First-Year Seminar Program
FALL 2016

Gettysburg College
An especially powerful first-year educational program helps first-year students integrate their academic and residential lives.

What Are First-Year Seminars?

First-Year Seminars offer the benefits of an experience often reserved for college seniors to students beginning their college career: classes that have a small enrollment, focus on a particular topic, and emphasize the active participation of students. These courses, designed for and offered only to students in their first semester at Gettysburg, provide an opportunity to work closely with a faculty member and a small cohort of peers to explore a topic that they all find interesting. In addition, First-Year Seminars are designed to employ and develop a variety of learning skills, such as writing, speaking, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and the use of technology or instrumentation.

All students in a First-Year Seminar will live in the same residence hall, which provides them with an opportunity to integrate their academic and residential lives. This experience, alongside programming offered through the college’s extended orientation program, offers students the opportunity of learning and working with other students and faculty on common educational interests and goals while deliberately fostering connections that support the transition to college. Extending the classroom into the residence hall provides a natural vehicle for combining formal teaching, informal learning, and personal support—complementing the academic curriculum, promoting an atmosphere of mutual concern and active exchange of views, and offering an exciting living and learning environment.

Special programming opportunities in the First-Year Seminar may include field trips, film series, guests from inside and outside the college community, special meals, library/electronic media workshops, academic advising/career planning tips, and community service projects. Many of these opportunities are designed for a specific seminar or group of related seminars.

Let yourself explore!
over the next four years, it will be your responsibility to shape your own coherent curriculum out of the wide array of programs and courses available to you. First-Year Seminars provide an excellent opportunity to begin exploring a new area of interest or to get to work closely with a faculty member in an area that you are already passionate about. As you review the following list of Seminars, notice those that arouse your curiosity. You should choose a Seminar because it sounds interesting to you, whether or not you think it relates to your intended career or prospective major. Before you sign up for your courses, you will be asked to rank your top five Seminars, so take notes on which sound the most exciting to you!

FYS 103
Natives on Film

Have you ever watched a fictional film depicting native peoples and wondered how accurate it is? This course is devoted to exploring how indigenous people are represented in full-length feature films and applying anthropological understandings to analyzing these works. The course is global in scope, including films about Native Americans (American Indians, Arctic cultures, and people of the Amazon rainforest), Africa, the Asia/Pacific region (Maori of New Zealand, Australian Aborigines, and peoples of Borneo), as well as depictions of pre-historic populations in Europe (Cro-Magnon and Neanderthal). We also look at key examples of films by indigenous filmmakers about their own cultures and explore a range of issues raised by people working in visual anthropology.

Instructor: Professor Matthew Amster, Department of Anthropology

FYS 103-3
Bringing the Past into the Present

If you love learning about past events, peoples, and ways of life, this seminar offers you the chance to study different ways used by public historians and public archaeologists to bring the past into the present. In addition to discussing, reading, and writing, you will carry out a semester-long research project based on primary documents and materials in the collections of the College or the Adams County Historical Society. You will also experience and analyze living history approaches and museum exhibits drawn from the rich array of resources at the College, in the community, and at the Gettysburg National Military Park. Central to public history and public archaeology is a sensitivity to the existence of multiple perspectives that are not always in agreement with one another. Presentation and interpretation of the past is not a simple matter of finding the truth or being objective. How we understand our past and the past of other people, groups, and nations changes in response to present-day concerns and reflects the shifting nature of collective memory. Field trips during class time may require you to pay an entrance fee for some off-campus tours. Research projects may center on the Civil War and the Battle of Gettysburg but they do not have to; this seminar is not about the Civil War nor is it designed solely for Civil War fanatics. Regardless of your topic, students taking this seminar should expect to spend a significant amount of time outside of class working on their project. Whether on or off campus, your project will require you to observe the hours of operation, rules, and regulations of the organizations whose materials you wish to study.

Instructor: Professor Julia Hendon, Department of Anthropology
Cutting-edge scientific discoveries.

FYS 106-3
STEM From The Ground Up: The Thrills and Skills of Science

In this seminar STEM Scholars students will learn what distinguishes science from other modes of inquiry, and be introduced to skills used throughout the various STEM disciplines. Through readings, analyses, discussions and engaging group activities, the STEM Scholars will learn what scientists do and how they do it, with special emphases on the importance of problem solving, quantitative skills, and clear communication with fellow scientists and the general public. Students will learn about the history of science, proper experimental design, uncertainty, and methods for collecting, interpreting and analyzing data. We will discuss how basic scientific research informs technological applications used in our daily lives; learn about cutting-edge scientific discoveries as well as discuss the ethical issues involved in the pursuit and application of science. This seminar focuses on a multidisciplinary approach to learning, understanding, discussing and practicing the specific skills necessary for students participating in the STEM Scholar program in preparation to a successful career in the STEM fields at Gettysburg College and after graduation.

Instructor: Professor István Urcuyo, Department of Biology

FYS 107
The Bush Administration: Approach to the War on Terror, Torture, and Prisoners of War

The Bush administration approached torture, harsh interrogation and prisoners of war in the War on Terror guided by a set of legal principles authored primarily by John Yoo of the U.S. Department of Justice. Students in the course read a number of books, including Yoo’s Crisis and Command, as a foundation for understanding the legal policies implemented by the Bush administration. Included is an in-depth review of Articles I, II, and III of the Constitution, the Geneva Conventions, The Detainee Act of 2005, and recent Supreme Court cases. This course will count as American Government for declared Political Science majors and will also fulfill the writing requirement for all students.

