

FYS 111: First Year Seminar II (4 credit hours) MWF 10:40-11:50

These courses are designed to develop students' abilities to construct research papers, craft and deliver presentations, and engage in ethical reasoning on complex issues. These courses will also help students reflect on questions of vocation, that is, on the ways in which we are called to use our abilities to serve others.

Spring 2020 First Year Seminar Course Descriptions: (Section)

(A) Art Shock: Art's Power to Provoke (Art Shock)

Lindsay Twa (Art)

From a "gash in the Earth" that memorializes the Vietnam War to the indecency of a urinal turned upside down and exhibited on a pedestal, art and controversy have gone hand in hand throughout history. This course will examine the history of art's power to provoke and how public skirmishes over artworks can illuminate changing values, social structures, and identities. Through art controversies, we will interrogate the ethical, political, and social positions that impact culture and society.

(B) The Ethics of Sport

John Bart (Communication)

Sport is an integral part of our culture. This course will examine the nature of competition and use that frame to learn about ethical theory. The course will then use ethical reasoning to examine controversial issues in sports. Topics will include paying college athletes, performance enhancing drugs, fan behavior, acceptable physical danger, sports equity, and technology.

(C) Rock of Ages: Music in Society

Mike Nitz (Communication)

This course will critically examine the universal language and nature of music, exploring a variety of musical genres. We will try to understand the motive behind the production and creation of music. We will learn how music has been used in various contexts. This involves exploring a variety of audience perspectives. Particular attention will be paid to the impact music has on the structure and process of society. Students will learn how to ethically examine musical texts (both audio and visual), analyze audience responses, and use ethical reasoning to analyze music and its impact on society.

(D) Media Activism

Kathleen McCollough (Communication)

What role does/should the media play in social change? Media activism appears as a visible part of social movements such as Occupy Wall Street, Arab Spring, #BlackLivesMatter, and #MeToo. In this course, we will work to formulate ethical perspectives on the power and limits of media to contribute to social change or whether it's all "slacktivism." To do so, we will consider examples of media activism as they take shape in a variety of media forms such as documentary, 4Chan/Anonymous, and social media (Twitter, Tumblr, blogs).

(E) Crimes, Cops, and Culprits

Cheryl Jackson-Nelson (English)

In this course, students will read accounts and experience videos of different types of real-life crimes and discuss pertinent elements of each crime and the behavior of the perpetrators, identifying similarities and differences in personalities, upbringing, motives operandi, and victim selection. This in-depth exploration of the criminal process will challenge students to critically analyze the ethical implications concerning the crimes, the criminals, the victims, and those involved in the apprehension of suspects and the conviction of perpetrators, as well as possible means to reduce the number of crimes and the recidivism rate among offenders.

(F) WTF, English?

Danny Gerling (English)

Why the fuss? Is texting indeed eroding language? Is "y'all" improper? Is politically correct language obscuring the truth? What does the MPAA mean when they tell us a movie contains "some language"? Is academic English necessary to communicate certain ideas, or is it merely for prestige? This course considers consequential debates in the way we use language today and asks you to determine where it should go from here. We'll research similar debates in the history of English and look at comparative disputes in other languages to the end of gaining a richer understanding of English and its future. Our readings and discussions will intersect with class, race, gender, and sexuality as we analyze contemporary ethical dilemmas centered around language.

(G) All the World, Staged: Plays on Truth

(All the World, Staged)

Debbie Hanson (English)

"All the World, Staged: Plays on Truth" examines plays inspired by actual people and events and addresses the obligations of both the playwrights and their audiences with regard to such material. In addition to discussing the ethical issues raised by these plays, students will also be asked to consider how much poetic license authors can take when basing their work on factual materials and how much responsibility they bear in terms of evaluating the truths of such situations when they are presented in a fictionalized form.

(H) Loving Big Brother: The Ethics of Surveillance

(Loving Big Brother)

Darcie Rives-East (English)

We live in a surveillance culture, one in which we are monitored by the government and corporations in the name of national security and economic growth. Further, we also watch one another through social media platforms like Twitter and Instagram. This course will use literature and film, such as George Orwell's *1984*, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, and David Fincher's *The Social Network*, to examine how popular culture represents the benefits and drawbacks of surveillance, while also considering the origins of American panopticism. We will ask: do we oppose surveillance or, like Winston Smith, do we ultimately love Big Brother?

