

FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR

FYS 100 My Music: Writing Musical Lives (4 Credits)

This first-year seminar begins with an exploration of our own musical lives. What does the particular constellation of material that we call "My Music" tell us about who we are, where we come from, and how we relate to the world? After analyzing and comparing musical lives within the class, students will read selected case studies and collaboratively design a musical biography project. Each student will curate one person's musical life story, gathering data through one-on-one interviews, weaving together their interlocutor's words with their own interpretations, and ultimately reflecting on what they have learned from the experience.

Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 101 The Lives of Animals: Literature and the Nonhuman (4 Credits)

In this course, we will track animals across a range of poems, stories, novels, essays, and films that try to imagine what it is like not to be human. From stories of people transforming into animals to texts that insist that we have no clue what animals really feel, we will consider the various ways that writers distinguish—or refuse to distinguish—humans from other animals. Why, we will ask, are literature and art so haunted by animal life? We will discuss zoos, pets, fables, cartoons, animal rights, vegetarianism, anthropocentrism, and extinction. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 107 Women of the Odyssey (4 Credits)

Homer's *Odyssey* presents a gallery of memorable women: Penelope above all, but also Nausicaa, Calypso and Circe. Helen plays a cameo role, while Clytemnestra is regularly invoked as a negative example. Together these women define a spectrum of female roles and possibilities: the faithful wife, the bride-to-be, the temptress, the adulteress, the murderer. The course begins with a careful reading of the *Odyssey*, then studies the afterlife of its female characters in the Western literary tradition. Readings are drawn from authors both ancient (Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Ovid) and modern (H.D., Robert Graves, Louise Glück, Margaret Drabble). This course counts toward the classics, classical studies and study of women and gender majors. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 109 Exobiology: Origins of Life and the Search for Life in the Universe (4 Credits)

This course explores interdisciplinary approaches to the search for life in the Universe by using the Earth as a natural laboratory. We will address fundamental questions surrounding the formation of our solar system and the first appearance of life, the definition of life and how we can search for it elsewhere, and the biases we introduce by using Earth as a model system. The goal of this class is to present a multidisciplinary view of exobiology by integrating geology, chemistry, biology, astronomy, and physics. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 110 A Century of Revolutions in Latin America (4 Credits)

This first-year seminar offers a multidisciplinary study of three major revolutionary processes in Latin America's past century. Through the examination of the Mexican Revolution (1910), the Cuban Revolution (1959), and Sendero Luminoso's insurrection (1980), this course explores regional trajectories of failed modernizations, social unrest, state transformations, and post-revolutionary reconfigurations. Weekly meetings are centered on the discussion of bibliography and the analysis of primary sources, including documents, fiction writings, visual arts, films, music and other materials. As a writing intensive class, students will deliver a series of research reports and one final paper on the topic of their choice. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 112 #FlipTheScript: Hot Topics in African Feminism(s) Today (4 Credits)

Does affirmative action in politics improve human rights conditions for African women or lead to tokenism? Are the decisions of religious African feminists to submit to their husbands or wear head coverings, choices that display female agency or choices steeped in oppression? This course considers some of the most controversial and hotly debated topics relevant to feminism in Africa today. In doing so, it aims to teach students how to identify both the core issues and points of divergence underpinning these debates and to be able to analyze and articulate their own positions on controversial issues. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 113 Mineral Resources and Sustainability (4 Credits)

Where do my cell phone batteries come from? This FYS explores a variety of mineral resources, their uses in modern society, and their impacts on the environment. Minerals have always held economic and social value, but as society works to switch to green technologies the need for mineral resources, such as rare earth metals for batteries and turbines, has increased. We will take an interdisciplinary approach applying geology, economics, policy, human health, and environmental sciences to the lifecycle of mineral resources. The goal of this class is to build a fundamental understanding of ore deposits, evaluate the impacts of mineral extraction on the environment and to society, and consider how society's need for minerals can be regarded as sustainable. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI {N}

Variable

FYS 114 Ordaining Women in America (4 Credits)

