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## MEMORANDUM

TO: All UAH Faculty and Staff

FROM: Harry Delugach, Honors Program Director  
The Honors Council

RE: Call for Proposals for Honors Interdisciplinary Seminars

DATE: March 5, 2013

The Honors Council seeks Honors Interdisciplinary Seminar proposals. You are invited to design an Honors Interdisciplinary Seminar, either on your own or with a colleague, that will stimulate and challenge a group of enthusiastic and highly motivated students. The Honors Program has about 300 students who are eager to extend their knowledge beyond the information and experiences accessible in regular classes. While Honors Seminars are often strongly interdisciplinary, the Council may consider excellent proposals whose primary emphasis is on a single discipline, as long as there is an interdisciplinary component. Honors Seminars allow the maximum flexibility for creative teaching, and they enable faculty members to work closely with talented students.

Proposals are accepted at any time. **Completed proposals** should be submitted to the Honors Program office after approval by academic department chairs. If you have previously taught a seminar and would like to offer it again, please indicate that in your proposal. If you previously submitted a proposal that was not selected, you are encouraged to resubmit it for consideration. Attached is a description of these seminars, which are offered at the junior-senior level, and information on the proposal format and schedule. If you have any questions, please contact Harry Delugach at 824-6451 or any member of the Honors Council. For general information (including a list of previously offered seminars), see the Honors Program web site at <http://www.uah.edu/honors/curr/interdisciplinary-seminars>.

The Honors Program has a limited **instructor budget of \$3,000 per seminar**. If an interdisciplinary seminar is taught as part of your regular teaching load, the Honors Program will transfer \$3,000 to your department for that semester. If the seminar is taught as an overload, \$3,000 will be either (a) transferred to your department, (b) transferred to faculty incentive ("3") account, or else (c) paid directly to you as salary (subject to all regular salary deductions). If two instructors are team-teaching a seminar, each is allocated \$1750 with the same options. Although funds are limited, the Honors Program may sometimes support modest additional course expenses such as books, videos, guest speakers, etc. Indicate these in your proposal. Contact the Director for further information about the budget.

We encourage you to discuss ideas with your colleagues and develop a proposal jointly or individually. We hope you will take advantage of this exciting and fulfilling teaching opportunity.

## **Honors Program Interdisciplinary Seminars**

### **General Description:**

The Honors Program requires that students take at least one upper division course for Honors credit. One valuable opportunity is to promote analysis of issues that cross disciplinary boundaries. Interdisciplinary seminars build on the foundations of general education acquired during the freshman and sophomore years and assist students in developing approaches to knowledge integration. Additionally, the seminars, which emphasize intellectual interchange between faculty and students, encourage students to analyze methodologies used by scholars in different fields. Seminar enrollment is normally limited to 18 students. The seminars emphasize breadth and depth of study and, like all Honors work, enhance the students' communication skills, ability to work independently, skill in conducting research, and competence in developing and defending ideas. Honors courses are thus defined by their methodological sophistication and their emphasis on students' ability for independent inquiry, not by the quantity of assignments, which should be comparable to other upper-level courses.

Interdisciplinary seminar courses are normally scheduled only in fall and spring semester during the academic year, although summer proposals are welcome. Qualified students who are not in the Honors Program may still enroll in the seminar, with the approval of the instructor and the Director of the Honors Program. In addition, the Honors Program may cross-list a seminar with an appropriate course in your department. In general, design your seminar so that successful students will earn three credit hours. The seminars may meet major/minor or program requirements in ways that vary for each specific degree; you are strongly encouraged to identify such potential options for your seminar. The credit hours generated by these seminars will be reported as interdisciplinary hours on university reports.

In order to maximize seminar opportunities for Honors students, instructors are encouraged to design courses that require no or minimal prerequisites. The Honors Council intends that, over time, every college in the University be represented in the seminars.

### **Selection Criteria:**

- Value of the topic in stimulating intellectual curiosity and enhancing students' knowledge and skills
- Emphasis on exposing students to diverse methodologies used by scholars, scientists, engineers, and artists in different fields
- Opportunities for encouraging and stimulating individual student research and independent study
- Opportunities for faculty development (e.g., materials for future courses, research, etc.)
- Novelty of the topic with respect to current state of the art in relevant disciplines

Proposals with a reasonable expectation of internal support (e.g., departmental or college funding or a course release) or external funding will be especially favored; please include your justification.

## Proposal Outline

Your proposal should include the following, but feel free to tailor it to your particular seminar.

1. **Summary**
  - a. Seminar title,
  - b. Semester to be offered
  - c. Courses with which it will be cross-listed (if any)
  - d. Brief overview (comparable in scope to a course catalog description)
  - e. Prerequisites if any (see above)
2. **Instructor(s):** Name(s) and affiliation(s) of instructor(s) and their expertise in the seminar's discipline(s). Vitae are not generally necessary.
3. **Brief outline** of the course, including wherever applicable:
  - a. Concepts that structure the seminar
  - b. Methodologies
  - c. Course goals
  - d. Potential texts or resource materials
  - e. Assignments (papers, tests, reports, presentations, etc.), and methods of evaluation
  - f. If the seminar has been offered before, what changes have you made based on students' feedback and your experience?
4. **Rationale for the value of the seminar** to the students' and the University's academic programs
  - a. Show either (a) a contribution to their educational depth (for major or related disciplines) or (b) a contribution to their lasting overall educational breadth.
  - b. What student and/or faculty research projects could potentially arise from the seminar?
  - c. Major/minor and/or programs in which the seminar may also count for major/minor or program credit (e.g., as an elective in a major)
  - d. How is the topic distinct from any related standard course offerings?
  - e. What other benefit(s) to students, instructors, other faculty and/or the university will accrue from offering this course?
5. **Resources** (other than the instructor budget)
  - a. Estimate of resources (material and financial) necessary for offering the seminar (guest speakers, software, library books, travel, etc.). Note that the Honors Program has very limited funds for this purpose.
  - b. Expected source and amount of internal (e.g., department or college) or external support
  - c. Possible source of gifts or grants to support the seminar (if any)
6. **Signatures** of the department chair and dean (or other unit head as appropriate) indicating approval of the proposal. Please make sure you and your chair/dean are aware of the instructor budget policy. It's recommended that you discuss your plans with your chair and/or dean when submitting your proposal.