Instructor: Professor Shirley Anne Warshaw, Department of Political Science

FYS 111-4
Migration: Now and Then

In October of 2015 a record number of over 210,000 migrants entered Europe by sea and in the first nine months of 2015 over 3,000 people perished attempting to migrate to Europe. This class examines the current immigration crisis in Europe through personal and historical lenses with the goals of understanding why migration occurs and the challenges to accommodating mass migrations of culturally distinct peoples. Students taking this class will employ digital tools to present and analyze artifacts and information related to migration and ideally will leave the class with a more nuanced understanding of the nature of migration, the complexities involved in the choice to leave one’s homeland, and the challenges mass waves of migration pose to recipient states.

Instructor: Professor Robert Bohrer, Department of Political Science

FYS 114-4
Sports, Space, and Resistance

Sport can create, reinforce, and challenge what a society values. This course uses a variety of sports, from basketball to cricket to horse racing, to explore and analyze how sports have either helped avoid or cause social change. Students will analyze diverse societies in places like South Africa, Brazil, and the United States through a multidisciplinary lens of history, geography, and law to explore why some social resistance movements survive and while others wither, and how physical space, law, and sports often work together to either support or suppress resistance. The concluding portion of the course will ask students to consider if sports today create new ways to maintain or resist the status quo.

Instructor: Professor John (Buzz) Jones, Sunderman Conservatory of Music

FYS 118-2
Why Jazz Matters: The Legacy of Pops, Duke, and Miles

This seminar investigates the origins and development of America’s indigenous music through the lens of three iconic jazz masters—Louis Armstrong (1901-1971), Duke Ellington (1899-1974), and Miles Davis (1926-1991). Their outsized personalities and burning energy to succeed inspired countless musicians who followed in their footsteps. We examine such questions as why 1920s society-at-large degraded jazz as a lesser art form and debate the overarching issue of racial discrimination in the arts. What is it about jazz as an improvisatory art form that continues to be so attractive to the masses after 100 years? Jazz-infused Harlem Renaissance poetry, analysis of musical examples from our three main characters, critical essays, vintage film clips, and biographical works are all part of the class experience. A background in music (band, orchestra, choir, or jazz) is helpful but not required.

Instructor: Professor John (Buzz) Jones, Sunderman Conservatory of Music

FYS 121-3
Soldiers’ Tales: Reading and Writing War

War is a subject of fascination in our society, but it is an experience only truly understood by participants. War literature is one of the means of conveying the experiences of war to broader
Explore the vibrations, oscillations, and rhythms that surround us.

...audiences Writing is a way in which soldiers try to convey and contextualize their memories in print. This seminar is an opportunity for students to read and reflect upon some of the literature of modern war. In reading non-fiction and fiction recollections, by discussing the themes and contexts of war books, and through writing reflective and thoughtful papers, students will learn something of the history of modern war from the point of view of the participant. Students will learn history through literary memories and, it is hoped, will gain the methodological skills to approach literary and historical sources for analysis. For first-year students, this seminar will introduce them to the methods of research writing in the humanities, through reading about war.

Instructors: Professor Ian Isherwood, Assistant Director of Civil War Institute

FYS 124-3 Rhythms in the Natural World

How does the rhythm of your heartbeat affect the music you choose to listen to? Why do birds often sing with low tones in the forest and high trills in the desert? When can we expect the first snows of the year? Is there any way to understand these questions from a common perspective, using common tools, and common terminology? From the expansion and contraction of the universe to a buzzing bee, rhythms are everywhere, and they can affect our lives in profound and often surprising ways. This seminar uses theory, methods, and software borrowed from the field of bioacoustics to explore the vibrations, oscillations, and rhythms that surround us. The focus is on concepts rather than equations, and through guided workshops and in class discussions, students from all backgrounds learn to apply a new perspective to the rhythms that make up their everyday lives.

Instructor: Professor Michael Caldwell, Department of Biology

FYS 127-3 (En)Countering Narratives: Storytelling, Identity and Social Change

Tell a story about a time you felt safe, an instance in which you offended a person of a different race, an important message you heard about what it means to be a man. Stories give form to life’s complexities, allowing us to make the abstract more personal and concrete. Through engagement with four story types, this course will consider how storytelling methodologies are used to enforce or dismantle oppression, mobilize or restrict change. By analyzing and sharing stories, students will gain an understanding of the complexity of race, class, and gender and the power dimensions through which inequity operates. This process will also encourage students to make sense of their own experiences and identity, connecting the personal with the political, the individual with the social. Designed in collaboration with the Center for Public Service, this course combines a traditional academic component with experiential education through participation in campus dialogue groups, field trips to hear from community members and a community-based learning component.

Instructor: Kim Davidson and Jeffrey Rioux, Center for Public Service

FYS 128-3 Shakespeare’s Sisters

This seminar will offer students the opportunity to study a selection of British and American women writers—some major, some minor—covering the past 500 years. Beginning with Queen Elizabeth and her contemporaries and ending with twentieth-century figures such as Virginia Woolf and Zora Neale Hurston, we will explore Woolf’s famous question: what if Shakespeare had a sister? We will consider the impact of gender on the creative process, and how economics, class, and racial issues intersect with gender to produce a unique female voice. The course will include several film showings and a field trip to Washington, D.C.

