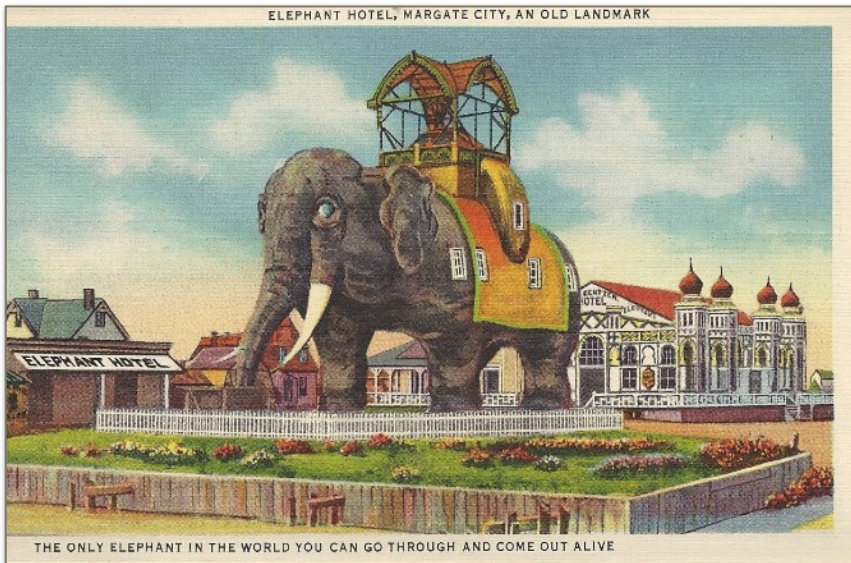


AMERICAN CARNIVAL

Honors First Year Seminar

What can we learn from Americans at play?



Step right up to your first semester at Worcester State! In this seminar, we will explore American culture and history through the lens of amusements: fairs, amusement parks, carnivals, circuses, freak shows, dime museums, and resort towns. While these topics do exemplify *fun and frivolous* aspects of the past, they are worth careful scholarly attention and can be unpacked in numerous ways. Our exploration will take us on a rich,

whirlwind tour through history, images, advertisements, biography, film, fiction, and place; along the way you'll strengthen your abilities to analyze, communicate, and create new knowledge. You will also be introduced to the rigors, challenges, and joys of college learning and the honors program in a focused seminar setting. Your first year seminar will be an anchor of your college experience; I encourage you to make the most of it. 🎪

A WORD ABOUT THE HONORS PROGRAM

This course, along with the other honors first-year learning communities, is a key component of the Commonwealth Honors Program at Worcester State University. You have been invited to be part of one of the state's premier programs for high-achieving students who show great academic promise.



The Honors Center and Student Lounge is located in LRC 218 on the main floor of the library; phone x8467.

The Honors Director is Dr. Nicole Rosa, nrosa@worcester.edu. Contact the program's staff at Honors@worcester.edu.

YOUR COURSE TICKET

WHERE & WHEN

T/Th 1 - 2:15 pm Sullivan 208

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Instructor: Dr. Tona Hangen
(History Department)

Office: Sullivan 327D

Phone: x8688

Email: thangen@worcester.edu

Office hours: Wed 11-1 and Fri 11-12. See Instructor Info on Blackboard.

CREDITS (3*) - Meets your FYS requirement in LASC; also counts as one of your 7 Honors courses.

3 credit class = about 9 hours of course engagement per week. *See course website for the official University definition of a credit hour.



COURSE OVERVIEW

The course involves reading, writing, research and group discussion. It is set up as a seminar, not a lecture course. It is intended to be a challenging course for Honors students. You will be expected to read 50-100 pages a week (sometimes more), and to write 20-30 pages over the course of the semester. You will need to put in consistent effort during the whole term, including with your attendance. You'll enhance your research and writing skills in your written work. You'll need to speak up in class and demonstrate active learning, not passive absorption.

Learning is not a spectator sport and we value everyone's participation. College-level seminar-style learning is successful when discussion involves everyone in passionate, informed conversation. To take advantage of multiple learning styles and to help create a community of learning in this classroom, this course will assess your progress in several different ways. See page 3 for the specifics on how your grade is calculated.

BOOK LIST - ALSO ON LIBRARY RESERVE

Erik Larson, *Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic and Madness at the Fair That Changed America* (Vintage, 2004) ISBN 0375725601

Sara Gruen, *Water for Elephants, A Novel* (Algonquin, 2007) ISBN 1565125606

Stephen Mihm, ed. *The Life of P.T. Barnum, Written by Himself* (Bedford Series, 2017) ISBN 978-1457692062



STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES



In this course, student will ...

- 1) explore and engage in university opportunities that support transition, academic growth, and cultivate a sense of belonging.
- 2) set short-term and longer-term academic and personal goals.

