiences, doing ethical research, and content creation beyond the classroom.

Food Access and Privilege
Claire McCabe

Food represents community, culture, and celebration. Yet access to a healthy and dependable food supply is not always in the control of an individual or community. Systems of production and distribution, as well as long-held racial, gender, and class biases, impact access to plentiful food. If the right of every person is to have dependable food supply, then we must understand how systems are affecting the non-privileged. In addition, the ability of the earth to continue to support a large human population is being threatened by global climate change. Join this class for lively discussions about how food systems work, and what policies and actions will contribute to a more just and sustainable food system. Assignments will include short journals and reading responses to texts including a book, articles, and films; short research paper incorporating an introduction to UD databases; a research proposal and annotated bibliography for an in-depth research paper that allows each student to explore a compelling food-related topic. The class will share multi-media presentations (PowerPoint, slides, videos) at the end of the semester that highlight the broad range of research conducted in this class.
When poet and disability activist Jillian Weise read the wildly popular “Good Bones,” a poem that won Maggie Smith national acclaim for its rendering of our flawed world in terms of an old house’s solid foundation, she eviscerated its central metaphor. Why should we understand health of body and home in terms of skeletal composition? Who has “good bones”? Although emerging from the world of poetry, Smith’s metaphor and Weise’s critique reveals the connections between real estate and social justice. In this course, we will read from a range of texts in various genres to examine how the physical activity of building homes intersects with questions of equity, justice, and inclusion. Developing skills in critical thinking and rhetorical analysis, we will consider who has access to renovation, the effects of architectural design and green space on community, and how social justice drives housing code. Doing so, we will not only expand our understanding of engaged citizenship, but we will learn to communicate ideas to different audiences and to conduct responsible research. Assignments will include short response essays, a podcast, and a research project that more deeply interrogates one argument or idea of the course.
HONR 290 sections fulfill a University Creative Arts and Humanities breadth

Stretch Your Ears! Music Outside the Mainstream
Ray Peters
Thanks to the internet, we have easy access to an almost limitless range of music. How do we decide when to listen to new and unfamiliar music? Can we change our musical taste, or are we conditioned to follow the mainstream? How do race, gender, and social interaction influence musical taste? What role do recommender systems and collaborative filtering play in creating musical taste? Are our musical tastes nothing more than a data profile? We will examine music that has defied popular conventions in favor of a distinctive path, from experimental classical music to electronic and computer music to free jazz to punk to turntablism and sampling. We will read Carl Wilson’s Let’s Talk about Love: Why Other People Have Such Bad Taste, John Lysaker’s Brian Eno’s Ambient 1: Music for Airports, John Corbett’s A Listener’s Guide to Free Improvisation, and a number of articles. We will also listen to samples of the music under discussion. Students will write brief response papers, critical reviews, analytical essays, and a research paper examining the creative process in the work of a composer or musician of their choice.

The Art of Medicine
Ray Peters
We will explore connections between the arts and medicine by looking at the patient–doctor relationship, the interpretation of illness, the duties and responsibilities of medical professionals, bioethics, death and dying, and other topics in medicine. Using stories, plays, films, essays, memoirs, poems, and the visual arts, we will examine the many challenges faced by medical professionals and patients as they deal with birth, death, health, illness, suffering, treatment, and recovery. We will study works by doctors and nurses who are also accomplished authors (such as Anton Chekhov, William Carlos Williams, Atul Gawande, Richard Selzer, Oliver Sacks, Cortney Davis, and Jeanne Brynner) as well as provocative works on medical themes, such as Wit, The Collected Schizophrenias, and Stitches. Students will write brief response papers, analytical essays, and a research paper analyzing the connection between medicine and the arts by focusing on an author or artist of their choice.

The Art and Literature of the Spanish Civil War
Susan McKenna
This course explores representations of the Spanish Civil War, that is, both its lived experience and its interpretations in Spain and abroad. Through careful analysis of literature, art, film, photography, and propaganda, including works by George Orwell, Ernest Hemingway, Pablo Picasso, García Lorca, and Robert Capa, we will consider the immediate impact of the war and its aftermath on European and North-American culture.

