**Syllabus for IDH2930, Spring 2018**
(Un)Common Read: *Dune*  **by Frank Herbert –** Winner of Both the Nebula (1965) and Hugo (1966) Awards for Best Science Fiction Novel

**Credits:** 1 ; **Instructor:** Greg Stewart
**Writing or Math Req:** None
**Gen Ed:** None. Student assignments and expectations: meet once per week/present a topic during the second half of the course with a two page, single spaced writeup one week prior.

Frank Herbert’s Dune won the Hugo award for best novel in 1966 as well as the first Nebula award. Dune is among the best-selling science fiction novels in the world (12 million copies sold to date) and had enormous influence on the entire genre of science fiction. It has been stated that Star Wars would not have been possible without it.

Student Assignments: At first meeting, agree at what pace we should read the book (divided into 10 weeks or, more optimally, within the first eight weeks.) Meet each week for 50 minutes to discuss, as the book is being read, what insights students are finding into issues which interest them. Three possible examples:

Can the human race evolve via conscious effort? Is the eventual triumph of good over evil in Dune foreordained, or merely at the author’s whim? What does Star Wars owe to Dune?

After the book is at least 50% read, each student picks a topic to discuss for 15 minutes with 10 minutes of group discussion afterwards, with two topics/class. They distribute a (minimum) two page, single spaced summary of what they will say 1 week prior.

Professor Stewart, a physicist, likes to read science fiction and has read almost every book ever published by Frank Herbert. If pressed, he would admit that Dune is by far and away the best.