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## Honors Oracle, October 1998

Marshall University Honors College

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# Honors News

Marshall University

Vol. VI, no. 2  
October 1998

## Comments from the Chair

This edition of *Honors News* contains a number of interesting features, including stories on the "H-Option" and on Spring 1999 Honors seminars. The H-Option allows honors students taking regular departmental courses to receive honors credit while enrolled in that class. The student receives this credit by designing an enriched course of study with the instructor that will supplement his or her regular work in the class. With enrollment continuing to increase in the Honors Program (freshman John Marshall Scholarships are up 300% in five years), more students are pursuing this relatively easy method of gaining some of their honors hours.

Students can fulfill up to 11 hours of their 24 hours needed for graduation with University honors through the H-Option. All students need to do is pick

up a form in the Center for Academic Excellence. Check out the story inside Honors News for more on this program.

Spring 1999 Honors courses are also discussed at length. Not only does the newsletter contain detailed descriptions of these courses, but two of the instructors teaching one of those seminars talk to one of our editors about the exciting features of their course. Since Honors seminars are limited to 15 students, these three classes are sure to close quickly. John Marshall Scholars in particular need to remember that they must fulfill 4 hours of seminar credit by the end of their sophomore year and 4 more hours by the end of their final year at Marshall.

Therefore, I would encourage students not to delay taking a seminar if

they see something of interest; we can't guarantee that these courses will be offered in the future. In fact, most honors seminars only run once. Early registration for currently enrolled students begins Monday, November 9. John Marshall Scholars need to see me or Ms. Woodward in the CAE before registering, so that we may advise you on your schedule and lift the advisor hold on your record. You won't be able to register without having that hold lifted. As always, we hope you'll stop by if you have questions, problems, or concerns.

Dr. Richard Badenhause, Chair  
University Honors Council 230 OM;  
<badenhau@marshall.edu>

## Honors Happenings: H-Option

Want to get Honors credit hours while taking your regular departmental classes? It's easy. Just pick up an H-option form in the CAE office, 230 OM. According to Dr. Richard Badenhause, Chair of the University Honors Council, an increasing number of Honors students are using the H-option, "because they have found it an efficient way to fulfill departmental requirements and get credit hours towards graduation with University Honors in the process."

Here's how it works. Before the semester begins, any Honors student can bring an H-option form (it's two pages-long) to a professor teaching a non-honors class and design a program that will supplement the student's work in that standard class through activities like outside reading, field research, oral reports, book reviews, journal writing, among many other possibilities. "The beauty of the program," says Badenhause, "is that the student proposes the nature of the supplemental work, in conjunction with

the professor, so that the student can tailor the work to his or her own interests."

None of the other students taking the course are aware that the H-option is in effect, for the student completes the regular assignments for the class, attends all the lectures, and so on. But once the semester ends and the student has successfully fulfilled the basic requirements and the supplemental work for the class, the H-option form gets delivered to the registrar and the course receives the Honors designation on the student's transcript. It's as easy as that!

Students interested in acquiring the 24 hours necessary for graduation with University Honors may use up to 11 H-option hours towards that requirement. Badenhause explained that John Marshall Scholars who take full advantage of the H-option would only need to take one more Honors seminar to graduate with University Honors, since those students are already required by the terms of their scholarship to complete 8 hours of Honors

seminars.

Students have used the H-option for a wide variety of classes, including those in history, biology, english, education, philosophy, management, and political science, among many others. Badenhause warned students to think about what types of activities they might want to add to the class *before* seeing the instructor, since professors are more likely to take your proposal seriously if it seems you have given it careful thought. Also, he continued, "some faculty are unaware of the program. If that is the case, you should encourage them to call me if they have any questions."

### Question of the Month

What is your favorite color? Why?

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## **HONORS COURSES**

### **SPRING 1999**

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#### **HON 196: LITERATURE & LORE OF 19TH CENTURY ANGLO-AMERICAN TALL (SAILING) SHIPS**

**MW 2-3:15**

The period of sailing ships, though long past, has left a unique contribution to fine arts and folklore. This course will explore that cultural heritage, as manifested in literature, music in a wide range of forms from shipboard work and recreational songs to opera, and (incidentally) in visual artworks such as painting and scrimshaw. The writers we will study will include Poe, Melville, London, and Charles Johnson; the composers will include Britten and Vaughan Williams. A specialist in sea lore will be a guest lecturer. Join us in this exciting study, to be among those that "go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters."

