

Fall 2026

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Freshman Forum Courses

HON 1081-H01 Honors Forum I Introduction to Honors Education

TH 12:30 p.m. – 1:20 p.m.

This course is designed to help freshmen Honors College students learn more about themselves, the university, and the specific opportunities available through the Shackouls Honors College. It is appropriate for every SHC major and interest level. Students will enjoy dynamic class conversations and interactions. They will explore their personality type to learn how they learn best while maximizing their productive interactions with others. There will be regular visits from esteemed university representatives, introductions to research tools, and opportunities to expand their circle of colleagues and friends for an overall more productive and successful student experience at Mississippi State University's Shackouls Honors College.

Taught by: Kierstynn Hunter, Shackouls Honors College

HON 1091-H01: Honors Forum II

Hail Dear Ole' State: Topics in University History>

W 10:00 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.

This one-hour Honors Forum class will explore topics in University History, with a different focus each semester. Topics may include student life, University presidents, athletics, campus buildings, political activism on campus, and more. A key element of this course will be an introduction to the library and to Archives and Special Collections. Students will learn how to find materials in the library and will have the opportunity to tour various spaces and museums within the library. In addition, students will learn how to identify and analyze primary sources and will create an exhibit based on their archival research.

Taught by Jessica Perkins-Smith, University Archivist, Mitchell Memorial Library

HON 1091-H02: Honors Forum II

MedLaunch: Elevating your Journey to Health Professions and Programs

W 11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

This course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of pre-health careers and the application process. Students will engage in class discussions and short reflections to demonstrate their knowledge of various pre-health career paths and the steps involved in the application process. Students will also explore elements within healthcare systems, including disparities and ethics, through class discussions of assigned readings, written reflections, and a final essay. One of the key objectives of the course is to foster students' ability to self-reflect on their professional and personal development. Through completion of the final essay and short reflections, students should gain insight into their strengths, areas for growth, and aspirations for the health professions. Since the course emphasizes the importance of volunteerism and community involvement in shaping future healthcare professionals, students will be required to participate in a service event of their choosing, to gain an understanding of the impact of community engagement on healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.

Taught by Mary Celeste Reese, PhD, Associate Clinical Professor, Biological Sciences, and Director, Healthcare Pathways Resource Center

HON 1091-H04: Honors Forum I

Mississippi Blues

M 11:00a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

Blues music was a part of everywhere Africans lived in the South, but there was a special type of music known as the Mississippi Delta blues. It has an intense vocal style and strong rhythm that derives from African music. Africans brought their culture with them, their performance practices, and their ways of singing. Enslaved Africans had the field holler and were allowed to maintain work songs because the overseer saw that it made them more productive. Having been forced into this new way of living with the brutality of slavery, it was especially important for them to have some sense of identity and to find a way to celebrate despite the hardships of life in Mississippi. Blues was a form of communication and expression. Blues comes from a terribly sad situation, but the music itself is fun. It makes you want to dance, clap your hands, and sing along. It's feel-good music even though it comes out of sadness. Although the music originated during slavery times in the earlier 1800s, it did not receive the name "blues" until decades after the Civil War – between 1912 and 1920. Recordings in the 1900s made the genre more popular. Later, blues music birthed rock and roll and influenced musicians such as Jimi Hendrix, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, and Led Zeppelin. Mississippi was home to a plethora of blues artists such as B.B. King, Robert Johnson, and Howlin' Wolf. The Mississippi Blues Commission

created the Mississippi Blues Trail of more than 100 blues markers across the state to commemorate these figures and landmarks of blues music. If you make a list of the great blues musicians, most of them were born in Mississippi. This class is a survey of selected Mississippi blues musicians and their music.

Taught by Dr. Robert Damm, Professor, Department of Music

HON 2081.H02 Honors Forum III

Research Discovery in Social Sciences

T 12:30 p.m. – 1:20 p.m.

This course aims to engage students in interdisciplinary undergraduate research and creative scholarship within social sciences. Students will be encouraged to explore, find their research interests, and start developing their own research projects. The course provides an introduction to various research areas within the social sciences, including approaches, ethics, and research compliance training. Students will explore research across multiple disciplines and research centers and discover the diverse resources and opportunities available at State University.

