

First Year Seminars Fall 2024

What Is An FYS?

First Year Seminars (FYS) focus on the following student learning outcomes: critical thinking and reasoning, effective reading, information literacy, intellectual curiosity, oral communication, written communication. Through the lens of a specific topic or issue, students are introduced to academic expectations as well as the preparation and skills that lead to academic success.

Fall 2024 Courses

FYS ART01 - Strange Coincidences: Synchronicity and Creativity

Take a skeptical and serious look at the concept of synchronicity through an interdisciplinary, multimedia lens. Synchronicity is a controversial theory that attempts to explain occurrences of extremely improbable coincidences between events where there is no apparent link. Although Carl Jung coined the term synchronicity in the 20th century, these kinds of 'strange occurrences' have been common to many cultures across time and space.

FYS BIO01 - Eastern Shore Ecosystems and Sustainability

Gain a comprehensive understanding of the diverse ecosystems present in Eastern Shore. Through interactive and collaborative learning experiences, delve into the significance of these ecosystems for both human well-being and environmental sustainability. By studying the environmental challenges faced by these ecosystems and exploring potential solutions, gain valuable insights into the critical issues impacting our planet today.

FYS BIO02 - Exploring the Human Microbiome

Learn about the composition of the human microbiome, how microbiome research is performed, and how the microbiome affects human health and disease. Emphasis is on exploring recent research about the human microbiome.

FYS CHM01 - Decoding the Future: How RNA Can Change the World

An introduction to first-year students in both STEM and non-STEM majors to the basics of biochemistry with a focus on the nucleic acids RNA and DNA. Start by exploring the basics of science and the scientific method. Examine what RNA and DNA are on the molecular level and learn their functions. Explore how RNA-based medicines could affect society now and in the future.

FYS EDU01 - How People Learn

Gain research-based insights into the nature of learning from birth through adulthood. Cultural, biological, social, emotional and physical influences on learning are explored. Characteristics of formal and informal environments that support the learning of children and adults and foster motivation are considered. Processes that have been found to support the development of knowledge and reasoning are studied.

FYS ENG01 - Intersection of Identity and Culture

Examine how we are shaped by a particular culture to determine why we are who we are and how our identities and beliefs intersect with those of other cultures to broaden perspective and bridge division. Consider the roles of language, place, education, gender, politics and religion/spirituality in forming identity.

FYS ENG05 - Language, Power and Prejudice

Examine how power and prejudice are constructed and sustained in and through language practices in modern society. The accumulating effects/consequences of marginalizing discourse on access to power, prestige and privilege in a plethora of public spheres are examined using multimodal evidence and innovative uses of game-based learning. Draw on real-world examples for in-class activities, discussions and course projects.



FYS ENG07 - Real-Life Stories: Reading and Writing Memoir

Through combined critical thinking and experiential learning, as well as a seminar discussion format with a creative writing workshop format, explore memoir as a literary genre wherein a writer transforms memory into a story.

FYS ENG08 - Poetics of Loss

Explore the way loss manifests in lyric moves in literary arts. See how different types of loss (death, memory loss, exile, the end of a relationship, youth, etc.) inform sound, image, diction, figure and form in poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, hybrid and even musical works. Zoom in on lyric moves such as ritual, wish, apostrophe, lyric time and voice and how they affect the way we understand different kinds of loss expressed by different types of writers, voices and characters. Draw meaningful comparisons and contrasts of content, delivery and lyric tactics in the works we study. Have a fulsome understanding of lyric expressions of loss, be able to communicate the nuances in these expressions and be able to create your own nascent creative interpretations of loss.

FYS ENG11 - Language Matters

Engages in a variety of language matters in many aspects of our lives. Facilitates reflection, analysis and understanding of how and why language matters in our lives by exploring language-related research from a variety of disciplines, often through a social justice and equity lens. In this interdisciplinary and inquiry-driven course, examine language matters in media, psychology, history, education, cross-cultural communication, social justice, public health, politics, society, criminal justice and literature, among others.

FYS ENG16 - Young, Gifted and Black

Focus on the study of children and young adult African diaspora literature or/and African diaspora literature related to the beginning of an important period in African diaspora history.

FYS ENV01 - Communicating Climate Change

Climate change is the defining issue of our time. It impacts virtually every discipline and social issue we care about and is the product of our economies, cultures and politics. But while the majority of people in the U.S. worry about climate change,

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most seldom talk about climate change with others. Evaluate how people communicate climate change through different contexts and genres: from communicating climate change through scientific graphs to science fiction, from direct action civil disobedience to conspiracy theories.

FYS ENV02 - Preserving Global Biodiversity and Justice

One of the grand challenges of the 21st century is determining how to balance the need for sustainable development of human communities with the need to preserve and restore the world's increasingly threatened species and ecosystems. Even as an ever-decreasing percentage of the world's population lives without electricity or drinkable water, we are also living through the planet's sixth global extinction event. This sense of crisis has led many conservationists to pit the preservation of nature against the flourishing of peoples living in or near biodiverse landscapes - this has resulted in tragedy in many places around the globe, from Yellowstone National Park in the U.S., to Bharatpur in India, to Kruger National Park in South Africa. Use an interdisciplinary lens to describe the contemporary global biodiversity collapse, its historical roots and its related human history. Using a series of case studies, investigate possible futures that might allow for flourishing of both human and non-human communities.