Instructor: Professor Suzanne Flynn, Department of English

FYS 130-1 Women’s Health and Sexuality

This seminar looks at the changing practices in women’s healthcare from the holistic, ancient, earth-based traditions that centralized women to the rise of the mechanomorphic American medical system, specifically gynecology. The course examines key historic events that shaped women’s healthcare, issues of gender biology, the gardener/mechanic metaphor, the modern medicalization of women’s natural cycles, the Wise Woman healing tradition, Chinese medicine and acupuncture, Ayurveda, and issues around women’s personal empowerment. Social issues concerning the control of women’s reproduction and the impact of the environment on women’s health are addressed. Additional topics include holistic nutrition for women, body image, gender identity, sexual orientation, negotiating young-adult social and emotional challenges, and power and control in intimate relationships. Particular attention will be on centralizing women in their own healthcare.

Instructor: Professor Stephanie Sellers, Department of English and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program

FYS 130-3 Designer Genes and the Ethics of Human Enhancement

Gene therapy, trait selection for...
babies, cloning, genetic engineering, bionic implants and drugs that improve physical and mental capabilities—the “biological revolution” has offered us many promising techniques for human enhancement. But we are uneasy: although preventing debilitating conditions and making “better” people seems attractive, the prospect of either a centralized eugenics program or unregulated individualized “enhancement” is frightening. We face, fearfully or hopefully, the possibility of altering the human race. Is human life to be a project, a purchase—or a gift?

This seminar explores the ethical issues raised by the possibility of enhancing individuals and, ultimately, altering human nature itself. Our reactions are influenced by the values of science, medicine, business, and religion; we respond to the images of science fiction, the convenience of technology, and the impact of personal experience. Considering both individual cases and practices, we will apply traditional moral values like respect for human life and justice. But we will also examine ways in which these revolutionary practices challenge these values, as we move from chance to choice, from “the natural lottery” to decision-making, and gain unprecedented responsibilities for a wider range of control over the sort of human beings who will have control.

Instructor: Professor Daniel DeNicola, Department of Philosophy

**FYS 131-2**

**Dante’s Divine Comedy: The Poet, The Pilgrim, The Prophet**

This seminar, taught in English, explores the three cantos of the Divine Comedy: Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. Students examine the life of Dante Alighieri and his times. Discussion focuses on the characters and events of this classic poem. Questions students will ponder include: what happens to us after death? What does it really mean to be a good person? Why do bad things happen to good people? How far would a person go for love? Why is having too many sexual relationships an ultimately less serious matter for the soul than drinking or eating too much? Here is the masterpiece of world literature that inspired and changed the lives of Michelangelo, Galileo, and James Joyce who once said, “Dante is my spiritual food!” No knowledge of the Italian language is expected or needed.

Instructor: Professor Alan Perry, Department of Italian Studies

**FYS 132-4**

**Diets and Deities: Eating Our Way Through Religious Traditions**

Everyone eats, but what does it mean to eat Christmas tamales, to not eat pork, to become a vegetarian, to offer a sacrifice to a deity, or to ingest the body of the divine? In this class we ask, “what is the meaning of food?” We answer the question by examining the central role of food in religion and the various ways religious food and eating intersects with issues of identity, ethics, and ritual. We reflect upon food practices while sharing meals together, some on campus, some off, and some prepared by the class. We begin the semester by addressing what it means to eat, focusing on Buddhist mindful eating. We then examine diverse holiday celebrations such as Hanukkah, Halloween, and the Day of the Dead. From there we move to the ethics of food consumption in the era of factory farms. We will visit the Painted Turtle Farm, volunteer with Campus Kitchen, and participate in a virtual discussion with an author whose book we will read. We conclude with religious responses to eating ethically, focusing on Native American respectful relationships to nature and we will take a field trip to the National Museum of the American Indian in D.C. and share a meal of traditional native foods.

Instructor: Professor David Walsh, Department of Religious Studies

**FYS 133**

**Einstein in Wonderland: Physics, Philosophy, and Other Nonsense**

Einstein showed that the faster an object moves, the shorter and heavier it gets. In quantum mechanics it is shown that a single electron will be in two places at once. Most people consider such possibilities to be nonsense...and they may just be right. But this does not mean that the theories are wrong, possibly it is our notion of sense that needs revision. In this class we will examine what is meant by sense by considering the scientific and philosophical writings of two of the most important historical scientific minds, Rene Descartes and Isaac Newton. In contrast, we will study the epitome of nonsense, Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland, in order to see...
A fascinating and fertile place for the literary imagination.

how the workings of this fantastical world violate the classical notions of sense displayed in Descartes and Newton. We will then read popular approaches to modern physics written by physicists (including George Gamow, the father of the Big Bang theory) in the style of Lewis Carroll to answer the question, “Has science turned sense into nonsense?”

Instructor: Professor Steven Gimbel, Department of Philosophy

FYS 135-3
Imagining Ireland

“My nation? What ish my nation?” demands an Irish character in Shakespeare’s Henry V. In many ways, Irish literary history tries to answer precisely this question. By studying representative works from the Tudor period to the present day, this course will examine how Irish and Anglo-Irish authors have responded to the challenge to imagine and define what it means to be Irish and to write “Irish literature.” Our focus will be on how different ways of imagining Ireland have had pragmatic effects on people’s daily lives—at times producing starvation and legal repression, and at times spurring the drive to revolution and independence. Overall, we will explore why Ireland has proven a fascinating and fertile place for the literary imagination.