And students will formulate solutions to ...

- 3) solve problems and negotiate within the institution and the world around you.
- 4) incorporate effective time management, organizational

planning, conflict resolution, and deliberation

5) as you explore topics chosen to engage you, you'll develop academic skills and study strategies suited to Honors-level courses in the Humanities, including critical and historical thinking, strategic reading, library research, seminar discussion preparation, and note-taking.

In other words....

This course is designed just for you as a first-year honors student. Through seminar discussion and active learning, you'll come to understand important (and also hopefully interesting and relevant) elements of cultural and history.

You'll write a lot, and learn to write better. You'll help create an

inclusive environment for all students, take intellectual risks, and be an integral part of a collaborative and welcoming learning community.

You'll learn to analyze many kinds of cultural texts and represent your findings in fresh ways. You'll be able to navigate library resources, evaluate what you find there and online, and cite your sources using standard academic methods.

You'll figure out college and how you fit in. You'll explore, set goals, and reach some of your goals this term.

You got this. Let's get started!



GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

College Transition Skills (30%)

Be the ringmaster of your own circus, through projects that invite you to develop strong study and research skills, and organize and reflect on your academic schedule, college and career goals. These include: navigating and communicating on our campus, activities involving career and academic planning, time management and executive functioning, and campus library resources.

Attendance and Participation (30%)

Lots of what we do, we do in class together. Participation implies more than being present in the room: it means bringing your best self, contributing to lively, respectful, and substantive discussion, and taking full part of whatever's on the syllabus for that day. Attendance and participation includes group collaboration, peer review, and informal in-class writing activities.

Analysis Papers (30%)

Short and well-crafted assignments give you experience analyzing different kinds of sources: Wikipedia entry, Historical Visual Sources, Academic Journal Articles, Film Scenes, and

Novels. Through these papers, you develop increasing complexity of thought and prose as the semester progresses.

Final Project (10%)

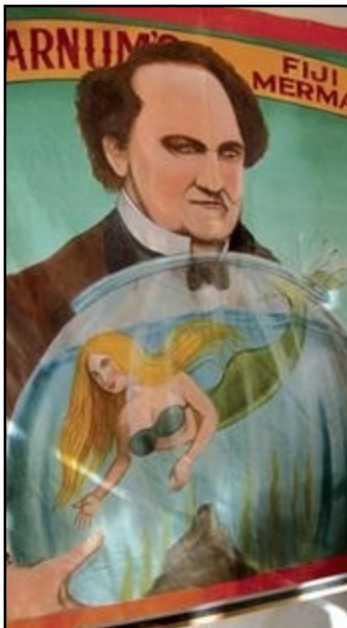
Choose your own adventure when it comes to the final project. Options include creating a podcast episode, writing a short story, or a research paper based on a course-related film. Your final project can be part of the Honors Showcase at the end of the term.

Extra Opportunities We will plan a few optional fun enrichments, including a field trip to the Big E Fair in late September and at least one evening movie night. There may also be chances for extra credit by attending relevant campus events; stay tuned for more information.



BREAKDOWN OF COURSE GRADE		
College Transition Skills	30%	Includes: campus email skillz, attending office hours, academic planning and goal-setting assignments, learning & using academic library resources.
Seminar Attendance and Participation	30%	Includes: community-building assignments, class attendance, discussion participation, group work, in-class writing (Blue Book), giving and receiving peer review / feedback, and end-of-semester reflection.
Analysis Papers	30%	Wikipedia analysis, due Sept 17 - 5 points Visual Source analysis, due Oct 8 - 10 points Scholarly Article analysis, Oct 15 - 10 points Novel Log (Nov 5) or Film Scene analysis (Nov 14) - 5 points
Final Project	10%	Project Proposal (Nov 26) Peer Review Day (Dec 5) and Final Submission (Dec 5)
	100%	

CLASS COMMUNICATION AND COURSE POLICIES



Curiosities: P. T. Barnum's famous hoax "FeeJee Mermaid," exhibited in the 1840's, was actually a mummified Japanese religious object made from an ape body sewed to a fish tail. But it sold tickets!

Course Blackboard

Course information and material and the course grade book are available on Blackboard in the Content tab. Updates and course news are in the Announcements tab.

The Fine Print

- In-class technology: we will be busy in every class session and we don't need technological distractions. Silence your cell phones in class & refrain from texting and social media use. If you use a laptop or tablet (and they're needed on many days), do so only for taking notes or accessing course materials, not for social media or other extraneous use.
- I will review proper citation with you; we will use MLA. Please demonstrate exemplary academic integrity in all your writing for this course, in accordance with the

University's Academic Honesty policy; plagiarism (including using AI to generate your text) is a zero on the assignment and jeopardizes your course grade.

- I honor all SAS academic accommodations. Please let me know if we need to design a solution to help you be successful in this class.

