Events

Wesson Weekend Update

Professors Lynn Garrioch and Patrick Anderson met with the first annual Wesson Weekend group Wednesday, March 22 to plan and discuss an impressive itinerary. Electronic plane tickets have been purchased, and hotels have been confirmed; all that remains is the packing of the bags!

The group will leave Wednesday, April 6 for over seven hours of plane rides to arrive safely in Seattle, Washington. Over the course of the weekend, the group will walk to Pioneer Square and take the underground walking tour of the village, discover the Japanese Garden, visit the Burke Museum while exploring the campus of the University of Washington, and enjoy an ethnic dinner. And that’s just day one!

The Experience Music Project, the Space Needle, a boat ride and tour of Blake Island and Tillicum Village, the Seattle Asian Art Museum, and even an afternoon tour of the Museum of Pop Culture are all part of the proposed schedule. And there’s hopefully room for more before the return flight home Sunday, April 10.

The flowers will be in bloom in Seattle, and the group hopes for the generally warm and pleasant weather this time of year. The group as a whole will document the entire trip, packing cameras and tape recorders, as well as essential journals and note books to bring home questions for critical thinking. The group will present their experiences of Seattle on Senior Scholar’s Day, April 27.

Take a study break...mark your calendar!

4/12
The Art of Rock - History of rock & roll through posters.
Music Historian: Paul Grushkin
Ware Campus Center
8:00 pm

4/13
Human Rights Watch Film Series: Deadline
Ware Campus Center
7:00 pm

4/13 - 4/16
11th Annual NH Clothesline Project: Break the Silence
Mercer Hall

Coordinator’s Nanosecond

How do we measure, name, and recognize seasonal change? When, in fact, do the seasons change?

Do our American culture’s sanctioned markers – New Year’s Day, Martin Luther King Day, President’s Day, Memorial Day, the 4th of July, Labor Day - employ our memory to describe seasonal change? Enough questions. In New England, as we anticipate the seemingly endless and fickle passage of winter into spring, I have an idea – a strategy and a challenge. Rather than measuring our lives in T. S. Eliot’s proverbial and proscribed “coffee spoons,” or the iconic Farmer’s Almanac’s gloomy predictions, let’s identify and invent thresholds and in-between moments that can transport us between familiar moments and unpredictable changes and allow us to imagine new paths, new seasons. I’m imagining going to Antarctica for inspiration and adventure. Anyone want to join me?

Thomas Pynchon, the novelist, wrote: “You wait. We all have an Antarctica!” Hello, terra incognita. - Ann Page Stecker

Happenings in the Classroom

The Coming of Age Narrative

With a little less than six weeks left to the spring semester, the sophomore seminar “The Coming of Age Narrative” has divided itself into three charrettes to become resident experts on three “staggering” books. The three groups are each entitled to one week to lead discussions and activities on one of the three texts: Dave Eggers’ A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius, Helen DeWitt’s The Last Samurai, and Maxine Hong Kingston’s The Woman Warrior. These texts explore central questions about the meaning of human experience and the coming of age in a variety of social, cultural, political and historical settings. In laymen’s terms: who and what comes of age and how? The charrettes will present three key issues from the texts (one per class period) that raise the course’s central question. Ann Page Stecker hopes the students will learn to “employ the habit of close reading of texts and identifying individual methods and conventions of thought and expression in each one, as well as to practice the discipline of enlarging, deepening, and reshaping accounts of individual student’s experience informed by the texts studied and the courses taken since the first year pathway.”

Philosophy in Literature

Since the break, we’ve moved from reading Robert Musil’s The Man Without Qualities to reading shorter works of fiction, including 20th century French writer Marguerite Duras’ The Square and 18th century French encyclopedist Denis Diderot’s Rameau’s Nephew. Both texts are written in a dialogue format and emphasize the conversational aspect of philosophy. Some of the topics we’ve covered include the relation of hunger to conversation, the importance of others’ recognition in developing one’s personhood, the role of the nanny in child rearing, and the value of morality in considerations of happiness. In the weeks to come, we’ll be reading 20th century Czech writer Milan Kundera’s Slowness and selections from emerging Thai-American writer Rattawut Lapcharoensap’s Sightseeing. Just before the break, we viewed Hiroshima, Mon Amour (with a screenplay by Marguerite Duras); earlier in the year, we viewed Run Lola Run (raising questions about reality and possibility, a central theme in Musil’s text). The course continues to be held as a seminar, with students making presentations and participating in discussions.

- Professor Craig Greenman

Senior Scholar’s Day April 27

Wesson Honors Program seniors look forward to Senior Scholars Day, April 27:

“T"he Wesson Honors Program has helped me create my capstone, so I’m not so focused just on Community and Environmental Studies...It’s kind of all encompassing and really not so narrowly focused.”

Jenni Brashileu, Community and Environmental Studies

“T”he Honors Capstone has done just that: put a ‘cap’ on my education. It’s helped me solidify a lot of the stuff I’ve learned over the years about child development in general. My contract involves me going above and beyond what the normal requirements would be in the capstone class by writing a paper and presenting it on child abuse and neglect intervention.”

Shahnaz Naeem, History, Society and Culture

“I decided to do the honors contract and did it with an independent study I had started last semester on the Arabic language. Through the honors contract I was able to add a lot more onto it and make it more interdisciplinary. Through this honors contract I look forward to letting people know what I found out about Islam.”

Who’s Who in the Honors Program?

The Wesson Weekend Group

Since the applications to participate in the four-day trip to Seattle proposed by Professors Anderson and Garrioch and funded by the Honors Program. We are pleased to announce the inaugural weekend group and look forward to learning from their experiences:

Sarah Dow; Psychology and Child Development ’07

Cheri Owens; Psychology ’05

Chad Nussinow; Psychology ’06

Tim Bradley; Communications Studies ’05

Kathy Corr; Graphic Design ’07

Gwen O’Neil; Psychology ’05

Christelle Kamaliza; Business Administration ’08

Kate O’Neill; English and Education ’07

Congratulations! Travel well Wesson Honors Scholars!”

Photo courtesy of Admissions