Instructor: Professor Joanne Myers, Department of English

FYS 136-2
The Evolution Revolution: Darwin Across the Liberal Arts

This seminar is a survey of the impact of Darwinism across the horizon of the liberal arts in various areas of intellectual inquiry. The 19th century British naturalist, Charles Darwin, revolutionized the study of biology with his proposal of the principle of natural selection, but his theory has had repercussions far beyond the boundaries of the life sciences. This course studies the effects of Darwin’s momentous concept of evolution in disciplines diverse and numerous, such as geology, religion, sociology, medicine, linguistics, literature and philosophy. The course’s readings, discussions and activities chart the path of the great idea of evolution through the liberal arts from the mid-19th century to the present.

Instructor: Professor Lawrence Gregorio, Department of French

FYS 138-2
Plato, Personhood, and Popcorn:
Big Ideas on the Big Screen

What did you think of that movie? This seminar is a philosophical exploration, through both text and film, of the nature of the self and its relationship to the world. Along the way it addresses questions concerning the experience of time and its relation to memory, the meaning of suffering in and out of the context of religious faith, the nature and value of thinking as a practice of everyday life, and the roles and limitations of human knowledge and technology. In addition to textual analysis, the course examines these questions with some of the more provocative films in the history of the cinema (such as Blade Runner, Fight Club, 2001: A Space Odyssey, and others), mining and developing strategies for watching movies at various intellectual levels, thereby enriching the overall experience of the capabilities of film, and illuminating the significance of philosophy as a living activity of thought that finds and transforms us in even the most seemingly mundane moments.

Instructor: Professor Vernon Cisney, Department of Philosophy

FYS 139-9
Reading on the Brain

If you’ve seen the movie Memento or Ex Machina, you know that interest in the brain and its mysteries is increasing exponentially. Pick up any newspaper or magazine and you might find an article about implanting false memories directly in the brain or using brain imaging to determine if someone is racist. Advances in brain science such as these capture public attention and emerge in a variety of cultural products such as literature, film, and advertising for commercial products. In this course, we study the ways in which cognitive neuroscientists, writers, artists, and filmmakers represent the brain, its functions, and dysfunctions. We also seek to understand the relationship between brain and mind and the role that reading plays in their interaction. We look at how recent advances in neuroscience help us to better understand why we consume, and how we respond to, cultural products. Finally, and more broadly, we examine how cognitive neuroscience, art and literature, and society intersect.

Instructor: Professor Temma Berg, Department of English and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, and Professor Kevin Wilson, Department of Psychology and Chair, Interdisciplinary Studies Program

FYS 141-3
But Is It Crazy Enough?

“We all agree that your theory is crazy. But is it crazy enough?”

—Niels Bohr

Everybody knows that the Earth goes around the Sun and that the Loch Ness monster isn’t real. But how do we know? How sure are we? In this course we’ll look at a variety of controversial topics ranging from global climate change to homeopathic medicine to the existence of ghosts, as well as the enduring controversy over the Earth orbiting the Sun—enduring, that is, in the early 1600s. We’ll discuss how the scientific method works, how we can use it to figure out what’s happening and what are the limits of what we can know, hopefully to separate what we can accept as true and what we have to reject as truly crazy.

Instructor: Professor Eric Remy, Educational Technology
Unlock your inner performer.

**FYS 143-2**
**This Machine Kills Fascists!: Protest Music & Social Change in the American Experience**

The famous inscription Woody Guthrie placed on his guitar in 1943 says something profound about how many artists and musicians view their work: while art entertains us, it also can enlighten and liberate us as well. Unfortunately, the history of America often taught in schools focuses largely on names, dates, and other facts pieced together in an effort to tell a particular kind of story about America—one that does little to help us appreciate the struggle that runs like a swift current just beneath the surface of daily life. In this seminar we will revisit some of that history, focusing primarily on the way musicians—from 19th century slaves to 20th century bluesmen, from Depression-era balladeers to Civil Rights marchers, and from war protesters of forty years ago to war protesters today—have attempted to right wrongs, educate sensibilities, and awaken the consciences of people in an effort to make America a place that lives up to its promise.

*Instructor: Professor Dave Powell, Department of Education*

**FYS 144-2**
**Why Do People Dance?**

In this class you will discover how dance teaches us about ourselves, our beliefs, and our cultures through our bodies. So why DO people dance? How can dance help reconcile current dialogues and arguments about race/ethnicity, gender/sexuality, and social class? As a nearly universal bodily experience, dance can be a fun way to work out tensions from stress to muscle soreness. But consider how the dance battle between a D.C. cop and teenager doing the Nae Nae restored balance to a volatile situation, similarly to Tommy the Clown’s krumping in Los Angeles and capeiroa “fights” first practiced in Brazil. Dance crosses perceived boundaries between social classes (think *Dirty Dancing* and *Step Up*); questions gender norms (as in Mark Morris’s androgynous *Nutcracker* snowflakes); and expands national identities (such as Nina Davuluri’s Bollywood dance fulfilled her “American Dream” of becoming the first South Indian Miss America). Finally, how do the swan dances of Misty Copeland, the first African American female principal dancer for American Ballet Theatre and Under Armour model, and Lil Buck, jookin’ street dancer and collaborator with ballet great Baryshnikov, resist stereotypes? No dance experience is needed, just a willingness to experiment with and observe different forms of movement.

