

FYS 110: First Year Seminar I (4 credit hours) MWF 10:40-11:50

These courses are designed to develop students' abilities in writing, critical thinking, and information literacy through critical inquiry on a specific topic. FYS 110 courses also include an orientation component to help students adjust to Augustana and learn about resources and opportunities that are available.

Fall 2017 First Year Seminar Course Descriptions:

FYS 110A Forming a More Perfect Union: Designing and Debating the Constitution

Joel Johnson (Government)

This course is an introduction to the framing and ratification of the U.S. Constitution. We will review the events leading up to the Philadelphia Convention of 1787, discuss the issues that arose during drafting, and immerse ourselves in the debate over ratification. We will see how the Federalists powerfully argued in favor of the new political order, while the Anti-Federalists offered shrewd warnings about the dangers of centralizing power. By engaging some of the most insightful political thought of the modern era, students will better understand not only the fundamentals of government, but also the characteristics of effective written and oral argumentation.

FYS 110B Fecal Matters: A Critical History of our Global Sanitation Crisis

Daniel Gerling (English)

2.4 billion people worldwide have no access to a toilet; meanwhile, Americans flush more than 2 trillion gallons of drinking water down the toilet annually. Neither of these trends is sustainable, and we are at a moment of significant change. In this course, we critically analyze the social and environmental consequences of the way our culture and others treat excrement. Using essays, field trips, and interviews with engineers, authors, and activists, we examine various cultures at key historical moments when the role of excrement shifted—for example, from a commodity to a waste. We also consider the future of sanitation technologies and cultures.

FYS 110C Sherlocked: Reading the Detective

Darcie Rives-East

Sherlock Holmes remains one of the most famous characters in literature and popular culture. First created in 1888 by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the great detective lives on in film, television, and print, and has inspired countless imitators, from *House* to *CSI*. What is the appeal of Sherlock Holmes, and why has he endured for over 100 years? This course will explore this question by returning to the original Doyle stories, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. We will see how critical thinking, the focus of FYS 110, is essential to Holmes's allure in print and on screen.

FYS 110D Coming of Age in American Literature

Mitch Harris (English)

The coming of age tale, or *bildungsroman*, is a common motif in literary history. And growing up (or “coming of age”) is something that you, as a college student, are in the process of doing—leaving your family to embark upon your college experience and begin a life of your own choosing. In this course, we will examine literature that explores the continuities and discontinuities of various coming of age experiences in the United States. In turn, we will explore how these novels can help us reflect upon, and grow to understand, our own formative life experiences

FYS 110 E Selfie

Sandra Looney (English)

Selfie. How do you capture yourself in writing? What shows the self? When the subject (self) is linked to an object (place), how does the subject revealed. Through the lens of memoir. Selfie presents the pictures of the self-grounded in a certain locality, where the self is forged into uniqueness and complexity. The definition of selfie is not “licking the mirror.” Instead the self recognizes her or his kinship with place. Whether it is chosen or thrust upon us by circumstances, place develops who we are and who we become.

FYS 110F The Rise and Fall of Nations

Cory Conover (History)

What makes a country great? What factors cause the decay or even collapse of societies? To understand the dynamics of creation and destruction, this class analyzes examples drawn from history--including the Greeks, Romans, the British Empire, and Nazi Germany. We will think broadly to consider culture, economy, military, politics, and natural resources. With these lessons, we examine the present to assess the fates of nations today.

FYS 110G Hacking the Human Genome: past, present, and future of designer babies

Cecelia Miles (Biology)

Science is closer than ever to producing genetically modified human beings, GM babies. Cutting-edge biotech discoveries have made this a real possibility. Should they do it? While the technological breakthroughs are brand new, ideas about manipulation of human genetics are not. We will examine the past, present, and future of “designer babies” by reading, discussing, writing, and constructing arguments to challenge each other on this controversial topic. What does the future hold for engineering the “perfect baby”?

FYS 110H Rock and Roll, An Examination

Michael Mullin (History)

Rock and Roll is more than just a musical form; it is a vehicle for understanding much of America’s history. Rock and Roll was essential to both the counter-culture and Civil Rights Movement. It separated youth from their parents and spawned new clothing and hairstyles. Opponents of Rock and Roll claimed it was ruining the youth of America and the nation’s social values. This course uses Rock and Roll to explore America from the 1950s until today.