(I) The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: A Literary Exploration of Character

(The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly)

Beth Boyens (English)

Literature is filled with conflicts of good versus evil. Determining a character's character is often easy: the good wear white and do right; the bad wear black and do wrong. What, though, is our response when those lines blur, when characters and real-life people are simultaneously good and bad—or neither? And what does the way we label another's character say about our own? This course will explore literary depictions of good, bad, ugly, and beautiful to wrestle with questions of how and why we draw such lines and whether they are helpful or hurtful—whether the labels themselves are good, bad, or ugly.

(J) Music & Times of The Beatles

Peter Folliard (Music)

Many revere The Beatles as the greatest band of all time, while others would say this is overrated...what would you say? This course will explore the rise of John, Paul, George, and Ringo and track their musical and cultural influences. We will look in-depth at the evolution of their music from The Quarry Men to Abbey Road, from American pop covers to creating new genres of rock that continue to influence us all 50 years later. We'll examine how The Beatles engaged with the radical social changes of the 1960s including social class, gender, and race.

(K) HA! Laughter Humor Comedy 2.0

Richard Bowman (Religion)

Jokes, sketch comedy, stand-up comedy, late night comics, sit-coms, rom-coms. Comedy is an integral part of human life. Comedy can amuse and entertain but still offend. Laughter can wound as well as heal, condemn as well as commend. Humor can instruct, critique, and transform society. View, read, and think about stand-up comedy and comedians. Ha! FYS doesn't get any better than this!!

(L) Global Poverty

Stephen Minister (Religion)

We often hear that more than one billion people live on less than a dollar a day. But what does this really mean and do we have a responsibility to do anything about it? This course will explore the realities and causes of poverty in a global context in order to ask what can and should be done in response to global poverty and who should do it. We will continue to develop our abilities in both written and oral communication as strategies for thinking through this question in a critical, cooperative, and creative manner.

(M) Can I Be Moral? Exploring Virtue Ethics

(Can I be Moral?)

Julie Swanstrom (Religion)

This course explores virtue ethics, an ethical theory that focuses moral judgment on the person rather than on their actions. After encountering classical virtue ethics, students will explore difficulties associated with it, including questioning whether it can incorporate religious belief, can apply in modern contexts, can apply to all humans, and can apply to non-human animals. Students will be able to explain, assess, and apply virtue ethics to various situations; assignments and projects will allow students to critique and respond to virtue ethics and its critics. Issues of gender, race, class, and economics are frequent topics of discussion in this class.

(N) The Grand Endeavor of Making and Taking Drugs

(Grand Endeavor of Drug Making)

Mark Larson (Biology)

It has been said that the creation and manufacturing of prescription medication is second only to warfare in terms of its total scale of human effort. The number of pieces that work together to fill our medicine cabinets is immense. However, there is a considerable range of considerations that go into drug making – scientific, economic, philosophical, and ethical – that allow the process of drug making to reflect who we are and what we believe as human beings. This class will examine the grand endeavor of drug making and the decisions that go into what gets made and consumed.

(O) Space Out in FYS

Andrew Klose (Chemistry)

Space travel and exploration have fascinated humans for millennia and have been the source of many important technical innovations during the last 50 years. In this course, we will investigate space exploration from the space race of the 1950s and 60s through SpaceX today. Additionally, we will study current trends and future innovations in space travel and tourism. Our discussions will focus on the rapid technical developments, ethical concerns, and economic implications of space exploration.

(P) Bad Blood: From Taylor Swift to Elizabeth Holmes

(Bad Blood)

Jason Harris (Business Administration)

Over the last several years, the world has been shocked by various scandals - such as those of Theranos, Wells Fargo, Bernie Madoff and Harvey Weinstein. These scandals raise questions regarding society's values. In this course, we will explore the ethical and legal aspects of several business scandals. Students will learn to analyze the causes of scandals and examine proposed solutions to avoid future scandals. And yes, we look at the various scandals involving Taylor Swift.