*Instructor: Professor Jocelyn Swiggin, Sunderman Conservatory of Music*

**FYS 143-3**
**Flipping the Switch**

How do you turn stage fright into charisma? What makes the difference between a good performance and an extraordinary one? Why is it that you can watch a stage full of people but be unable to take your eyes off just one? How can performers harness nerves for confident, compelling performances?

Unlock your inner performer through a series of exercises, readings, reflections, and performances. This class is open to musicians, actors, and anyone seeking to perform at the highest level. Musical training is not required, but a willingness to engage musically is.

*Instructor: Professor Jocelyn Swiggin, Sunderman Conservatory of Music*

**FYS 149**
**Samurai and Geisha: Beyond the Stereotypes**

This seminar will examine the historical development and meaning of the categories known as “samurai” and “geisha.” The course will explore the realities and myths behind these enduring gendered stereotypes. Students will investigate how, when, and why these categories emerged, who was included and how this changed over time, what kind of training was involved, the significance of these images within Japanese society, as well as how they continue to shape Western perceptions of Japan. Sources considered will include historical works, fiction, film, and works of art.

*Instructor: Professor Dina Lowy, Department of History*

**FYS 150**
**Death and the Meaning of Life**

The topic of death raises more questions than answers. What happens when a person dies? Is there an afterlife? How does one deal with the loss of a loved one? How do our funeral practices compare with those of other religions and cultures? But the topic of death also raises personal questions of life: What is the meaning and purpose of our existence? What can I accomplish in my time here? How should I treat my elders, my peers, and my juniors who will predecease or survive me? While we will all experience death, too few of us talk about death. This seminar intends to begin that life-long discussion by considering death from a variety of angles. We will look at death and popular music and culture, death and the medical profession, the business of death, and the psychological impact of death. We will look at how other religions and cultures view death and deal with the dead. We will also explore various types of death, from illness and disease to suicide, murder, and genocide. Presentations by outside speakers as well as field trips to a local funeral home, the Gettysburg Battlefield, and the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., will complement the in-class discussions.

*Instructor: Professor Charles (Buz) Myers, Department of Religious Studies*
FYS 153-2
Faster, Higher, Stronger:
Is There a Limit to Athletic Performance?

How fast can a human run? How high can one jump? Will someone long jump thirty feet? World records are what have been done in the past but what will the future hold? This seminar will explore the factors that contribute to the limits of athletic performance and determine if there is a ceiling that is being approached perhaps by the next generation. Students will use statistics to examine the progression of world records in several sporting events. Historically significant milestones will be highlighted including the four minute mile and Bob Beamon’s Olympic long jump. The factors contributing to athletic performance include the anatomy of muscle and bone to determine breaking points, physiological limits of energy production, biomechanical analysis of an athlete’s technique, sports nutrition, “flow” in sport psychology, legal and illegal use of ergogenic aids, equipment and product design, and technological advancements. Each student will select a current world record and through investigation predict the limit of which the human body is capable.

Instructor: Professor David Petrie, Department of Health Sciences

FYS 155-2
Cancer in Society: A War Against Immortality

This course will explore the historical evolution of society’s struggle to understand what cancer is and how to treat it. The modern view distinguishes cancer cells by their apparent ability to multiply forever. In contrast, normal cells have defined life spans. To insure genetic stability, normal dividing cells are systematically killed, and their components recycled into new and healthier versions. Cancer cells overcome the normal cycle of death and replacement. If given the proper nutrients they proliferate forever, achieving a state of immortality. Thus the ongoing war against cancer is paradoxically, a war against immortality. The modern view of cancer evolved from nearly 4000 years of observation, discovery, debate, and modeling, with emphasis shifting over the centuries from humoral balance to cell structure to mutation theory. In 1971 President Richard Nixon enacted the National Cancer Act, declaring a “War on Cancer.” In some ways we are winning that war. Today the cancer field is less disparate and more uniform than ever. The best of many areas in science have come together to pave the way for a new era of discovery. Hundreds of cancer-causing genes have been identified. Understanding the role these gene products play in controlling cell proliferation and avoiding cell death has given rise to new hopes and promises. In the U.S. death rates against prostate, breast, lung, and colorectal cancers are in decline. As the population becomes more educated, certain risk behaviors are also in decline. The first anti-cancer vaccine has been developed. More cancers today are treatable than ever before. However, in certain areas we are losing ground. The outcome of too many cancers still remains grim; the incidence of others is alarmingly on the rise; and unexplained cancer disparities exist in various ethnic groups. This course will explore society’s historic struggle with understanding cancer by reviewing past and present models of cause, prevention, treatment, and cure. As always, continued education is key to winning the fight.

