

**CRN #****Fall 2020 First-Year Seminar Course Descriptions**

These courses are only open to students who have not completed their First-Year Seminar Requirement.

**STANDARD LEVEL**

- 20101 COM 110-A, FYS: Navigating Media Landscape 4 credits**  
**Prof. A. Paradise**  
 This course will provide an overview of the history, structure, performance, content, effects, and future of mediated communication, including issues of media ownership, regulation, and media literacy. As a first-year writing-intensive seminar, students will engage in frequent writing assignments, rigorous analysis of texts, critical thinking, and information literacy. Open to First-Year Students only.  
*This course is the equivalent to COM 107 Mediated Communication.*
- 20237 ECO 110-A, FYS: The Economics of eBay 4 credits**  
**20238 ECO 110-B, FYS: The Economics of eBay 4 credits**  
**Prof. H. Kazemi**  
 Why do some items sell for such ridiculously high prices at auctions of reputable establishments such as Christie's, Bonham's, Sotheby's or even eBay? Has it ever occurred to you why the owners of a house listed for \$1.5 million last year cannot get 1/3 of that price this year? In this class we will examine the way consumers and businesses think and behave as rational entities. Open to First-Year Students only.  
*Fulfills the Cornerstone Social Scientific Inquiry Requirement and is the equivalent to ECO 176 Microeconomic Principles.*
- 20239 ECO 113-A, FYS: Everyday Economics 4 credits**  
**Prof. P. Chandra**  
 Why does popcorn cost more at the movies? What policies should the government enact to mitigate the climate crisis? Can rent control help solve the housing crisis faced by poor households in Boston and New York? Can dyeing elephant tusks really save elephants from poachers? Economics can be applied to help answer questions that range from relatively mundane to those that are really important. This course will introduce students to basic principles of microeconomics with emphasis on providing tools to analyze economic issues and problems we face every day.
- 20555 ENG 125-A, FYS: The Imaginary Primitive 4 credits**  
**Prof. J. Green**  
 Our seminar will focus on how the modern idea of Western "civilization" took shape in response to the image of the non-European, "native." Specifically, we will examine the "primitive" (and the related figures of the "cannibal," the "savage," and the "barbarian") in British and French literature and visual art as the essential—if often invented—figure at the heart of modern concepts of empire, subjectivity, aesthetics, ethics, and culture. Although much of our work will concentrate on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, we will begin by examining several foundational early modern and Enlightenment-era texts to see how images of first contact between so-called "natives" and European explorers influenced more contemporary discourses of anthropology, biology, social science, psychoanalysis, and imperial politics. Readings will examine several key contact zones between European and non-European peoples: Africa, India, Oceania, and the Middle East. Our semester will end with a section devoted to contemporary responses to European constructions of racial 'Otherness' from the Sudan, France, and England. Authors to be covered include William Shakespeare, Michel de Montaigne, Montesquieu, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Rudyard Kipling, Paul Gauguin, Joseph Conrad, W. Somerset Maugham, E.M. Forster, George Orwell, Marjane Satrapi, Tayeb Salih, and Zadie Smith. We will also look at art by Gauguin, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Man Ray, and Pablo Picasso, among others, as well as films such as Cannibal Tours and Dirty, Pretty Things.  
*Fulfills the Literature Cornerstone requirement.*
- 20554 ENG 131-A, FYS: Extreme Makeovers: Transformative Texts 4 credits**  
**Prof. S. Gracombe**  
 From Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to *America's Next Top Model*, we have always been fascinated by extreme makeovers. What accounts for this ongoing appeal? To answer this question, this course will examine transformations in texts as diverse as the Greek myth of Icarus, Bram Stoker's Victorian vampire novel *Dracula*, and Phil Klay's recent Iraq war story "Redeployment." What do these extreme makeovers reveal about psychology, sexuality, and otherness at different moments in history? In particular, what do they suggest about the boundaries between the human and the animal? About the process of growing up? About the challenges of belonging, national and personal? While we will focus on literary depictions of transformation, we will also examine the transformative potential of art itself.  
*Fulfills the Literature Cornerstone requirement.*