FYS 110I Keep Calm and Solve for x

Martha Gregg (Mathematics)

Math: what has it done for you lately? Math is essential to many of the technological advances that make our modern lives longer, better, and richer. We’ll learn about some of those advances and the mathematical engines that drive them – how game theory saves lives by optimizing kidney exchanges, how graph theory makes your internet searches more efficient, why understanding conditional probability is important to making decisions about medical treatment. Disclaimer: this is not a math class; there is no mathematical prerequisite, and no computational work will be graded (although we may actually compute a few things)!

FYS 110J Get Lost: The Art of Wandering

Beth Boyens (English)

Wandering in the unknown has occupied minds of explorers, philosophers, artists, and writers for centuries, yet we are often expected to know exactly where we are going and how we will get

there. In this course, we will consider connotations and social constructions of wandering, being lost, and purposeful traveling; orientation and disorientation; crossable borders and impenetrable barriers. Examining the writings of those who brave the wilderness, map the unreadable, lose themselves in the unfamiliar, and wander the landscape of the mind, we will ultimately explore what wandering and getting lost have to do with vocation, education, inquiry, and discovery.

FYS 110K Music and Ideology: Passion vs. Expression

Russell Svenningsen (Music)

“Music is inscribed between noise and silence, in the space of the social codification it reveals” (Jacques Attali). Throughout the history of art we see change; change in medium, change in technique and a change in the perception and functioning of the artist within society. In the art of music, one way we can observe this change, this development, is in the service of expression, specifically that of the composer in writing music or the instrumentalist/singer in bringing a composer’s music to life. To what extent is expression a vehicle for ideology? Going further, in what ways has musical expression been not only a reflection of culture but a harbinger of change? This course will explore the related ideas of expression and passion and the ways in which they not only reveal passion but catalyze change. This course is both historical and contextual, it will utilize music and the musicians who have made it to approach and seek to understand cultural development.

FYS 110L Dying to Know: Dying as Personal Journey in a Social Context

Sue Schrader (Sociology)

“Death will come to thee, and to thee, and to thee, but not to me.” Sentiments like this cloud our understanding of and preparedness for the dying process and the inevitable...death. What constitutes a life “well lived” and how does the answer to that question shape the conversation about what constitutes a “good death”? Using readings, film, and field trips, this course will invite reflections on the personal, social, economic, ethical, and familial implications of how, when, and where dying occurs.

FYS 110M A Passage into India: a History of the Making of British India

Margaret Preston (History)

In 1877 Queen Victoria became empress of India, making it the jewel in the crown of the British Colonial Empire. India was important to Britain in many ways including militarily, economically and socially. This course will introduce students to India and focus on how the sub-continent became essential to the British Empire. In addition to understanding the story of India’s colonization, the course will look into how Indians responded to Britain’s increasing political control of their nation.

FYS 110N Lost Tribes and Buried Cities

Kristen Carlson (Anthropology)

This course provides an introduction to Archaeology and the deep history of human kind. Providing a world tour through time, we travel from our early origins in Africa through the cognitive development that emerges in the rock art caves of France. The course then travels through the development of agriculture in the Middle East to the emergence of complex societies throughout prehistory. Explore the exciting sites of Egypt, the Southwest of North America, and Stonehenge all while learning about the development of human kind.

FYS 110O Nevertheless, She Persisted

Heather Bart (Communications)

“She was warned. She was given an explanation. Nevertheless, she persisted.” Senator McConnell’s rebuke of Senator Elizabeth Warren ended with her official silencing. These words could just have easily be spoken to many women in the early days of the United States. This course examines the history of women’s rights movements from the middle 1800s to 1920 (suffrage). We will explore themes, rights sought, arguments for and against rights, and speeches from women in the movements. In other words, we study women who persisted. At the end of the semester, we relate elements of history to contemporary women’s rights issues.

FYS 110P Mere Rhetoric or Life Experience? You choose.

John Bart (Communications)

Human experience often calls forth rhetoric. Eulogies discuss the nature of life well lived. Commencement addresses discuss the nature of the educated person. Other addresses discuss social institutions like citizenship, education, marriage and personal responsibility. We will look at rhetoric, how to critique it, create it and learn from it. We will examine rhetoric’s role in the social fabric. As you begin your educational journey, we will think about that journey’s purpose.