Instructor: Professor Robert Garrity, Department of Chemistry

FYS 156-1
Bread and Circuses:
The Politics of Food in the Past and Present

We all need to eat, that’s a fact of life, but beyond eating as a biological necessity, what we eat, with whom, and how we eat has always been closely linked to the way a society functions (or doesn’t). From the Roman Emperors offering the plebeians bread in ancient Rome, to Marie Antoinette (supposedly) exclaiming, “let them eat cake”, food is highly political. This seminar takes a comparative look at both the ancient and modern worlds in regard to how societies have been organized (often unequally) around the way we grow and eat our food. In particular, the seminar draws upon two approaches: an historical approach based upon the archaeology of the ancient world, and a comparative approach based in anthropology that looks in particular at the state of the modern world. Case studies which we will examine will include examples as diverse as ancient Rome, the Irish Potato Famine, and the increase today in the popularity of Fair Trade. The
Is this the end of the world or the beginning of a new one?

Seminar will look at questions such as: Everybody has to eat, but why do some people feast on food (and even throw it out), while others starve? How have people organized food production in the past and how is this different (or similar) to today? How do we explain the widespread malnutrition in the world today despite advances in food production techniques? Were food shortages more or less prevalent in the past, when technology was less developed? Why does it matter knowing where our food comes from?

By the end of the course, students will have acquired the necessary critical thinking skills to evaluate the way food production and consumption is organized in the modern world and in turn contextualize this within a historical framework, as well as in a very practical way make informed choices about food consumption in daily life.

Instructor: Professor Benjamin Luley, Departments of Classics and Anthropology

**FYS 156-2**

Green Eggs and Government Cheese: Food for Environmental Sustainability

What is a sustainable food system? What does it have to do with green eggs and government cheese, or with ham? In this class we’ll think about eggs, cheese, ham, and various other such delectable edibles in ways that help us ponder the connections between food and global, national, and local environmental issues including climate change, land use, and community health. We will not only read and write about food but we will also analyze food films and go on field trips (for example, to a local organic farm). In addition, we will participate in community focused activities with the College’s Center for Public Service to explore the interrelations between the health of our environments, our bodies, and our communities. The final research project will provide recommendations for sustainable food policies in local communities.

_Instructor: Professor Salma Monani, Department of Environmental Studies_

**FYS 157-2**

Food, Water, Shelter, Song: Staying Human on a Planet in Transition

Climate instability? Peak oil? Overpopulation? Malnutrition? Glaciers shrinking? Great rivers drying up before they reach the sea? Siberian forests on fire all summer and Pakistan flooded for months on end? Is this the end of the world or the beginning of a new one? Is this a crisis with no real remedy in sight or an opportunity to build a more balanced, more just, more resilient human presence in the world?

This course examines the human-earth relationship in terms of fundamental human needs for food, water, and shelter and explores the systems that shape our choices with regard to these essentials of human life. Secondly, it seeks to build a bridge between science-based information and citizen action in search of strategies for staying human—and humane—on a planet in transition.

_Instructor: Professor William Lane, Department of English_

**FYS 159-4**

A Day in the Life: 24 Hours in Literature and Film

From the hit show 24 to coming of age comedies such as Superbad, we remain fascinated with how much or how little can happen to us in one day. This course studies exclusively literature and film that cover events that take place over 24 hours. We examine how literature represents the close passage of moments as well as the profound transformations and stasis that might occur in one day. How do authors and filmmakers choose to represent the details of everyday existence? What gets close attention? Perhaps more importantly, what gets left out? What are the psychological and ethical implications of such inclusions and omissions? Can one’s life really change unalterably in one day?

_Instructor: Professor Sarah Sillin, Department of English_

**FYS 161-2**

Graphic Novels: Sex, War, and Literary Revolution

For decades, comics were read outside the classroom as an escape from “serious” reading, either too suggestive or trivial to merit study. This seminar examines how now—even as comics remain controversial for their graphic depictions of violence and sexuality—museums, libraries, and college classes recognize their rich visuals and narratives. Texts like Maus, Persepolis, Fun Home, and Scott Pilgrim offer a fresh look at familiar literary topics, ranging from war to adolescence. Students explore how graphic narratives challenge readers by combining image and text. When are comics funny and serious? Why have they become the hot new thing to read? And what happens when we view them as “high brow” art?

_Instructor: Professor William Lane, Department of English_

**FYS 162-2**

Math as Muse: Exploring the Relationship Between Math and Art

The intersection of mathematics and art is larger than you might expect, incorporating painting, music, dance, architecture, sequences, ratios, geometry and algorithms. From ancient civilizations to the current day, artists have employed geometry, sometimes intentionally and sometimes unwittingly, to
What underlies humans’ diverse relationship with animals?

During the 1960s young people were crucial to transforming American society. This course examines social and cultural transformations in the US during this decade. The focus is on youth’s participation in movements including the Freedom Movement, the Women’s Liberation Movement, and art and cultural movements. The course examines the importance of young people in revitalizing society and making the US more egalitarian. It explores how the efforts to bring about peace and justice led young people themselves to change. The course reflects on lessons that are relevant to youth creating change today.

Instructor: Professor Kimberly Spayd, Department of Sociology

FYS 171-4 Encountering Animals

Introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Human Animal Studies. This course invites students to collectively examine modern human-animal relationships in cross-cultural, geographic perspective. Students will learn how to question, research, analyze, and represent the historical, economic, cultural, ethical, and political geographies of various non-human animals. Classic and contemporary readings, films, and popular media sources will be supplemented by field trips, research and service-learning opportunities, and interactions with local animals and their caregivers in order to provide students with a rich and supportive learning environment as they together address questions such as, What underlies humans’ diverse relationships with animals in different places and times? How are humans’ relationships to animals shaped by our own forms of diversity? How are the struggles of humanity linked to the struggles of animals? The course is intended to be flexible, positive, collaborative, and student-centered; thus students will be expected to contribute their own learning goals and questions.