- 20553 ENG 156-A FYS: Listen: Sound Texts from Broadcast to Podcast** **4 credits**  
**Prof. S. Cohen**  
 This seminar will examine the histories and cultures of broadcasting. We will consider radio as a unique mode of storytelling and information distribution. The forms of listening have changed from scheduled or serendipitous dial-spinning to downloading and streaming on demand. But much remains the same about the form and connections that broadcasting makes possible. In addition to unearthing connections between radio and literary and cultural production, we will also create our own podcasts.  
*Fulfills the Literature Cornerstone requirement.*
- 20020 HIS 124-A, FYS: History of American Freedom** **4 credits**  
**Prof. J. Rodrigue**  
 This course examines the idea of freedom in U.S. history from the American Revolution to the present. It focuses on how this idea, so central to American identity, has evolved and has been contested throughout the nation's history.  
*Fulfills the History Cornerstone requirement.*
- 20021 HIS 141-A, FYS: History and Horror** **4 credits**  
**20022 HIS 141-B, FYS: History and Horror** **4 credits**  
**Prof. K. Spicer, CSC**  
 An examination of the history of horror films. This course is an excursion that will compare and contrast the fictional world of the macabre with the historical realities that form and challenge our social and cultural lives. With the aid of film, this course will analyze the phenomenon of the horror genre down through the ages.  
  
 This course does not count towards Elementary Education Licensure. Only open to students that have not completed the First-Year Seminar and History Cornerstone requirements.  
*Fulfills the History Cornerstone requirement.*
- 20502 PHL 116-A, FYS: What You Thought You Knew** **4 credits**  
**Prof. A. Lannstrom**  
 What is true happiness? Is morality real, or is it just a made-up thing? Everything we experience is put together by our brains --- how, then, can we be sure any of it is really true? Are we secretly biased? Does God exist? Should all protests be non-violent or is violence sometimes allowable?  
*Fulfills the Philosophy Cornerstone requirement.*
- 20503 PHL 118-A, FYS: Questions of Culture and Value** **4 credits**  
**Prof. J. Velazquez**  
 Why do we enjoy sitcoms where the characters suffer social and romantic disasters: are we just cruel or is there some other explanation? Is morality something real or is power the only reality and morality just an illusion? What kind of compassion is the best kind? Why are flowers beautiful? What's the hidden meaning of the marriage ceremony?  
*Fulfills the Philosophy Cornerstone requirement.*
- 20504 PHL 121-A, FYS: Philosophy as a Way of Life** **4 credits**  
**Prof. E. McGushin**  
 Philosophy is often taught as a theoretical discipline about abstract ideas and arguments. This course will emphasize how the ideas and insights of different philosophers might be applied to our daily lives and potentially change the way we live, helping us lead wiser, better and more authentic lives. Only open to First-Year Students only.  
*Fulfills the Philosophy Cornerstone requirement.*
- 20284 POL 110-A, FYS: Power, Order, and Justice** **4 credits**  
**Prof. B. Scholz**  
 This course will explore the dilemmas facing all governments: on what principles should the political order be based? What is the nature of the just state? What determines citizenship, political authority, and power? What is the good life and how is it related to the political order and the satisfaction of justice? Open to First-Year Students only.  
*This course is the equivalent to POL 171 Power, Order, and Justice.*
- 20524 RST 120-A, FYS: Deviance and the Devine** **4 credits**  
**Prof. S. Lowin**  
 This course will use the concept of deviance as the lens through which we will study the three major monotheistic traditions of the world - Islam, Judaism and Christianity. What are the major tenets and beliefs of each? What do they share and where are the conflicts? What does each consider normative and why? When does a belief or practice cross the line in deviance? Ultimately, are they all simply deviants of one another? In our investigation, we will also look to some lesser known religious traditions as foils, such as Scientology, Raelianism, the Nation of Islam, Jews for Jesus, Mormonism, and Christian Science.  
*Fulfills the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.*

