

Previous HON 3750 Course Descriptions

HON 3750: Honors Forum

Three credit hours

Leonardo Da Vinci at 500

Honors Forum (HON 3750)

Dr. Nick Wilding, History

2019 marks the 500th anniversary of the death of Leonardo. Around the world, exhibitions will be held celebrating his life. This one-off course will introduce students to the full range of disciplines to which Leonardo contributed, from astronomy to zoology, with guest speakers drawn from across GSU and other institutions. Students will be introduced to the history of academic disciplines, and understand how the modern form of disciplines emerged from the quite different terrain of late medieval learning. Contrapuntally, we will study the changing reputation of Leonardo over the last 500 years, and think about the history of such terms as 'Renaissance' and 'genius,' as well as the psychological and historical models employed by biographers to make sense of this constantly changing figure.

An Introduction to the History of the Book

Honors Forum (HON 3750)

Dr. Nick Wilding, History

Since its first appearance about two thousand years ago, the codex has been the main material repository through which written works have been transmitted. Irrespective of whether we read literature, law, cooking or comics, the content has, until recently, probably come to us in book form. It is for this that we are literate. However, the rise of the book (in an environment of wax tablets, stone inscriptions, and scrolls), its adoption by early Christians, its global colonialization and eradication of other media, its gradual mechanization, and its current digitization, are not necessary or even obvious historical processes. In this course, students will be given hands-on experiential access to the technological processes by which books have been made over the course of their long histories in order better to understand the material conditions under which information has been passed on, across time and space, so successfully. We will write on parchment, make paper, and handle 500-year-old artifacts; we will also think about the history of publishing, of reading, of libraries; we will make sense of the digital turn and engage with the rich interdisciplinary literature of book history.

Oscar Wilde: The Art and Science of Perception

Honors Forum (HON 3750)

Dr. LeeAnne Richardson, English

Nineteenth-century innovations in art, discoveries in science, and theories of self converge in the writings of Oscar Wilde. Not only are Wilde's writings in a variety of genres (poems, plays, short stories, essays, and a novel) entertaining and witty, they also register the scientific revolutions of the nineteenth century that took perception—neurological, psychological, and aesthetic—as their foundation. And as Carolyn Burdett has noted in introducing C19's special issue on psychology and aesthetics, "Subjecting aesthetic response to the light of scientific enquiry was also a means to define and evaluate the goods of Victorian culture and civilization. Issues of power, privilege, and hierarchy were never far away from discussions of beauty." This course is primarily a study of Oscar Wilde's texts, but it is enriched by an interdisciplinary study of how Wilde's comic works register, represent and refract the study of perception. And because perception undergirded some of the most serious issues of his day—class hierarchies, gendered inequalities, non-normative sexuality—we will also discuss issues that continue to resonate today.