In the 1970s, many Christian, Jewish and Buddhist communities in America began ordaining women as ministers, rabbis, priests and teachers. This change in policy provided women long-denied vocational paths, necessitated new theological self-understandings and ritual forms, and served as a proxy for larger culture war divisions in America. While focused on the last fifty years, this course provides a wider historical narrative for these developments, from the bold revivalism of colonial-era women preachers to anti-racist activism by contemporary Zen senseis. As part of a class project, students will conduct interviews with ordained women and construct podcast episodes from these interviews. Limited to 16 first-years. (E) WI {H}{S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 117 The Bible and the American Public Square (4 Credits)

This course examines what the Bible (and to some extent the broader Jewish and Christian traditions) have to say about controversial issues that have divided Americans in the past (e.g., slavery) and present (e.g., abortion). The aim is to give students the skills to assess critically various arguments that invoke the Bible or religious tradition and authority, wherever they come from on the political spectrum. Students are introduced to the Bible and biblical scholarship, as well as learn about different understandings of biblical authority and views of applying the Bible to contemporary political and ethical debates. This course counts toward the Jewish studies and religion majors. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {H}{L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 119 Performance and Film Criticism (4 Credits)

An introduction to the elements, history and functions of criticism. How do reviewers form their critical responses to theatre and dance performances as well as to films? This course explores different critical perspectives. The students attend live performances and film and video screenings, and write their own reviews and critical responses. This course counts toward the theatre major. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {A}{L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 120 Philosophical Explorations of Humor and Laughter (4 Credits)

Closely examining texts from a variety of philosophical perspectives, this course explores some of the ethical, social and political issues raised by humor and laughter. Humor can be a forceful instrument, often deployed by the powerful in their attempts to control the powerless and by the powerless to topple the powerful. Humor tends to operate in such a way as to include some and exclude others. Its effects, intended or unintended, can be benign or hurtful. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {M}{S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 124 Writers and the Body: Health and Illness in African Diasporic Women's Literature (4 Credits)

This seminar will explore representations of health and illness in writing by women of the African diaspora from the nineteenth century to the present. Our authors hail from Antigua, Bermuda, Canada, Guadeloupe, and the United States, and their interventions (ideological and geographical) engage an even broader territory. We will ask how women novelists, memoirists, poets, and playwrights (some of them health care professionals) challenge, support, influence, and/or respond to contemporary medical theories of health and illness. We will also make use of archival and digital resources at Smith. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 128 Ghosts (4 Credits)

This course explores what Toni Morrison in *Beloved* calls "the living activity of the dead": their ambitions, their desires, their effects. Often returning as figures of memory or history, ghosts raise troubling questions as to what it is they, or we, have to learn. We shall survey a variety of phantasmagorical representations in poems, short stories, novels, films, spiritualist and scientific treatises and spirit photography. This course counts towards the English major. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 129 Tierra y Vida: Land and the Ecological Imagination in U.S. Latino/a Literature (4 Credits)

Tierra y Vida explores the ecological imagination of U.S. Latinos/as as expressed in narratives from the early 20th to the 21st centuries. Expanding beyond dominant tropes of land/farm worker as the core of Latino/a ecological experience, students consider a range of texts that depict the land as a site of indigenous ecological knowledge; spiritual meaning; and ethnic, racial and gendered belonging. In dialogues between Latino/a writers and theorists students also explore the possibilities of ecological futures rooted in emancipation and liberation as alternatives to ecological imaginaries still fraught with colonial desires. Students in this course participate in a digital atlas and story-mapping project. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI {L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 131 Paris: City of Light (4 Credits)

Urban, architectural, and cultural history of Paris, from its founding some 2,000 years ago through the twentieth century. We will explore the layout of streets and parks; the provisioning of infrastructure (water, sewers, public transportation); building typologies; châteaux and country houses in the capital's environs; the social, economic, political, and aesthetic contexts of architectural patronage; and how the built environment carries decipherable symbolic meaning. Paris as a subject in the visual arts—in the Impressionist era in particular—will be examined, as will the city's status as a perennial crucible of fashion, avant-gardism, and modernism. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {A}{H}

Fall

FYS 132 Girls Leaving Home (4 Credits)