Letter of Recommendation
Steve Tague
“Letter of Recommendation” is a weekly column or feature in the New York Times Magazine, the Sunday edition. These are short essays, about 900 words, that to quote the feature’s editor, “gives a space for writers to talk about what they love.” On the surface, these essays tend to be about things like, (and these are real examples) pull-ups, Spam, tiny museums and karaoke, but underneath, they are about, respectively, community, tradition, our quirky minds and the release of joy. This is a tiny sample of what you will read. There are a couple of opinion columns thrown in to read, alongside some rants and cultural critiques to break up the semester. The student will write four essays, two of the 900 word essays, a 500 word cultural critique and a 1200 word closer examination of human behavior, but all in the style of the “Letter of Recommendation,” which is, generally, uplifting, even if the “recommendation” is quiet or entirely absent.
HONR 290 sections (Continued)

Ethnomathematics: Art, Culture, and Social Justice
John Jungck
Ethnomathematics is the intersection between art, cultural anthropology, and mathematics. This multicultural course specifically focuses on issues of equity and social justice. Our objective is to identify, understand and appreciate some of the distinctive intellectual and cultural accomplishments of underrepresented groups here and abroad. We will explore how different cultural groups comprehend, articulate and embed beauty within their artifacts, ideas, and practical applications that use mathematical patterns. The mathematics introduced (such as tessellations, fractals, symmetry, knot theory, graph theory, networks, chaos, automata) only assumes high school level algebra and geometry.

Engaging the Dramatic Imagination
Leslie Reidel
Why theatre? What accounts for a form lasting thousands of years? What does it mean to engage the dramatic imagination? What is the unique nature of the dramatic form and how is it made manifest in the theatre? What distinguishes the theatre from television, film, and other mediated performance forms? Working in collaboration, we will explore these and other questions in depth as we read about theatre, see theatre, make theatre, and speculate about the possibility of the theatre in our media age.

HONR 291 sections fulfill a University History and Cultural Change breadth

From Corporate Board Rooms to College Dorm Rooms: Delaware's Court of Chancery and How it Shapes America
Jonathan Russ
How is it that Delaware became America's corporate capital, the state in which thousands of firms both large and small are incorporated? In large part, the answer has to do with Delaware's Court of Chancery, an entity established in 1792 that evolved into the single most important court guiding U.S. business affairs. At first blush, it's something of a peculiar entity; it doesn't utilize a jury in reaching decisions, and it traces its roots to English courts predating the American Revolution by centuries. Its judges base their rulings on the concept of equity that might otherwise be unavailable in more rigid courts of common law. And yet, although the Court specializes in matters affecting corporate America, its rulings have had a profound impact upon the University of Delaware as well. To best study Chancery and its sweeping reach, students will read various case histories from the Court, including Parker v U.D. (the case that desegregated the University,) Gebhart v Belton (which became one of four cases that were combined into Brown v Board of Education in which the U.S. Supreme Court found segregated education to be unconstitutional,) Keegan v U.D. (another case ultimately wending its way to the Supreme Court that established the freedom of religious worship on public college campuses,) and Time v Paramount (the case that dramatically reshaped the relationship between shareholders and corporate boards, leading to a wave of corporate mergers and acquisitions in the 1980s and ‘90s.) In addition to reading landmark cases, students will hear from guest lecturers connected to the Court. Although there will be no exams, students will be expected to participate in class discussions and write several papers.
HONR 291 sections (Continued)

Food, Glorious Food: Challenges for the 21st Century
Rolf Joerger
“Food production must double by 2050 to meet the demand of the world’s growing population and innovative strategies are needed to help combat hunger, which already affects more than 1 billion people in the world” experts told the United Nations General Assembly in 2009. Are we likely to achieve these goals? What are the challenges facing food producers and consumers now and in the future? Videos and reading materials will introduce students in the course to our food system. Food insecurity, sustainability, impact of climate change, genetic engineering, vegetarianism, animal rights, obesity and other food-related issues will be topics to be researched and discussed in this course. Students will write about challenges and possible solutions to problems with our current and future food system and create a video documentary on a food-related topic of their choice.