- 20525 REL 126-A, FYS: Critique of Religion 4 credits**
- 20526 REL 126-B, FYS: Critique of Religion 4 credits**  
**Prof. D. Ullucci**  
 This course is an introduction to the critical, academic study of religion. It will touch on both personal and broader societal issues that are involved in the contemporary study of religion. It will examine several of the most prominent modern critiques of religion, as well as the various responses to those critiques. Further, it will explore and ask students to reflect on the meaning of religion in today's culturally diverse and religiously pluralistic world. Its objectives are to acquire a basic knowledge of some of the foundational theories of religion, to acquire a working understanding of various methodologies in the critical study of religion, to reflect on one's own understanding and experience of religion, and to reflect on the role of religion in the contemporary world.  
*Fulfills the Religious Studies Cornerstone requirement.*
- CENTRIC LEVEL** (*Offers Enhanced Writing support*)
- 20169 WRI 110-A, FYS: Writing in New Media 4 credits**  
**Prof. J. Solomons**  
 Let's face it, writing in the 21st century is accomplished online. This course explores reading and writing across social media and other web spaces through genre study, cultural analysis, and real-world practice. Through posts, tweets, blogs, emails, and texts students will hone valuable skills necessary in the twenty-first century thought-place. Creating web-based resumes and professional avatars will also be discussed. Course may be applied to the American Studies program. This course provides enhanced writing support.  
 Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20170 WRI 110-B, FYS: Writing in New Media 4 credits**  
**Prof. H. Sadler**  
 Let's face it, writing in the 21st century is accomplished online. This course explores reading and writing across social media and other web spaces through genre study, cultural analysis, and real-world practice. Through posts, tweets, blogs, emails, and texts students will hone valuable skills necessary in the twenty-first century thought-place. Creating web-based resumes and professional avatars will also be discussed. Course may be applied to the American Studies program. This course provides enhanced writing support.  
 Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20171 WRI 110-C, FYS: Writing in New Media 4 credits**  
**Prof. J. Softcheck**  
 Let's face it, writing in the 21st century is accomplished online. This course explores reading and writing across social media and other web spaces through genre study, cultural analysis, and real-world practice. Through posts, tweets, blogs, emails, and texts students will hone valuable skills necessary in the twenty-first century thought-place. Creating web-based resumes and professional avatars will also be discussed. Course may be applied to the American Studies program. This course provides enhanced writing support.  
 Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20172 WRI 111-A, FYS: The Supernatural in Contemporary Pop Culture 4 credits**
- 20173 WRI 111-B, FYS: The Supernatural in Contemporary Pop Culture 4 credits**  
**Prof. S. Morris**  
 We live in a world haunted by the fantastic. Vampires, werewolves, witches, fairies, ghosts, and even caped crusaders invade our everyday lives through entertainment media and advertising. This course will look at how these familiar creatures evolved and what they can teach us about history, culture, and ourselves. This course provides enhanced writing support.  
 Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20174 WRI 111-C, FYS: The Supernatural in Contemporary Pop Culture 4 credits**  
**Prof. S. Smith**  
 We live in a world haunted by the fantastic. Vampires, werewolves, witches, fairies, ghosts, and even caped crusaders invade our everyday lives through entertainment media and advertising. This course will look at how these familiar creatures evolved and what they can teach us about history, culture, and ourselves. This course provides enhanced writing support.  
 Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20182 WRI 241-A, FYS: The Art of the Essay 4 credits**
- 20183 WRI 241-B, FYS: The Art of the Essay 4 credits**  
**Prof. S. Connor**  
 In this workshop-based course students will sharpen their writing skills in a rigorous yet supportive workshop setting; explore the flexibility and versatility of the essay form in a variety of rhetorical contexts; and prepare a final portfolio of revised writing that demonstrates mastery of the essay form. This course provides enhanced writing support. Open to First-Year Students only.

