# 2019 Scarlet Honors Weekend Class Session Offerings

**Democracy: from Athens to America**
Our country is a democracy—a term we've adopted from ancient Greece, where democratic government supposedly began. In this session, we'll travel back in time to explore what democracy looked like during the so-called Golden Age of Athens, ca. 450 BCE. We'll investigate key texts alongside the material remains of Athenian democratic government, from ballot boxes—some clearly rigged—to allotment machines and the scraps of pottery used to write down names of citizens to be ostracized.  "Who counted as a citizen?" "What were the rights and duties of a citizen?" and "How did democracy function on a daily basis?" are some of the questions we will consider.  Finally, we will compare democratic government in Athens to democracy as it operates today in the United States.

**Parasites, Poverty, and the Social Side of Global Health**
Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) -- including some that are now in the United States -- are mainly parasitic diseases of poverty. Given that these infections represent encounters between parasitic organisms and hosts, it would seem like understanding them would be a straight-forward consideration of biology and species interactions. However, global health problems like these are, in fact, multi-disciplinary problems -- indeed, liberal arts problems -- that require careful consideration of risk factors from a variety of perspectives including the life sciences, social sciences, humanities, and the arts. What are these factors and what role(s) do they play? Together we'll consider some NTDs and the social, economic, and political factors that contribute to our study of, and fight against, these infections.

**Can we detain a citizen suspected of terrorism indefinitely without charge or trial?**
The military has captured an American citizen that it strongly suspects of terrorism. The President detained him without charge or trial so the government could gather vital evidence without having to disclose publicly the evidence or how it obtained the evidence. Now, nine months later, the citizen's family has sued the President claiming the detention is unconstitutional and demanding the citizen either be released or tried for treason. Who wins? Join the debate and see how we learn constitutional law by _doing_ constitutional law at Wabash.

**Protein Folding: Form and Function**
Proteins are important components of cells, and to do their jobs, they need to have the right shape. There are a number of diseases that are associated with incorrect folding, such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and many others. But what forces affect protein folding?  In this activity, we will use a model system to look at the intermolecular forces that stabilize protein folding and to learn about how biochemists study protein folding.

**_Iron Man 3_ behind the Curtain: Analyzing Genre Film**
We will look at some of the basic skills in deconstructing film language in the hopes of revealing hidden subtext underneath the larger narrative. We will look into how Horror and Science Fiction films have historically been vessels for critical speech and a reflection of our true moment in time. Students are encouraged to review 2013's Iron Man 3 before attending the session but it is not mandatory.

**Nanotechnology and the Future of Materials, Electronics, & Medicine**
Nanotechnology remains popular in science fiction books and films! However, in real life, the manipulation of matter on the nanometer scale has become a huge area of modern research. Much of the driving force for building tiny devices and features on the nanoscale is their importance for existing and emerging technologies such as nanoelectronics, microscopic robots, sensors, molecular computing, medical implants that can communicate directly with cells, and a myriad of other applications. This interactive activity will allow you to synthesize gold nanoparticles in a Wabash laboratory and explore their behavior.

**Predicting the Future with Physics**
Using the laws of physics, you can predict the future! In this activity, you will be part of a team that will be presented with a problem for which you'll need to conduct experiments to formulate a model to predict what will happen when presented with a specific scenario. Then all the teams will put their predictions to the test—the winning team will be the one with the most accurate and most precise prediction.

**The "I" in "Interactive": Free Will and Agency in Videogames**
Videogames differ from other media in part because they are interactive. Unlike viewers of films, players of videogames have control over the on-screen action. The sense of freedom and control that videogames offer makes them very well suited to help us think about what freedom is, and how free we really are to exercise control over our actions. In this session, we will play and think about videogames from a philosophically engaged perspective in order to see what they can teach us about the classic philosophical problem of free will.

**Viruses, flies, you . . . and a global decision**
The session will investigate the impact of insect-borne viruses on human health and will weigh the relative merits of potential anti-viral strategies, considering environmental, economic, and cultural constraints.

**How to Read a Page on Comics**
Dismissed once as kids' fare or shrugged off as sub-literate, comics today are enjoying their Renaissance. In 2015, comics and graphic novel sales topped $1 billion, a 20-year high; books like Art Spiegelman's *Maus* or Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* commonly appear in college courses.  In this mini-class you'll learn how to close read this deceptively simple medium, developing special, analytical abilities.

**Robots, Graphene, and Vaccinations: On Determinants of Living Standard**
In this session, we will explore what are the main factors that determine our material well-being. Why are some countries rich and the others not? What may be the reasons that Argentina was one of most developed nations just before WWI, but now is no longer considered a rich nation? Do we know that nations that are well developed today will be among the rich countries 50 years from now? We will focus on the most important determinant and connect it to technological progress. Finally, we will explore what are the origins of new ideas that contribute to improving living standards.

**Good Arguments in a World of Fake News and Echo Chambers**
Today's socially mediated world challenges two aspects of good argumentation: (1) the use of factual information as a starting point for eventual claims and (2) willful, open, and honest engagement with ideas that differ from our own. Genuine debate is difficult when fake news runs rampant and people's digital lives expose them primarily to conclusions with which they agree. This session offers tools and strategies for navigating this reality. To achieve this goal, we will define key terms, discuss the nature, scope, and trajectory of the problem (with participants sharing their own experiences and concerns), followed by a discussion of resources, strategies, and tactics to address the problem.

**"A language made of blood": contemporary war poetry**
Grief, terror, boredom, love, guilt, loss: war poetry uses words on a page to represent some of the most intensely-felt human experiences and emotions. This class considers post-9/11 war poetry written by poets and soldiers of various backgrounds. We will read and analyze several short poems together, with an emphasis on uncovering the range of responses to contemporary warfare.

**Food and Diversity in Latin American History**
This class will trace the movement of foodstuffs and cooking techniques in the region, as a way of understanding historical cultural change. We will analyze recipes as a source for such changes in the region.

**Politics of Immigration Policy**
Immigration is among the most hotly contested issues in U.S. politics. At its heart are several fundamental questions: Who should be allowed to move to a new country and how should they be treated once they arrive? What should newcomers have to go through to achieve full membership in a political community (a.k.a. citizenship)? Are there special circumstances that call for more restrictive or permissive immigration and citizenship policies? In this class, we'll delve into how political thinkers, politicians, and the public have grappled with these questions from the founding of the United States through the present. In addition to looking at what's changed and what hasn't in these debates generally, we'll explore the special case of refugee policy, or immigration provisions for people displaced from their home countries by natural disasters, persecution, or war.

**Going Nuclear: Crafting Disaster Perception by Writing**
Reality is shaped by perception, and perception is malleable. What is written about an event, what is stressed in reporting, and what details are use determine how people outside of an event perceive what happened. This session will examine how this works by looking at the realities of nuclear reactors and the use of nuclear power.

**Digital Compositing: Combining the real world with artificial environments**
This class will survey recent student digital work and explore the process of compositing.