Independent Cross-Cultural Readings: Did you know that the Chinese discovered America in 1421? Were you aware that the Hindus’ invention of the zero enabled the mathematical calculations that the entire world is dependent on today? That the Algonquin Indians provided the British Navy with quinine that allowed them to conquer the Indian sub-continent, a lynchpin of the British Empire? We are said to be living in an increasingly globalized world, but people from far-flung cultures have been interacting and influencing one another since the Egyptians influenced the Greeks. Such phenomena as the Phoenecian ocean voyages to the British Isles, trade routes like the Silk Road, Alexander’s conquest of India, the Islamic rescue of Greek Philosophy, and the (re) Discovery of New Worlds seem to point to hundreds if not thousands of years of ‘globalization’.

This course is an independent readings course designed to center on cultural interactions, perhaps in some cases even cultural clashes. It seeks to bridge the gap from this years’ freshman Western Traditions to next years’ Non-Western traditions sequence by exposing students to some interesting and accessible texts that highlight some surprising or unusual cultural interactions. Students will choose titles from a list of recommendations from faculty concerned with the subject, or submit titles for approval, themselves. Students will discuss the works with faculty on-line or in one on one sessions and submit an in depth analysis of a book for one-hour of credit. The process may be repeated for up to 3 hours credit. The Honors College will provide funding to support for 1 hour of credit.

Human Sexual Behavior Across Historical Periods and Cultures: A Natural History: This course is designed to help you learn to think and write critically about the history of human sexuality across cultures. We will also focus on the cross-cultural aspects of human sexuality in the present day, worldwide. We will be examining both scientific and popular culture literature. Popular culture media will be important in this course, as it is often the most accurate source of information on current and past societal trends within the area of human sexuality. It is expected that all students will welcome the chance to explore topics that may have, in the past, been associated with some level of discomfort. We will be examining these topics in-depth, in a seminar course setting.