FYS 110Q The Truth is Out There? Conspiracy Theories

Michael Nitz (Communications)

The world is full of great conspiracies. Did we really land on the moon? Is Bigfoot a government cover-up? Is AIDS a disease created by the CIA? This FYS course will utilize the tools of critical thinking, communication and effective writing to analyze conspiracy theories.

FYS 110R Baseball Heroes: Saints and Sinners, Saviors and Villains

Richard Bowman (Religion)

What are the characteristics of a baseball hero: on field performance or off field character? Who creates and promotes baseball heroes: journalists, team public relations departments, or players themselves? What are the roles of media (print, broadcast, and social) in the creation of heroes? Discover and discuss heroes from baseball’s storied past. Follow on Twitter today’s players. Who and what makes a baseball player a hero? You decide!

FYS 110S What Does it Mean to be Human?

Stephen Minister (Philosophy)

This course will explore some of the fundamental questions of life with philosophers from Plato to the present day. What does it mean to be human? Why are we here? What matters in life? What’s our relationship to others, to society, and to the world? How should we live? We will study a variety of answers to these questions as we think through them deeply for ourselves.

FYS 110T Economic Inequality

David Sorensen (Economics)

This seminar will examine economic inequality over time and across countries, including a discussion of poverty and standards of living. The measurement and representation of inequality will be examined, and multiple economic views and broader perspectives of fairness and justice will be discussed. Differences among groups within the United States will be considered, and measures to address economic inequality will also be discussed. In addition to the general FYS emphases on critical thinking and written and oral communication, the course will involve the use of multiple data sources and working with data.

FYS 110U How To Make Your Ideas Clear: Thinking Like Plutarch And Cicero

David O'Hara (Philosophy)

This course is an introduction to the writings of the ancient Greek philosopher Plutarch, and the Roman Stoic philosopher and legal orator Cicero. Both philosophers wrote letters and essays about how to be good students: how to read well, how to listen to lectures, how to think clearly, how to remember complex ideas, and how to make persuasive speeches. This course will focus on these writings, examining their content and their context, with the aim of learning from Plutarch and Cicero how to listen, think, and argue well. In short, this is a course about how to succeed in school.

FYS 110V Put Me in, Coach: The Reality of Disability in Our Society

Matthew Johnson (Education)

This course will introduce students to a variety of readings and activities to promote the development of perspective-taking, critical thinking, and constructive discussion skills necessary to analyze the experiences of children and adults with varying abilities (e.g., autism, Down syndrome, and others). The focus will be on the process of formulating thoughtful, intellectually appropriate responses to difficult questions. This course will also help students develop their ability to use written and oral communication as tools of thought, analysis, and argumentation.

FYS 110W Staging the Future

Jayna Gearhart Fitzsimmons (Theater)

Have you ever wished for the ability to see into the future? Contemporary playwrights imagine the future in a variety of ways—from sci-fi crime thrillers to dystopian dark comedies—and use drama to pose complex questions about our relationship to technology, our responsibility to our communities, our treatment of natural resources, and the way we define home, love, freedom, and personhood. By exploring new performance texts like *Speed of Light*, *Mr. Burns: a post-electric play*, *Urinetown: The Musical*, and *The Nether*, we will think together about how staging the future might impact the way we live today.

FYS 110X Not at the Dinner Table: Discussing Religion and Politics

Emily Wanless (Government)

Two things people are told to never discuss at the dinner table are religion and politics. Not at the Dinner Table: Discussing Religion and Politics allows students to do both. Focusing specifically on the relationship religion has with the political world, this course will analyze topics such as religion's impact on the development of our political preferences, presidents and the concept of civil religion, the influence religion and religious entities have on the legislative process, and Supreme Court case law on the 1st Amendment's Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses.

FYS 110Y Food Fights

Sherry Barkley (Exercise Science)

Diabetes, obesity, and heart disease are major health problems in the US and around the world. All of these can be affected by what we eat. Should we blame the fat in our diets? What about sugar or processed foods? Is there an advantage to organic foods? What about vegetarian, paleo, and other diets? Are there good foods? Bad foods? Who should be responsible for our food choices? Through readings, writings, and discussions, students will learn to critically evaluate the evidence surrounding the various arguments about what people should—or should not—be eating.