This course explores how literary writers from various times and places have addressed the topic of girls leaving home. What are the risks and benefits for young (usually single) women who leave a place of origin, temporarily or permanently, with or without families, to make new lives? What do they flee or seek? How do gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, class complicate their stories? How is "home" understood or redefined in these narratives? Readings include Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, and immigrant American narratives *The Road from Coorain*, *The Woman Warrior* and *Americanah*. Our primary methodology is literary analysis. Recommended for students considering the English major. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 134 Satire (4 Credits)

This course examines the myriad forms satire has taken in the West, from the mists of antiquity (when satire meant a form of verse that could actually kill or maim its victims) until recent times. Students will hone their skills in close reading and writing about literature. Though some satires (especially in the tradition of Juvenal) simply and straightforwardly bludgeon their targets—so violent did these become in 1590s England that for six years publication of satire was illegal—we'll focus on the more enjoyable ironic varieties—more enjoyable but also more demanding, since these make readers do most of the interpretive work. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. {L}

Fall, Spring, Alternate Years

FYS 136 The Art of Gossip (4 Credits)

"No gossip, no interiority," writes novelist Cynthia Ozick, who provocatively reminds us of word-of-mouth's close relationship to storytelling itself. We know that gossip can be toxic, immature, and dangerous—but can it have other, more complex purposes and effects? In this course, we'll examine inside jokes, open secrets, call outs, and speculation in literature, art, music, film, and popular culture. From novels about manners and the sustaining (or, tearing down) of communities to chatty, genre-defying poetry and films, documentaries, and song lyrics, we'll engage in a wide-ranging meditation on gossip as an art, a weapon, and an imaginative inter-relational tool. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI {L}

Alternate Years

FYS 138 Democracy in America: From the Revolution to Trump (4 Credits)

This course explores the history of democracy in America. Students will examine how political leaders and social movements have fought to expand the bounds of democratic citizenship ever since the American Revolution, and how others have fought to restrict it. Students will trace the evolution of both defenses and critiques of democratic self-governance and will consider how polarization, inequality, and globalization strain modern democracy. The class will reflect critically on what exactly democracy has looked like – and can look like – not only in formal politics, but also in economic and social life more broadly. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. (E) WI {H}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 141 Reading, Writing and Placemaking: Landscape Studies (4 Credits)

Landscape studies is the interdisciplinary consideration of how we view, define and use the land, whether it be our backyard, a moonscape or a national park. How does land become a landscape? How does space become a place? Scientists study and manipulate landscapes as do politicians, builders, hunters, children, artists and writers, among others. In this course, students examine how writers, in particular, participate in placemaking, and how the landscape influences and inhabits literary texts. The course includes some landscape history and theory, visits by people who study landscape from nonliterary angles, and the discovery of how landscape works in texts in transforming and surprising ways. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 142 Reacting to the Past (5 Credits)

In this course, students learn by taking on roles, in elaborate games set in the past; they learn skills—speaking, writing, critical thinking, problem solving, leadership, and teamwork—in order to prevail in complicated situations. Reacting roles do not have a fixed script and outcome. While students adhere to the intellectual beliefs of the historical figures they have been assigned, they must devise their own means of expressing those ideas in papers, speeches or public presentations. Class sessions are run entirely by students; instructors guide students and grade their oral and written work. It draws students into the past, promotes engagement with big ideas and improves intellectual and academic skills. Enrollment limited to 24 first-years. WI {H}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 143 The Mind of Plants: A Journey into Plant consciousness and the human relationship to plant life (4 Credits)

Plants are perhaps the most necessary form of life, providing nutrition and thus allowing life for all animals, including humans. Yet, humans have oftentimes a predilection for animals over plants. However, the idea that plants have a mind of their own has been a core element of indigenous stories, literary works, poetic imaginings, philosophical systems and experimental investigations worldwide. This course examines a series of lyrical, reflective, experiential and personal evocations of plant minds and their connection to humans. The class looks to literature and visual art, which have long been particularly attentive to the plant world, to answer the question, "How can we de-objectify plants and restore their dignity?" Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. (E) WI {L}

Fall, Alternate Years

FYS 144 Science and Society (4 Credits)

