

First Year Seminars

Spring 2022

As of 1/13/22

FYS 100-01 (20342) TTh 8-9:50 **Indigeneity and the Arts [in person]**

(Lawrence)

This course explores expressions of indigeneity through arts such as storytelling, literature, films, images, dance performance and objects, including the impact of climate change on Indigenous cultures in a contemporary society.

FYS 100-02 (20343) MW 8-9:50 **Leadership Study Through the Biography [in person]**

(Kunkel)

This course will examine aspects of leadership primarily through the study of biographies and biographical portraits. The class will explore qualities of various leaders through online sources, print and media. For final projects, students will conduct research as well as read a biography of their choice and share a profile of their subject based on their original research.

FYS 100-03 (20861) MW 8-9:50 **Sex Rights, Sex Wrongs [in person]**

(Edelman)

When it comes to sex, sexuality, and even gender, how do we know what is ‘right’ versus what is ‘wrong’? The legal system, our families, schools, and our communities all have a hand in telling us what we are to think about or do with our bodies. In this course we explore how gender, sex and sexuality-specific ideologies shift and morph over time, as well as how they broadly impact and structure our lives in important ways. We will explore these complex topics through a diverse selection of theoretical and ethnographic texts as well as through films, zines, and graphic novels.

FYS 100-04 (21099) TF 12-1:50 **Drawing Our Stories [hybrid]**

(Ramos)

In this First Year Seminar, students will explore the graphic novel as a powerful medium to express and discuss difficult, tragic, and, sometimes, personal issues. We will look at various capacities of the graphic novel—a recording of family history, autobiography, and journalism. While covering a number of themes, we will focus on the Holocaust, societal change through the Iranian revolution, war journalism in Bosnia, and the complexities of family dynamics and identity. In addition to reading and analyzing graphic novels, students will create their own graphic stories. Drawing experience and artistic skills are not at all required (as your professor will repeatedly demonstrate!); curiosity and an interest in reading graphic novels are strongly suggested.

FYS 100-05 (20862) MW 10-11:50 **But I Must Politely Disagree [online synchronous]**

(Molloy)

This seminar offers opportunities to explore new ideas and different ways to think about diverse topics. Topics like... how to allocate scarce healthcare resources during public health emergencies (e.g., who gets a ventilator when we don’t have enough) examined through the consumer lens, the disabled or aged person lens, or that of the healthcare provider/administrator. Through writing, discussion, and self-reflection, students will evaluate how to choose reputable sources upon which to base their ideas and shape their thinking and how to communicate with one another about ideas they may not agree with. Students will work in small groups reviewing articles about different topics from multiple perspectives and will present their ideas to other student groups using principles of effective intergroup communication.

FYS 100-06 (20863) TTh 10-11:50 **From *Star Trek* to *Star Wars*: Understanding Your World Through Science Fiction [in person]**

(Allard)

Who doesn't like a good sci-fi show, movie or book? Yet science fiction can be much more than entertainment: through utopian or dystopian visions of humanity, science fiction often offers a social commentary on human nature, culture, history as well as current political issues. By reimagining worlds and futures, science-fiction asks important anthropological and archaeological questions: what does it mean to be human? How do we, as people, make sense of the world around us? How do we create difference? In this first year seminar, we will explore how various science-fiction media (books, tv-shows, movies, video games) tackle and reimagine contemporary issues. We will examine themes such as the construction of difference through the concept of "aliens," climate change, identity politics (class, gender, race, sexuality), religion, immigration and more. For example, what do cyborg and Artificial Intelligence (AI) characters tell us about current human concerns and relationship with technology? How are gender and race portrayed in popular sci-fi? What can we learn from science fiction to improve the world that we live in? We will read important science fiction works, view relevant tv-show episodes and movies, and engage in discussion and in-class activities, ultimately with the goal of learning more about ourselves as people. You do not need to be a sci-fi fan to take this course, but it will help if you are familiar with, and interested in, the genre.

FYS 100-07 (20344) TTh 10-11:50 **Leaving a Trail Where There is No Path: Anyone Can Lead [in person]**

(Urda)

Leaders are mostly thought of in terms of politics and business. But everyone has the potential to lead, regardless of their official status. Anyone may benefit from learning what makes leaders effective and how you can do it, too. Leadership is used in captaining sports teams, presiding over student groups, running departments, heading families, guiding religious followers, and teaching students. Topics include current leadership theories, personality, emotional intelligence, sources of power, ethical use of power and authority, and other leadership topics that have both personal and professional applications.