Instructor: Professor Monica Ogra, Department of Environmental Studies

FYS 172 Why Suzy Won’t Take Science and Dan Won’t Play With Dolls: The Role of Gender in Science and Society

Statistics show that some areas of science are unattractive to women (and equally unattractive to African Americans and Hispanics). The controversy over this lack of diversity has affected every level of the academy, from kindergarten teachers to Harvard’s president. Why are some areas of science diverse and others simply are not? And why should we care?

This course is connected with the Center for Public Service, and therefore has designated Service-Learning opportunities. In particular, course participants will mentor fifth graders in an after-school robotics program.

In this writing-intensive course, we will identify our personal gender schemas, which will help us connect our future trajectories as scholars to our past roles in the classroom and the home. We will become familiar with the current research on diversity in the sciences, research that spans a tremendous range of disciplines in order to make us informed participants in the debate on not only who is doing science, but perhaps who should be and could be doing science.

Instructor: Professor Renée Lehman, Department of Health Sciences

FYS 178-2 Complementary Medicine: A Cultural and Scientific Inquiry

Complementary and alternative medicines are so interwoven in the fabric of American healthcare that it may no longer be relevant to draw a firm line between complementary and conventional medicine. Many complementary medicine techniques represent different ways of thinking about wellness, health, and disease, which are deeply rooted in distinct cultural histories, philosophies, and languages. In this course, we will explore cross-cultural perspectives on wellness and disease, and the scientific underpinnings of complementary and alternative therapies. Students will learn about complementary and alternative therapies such as acupuncture, naturopathy, herbal medicine, meditation, chiropractic, therapeutic massage, as well as many other therapies. Students will have the opportunity to meet experienced and distinguished practitioners of complementary and alternative therapies. Learning will involve experiential activities, multisensory experiences, journaling, group discussion, and individual/small group projects.

Instructor: Professor Sharon Stephenson, Department of Physics

FYS 178-2 Voice of the Rebel in America

When an individual rebels against the status quo, he or she implicitly
affirms the existence of a larger community and is thereby often compelled to pursue social justice. America enjoys a rich tradition of radical thought and behavior, from the Boston Tea Party to the Civil Rights movement to environmental activism. Of course, rebellion can be precarious for the unprepared: reckless revolt may have dire consequences for both the individual and the community. This seminar will scrutinize examples of the rebel’s voice in American culture, in an attempt to discern between fruitful revolt and fruitless rant. In a series of written assignments and group discussions, students will be prompted to respond to a diverse selection of readings and films, encouraged to interrogate the American zeitgeist, and asked to examine their own role in the evolution of our democracy.

Instructor: Professor Dustin Beall Smith, Department of English

FYS 179-2
How much of Science Fiction is Science Fact

While science fiction, in all its various incarnations, may be limited only by the author’s imagination, the draw of the genre for many is in the tantalizing possibilities of reality among the fiction. Spaceships, powered by faster than light technology, ferry humans to other worlds in the distant future where they encounter creatures beyond our comprehension. Just how far-fetched are these tales? The answer is perhaps not so far-fetched as one might think. Much of science fiction is just that; fiction, but some of these stories have taken from, and even inspired, great works of real science. This course draws from the cannon of modern cinematic and literary science fiction to observe how well these works obey, or do not obey, the physical laws of nature. Prepare yourself for the real world of science fiction where, as Carl Sagan said, “there are wonders enough out there without our inventing any.”

Instructor: Professor Ryan Johnson, Department of Physics

FYS 182-3
Words and Worlds

What is language? How does the mind create language? What do words tell us about the way we think, about who we are? How does the way we talk reflect our views and mores with respect to gender, social status, education and ethnicity? How do the language commonalities reveal the universal community of the human mind? This course is intended to introduce students to the study of language as a window into human nature. As we increasingly live in a world where words impinge on our every moment of consciousness, studying language helps us all understand the way our words reveal and shape our world. By having students examine the ways in which language is formed and used, it will increase their awareness of the nature of the human being and of their own linguistic identity in a social and cultural context. Comparison of languages is intended to enhance the student’s understanding of the differences among languages as well as the universal aspects of them. Through a variety of sources (film, literature, music, and media), we will address a series of linguistic questions in order to dispel certain common misconceptions that people have about language and language use.

Instructor: Professor Cristina Martínez, Department of Spanish

FYS 182-5
The AIDS Play: Cultural Phenomenon in a Time of Crisis

For roughly 15 years, from the early 1980’s to the late 1990’s, certain communities in the United States underwent a transformational crisis prompted by the AIDS epidemic. Professional theatre circles, longtime centers of LGBT acceptance, were particularly hard hit, and several artists responded by creating powerful new works. This course examines those turbulent times and the works born out of them. In addition to reading and discussing several of these plays, students will collaborate to create a new work of AIDS-related drama. From interviews with people who lived through those years and contemporary news and commentary, students will compile a work of Documentary Theatre, and present it in a staged reading.