The importance science plays in the health of humans and of this planet has never been more urgent. Unfortunately, the complex language of science has made its presumed accuracy a weapon against those unable to interpret scientific truths. In this course, we will explore four main areas where science and society meet for better or worse. Students will study and write about the science of superheros, abortion policies, climate change and the pandemic. Students will maintain a personal journal, write in diverse styles, and use quantitative information. A final project will serve to educate an audience outside of smith college. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Alternate Years

FYS 145 Life in the Classroom-Narratives of Teachers and Students in Context (4 Credits)

This course inquires into the day-to-day lives of teachers and students in U.S. K-12 classrooms, specifically through the lens of narratives. Students engage with works of ethnography and portraiture that reflect a range of school settings and student developmental levels. Further insights are derived from guest speakers, classroom observations, documentaries and other resources. Course readings, discussions and assignments facilitate in-depth explorations of real-world school contexts—considering the implications of these past and present accounts for the future.

Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. (E) WI {S}

Fall, Spring, Alternate Years

FYS 147 Power Lunch: The Archaeology of Feasting (4 Credits)

Throughout history, food and dining have formed some of the most fundamental expressions of cultural identity—in a very real sense, people are what they eat, and how they eat. This cross-cultural examination of the topic begins by exploring the various roles that feasting played in the world of the ancient Mediterranean, particularly the cultures of Greece and Rome. The class examines comparative material from contemporary societies. How does food define and create culture? In what ways does dining express or reinforce inequalities? These and other questions are tackled through the use of primary literature, anthropological studies and archaeological material, along with hands-on approaches. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {H}{S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 148 Pleasures, Politics and Power: Food in Literature and Culture (4 Credits)

This first-year seminar examines the pleasures, passions, politics, economics and toxicities of food through the works of writers, chefs, artists and critics who celebrate and critique how food heals, harms, nourishes and pleases. Food plays a critical and dynamic role in fiction, poetry, mystery, memoir, film and recipe books. This course will analyze literary portrayals of and engagements with a range of foods, including fast food, desserts, holiday feasts, haute cuisine, street food and “junk food,” as well as issues involving abundance, scarcity and nutrition. Through our study of food in literature and culture, this seminar will also consider concerns central to critical food studies, including power, colonialism, capitalism, identity and the environment. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {A}{H}{L}

Fall**FYS 149 The Big Bang and Beyond (4 Credits)**

What is all the stuff in the night sky, and where did all this stuff around us come from? How old is the universe? Is it going to be here forever? How do we know all of this? These are some of the questions we will explore in “The Big Bang and Beyond,” an introduction to what is known about the universe and how it is known. The course requires no math or physics background. Along the way, you’ll practice reading and writing about scientific ideas. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {N}

Fall, Variable**FYS 150 Writing and Power in China (4 Credits)**

This course examines the many ways in which writing has been used to gain, maintain and overturn power throughout Chinese history, from the prognosticating power of oracle bone script to the activist potential of social media. We examine writing as a tactic of agency, a force for social change, and an instrument of state power; analyze the changing role of literature; and consider the physical forms of writing and the millennia-long history of contemporary issues like censorship and writing reform. Finally, students work to make their own writing as powerful as possible. No knowledge of Chinese required. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI {L}

Fall, Spring, Variable**FYS 151 Our Mill River (4 Credits)**

The Mill River flows through campus and connects the landscapes upstream and downstream of Smith. From its headwaters in Goshen, MA, to its mouth where it joins the Connecticut River on the Northampton/Easthampton line, the Mill River defines a region of communities that are all here as a result of its waters. Students will gain important insight into Smith’s context by exploring and reflecting on the natural and cultural landscape of the Mill River. Weekly field experiences are complemented by readings, map work, historical collections, a sampling of local delicacies, guest experts, and class discussions. This course is writing intensive and based in field experiences. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable**FYS 153 The Muslim World in the Age of the Crusades: Encounters, Influences and Lasting Legacies (4 Credits)**

This course explores the religious, political, social and cultural impacts of the Crusades on the Muslim World from 1095 CE until today. Special attention is given to the variety of Muslim reactions to the Crusades, including cross-cultural interactions and influences. It also considers the Crusades’ enduring legacy and effect on Islamic history and religious thought. Materials used include religious and historical texts, travelogues and biographies, films, novels, etc. The course concludes with an examination of how the exploitation of history by hate groups (such as White Supremacy and Islamic Jihadism) continues to shape political and social realities today. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {H}