Taught by Dr. Sandra Orozco Aleman, Professor, Department of Finance and Economics

HON 3143 H01: Honors Interdisciplinary Seminar in the Social Sciences:

Harry Potter & Society

TH 2:00 - 4:50 pm

This course will examine how the Harry Potter franchise influences and is influenced by society. Specifically, the course will focus on social identities, social inequalities, social institutions, and social change through the Harry Potter universe (books, movies, fandom, culture). Previous knowledge of the Harry Potter storyline is required to get the most out of this course.

Taught by Dr. Nicole Rader, Professor and Department Head, Sociology

HON 3173 H01 Honors Interdisciplinary Seminar in Fine Arts

Myths, Legends, and Stories: Discovering the Ancient World through Films, Plays, and Musicals

TTH 11:00am - 12:15pm

This seminar course is designed for students to read selected plays and literary works from the ancient world, to watch representative films based on ancient myths, legends, and stories, and to create active research in the discovery of how these civilizations have made, and will continue to make, an enduring impact on contemporary society. Tales of adventure, power, war, revenge, lust, jealousy, and love continue to play huge roles in how we live our lives as a society today and what we continue to enjoy as entertainment. Through class discussions, readings, films, presentations, and projects, students will reach a greater understanding of the significance in the historical, social, cultural, political, and philosophical influences of the ancient world; analyze entertainment values through representative films, plays, and literary works; identify distinct features of film and play productions and the importance of literary works; and participate in research projects as it pertains to a film, a play, or a literary work.

Taught by Dr. Donna Clevinger, Senior Faculty Fellow and Professor, Shackouls Honors College

HON 3183 H01 Honors Interdisciplinary Seminar in Humanities

Philosophy of Popular Culture

TTH 9:30 - 10:45am

This course is a philosophical exploration of popular culture. What is popular culture? How does it function in contemporary life? What relation does it have to our experiences? These are some of the questions with which we will begin the course. As we study these questions, we will use philosophical approaches developed in the course and develop new approaches in order to make sense of cultural phenomena, including photography, online relationships, movies, and more. This semester there will be an intense focus upon *Stranger Things*. We will both use the philosophical approaches developed earlier in the course and develop new approaches in order to make sense of these cultural phenomena. Finally, we will end the course by asking ethical questions: what are the various ways we might interact with, immerse ourselves in, and resist popular culture, and which ones should we choose?

Taught by: Dr. Anthony Neal, Professor of Philosophy and Faculty Fellow, Shackouls Honors College

HON 3183 H02 Honors Interdisciplinary Seminar in Humanities

Science Fiction, 1960 to the Present: Conquering the World?

MWF 12:00 - 12:50pm

The subject of this course will be the history and development of science fiction over the last six decades, a period which has seen the genre gain greater worldwide popularity than ever before in its history. We will read and discuss a wide and varied selection of novels and short stories from the USA and elsewhere, including internationally famous classics such as Frank Herbert's *Dune* and books by Philip K. Dick, Ursula K. Le Guin and Margaret Atwood - but also many slightly lesser-known works that are well worth discovering! A study of science fiction as a global phenomenon, though, would not be complete without also covering comic strips/graphic novels, TV shows, computer games and - not least - movies, ranging from the Star Wars franchise to the dystopian vision of Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*. Among many other topics, we will look at the evolution of Marvel science fiction superheroes from the Silver Age comics of the 1960s to the massively successful Marvel Cinematic Universe.

Taught by: Dr. Matt Peaple, Assistant Teaching Professor, Shackouls Honors College

HON 3183 H03 Honors Interdisciplinary Seminar in Humanities

Why go to College? Issues in Higher Education

TTH 3:30 - 4:45pm

While many have taken for granted the good of higher education in America, others have responded to the time and expense of going to college with questions: Why go to college? How should I choose a major? Is my college degree a guarantee of getting a good job? Should taxpayers subsidize higher education? What is this thing called “liberal education” anyway? This interdisciplinary course will examine these issues and many others through readings in the history and philosophy of higher education, comparisons between U.S. institutions of higher learning and those in other countries, and close scrutiny of the economics of higher education (tuition, salaries, operational costs, etc.).