- 20185 WRI246-A FYS: Reading & Writing Diverse Lives** **4 credits**  
**Prof. S. Westhues**  
 An exploration of the autobiographical essay as a form of cultural critique. A critical analysis of how writers use their life experiences to examine the challenges inherent in the cultural diversity of American democracy. In addition to reading and analyzing autobiographical essays, this course will serve as an introduction to the craft of life writing.
- 20188 WRI 299-A, FYS: Topics in Writing: Finding Your Path** **4 credits**  
**Prof. S. Smith**  
 Offers students the opportunity to explore individual career aspirations in a small-class format. Emphasis on writing, discussion, critical thinking, and reflection on the choices we make when considering potential career paths. This course provides enhanced writing support. Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20189 WRI 299-B, FYS: Topics in Writing: Music Culture Critique** **4 credits**  
**Prof. J. Solomons**  
 Music has been used to protest specific ideologies, protest political policies; it has been used as a voice for the voiceless; it has been used as a way to unite those who have been marginalized. This course will focus primarily on music that has been used in this way. This course provides enhanced writing support. Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20190 WRI 299-C, FYS: Topics in Writing: Time Travel in Popular Culture** **4 credits**  
**Prof. G. Scala**  
 If there is one thing that we cannot control, it is time...yet, our literary and cinematic counterparts never cease trying—and this leaves us simultaneously perplexed and astonished. In this First-Year Seminar, we will consider the potential scientific, philosophical, and religious aspects and ramifications of time travel and examine the ways in which this theme manifests itself in popular culture. This course provides enhanced writing support. Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20191 WRI 299-D, FYS: Topics in Writing: Writing and Social Justice** **4 credits**  
**Prof. K. Wickham**  
 This class explores the rhetorical aspects of social justice writing. Students will critically analyze a diverse range of writing from activists and intellectuals who utilize writing as a form of social critique, identity formation, and as a means of advocacy or dissent. Students will select a social justice issue relevant to their interests and develop, revise, and assess their own writing strategies and ethics. Only open to First-Year Students only.
- 20192 WRI 299-E, FYS: Topics in Writing: Storytelling Across Media** **4 credits**  
**Prof. M. Krejci-Papa**  
 This course looks at the role of storytelling across media in popular culture, whether in a verbal medium (short story, novel, prose poem, or lyric poem) or in a visual medium (fresco series, film, graphic novel, or dance). Students will gain experience in the essay form, both as creative expression and critical analysis. Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20193 WRI 299-F, FYS: Topics in Writing: Cyborgs, Clones & Ethics** **4 credits**  
**Prof. J. Softcheck**  
 This course explores some of the major cultural and ethical questions that are presently emerging from new technologies and their impact on the past, present, and future. Is reproductive human cloning ever permissible? Could cloning be a viable and ethically permissible way of preserving endangered species? What is your position on genetic engineering? Would you download your mind and soul into a mechanical body if it meant you could live as a cyborg forever? Sound like science fiction? *Think again.* Join us in probing some of the most interesting and challenging issues of our time!

**BASIC LEVEL** (*Offers Enhanced Writing support*)

- 20175 WRI 141-A, FYS: Introduction to College Writing** **4 credits**  
**Prof. J. Chichetto, CSC**  
 This workshop-based course is designed for students who wish to practice and develop the essential skills of writing, critical reading, and textual analysis at the college level. Instructors provide extensive feedback on assignments, helping students to gain more confidence with grammar, sentence structure, and the writing process as a whole. This course provides enhanced writing support. Open to First-Year Students only.
- 20176 WRI 141-B, FYS: Introduction to College Writing** **4 credits**  
**Prof. M. Freitas**  
 This workshop-based course is designed for students who wish to practice and develop the essential skills of writing, critical reading, and textual analysis at the college level. Instructors provide extensive feedback on assignments, helping students to gain more

confidence with grammar, sentence structure, and the writing process as a whole. This course provides enhanced writing support. Open to First-Year Students only.

**20177 WRI 141-C, FYS: Introduction to College Writing**

**4 credits**

**Prof. B. Troupe**

This workshop-based course is designed for students who wish to practice and develop the essential skills of writing, critical reading, and textual analysis at the college level. Instructors provide extensive feedback on assignments, helping students to gain more confidence with grammar, sentence structure, and the writing process as a whole. This course provides enhanced writing support. Open to First-Year Students only.

**20179 WRI 141-E, FYS: Introduction to College Writing**

**4 credits**

**Prof. K. Wickham**

This workshop-based course is designed for students who wish to practice and develop the essential skills of writing, critical reading, and textual analysis at the college level. Instructors provide extensive feedback on assignments, helping students to gain more confidence with grammar, sentence structure, and the writing process as a whole. This course provides enhanced writing support. Open to First-Year Students only.