Dr. Joan Tyler Mead, Professor of English & Dr. John H. Mead, Professor of Music

#### **HON 294: DISASTERS: THEIR EFFECT ON HISTORY AND LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

**TTH 11-12:15**

It seems that every day a major natural disaster has struck somewhere in the world, usually resulting in a catastrophic loss of life or major property damage. In the past century, many of these natural and man-made disasters have ultimately brought about some type of social or legislative initiative, an outcome that has caused some to note that much of the world is "legislated through disaster." The United States is no less guilty of this process. As a result, this course will examine some of the major disasters of the past hundred years—including the Titanic, the San Francisco earthquake, the Buffalo Creek/Huntington flood, the Coconut Grove Fire, among others—asking the question: has legislation arising from these famous catastrophes been helpful or a waste of time?

Dr. David A. Stern, Professor/Coordinator Safety Technology

#### **HON 481: PHILOSOPHY AND MADNESS**

**TTH 3:30-4:45**

This course will examine the rather precarious relation between reason and madness. Because reason and its tools are employed throughout all disciplines, this course is relevant not only to philosophy but to every attempt to think critically, whether that activity occurs in an analysis of economic principles, political principles, or ethical judgments. We will concern ourselves with two major questions. 1) What validates the distinction between reason and madness; or, from what vantage point may we rigorously make such a distinction without resorting to some form of dogmatic claim resting on the unexamined assumption of the distinction itself? 2) If such a distinction cannot be rigorously made, what adjustments might we make in our attempt to employ reason in the analysis of various phenomenon? In addressing such questions, we will examine texts from various disciplines, including philosophical works by Plato, Descartes, Hegel and Nietzsche; literary works by Nerval, Blanchot, and Artaud; and psychological tracts by Freud. *This course fulfills the three-hour multicultural studies requirement of the Marshall Plan.*

Dr. Jeffrey Powell, Assistant Professor of Philosophy

#### **DEPARTMENTAL HONORS CLASSES**

ENG 201H-201	McKernan	11:00 - 12:15 T-TH
ENG 201H-202	McKernan	12:30 - 1:45 T-TH
ENG 201H-203	Van Kirk	4:00 - 5:15 T-TH
HST 103H-201	Woodward	8:00 - 9:15 T - TH
HST 231H-201	Sawrey	1-3:30 M

**These courses often fulfill many departmental major and college requirements. Check with Dr. Badenhausen for details.**

## Line of Sight: Responding to the Call of the Shanty Man

by Molly Bassett

This spring, Dr. John Mead, Professor of Music, and Dr. Joan Tyler Mead, Professor of English, will lead the students of Honors 196: Literature and Lore of 19th Century Anglo-American Tall (Sailing) Ships on a journey through the tales of Melville and Poe, the music of Vaughan Williams, and the art of scrimshaw.

Ready to make use of backgrounds in maritime literature, music, and art, both professors eagerly await the spring semester. Dr. John Mead's background stems from doctoral research in the 1960's at maritime museums located near ports like Mystic, Connecticut, and Nantucket Island, Massachusetts. Nantucket, described by Melville as an "elbow of sand," became a principal whaling port in the mid-nineteenth century. Dr. Mead's doctoral research concerning the shanties, work songs, and leisure songs of sailors inspired, in part, his wife's pursuit of maritime literature. She stated, "I became really interested in his work."

Dr. Joan Tyler Mead's principal interests in the literature of this time period focuses on narration in the writings of such authors as Herman Melville, Edgar Allen Poe, Jack London, and Charles Johnson. Her contri-

butions to the discussions of maritime literature will focus on the narrator's voice during the "voyage out and the return and the great sea change wrought by the voyage." In her opinion, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, one of the seminar's texts, represents the "quintessential and distinctly American tale," to which her husband added that "Melville's technical accuracy is that of a sailor: when he describes a shanty, it's a real shanty."