Fall, Variable**FYS 154 The World of Anna Karenina (4 Credits)**

This course explores the social, cultural and political history of late imperial Russia through Leo Tolstoy’s iconic novel Anna Karenina. Students will learn about the production of the novel but also focus on such themes as modernization and industrialization, gender and sexuality, social construction of family and marriage, empire and colonialism. They will also study the rise of realism in art and the ways in which the Russian educated classes used the new style as a form of social critique. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {H}

Fall, Spring, Variable**FYS 160 The End of the World as We Know It: The Post-Apocalyptic Novel (4 Credits)**

We explore a wide range of literary scenarios that depict the collapse of civilization in the wake of plague-like disease and/or nuclear war. The motif of the post-Apocalyptic novel has become common, yet its roots go back as far (and further than) Jack London’s *The Scarlet Plague* and Mary Shelley’s *The Last Man*. In the works we will be examining, we witness the attempts of the few survivors of catastrophe to create a new world, or merely to live in a world in which the past casts a vast shadow over the present. The society that comes forth from these worlds can be anarchic, dystopic, utopian or a combination of these. Some works we explore include *Alas, Babylon*; *On the Beach*; *Riddley Walker*; *The Postman*; *A Canticle for Leibowitz*; *The Chrysalids*; *The Road* and others. Film adaptations are shown as part of the course. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable**FYS 162 Ambition and Adultery: Individualism in the 19th-Century Novel (4 Credits)**

This course looks at a series of great 19th-century novels to explore a set of questions about the nature of individual freedom, and of the relation of that freedom—transgression, even—to social order and cohesion. The books are paired—two French, two Russian; two that deal with a woman’s adultery, and two that focus on a young man’s ambition—Balzac’s *Père Goriot*; Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary*; Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*; Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*. There are some additional readings in history, criticism and political theory. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 165 Childhood in African Literature (4 Credits)

A study of childhood as an experience in the present and as a transition into adulthood, and of the ways in which it is intimately tied to social, political and cultural histories, and to questions of self and national identity. How does the violence of colonialism and decolonization reframe our understanding of childhood innocence? How do African childhood narratives represent such crises as cultural alienation, loss of language, exile and memory? How do competing national and cultural ideologies shape narratives of childhood? Texts include Tsitsi Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions*, Zoë Wicomb's *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town*, Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Weep Not Child* and Tahar Ben Jelloun's *The Sand Child*. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 166 Mammalian Reproduction: A Female Perspective (4 Credits)

This seminar explores the diversity of reproduction in mammals from genetics to environmental adaptations, but all from the perspective of female mammals. How does the female perspective change the way we think about reproduction? For instance, conception vs. fertilization; embryo rejection vs. miscarriage. We cover basic concepts as well as the biases and assumptions present in the study of mammalian reproduction. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 167 Viking Diaspora (4 Credits)

The Norse colonies of Iceland and Greenland and the attempted settlement of Vinland in North America were the first European societies of the New World, revealing patterns of cultural conflict and adaptation that anticipated British colonization of the mid-Atlantic seaboard seven centuries later. This course compares the strengths and weaknesses of the medieval Icelandic Commonwealth, founded in 930, with the 1787 Constitution of the United States, both political systems facing serious crises within two generations. Sources for these experimental communities are the oral memories of founding families preserved in the later *Íslendingasögur* (Sagas of Icelanders) of the 13th century. This course counts toward the world literatures, English and medieval studies majors. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 168 Damaged Gods: Myth and Religion of the Vikings (4 Credits)

A reading of poems and sagas about the Old Norse gods and their cults during the Viking Age (ca. 800-1100 CE) as these were preserved mainly in Icelandic manuscripts of the 13th century, but also in Arabic, Latin, Old High German and Anglo-Saxon texts and runic inscriptions. We explore the dark world-view and desperate religion of the Vikings from the creation of the world to the end of time, including relations between living and dead, male and female, animals and humans, gods and giants, Æsir and Vanir—a crowded universe of trolls, elves, witches, dwarfs, valkyries, berserks, shapeshifters and various kinds of human being. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 172 (Dis)Obedient Daughters (4 Credits)

