Fall 2005 Sophomore Roundtable Seminars

**SYE 250.01 Science and Politics of Desserts and Drugs**
*Thomas Antonio Friday 9:00 to 11:50*

All life depends on plants, but some plants provide only addictive substances. We will discuss the reproductive biology, biogeography, and environmental politics of some of the world’s most beloved plants. Chocolate, coffee and sugar along with the opium poppy, cannabis and cocaine have had profound historical and environmental effects on the planet. Each of these plants requires significant amounts of hand labor for harvesting. Sugar subsidies contribute to the damage of Florida’s Everglades and child / slave labor is again associated with the harvesting of chocolate. With so little nutritional value provided, how have these plants come to dominate our social fabric? Grown primarily in underdeveloped countries, the vast markets for the final product are the overdeveloped countries.

**SYE 250.02 Clothing as Metaphor**
*Cheryl Odom Friday 9:00 to 11:50*

This class will investigate how clothing style is affected by historic events, philosophy, and art. The teacher will choose several examples from history in order to demonstrate these phenomena. Students will then be led in choosing their own different period and making an in class presentation including visual examples. Research techniques and logical thinking will be emphasized as well as methods of presentation style.

**SYE 250.03 Economic Ideas that Changed the World**
*Ali Arshad Thursday 12:30 to 3:20*

In this course we will survey economic ideas that have impacted institutions, history and human relationships. Thinkers such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Karl Marx et al will be discussed.

**SYE 250.04 Cabinet of Wonder**
*Ligia Bouton Friday 1 – 3:50*

Throughout history, the human race has aspired to know and possess the unexpected, the abnormal, and the awe inspiring. Divided into three main sections The Collection and Desire, The Collection and The Institution, and The Collection and The Body
class will explore the psychological, historical, and social implications of the act of collecting and displaying objects and artifacts. Visits to local resources such as the Museum of International Folk Art will be combined with a close examination of the works of artists and writers who have incorporated issues of taxonomy into their creative practices. Students will be expected to write extensively on a variety of related subjects and will ultimately compile their compositions into a cohesive anthology. In addition, each student will spend the semester creating their own collection and will be required to appropriately display their compilation in a class exhibition.
This class is about the politics and the social movements of the 1980’s. In 1981, Ronald Reagan was inaugurated as president, and the country experienced a significant move to the right. Why was Reagan elected? What were the policies he promoted? And what was the social response to the “Reagan Years?” Political shifts should be understood in a broader economic and cultural context. What was going on culturally and technologically in the eighties? What structural economic transformations brought terms like “downsizing” and “outsourcing” into common everyday language? What new tactics did social movement organizations like ACTUP and Operation Rescue contribute to the political process? Finally, how do the policies enacted in the 1980’s shape the world we live in today? In this Roundtable students will learn about the policies, the political economy, and the social movements that emerged in the 1980’s in order to address these questions.