HONR 292 sections fulfill a University Social and Behavioral Sciences Change breadth

Race and Policing in America
Earl Smith
This colloquium explores the connections among Policing, African American Civil Society, and Urban Space using the lens provided by the HBO award winning series, The Wire. The theoretical frameworks guiding the course are: Intersectionality and the theory of Color-Blind Racism. Using the tools of Intersectionality and the theory of Color-Blind Racism we interrogate the urban spaces where African Americans live and how they are policed using a variety of social science data sources as well as through the narrative account of the city of Baltimore as fictionalized in the HBO award winning series The Wire, which is based on years of journalistic coverage of the city of Baltimore by David Simon. In this colloquium we also explore the origins of policing in the U.S., and its connections to slavery. Finally, this colloquium interrogates the myriad ways in which Black bodies are policed both literally and symbolically through data and the narrative text, The Wire, which offers us a unique and accessible window into our exploration of urban Black America. We will read Angela Hattery and Earl Smith's Policing Black Bodies: How Black Lives are Surveilled and How to Work for Change, Michelle Alexander's The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, and watch the HBO series entitled The Wire. Students will write memos and a research paper, deliver an oral presentation, and participate in community-based learning experiences.

The Health of Our Health
Bryan Townsend
Are we healthy? What does “health” mean? How much of our health can and should be our individual responsibility? How much can or should we depend on making use of publicly or privately funded health care? On access to advanced medical science? On basic nutrition and hygiene? How do we as America—the wealthiest country in the world, and one of the most technologically advanced—compare to other countries when it comes to how healthy we are and how well our health care system operates? This course examines these and other questions, drawing from history, sociology, health sciences, probably some philosophy, definitely politics and public policy, and very importantly from the perspectives and experiences of students in the class. Readings will include ancient Greek and Daoist philosophers; Dan Buettner’s work relating to Blue Zones; the history of the role of hospitals in delivery of health care; and scholarly analyses of how politics influences health policy. Assignments will include brief reflection papers, essays, and a research paper. And class participation, lots of it—loaded with critical thinking, self-reflection, and laughter, which is healthy and which our world could use more of.
Our Ocean Planet
Carolyn Thoroughgood
The ocean covers more than 70 percent of our planet’s surface and yet less than five percent has been explored. However, oceanographers have found some of Earth’s most dramatic features to be located underwater including the planet’s longest mountain chain, the Mid-Ocean Ridge that extends 65,000 kilometers and Earth’s deepest point, the Mariana Trench that is 11,034 meters (almost 7 miles) deep. The ocean is home to the majority of life on this planet, but we have only identified a fraction of the marine species and new marine life is being found with each oceanographic expedition. Marine life has been found to exist in extreme environments that are totally dark, with atypical temperatures, pH, salinity, pressure, and toxic waters. The adaptational prowess of marine organisms is extraordinary and far exceeds that of those living in terrestrial environments. Marine plants, nearly all of which are marine algae, provide 70 percent of the oxygen in the atmosphere that we breathe. In addition, the ocean regulates climate and weather and provides food and energy resources for humans worldwide. Water in every stream or river on the planet eventually ends up in the ocean, and all life on Earth is dependent upon ocean health. More than half of all Americans live within 50 miles of the coast, but whether near or far, our lives are inextricably linked to the ocean. Society’s increasing demands on marine and coastal resources have placed ocean issues at the forefront of public concern. As a result, there are growing calls for improved governance to promote the wise use and management of ocean resources. This course will examine both the natural science and human dimensions of such issues as global climate change, ocean pollution and dead zones, dying corals, overfishing, sea level rise, and oceans and human health. We will learn more about “our ocean planet” through discussions of specific ocean processes and how they are intertwined with human survival and quality of life. Power-point presentations, reports, and videos that present overviews of each of these topics will serve as the bases for discussion and students will be evaluated on their ability to think critically and analyze approaches designed to address complex, multiple use demands on ocean resources.

Confidence and Decision Making
Peter Atwater
Why are microbreweries booming and states legalization marijuana? Why are Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk leading a space race to Mars? Where do spontaneous social movements, like the Tea Party, Black Lives Matter, and #MeToo really come from? These are just a few of the questions we’ll answer as we explore confidence and how changes in social mood shape the decisions we make every day and the events in politics, economics, science and culture that we see around us. Using current news stories and examples from real life, along with Daniel Kahneman’s “Thinking, Fast and Slow,” the class will look at the choices we make and the situational logic that we routinely apply. Students should expect to have their preconceptions of cause and effect seriously challenged and come prepared to explore history in a new light. Four papers with an emphasis on clear, logical reasoning and writing for impact will be required.