How does the powerful relationship between mothers and daughters influence how women define themselves and search for their own identity? What does it mean when a woman defines who she is in opposition to her mother while seeking her mother's love and approval? How is the problem compounded when the mother's culture is different from her first-generation-immigrant daughter's? Through fiction and film by women from different cultures, we will explore such topics as gender roles, race, ethnicity and class. Authors read will include Jamaica Kincaid, Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, Maxine Hong Kingston, Nora Okja Keller, Donia Bijan, Laila Wadia, Igiaba Scego. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI {L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 174 Merging and Converging Cultures: What Is Gained and Lost in Translation? (4 Credits)

By reaching across linguistic and cultural barriers, this course fosters understanding of different worldviews and introduces students to the varied field of translation in order to develop their critical thinking skills and broaden their intercultural awareness. Translation is a fundamental human activity; the way individuals perceive the world influences their interpretation and understanding of all communication. Traditional forms of translations and interpretation will be studied along with adaptation/transformation of literary texts into films and different art forms. Topics studied include: translation, theories, ethics of translation, invisibility/visibility of translators, transculturation, subtitling and dubbing, machine translation and globalization. Competence in a language other than English or enrollment in a foreign language course is not required, but highly recommended. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 176 Existentialism (4 Credits)

The term "existentialism" refers to a nexus of twentieth-century philosophical and literary explorations focused on themes including human freedom, responsibility, temporality, ambiguity and mortality. Existentialists Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre oppose a longstanding philosophical view that human beings flourish by understanding themselves and the cosmos in rational terms. In addition to exploring assigned readings in depth, the course addresses broader questions: "Are there insights involving existentialist themes that literary works are in a distinctive position to convey?" "Is there an existentialist ethics?" and "Do existentialists' realizations about living well continue to have resonance today?" Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {H}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 178 Ecological Crisis: the Green New Deal, Degrowth and Eco-Socialism (4 Credits)

This course explores the causes of the multi-front ecological crisis that faces us and evaluates various suggested solutions from a political economy perspective. It addresses real-world problems, setting aside conventional models based on unrealistic assumptions, and alerts to the complex interrelationships between nature, economic motivations, social structures and political processes/institutions. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. (E) WI {S}

Fall

FYS 179 Rebellious Women (4 Credits)

This course introduces students to the trailblazing women who have changed the American social and political landscape through reform, mobilization, cultural interventions and outright rebellion. We use a variety of texts: *No Turning Back* by Estelle Freedman, primary sources from the archives and the SCMA, films, a walking tour and local events. The intention of this seminar is threefold: (1) to provide an overview of feminist ideas and action throughout American history, (2) to introduce students to primary documents and research methods, and (3) to encourage reflection and discussion on current gender issues. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {H}{S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 182 Fighting the Power: Black Protest and Politics Since 1970 (4 Credits)

This course examines the various forms of black "politics," broadly conceived, that emerged and developed in the wake of the modern civil rights movement to the present time. Major topics of concern include: black nationalism and electoral politics, black feminism, resistance to mass incarceration, the war on drugs, black urban poverty, the rise of the black middle class, reparations, the Obama presidency, Black Lives Matter and other contemporary social movements. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {H}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 183 Geisha, Wise Mothers, and Working Women (4 Credits)

This course examines images of Japanese women that are prevalent in the West, and to some extent Japan. Our focus will be on three key figures considered definitive representations of Japanese women: the geisha, the good wife/wise mother, and the working woman. We will read popular treatments including novels, primary sources, and scholarly articles. Our task will be to sort through these images, keeping in mind the importance of perception versus reality and change over time. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 186 Israel through Literature and Film (4 Credits)

What was the role of Hebrew writers in constructing a nation's founding myths and interpreting and challenging its present realities? How do literature and film about Zionism and the State of Israel frame and interpret tensions between sacred and secular, exile and homeland; indigenous and colonial; language and identity; and the national conflict between Jews and Palestinians? All readings and screenings in English translation. Includes texts from differing historical periods, political perspectives, and languages. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 188 Indigenous Peoples and the Environment: Myth and Reality (4 Credits)