Instructor: Professor Richard Sautter, Department of Theatre Arts
FYS 193-4
Blood on the Moon: Literature and the American Civil War

Students read and analyze great poems, novels, short stories, and other literature of the American Civil War, and develop understandings of the myth of the Lost Cause, slavery and race, the concept of “hallowed ground,” and apply these to present day economic and political issues. Literature, songs, and movies about the war give us the feeling of what it was like to be in America (and on this ground at Gettysburg) in the 1860’s, and show us how the war came to be seen afterward and how we are “still Rebels, still Yankees.” Was Lincoln a racist and does he still matter? Are the movies Gettysburg and Gods and Generals accurate and fair? Is the Old South a lovely civilization gone with the wind? Why are there red and blue states now? Did the war resolve whether a nation “so conceived and so dedicated” as ours “may long endure?” What ghosts still haunt the campus, the nation, and our own sense of who we are?

Instructor: Professor Kent Gramm, Civil War Era Studies

FYS 187-4
Games and Computation

This seminar is a computational look at a variety of games, focusing mainly on combinatorial games (e.g. Chess), games of chance (e.g. Backgammon), and games of imperfect information (e.g. Poker). Students will come to understand not only how we mathematically model such games, but also how we compute optimal (or approximately optimal) play for such games. Sophocles wrote, “One must learn by doing the thing; for though you think you know it, you have no certainty, until you try.” Thus, students will not merely read about game-playing techniques from fields such as Game Theory and Artificial Intelligence, but will also apply them through both handwritten and computer programming exercises. No prior programming experience is necessary; students will be introduced to simple programming languages and techniques as part of the course. By the completion of the course, students will understand the fundamentals for reasoning about many games, gain a sense of how the computer can serve as a power tool for the mind, and experience the joy of discovering new and deep insights into the artificial micro-worlds of games.

Instructor: Professor Todd Neller, Department of Computer Science

FYS 184-4
“You’re not Yelping:” From the Critique of Judgement to Consumer-Rating Culture

Yelp, TripAdvisor, RottenTomatoes, RateMyProfessors, like, dislike… Even though People—“a Yelp for people,” in the words of its creators—faced some backlash in the fall of 2015, it seems that nowadays everything is available for everyone to rate and that our compulsion to order, evaluate, and judge has grown almost limitless. In this course, we study a number of examples—late 19th century French painting and literature, contemporary American fiction and nonfiction, kitsch and lowbrow art, mass tourism, as well as recent trends such as the cronut, kale, cat cafés, etc.—in order to see the ways in which judgment and taste have been fashioned and have evolved from the late 19th to the 21st century. How have external forces (such as institutions, ideology, mass culture, and technology) contributed to shaping taste and perception? Conversely, how have taste and trends affected the sensible world? Can we—should we—articulate and/or reconcile subjective, individual judgment with objective norms?

Instructor: Professor Todd Neller, Department of Computer Science

FYS 198-2
Tryin’ to Find a Way Back Home: An Introduction to the Literature and Legacy of Homelessness in America

“How have tastes and trends affected the sensible world?”

“Homelessness” is a term that conjures up unsavory images in the popular imagination, flat, generic clichés that owe as much to fear as to fact. The truth is that children account for a shocking proportion of the homeless in America today, as do women fleeing abuse, as do the working poor, many of whom find it impossible to secure affordable housing in many of our cities. If working men and women and school-attending children number among the homeless, why do the stereotypes of the pushy panhandler and the drunken skid-row bum continue to dominate our

Instructor: Professor Tara J. Sommer, Department of History
collective vision of homelessness? Why does this population continue to grow? What can be done to alleviate the circumstances surrounding homelessness in America? Should we act? Should we care?

Designed in collaboration with the Center for Public Service, this course combines the traditional academic component with experiential education through a number of Service-Learning opportunities. Each student will participate in regular service commitments in the local community throughout the semester, and the keystone of the course will be a group Service-Learning trip in October. We will meet and work with many people who are or who have been homeless, as well as quite a few who have dedicated their lives to serving those less fortunate than themselves. If experience is any guide, we will like a great many of the people with whom we will come into contact; we most certainly will learn from all of them.

In the classroom portion of this course, we will study portrayals of homelessness in popular works of fiction and film in order to refine our understanding of how the American understanding of homelessness has evolved since the Great Depression. Some of these works will reflect common assumptions about the homeless while others may challenge such views, but all will contribute to our understanding of how we as a people face the realities of poverty, homelessness, and social inequities.

Instructor: Professor Christopher Fee, Department of English

Examples of Special Events in 2015 FYS Courses

- Field trip to National Security Agency
- Field trip to NYC to see Broadway show
- Performance by Arlo Guthrie at local theater
- Guest lecturer from pharmaceutical company on Malaria vaccines
- Overnight hike on the Appalachian Trail
- Pizza-making demonstration by renowned chef
- Presentation by head athletic trainer for Gettysburg College
- Field trip to Ellis Island
- Guest lecture by curator of Museum of the City of New York
- Visit with head historian at Gettysburg National Military Park

As discussed at the start of this booklet, you should select your First-Year Seminar based on your interests, choosing topics about which you are passionate and material you are eager to learn. The Gettysburg Curriculum is quite flexible and most students will find meeting the curricular goals to be a straightforward process, so you don’t need to worry about required courses as you begin. Nonetheless, it’s true that many First-Year Seminars allow students to meet curricular goals, and some count towards the coursework you will eventually need in certain majors and minors.

For the most up to date information, you should check this webpage: www.gettysburg.edu/about/offices/provost/registrar/courses_fulfillingthegettysburgcurriculum.dot