Dr. Mead commented that tall ships on which these texts are located, inspire "nostalgia and romantic and heroic conceptions"--contrary to the harsh, difficult reality of shipboard life. She further remarked that since West Virginia is landlocked, she hopes that the "strange and exotic" aspects of this narrowly focused seminar will attract students of various disciplines.

Dr. John Mead will function in multiple positions; he will be responsible for explaining the basic workings and manhandling of the ships, the role of music, specifically of shanties (work songs) in the lives of sailors, and the terminology involved in the settings of literature inspired by tall ships.

The Meads' interest in tall ships led

to extensive travel of the New England coast, and their enthusiasm has endured three decades. They hope that Honors 196 will "start a quest, answer questions, provide a background, open to discussion, and lead to personal inquiry of literature and other related materials of the 19th Century."

Both professors stress the importance of recognizing the containment of sailors' lives, and they hope that literature's demonstration of the close community of the maritime world will reveal to students that these sailors display a cross-section of human faults and strengths.

As the class works together to discover the meaning behind the roles of music, the narration of literature, and the creation of art inspired by the tall ships of the 19th Century, students can expect to gain a vast knowledge from two enthusiastic specialists who are prepared to discuss subjects from feminist interpretations of Melville, to "fakeshaw," to the rigorous lives of sailors.

## Comments from the Editors

Q. Kathleen what's your favorite color?

A. Molly, I like white, which for the record, reflects every color.

Q. Molly what's your favorite color?

A. Duh Kathleen, you know everything I own is green.

Now that we've given you a model for responses to the Question of the Month, **RESPOND**. After last month's deluge (joke) of responses to "What do you like to do in your free time?" we're not sure if there *are* any honors students. Hello, does anyone read this?

Well, if you are reading this, and you feel stressed, we can help. Being

upperclassmen, we feel your pain--exams, essays, obligations, and no clean tubs for bubble baths. Throughout our semesters of experience, we have found solitude, a good book, and an affordable meal (away from the Eurokitchen) nice alternatives to the daily grind.

Executive Director of the Center for Academic Excellence Martha Woodward suggests pairing *The Collected Works of Shakespeare* and Rocco's for a good time. Dr. William Palmer, Professor of History, enjoys perusing his favorite book *A.J.P.*

*Taylor: A Biography* while munching on refried beans at Rio Grande. Amanda Edmonds, a sophomore Communications Disorder major, prefers reading some Dostoyevsky while eating at Calamity Cafe.

We hope these suggestions are the impetus for some stress relieving activities. And remember, if you don't have a favorite book you can always take the *Honors News*.

Molly Bassett

Kathleen Sandell

Co-editors

# Honors Council Appointments 1998-1999

## College Representatives, Faculty:

COLA	Caroline Perkins
CTC	Linda Hunt
COB	Harlan Smith
COE	Paula Lucas
COFA	Reed Smith
SON	Madonna Combs
COS	Leslie Frost

## Two Faculty Appointees:

Helen Linkey (Psychology)  
Dolores Johnson (English)

## Representative of the Student Affairs Deans Council:

Steve Hensley

## Undergraduate Student Ap- pointee:

Courtney Ostaff (JMS)

## Co-consuls of MUSHHA:

Luke Styer (JMS)  
Nicole LaRose (Yeager)

## Ex officio, Voting Members:

Chair, Honors Council  
Richard Badenhausen  
Executive Director, CAE  
Martha Woodward  
Asst. VP, Academic Affairs  
Frances Hensley  
VP, Academic Affairs  
Sarah Denman

## Calendar of Events

November 4 & 5-- SGA Elections

November 9 - 20-- Early Registration  
for currently enrolled students

November 12, 3:30-6:00 PM--  
Fabulous Faculty Dinner sponsored  
by Phi Sigma Theta

November 20-- Last Day to Drop  
2nd 8 weeks course

November 20, 6:00 PM-- Residence  
Halls close for Fall Break

November 29, 12:00 PM--  
Residence Halls Open

November 30-- Deadline for Honors  
Domestic and International Study  
Scholarships

November 30-- Deadline for 1999/  
2000 Faculty Honors Course Proposals

December 2 - 8-- Dead Week

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Center for Academic Excellence  
Honors Program  
Old Main 230  
Huntington, WV 25755-2160

Francis Hensley  
Academic  
Affairs