This course examines the stereotype of the "ecological Indian"—a racial trope that has perpetuated the idea that Native North Americans are naturally closer to nature or are natural conservationists. The class looks at how this stereotype has shaped non-Native ideas about Indigenous peoples in what is now the United States and has affected Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. This course also examines the varied ways Indigenous peoples have thought about ecological relationships and the strategies they developed to live in relation with the environment. The class critically examines the relationship between settler colonialism and the environment and considers contemporary and historical case studies in which Indigenous peoples have fought to protect and care for their lands and waters in the face of the ongoing violence of settler colonialism. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {H}

Fall, Variable

FYS 189 Data and Social Justice (4 Credits)

Students examine sociopolitical forces that impact the availability, structure and governance of data regarding various social justice issues. Students learn techniques for presenting data in ways that foreground the contexts of data production and remain accountable to diverse communities. Datasets about health equity, housing justice, environmental justice and carceral justice are studied, analyzed and visualized. Students identify institutions and stakeholders involved in data production, unpack the vested interests animating data semantics, consider what people and problems get erased in data structuring and evaluate ethical tradeoffs that data scientists grapple with as they plan for data presentation. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {S}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 192 America in 1925 (4 Credits)

Readings, discussions and student projects explore the transformation of a "Victorian" America into a "modernist" one by focusing on forms of expression and sites of conflict in 1925—the year of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Bessie Smith's "St. Louis Blues," Alain Locke's *The New Negro* (the foundational text of the Harlem Renaissance), Chaplin's *The Gold Rush*, the Scopes evolution trial, and the emergence of powerful new ideas in the social sciences—to cite just a few examples. Enrollment limited to 16 first years. WI {H}{L}

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 194 Making Meaning from Material Lives (4 Credits)

This class considers the numerous ways in which human beings engage with material culture, that is artifacts, things or stuff. How does material culture give meaning to lives and how does it help mediate lived experiences for both individuals and members of society? The course seeks to examine how a variety of cultures, including American, make sense of things through the ways in which material culture is created, consumed, defined and valued. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. (E) WI

Fall, Variable

FYS 195 Literary Borders (4 Credits)

This course examines the imaginative possibilities of the border in literary and visual texts. The class considers how writers portray cultural, national, temporal and linguistic frontiers; how literature embodies the experience of crossing or dwelling within borderlands; how texts reinforce or transgress the boundaries at which readers are positioned; and how writing itself can construct and bridge differences. Reading poems and stories of liminal figures, the class analyzes how the border challenges ideas about place, body, identity, language and text. In encounters with new expressive forms that disrupt the way literature is read, the class explores the edges of language. For a broader picture of the border in the imagination, the class also examines film, music, theatre and other arts. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. (E) WI {L}

Fall

FYS 197 On Display: Museums, Collections and Exhibitions (4 Credits)

Why do people collect things and what do they collect? Students explore these questions by focusing on local museums and exhibitions. From a behind-the-scenes look at the Smith College Museum of Art to an examination of hidden gems like the botanical sciences herbarium collection or that cabinet of curiosities which is Mount Holyoke's Skinner Museum, students research the histories of these collections and analyze the rationale of varying systems for ordering objects. By learning the critical skills of visual analysis and by grappling with the interpretations of art historians, anthropologists and psychologists, students attempt to come to an understanding of how knowledge is constructed in the context of display and how visual juxtapositions can generate meaning. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI

Fall, Spring, Variable

FYS 198 The Coming Apocalypse (4 Credits)

It's boom time for the End Times. Millennialists state with confidence that the world's final hour is approaching: the signs are everywhere, for those who know how to see them. Eschatological scenarios abound, ranging from climate change desolation and nuclear annihilation to alien invasions and zombie uprisings. Every ending also heralds a new beginning, though; every apocalypse gives way to a post-apocalypse. By focusing on apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic stories across a variety of media and genres, this course considers the significance of the human predilection for telling stories about the end of humanity. Enrollment limited to 16 first-years. WI {L}

Fall, Spring, Variable