Email: Your worcester.edu email account is your official university email for course and college-related correspondence; please use it rather than a private email address for any course-related communication.

Email is the best way to reach me; I check it several times a day, although I am more likely to answer it during business hours.
changen@worcester.edu
 If you prefer to text, use 617-506-9440

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

Contact the **Honors Program** with questions about honors courses and events, and for academic advising related to honors. LRC 218, x8467

Student Accessibility Services Office is located in Admin A131, x8733, worcester.edu/SAS

Counseling Services can provide confidential assistance in crisis or ongoing support for any student's emotional/mental health. Staff are also trained responders for sexual assault. Office: 3rd floor of Student Center, x8072

Career Services: yes, even first-year students should get to know this office for help with resume, career exploration, jobs, internships, etc. Office: 3rd floor of Student Ctr SC-334, x8941

Your Academic Advisor in your department is a very important resource! Meet with your advisors early and often!



The **Academic Success Center** is the go-to location for first-year and undeclared advising and for help with academic skills. Location: Admin A130, x8139.

The **Writing Center** provides free assistance to all students in areas of research & writing. Location: Sullivan 306, x8112. Email: writingcenter@worcester.edu. For hours, info, and online writing lab, visit the website: worcester.edu/FP-Writing-Center.

Worcester State Library: in addition to its book, journal and reference collection, the library has access to many articles through online databases, and to nearly anything in print through interlibrary loan (ILL). If you hit a paywall in your research, do not pay; work with the reference staff to find another appropriate way to access materials you need; in all likelihood you can get them either online or via ILL without additional cost. Get started at worcester.edu/library

Syllabus = Day by Day Schedule

Check Blackboard and Announcements for latest updates!

Week	Class #	Date	What We're Doing / What to Read	What's Due
1	1	Th Sept 5	Course Introduction + What's a Syllabus?	Get-to-Know Powerpoint Slide
2	2	T Sept 10	A Brief History of the Circus / Alvarez (Reader)	Ring 2 Goals and Questions
		<i>W Sept 11</i>	<i>Club Kickoff</i>	
	3	Th Sept 12	Navigating College Life + Wikipedia Workshop Reading: How to Email Your Professor (Reader)	Email draft
3	4	T Sept 17	Columbian Exposition, 1893 / DWC Part 1	Wikipedia Analysis
	5	Th Sept 19	DWC Part 2	Ring 1: My Fall Schedule
		F Sept 20	Class / Honors Field Trip to the Big E 4 pm - Midnight	See the Circus!
4	6	T Sept 24	Campus Unity Day	G-Form Unity Day Response
	7	Th Sept 26	All About Advising + DWC Part 3	
5	8	T Oct 1	DWC Part 4	Office Hours Visit
	9	Th Oct 3	Photo Workshop + Guest Presenter: Career Services Reading: Ostman (Reader)	
6	10	T Oct 8	Photo Analysis Workshop	Photograph Analysis
	11	Th Oct 10	Library Visit	Library Scavenger Hunt
7	12	T Oct 15	Scholarly Approaches to the Circus / Davis, Putova (Reader)	
	13	Th Oct 17	Film: PBS American Experience "The Circus"	Scholarly Article Analysis
8	14	T Oct 22	ASC Pre-Reg Presentation / Water for Elephants, Part 1	
		<i>W Oct 23</i>	<i>Fresh Check Day</i>	
	15	Th Oct 24	Guest Presenter: Pre-Reg Session	
9	16	T Oct 29	How's it Going + Water for Elephants, Part 2	Ring 2: Midterm Goals Check
	17	Th Oct 31	Water for Elephants Part 3 + Guest Presenter: Research	



Syllabus = Day by Day Schedule

Check Blackboard and Announcements for latest updates!

Week	Class #	Date	What We're Doing / What to Read	What's Due
10	18	T Nov 5	Freak Show: Theory, Disability, and Spectatorship Reading: Adams, Bogdan, Hawkins (choose 2 of 3)	Novel log for WFE
	19	Th Nov 7	From Viewing to Analysis: Intro to Film Studies / Duke Film Studies	
11	20	T Nov 12	Class Screening: Freaks (1932)	Ring 3: Spring Schedule
	21	Th Nov 14	Who Was P.T. Barnum? / Fretz, LB Part 1	Film Scene Analysis
12	22	T Nov 19	"Sucker Born Every Minute" / Storey, LB Part 2	
	23	Th Nov 21	Discuss Rings 3-4 + Barnum Research Day	Ring 4: Future Plans and Goals
13	24	T Nov 26	Barnum Research Day	Project Proposal
		Th Nov 28	Thanksgiving, University Holiday	
14	25	T Dec 3	Final Project Workday	Respond to Feedback
	26	Th Dec 5	Final Project Workday, Course Wrap-Up	Peer Review + Final Project Final Ring 2 Reflection