(Q) The Power of Different: Beyond Diagnosis, Classification, and Labels

(Power of Different: Beyond Labels)

Matthew Johnson (Education)

As a society, what are we supposed to do with the evidence that suggests the characteristics that can cause our lives to be difficult (inability to relate to others, learning problems, cognitive challenges, for example) often come with unique skills and aptitudes (creativity, artistic ability, remembering numbers, to name a few)? For example, some suggest that Albert Einstein could not have made his historic scientific breakthroughs were it not for his daydreamy, distractible mind. What if we focused on the potential of an individual rather than diagnoses or labels like intellectual disability, autism, ADHD, learning disability, etc. This course will explore that possibility.

(R) Political Trials: Rhetoric, Ethics, and the Law

(Political Trials)

Joel Johnson (Government)

Political trials—such as those of Socrates, Leopold and Loeb, and the Nuremberg war criminals—engage fundamental questions regarding society's values. In this course, we will explore the legal, ethical, and rhetorical dimensions of a number of famous political trials. We will focus not only on matters of guilt or innocence, but also on the bigger issues the trials bring to light, including the proper relationship between the individual and society, the role of religion in public life, inequality and discrimination, treason and patriotism, and the moral status of wartime acts.

(S) Aloha 'Oe

Mike Mullin (History)

Is it ever okay for the citizens of one country to forcibly seize another? What if that seizure produces a better standard of living, not right away, but over the course of a century? These are the types of questions the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy produced in 1893. The revolutionaries wanted the United States to annex the islands, but was such an annexation moral and legal? Using Hawaii as its focus, this course examines how America came to claim Hawaii as its own, even when most Hawaiians wished to remain under the control of the Hawaiian monarchy.

(T) 1619: Slavery, History, Memory

Matthew Pehl (History)

2019 marked the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the first African slaves to American colonies. To mark the event, the *New York Times* produced a remarkable series of features reflecting on slavery's legacy. The *Times*'s series, in turn, drew heated critiques from people who disagreed with the paper's emphasis on slavery. Using the NYT's "1619" project as a launchpad, this course will examine the contentious legacy of slavery in American history, memory, culture, and politics.

(U) Waking India: Gandhi and the Struggle for Independence

(Waking India)

Margaret Preston (History)

In 1885, the Indian National Congress (INC) formed to fight for India's Independence. The INC would eventually be led by Mohandas K. Gandhi. This course will wrestle with the history of the INC and look at the life of Gandhi. His fight was not only to bring independence to India, but to do so through peaceful civil disobedience. In addition, Gandhi unsuccessfully, but peacefully, struggled to overcome the sectarian divisions which would lead to a geographic split and the creation of Pakistan in 1947. Ironically, Gandhi will be dead within a year—assassinated, not by a Muslim, but a radical Hindu.

(V) Applied Batman Psychology

Benjamin Jeppsen (Psychology)

Batman is one of the most popular characters in modern pop culture. One reason for his popularity is that he is a superhero despite his lack of super powers. There is something about the real possibility of being Batman that is inspiring (if we only had his resources!). In this class we will take an in-depth study of the Batman and his mask: Bruce Wayne. What can we learn from Batman to be super-versions of ourselves? What ethical dilemmas does Batman face, and how would you respond to them? This isn't just Batman Psychology, it's *Applied* Batman Psychology.

(W) The First War of Physics

Nathan Grau (Physics)

During one short period in the last century, the joy of scientific discovery turned deadly. Physicists in the US, Germany and Russia were pitted in a race to develop the first atomic bomb. The winner would ultimately decide the outcome of the Second World War. This course explores the rapid progression between the discovery of fission until the first bomb was dropped on Hiroshima by exploring the people, places and situations involved in the race both here in the US and abroad.

(X) “Do I Belong?”: The History of Diversity & Immigration in South Dakota

(Immigration in South Dakota)

Sam Ogdie (Modern Foreign Language)

We like to think of the United States as a country that welcomes newcomers. Today that notion is being severely challenged. All of us, except Native Americans, came from ancestors that arrived here often under difficult situations. Focusing on the immigration history of South Dakota, we will research if our ancestors were treated ethically. We will explore the difficulties that each group experienced, the areas where they established their homes, the businesses that they started, and the advances that they made to our city and state to form what this state is today.