FYS FLM01 - Storytelling in Cinema, Writing and Life

A study of how stories work in cinema, how story informs writing, and the relationship between story and life.

FYS FRN02 - Marginal Paris: Exploring the Shadows of the City of Light

Dig into Paris' Roman and Medieval history, explore its sewers and underground ossuaries, take a trip to its outskirts. As we wander through the hidden, off-beat and undervalued Paris, engage intellectually with the multifaceted concept of marginality and its ethical implications.

FYS GEO01 - America's National Parks

An examination of the varied and spectacular physical environments protected within the United States National Park System. The geology, geomorphology, weather, climate and biogeography of selected parks are examined with an eye toward the continued conservation of these national treasures in a changing climate.

FYS HST02 - Love, Sex and Relationships Through History

A study of how individuals and communities across different time periods and regions have understood love, sex and relationships.

FYS HST05 - Cold War Latin America

An exploration of the Cold War experience in Latin America and its implications for human rights and democracy. Focus on U.S. foreign policy, revolutionary movements, guerrilla warfare, dictatorships and dirty wars in the second half of the 20th century.

FYS HST06 - Empathy and Dehumanization in the Modern World

A study of the 20th and early 21st century movements in which human societies engage simultaneously in empathetic and destructive processes against different kinds of communities.

FYS HST11 - An Alcoholic History of America

Undertake an introductory exploration of American history and society through the lens of drinking habits and policies from colonial times to the present. Studying the history of drinking offers an alternative look at American society. The so-called "liquor question" has historically been enmeshed with issues of ethnicity, gender and class, as well as economics, public policy, civil liberties and labor history. What was the relationship between changing drinking habits and various forms of control like temperance and prohibition? Why did the working-class saloon become such an American institution and why did it die out? Why did national prohibition become law? Studying the cultural politics of drinking provides a window into modern American society and helps us understand today's attitudes, customs and policies around alcohol.

FYS IDS05 - Adventure Begins with Curiosity: Interdisciplinary Leadership

Learn concepts and strategies to become interdisciplinary leaders. Engage the local contexts of Salisbury University's campus and the surrounding Salisbury community as you learn skills for educational and professional success through the development of your personal leadership platform and strategies for continual growth as leaders. Interdisciplinary leadership requires curiosity that leads to adventure.

FYS INF01 - Design Thinking, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

First-year students work individually and in teams to identify, design and create prototype products and solutions to problems impacting their generation. Through engagement and hands-on learning, broaden intellectual curiosity and develop analytical, communication (oral and written), critical thinking, reasoning and technical skills.

FYS MUS01 - How to Write One Song: Lyrics, Lives and Listening

A survey of perspectives and creative approaches to sound and music. Philosophies on music through different eras and cultures as well as the accounts of musicians are included. The craft of music-making is explored, in both lyrics and music, toward the creation of an original song. Material is presented in lecture with analysis of texts and musical examples, discussion, and listening. Prior musical experience is helpful but not necessary.

FYS PHL01 - Imagine This Is Our World: Philosophy and the Graphic Novel

Examine philosophical issues as they arise in graphic novels, especially graphic memoir. Study integrates elements of textual analysis, reflection, discussion and interpretation with the goal of learning to recognize philosophical ideas, to discuss them with our peers and to use them to think critically about our own perspective. It's an opportunity to reflect on the artistic and literary expression of lived experiences and explore why certain experiences are significant to ourselves and others. Course texts are about difficult choices, weighing competing values and commitments, seeking

to understand ourselves and what happens to us, and connecting to a broader sense of human life. Seek to understand why we value what we do, what philosophical questions arise naturally out of our lives, and to articulate how knowing the lives of others contributes to our own philosophical development.

FYS PHL02 - The Beginning: Childhood and the Meaning of Life

Explore the initial phase of human existence: the time where we began and started becoming who we are. Our general focus of inquiry is childhood, understood as a unique time of human life where connections to others, to ideas and to oneself are formed. Gain an appreciation of the place of childhood and articulate its role in human life through insights from the philosophy of childhood, the history of childhood and pedagogy. Organize philosophy-based activities for a group of children in the local elementary school as a civic engagement component.

FYS SPN02 - In-Between Treasures: Intercultural Experiences in Latin American and Latinx Art

Examines intercultural experiences and expressions in Latin America and Latinx US. Considering hyphenated identities, multilingualism, transnational art, and transatlantic encounters in Latin American and Latinx cultures, students will develop intercultural skills and multidisciplinary perspectives to approach multicultural phenomena and develop a critical vocabulary to inhabit the transcultural world we live in.

FYS SWK01 - Sexuality Social Justice

Students talk about wanting to make a difference - to change the world in some way. Examine your ideas and values related to making a difference, learning to think critically about the meaning and methods of changing the world, and being challenged to integrate thoughtful evidence with your values and beliefs about a socially just world. With a focus on social justice, consider a variety of social problems and investigate and critique various approaches to creating change to improve these social injustices.

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