Following its spring pilot, this new honors course, “How the ‘60s Changed America,” is being expanded. Each week, a different faculty expert speaks on a different topic such as medicine and health care, the Civil Rights Movement, marketing and the consumer, the Women’s Movement, environmentalism, student activism, and the Space Program with special speaker NASA astronaut Cady Coleman (Colonel, USAF, ret.) (‘91 alum).

The objective of the course is to provide a common experience for Commonwealth Honors College students in their junior year. While recognizing that by the junior year students will be working in a wide variety of disciplinary areas, an interdisciplinary course like this helps honors students at the preliminary stage of thinking about a culminating senior thesis, project or capstone to experience a variety of topics and approaches that can lead to the development of their own senior culminating experience.

Why the 1960s? Many of the things we accept as modern social, political, artistic and scientific movements have their roots in the 1960s. By reviewing the historical record of changes in the 1960s, students will see how interactions across groups and fields of endeavor propel or retard progress, be it social, political, scientific or artistic. Viewing change as a complex system of dynamics will help students understand current issues in areas like racial identity and tension, political polarization, economic inequality, and scientific progress.

Carrying a Gen Ed SBU designation, this course may be used by students to fulfill either a Gen Ed honors course requirement, or for students in the Multidisciplinary Honors track, the any-level or 300-level-or-higher honors course requirement. Lectures are on Wednesdays from 4 to 5:30, with an additional discussion section at various potential points in the week.