FYS 100-08 (20859) MTh 12-1:50 ***Hamilton* Analyzed: History, Race, Art, and Society [in person]**

(Miller)

In recent years, the musical *Hamilton* has become a national phenomenon with great popularity as a play, film, and soundtrack. This FYS course explores *Hamilton* as a cultural artifact that can reveal much about American society and perceptions and understandings of history, race, and art. Students will examine and discuss a wide variety of popular commentary and academic scholarship on themes and aspects of *Hamilton*, such as how the musical shapes people's understanding of the history of the American Revolution, the impact of having people of color represent American "founding fathers," the influence of Hip Hop as a musical genre in the play, and the role of the audience in popular culture. Students will also write their own research paper on a theme or topic related to the musical. Throughout the semester, as students analyze *Hamilton*, they will gain experience in important academic skills of critical thinking, reading, research, writing, and discussion.

FYS 100-09 (20350) MTh 12-1:50 **Critical Issues in American Education [in person]**

(Kunkel)

This seminar studies critical issues in 21st century public schools. Through an examination of (at least) two sides of more than 15 critical issues facing American education today, this course teaches dialectic reasoning – or how to find the third option from two opposing sides. Together, we will explore issues important not only to today's youth, but to the future of our education system. Issues include gender and schools, equity in school funding, affirmative action, critical thinking, multicultural education, national curriculum, values, standardized testing, academic freedom, and school violence (among others).

FYS 100-10 (20347) MW 2-3:50 **Language and Gender [online synchronous]**

(Basile)

This course will explore the concept of gender as a social construct, and how men and women use language to reflect cultural expectations of masculinity and femininity. It also discusses current socio-cultural approaches to human identity beyond the traditional binary gender classification. Students will analyze a varied of materials that illustrate how we perform our gendered identity through language, and provide a critical discussion of theories of this interdisciplinary field of study.

FYS 100-11 (20348) MW 10-11:50 “¿Dónde está mi gente?” **Latinx Culture in the U.S. [in person]**

(Ramirez)

Language of instruction: Spanish

Assignments can be completed in English or in Spanish

This seminar is an invitation to explore, celebrate, question, and reimagine Latinx culture in the U.S. We will discuss novels and songs, films and *telenovelas*, works of art and poems. We will read and debate about what it means to be Latina/o. Or is it Hispanic? Or Latinx? We will also learn some history. How did Latinx people arrive in the U.S.? Did they arrive? We will tell stories, hear stories, and reflect on the powers and limits of storytelling. Finally, we will talk about the future, about the challenges and opportunities lying ahead for *la comunidad latina*.

FYS 100-12 (20865) MW 4-5:50 **The State Where You Live: Rhode Island’s Secrets [in person]**

(Schneider)

Have you ever asked why is my street named after a person? Why do some family names appear all over, for example, Williams, Slater or Waterman? What do the old churches, buildings, or cemeteries in my town reveal about its heritage? This course exposes students collectively to the story of the smallest state in the union through its historic sites. These include larger places like Slater Mill and Fort Adams, but also smaller museums and historic houses, which will be introduced through reading their literature, exploring their websites, and listening to presentations by on-site managers. Each student will have the opportunity to explore their home town or neighborhood for its history. This semester-long project will culminate in an oral presentation and a written report.

FYS 100-13 (20349) MW 6-7:50 **Performance in the First Person [in person]**

(Pennell)

This class will explore a variety of methods of research, personal narrative/memoir writing, and storytelling. It will include theatrical exercises and methods for presentation tapping into your creativity and confidence building. The course will culminate in final class presentations.

FYS 100-14 (22003) TTh 8-9:50 **Technological Design and Innovation [in person]**

(McLaughlin)

Technology! We are surrounded by it, but do we understand it? Technology is one of the greatest liberating forces in human history. We are consumers of technology without equal, but we have a certain lack of knowledge about the materials and processes used to make the things we use daily. During this seminar, we will research historical technological design and innovations that make our lives better. The class activities will require us to explore the processes of innovation and invention, design, building, *and producing simple products*. This course will contribute to our understanding of technology.

FYS 100-15 (22004) MW 2-3:50 **You, Inc: Applying Business Concepts to Life [in person]**

(Blanchette)

The course proposition is that applying business concepts to one's attitudes and behaviors potentially may contribute to a student's professional, personal, and academic success. These include:

- self-management
- personal finance
- creativity
- analysis/critical thinking
- ethics
- marketing yourself
- emotional intelligence
- teamwork
- leadership
- strategic planning

There are no tests or quizzes, and students do not need to purchase a textbook. Students choose which elements of the course will count for their grade, choosing from tasks relating to class engagement, homework, and mini-projects to construct their grades. Classes are built around the discussion of current events and concepts that are applicable across and beyond academic domains, business-related concepts transferrable to one's life regardless of major or career, and application activities.

FYS 100-16 (22005) TTh 2-3:50 **Sharks! [hybrid]**

(Merson)

Discover the fascinating life of sharks and their relatives. What is the biggest shark in the ocean? Can sharks learn? How hard do they bite and how is it measured? How do sharks give birth? What is the longest shark migration? We will explore many interesting questions about shark biology and how researchers study them.