

## Model Curriculum Overview: UMass Commonwealth Honors College

<https://www.honors.umass.edu/academics/courses/honors201h>

Commonwealth Honors College encourages students to develop broad perspectives and engage in deep analysis through its four-year curriculum, which is comprised of **Breadth of Study (General Studies)** and **Depth of Study (Advanced Scholarship)**.

- **Breadth of Study (General Studies)** is designed to overlap with university General Education requirements as well as to provide common course experiences for all honors students.
- **Depth of Study (Advanced Scholarship)** is traditionally undertaken during junior and senior years and emphasizes deep engagement in the student's major (Departmental Honors) or in two or more areas of academic interest (Multidisciplinary Honors). The Honors Thesis or Project is the central component of honors work in the senior year and is required to complete the Depth of Study component of the curriculum.

### **Two special courses are required for all Commonwealth Honors College students:**

Honors 201H, Ideas That Change the World; and [Honors 391AH, Topics](#). In combination, these courses are designed to encourage a spirit of critical inquiry and an appreciation for voices that have impacted humanity.

Honors 201H is a 4-credit honors course that also fulfills an Interdisciplinary General Education requirement. In this class, students examine the works of W.E.B Du Bois, Rachel Carson, and the film *Citizen Kane* (supplemented by others) and the impact these major thinkers had on the world. This course is broken down into four units focused around one common text (book, work of art, film, performance, etc.). Honors 201H is intended to challenge students to think critically about our world and the profound ideas that shaped it. A close connection is maintained in the course between the concept of the historical innovator and the concept of the student as potential creator.

### **This course addresses questions such as**

1. Why do some ideas become influential?
2. What social conditions tend to foster creative thinking?
3. Under what circumstances can creativity transform societies?
4. Across disciplines, what do innovators have in common?

### **Important Links:**

[Faculty Lecture Video](#)

[Book Selections](#)

[Instructor Resources](#)