Taught by: Dr. Christopher Snyder, Faculty Fellow, Shackouls Honors College, Professor of History

HON 2091 H01 Honors Forum IV

Inside Congress: Procedure, Policy, and Politics

M 11:00 - 11:50am

This course examines, from a practical perspective, the structure and processes of the United States Congress and explains how politics play a key role in policymaking. Students will explore the constitutional foundations of the legislative branch, with a key emphasis being placed on the House of Representatives (the lower House closest to the people). In order to provide an inside look into Congress, this class will be co-taught by U.S. Congressman Michael Guest from the third congressional district, which represents Mississippi State University. This course will explain how legislation is introduced, debated, amended, defeated, and passed. Furthermore, the course will show how Congress hold its members accountable. As Chairman of the House Ethics Committee, Rep. Guest will offer a first-hand account on how that unique committee functions.

Taught by: Dr. Brian Pugh, Executive Director of the Stennis Center for Public Service

HON 2091 H02 Honors Forum IV

The Future of College Athletics

W 4:00 - 4:50pm

Upsets in college athletics traditionally describe the shocking outcome of a single game, when an underdog defeats a perceived favorite. Yet viewed holistically, college athletics as an institution is experiencing arguably its most disruptive era ever—a sustained, systemic upset. Colleges and universities now face new challenges stemming from the transfer portal, NIL, legal battles, conference realignment and policy shifts. Honors colleges and programs at ten universities in the SEC—more than half of the conference—are coming together to offer a forum on the future of college athletics. The initiative helps undergraduate students understand the rapidly evolving landscape of the modern game, including legal ramifications, revenue sharing, athletic department budgeting, licensing, sports marketing and journalism. By bringing together perspectives from multiple institutions, the forum offers rare insight into both campus-level operations and the broader, conference-wide forces reshaping college athletics. The result is an exceptional workforce development opportunity that provides students with unparalleled, cross-institutional exposure to the business, legal and media dimensions of the sport. The hybrid course offers virtual plenary sessions in which students learn directly from athletic leaders and experts. Each honors college will also host colloquia focused on the unique sports culture of its institution and provide in-person tours of athletic spaces. Such comprehensive exposure—both within and across universities—is exceedingly rare and equips students from diverse majors, including business, pre-law and journalism, with a competitive edge few undergraduates receive.

Taught by: George Dunn, Assistant Dean, Shackouls Honors College

BIO/PSY 3033:

Introduction to Neuroscience

MWF 12:00 - 12:50pm

Three hours lecture. Introduction to the rudiments of neurobiology. Focus is on basic mechanisms of neuron conductance, transmission, intracellular signaling pathways and plasticity, plus a brief survey of human neuroanatomy, and sensory and cognitive neural systems.

Taught by: Dr. John Bickle, Professor of Philosophy

CO 1503

Intro to Theater

TTH 12:30 - 1:45pm

Three hours lecture. A comprehensive view of the theatre, including plays, playwrights, directing, acting, theatres, and technicians.

Taught by: Dr. Donna Clevinger, Senior Faculty Fellow and Professor, Shackouls Honors College

Quest Courses

Our “Quest” courses are offered every semester and are small discussion-based seminars (about 15 students) focused on Great Books, Big Questions, and Big Ideas. Students will read some of the most important texts from the history of literature, philosophy, political science, art, architecture, and music from around the world. Discussions will address questions such as: What is human nature? What is the nature of the divine? What is justice? What is truth? What is love? What is the purpose of art? and How do we know what we know? Students who complete Quest 1 and Quest 2 and earn a grade of C or higher will receive the following General Education credits: 3 Humanities credits (Quest 1) 3 Social Sciences credits (Quest 2) “S” credit for Fine Arts. (Please note: Any additional 3-credit course must be completed in order to meet total degree hours for your major.)

HON 1163: The Quest Begins (3 credits)

This course examines core texts from Classical Antiquity through the Renaissance. In addition to several short interpretive papers, students will be expected to produce a substantial comparative essay.

HON 1173: The West and the Wider World (3 credits)

This course will examines core texts from the Renaissance to the present. In addition to short interpretive papers, students will be expected to produce a research paper and present their research to the class.