

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 2018 First Year Seminar Course Descriptions: (Section)

The Physicist's War (1939-1945) (A)

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.

WTF, English? (B)

Daniel 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.

All the World, Staged (C)

Debbie Hanson (English)

All the World, Staged examines plays and films inspired by actual people and events that address contemporary issues such as racism, genetic research, sexism, and sexual identity. In addition to discussing the ethical conflicts raised by these works, students will also be asked to consider how much poetic license authors and filmmakers can take when using factual materials and how much responsibility audiences bear in distinguishing between what is fictionalized and what is not.

Medicine, Literature, and the Ethics of Empathy (D,W)

Mitch Harris (English)

This course will look at the field of narrative medicine, and immerse students in its foundational practices: reading and writing. In the late-20th century, narrative medicine emerged in response to the growing demand for competent health care providers who could strengthen the provider-patient bond by engaging in the process of narrative—listening carefully to the patient's history and responding in an empathetic manner befitting the intellectual, psychological, and spiritual dimensions at play in the provider-patient dynamic. Students will read fiction, poetry, drama, and creative nonfiction, as well as academic essays on narrative medicine and the relationship between reading and empathy.

**Section D will meet from 10:40-11:50am. Section W will meet from 2:00-3:10pm (Hold 11:00 hour for plenary sessions).*

Crimes, Cops, and Culprits (E)

Cheryl Jackson Nelson (English)

Approximately 18,417,000 crimes are committed annually in the United States. These crimes range from theft to assault to murder, and they result in over 11,206,000 arrests by the more than 900,000 law enforcement personnel. Through discussion and research of real-life crimes, narratives of law enforcement, and crime videos, students will explore the investigative process: Why are victims selected? How are suspects identified? What police procedures are practiced? Students will consider the ethical implications of these and other questions concerning the criminals, the crimes, the victims, and those who apprehend the suspects.

Human Rights in Latin America (F)

Cory Conover (History)

Exactly because of its grinding poverty, violence, and corrupt politicians, the issue of human rights is at the forefront of concerns for Latin Americans today. Through this class, you will come to understand the underlying reasons why such injustice prevails and what might be done. We examine human rights through topics like civil wars, drug trafficking, and government malfeasance as well as the effects of U.S. foreign policy—particularly development and military aid—on Latin America.

The Grand Endeavor of Making and Taking Drugs (G)

(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.

Aloha ‘Oe (H)

Michael 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, but examining events from around the world, this course examines the ethics of colonial conquest.

Feast or Famine: A Foodie’s Guide to the Politics of Hunger and Consumption (I)

(Feast or Famine)

Ann Kolbrek (Success Center/English)

In a world filled with self-proclaimed “foodies,” we rarely consider the political implications of food. This course will examine food as a political weapon for both oppressor and oppressed. Appetite, hunger, and satiety will not only be the subjects of our readings, but more importantly the lens through which we examine scenes of oppression and representations of identity. We will ask how hunger shapes consciousness, subjectivity, and language. Even more, how does this tool influence identity, particularly already marginalized identities? Our readings/films invite students to explore food in the contexts of famine, hunger strikes, and eventually overconsumption and inebriation.

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

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.

**Section J will meet from 10:40-11:50am. Section X will meet from 2:00-3:10pm (Hold 11:00 hour for plenary sessions).*

Generations in the Workplace (K)

Jaciel Keltgen (Business)

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, three generations currently represent about 97 percent of the U.S. workforce – Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials. Millennials are the largest generation in the workforce and by 2020 will comprise about half the workforce. A later generation, Generation Z, is now entering the college years. Participants in this course will gain an understanding of demographics in the workplace, learning how organizations manage and motivate employees in terms of job satisfaction, leadership, training, understanding and appreciating individual differences, conflict resolution, mentorship and empowerment.

Education: Grading Our Schools (L)

Monica Lhotzky (German)

What are we required to learn? Why do we learn these things in our schools? Do we learn what is important and necessary? Do grades reflect performance and mastery? These fundamental questions will be explored. An educational system reveals the values of the society that created it. In this course, U.S. schools and their curricula and policies are critically examined via a comparison with educational systems around the world.

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

(India: Gandhi and Independence)

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.

Media Activism (N)

Kathleen McCollugh (Communication Studies)

What role does/should the media play in social change? Media activism appears to play a critical role in everyday activism and within broader social movements such as Occupy Wall Street, Arab Spring, #BlackLivesMatter, and the feminist movement. 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).

Cinema, Character, and Culture (O)

Heather Bart (Communication Studies)

Students today are born into a culture whose most powerful and popular narratives are told through moving pictures and sound. This course examines how TV shows/films both represent and create moral narratives that define our culture. We will develop thoughtful, complex answers to social and ethical questions raised in film/TV. Through TV/film viewing, readings, critical thinking and writing, students will develop an understanding of what films (narratives) communicate aesthetically, philosophically, spiritually and sociologically about who you are, who you might be, and how you might treat your fellow humans in the years to come.

The Ethics of Organized Sport (P)

John Bart (Communication Studies)

Sports in America will be used to learn ethical reasoning. While professional and college sports generate significant economic development, they also require cash strapped government entities to invest in expensive facilities. While sports teams generate community pride, they also divide communities through fan loyalty. While sport has been on the cutting edge of racial integration and gender equality, it has spawned backlash to that same diversity. While team sport champions physical fetes and athletic grace, it also causes significant injuries and tempts people to exploit performance enhancing drugs. We will examine the ethics of these issues and others of the classes choosing throughout the semester.

This Ain't Your Gramma's Norway (Q)

Michael Nitz (Communication Studies)

Augustana is rich in Norwegian heritage. Augustana is also very active in Norway today. This course will explore the paradoxes and contradictions that are contemporary Norway. Students will learn ethical reasoning skills, writing and communication as we study ethical dilemmas such as the following: Norway is the world's peace superpower, yet makes drones for the US military. Norway is a leader in environmental rights, yet is a top five oil and gas producer. Norway has "free" health care, but is it really the world's happiest place? The course will focus particular attention on how Norway communicates itself.

Baseball Ethics or "Would Kant Cork His Bat?" (R)

Richard Bowman (Religion)

Historian Jacques Barzun has noted: "Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of Americans had better learn baseball." As such, baseball reflects the profound moral and ethical issues with which America has struggled. In addition to the violation of the written and unwritten rules of baseball, the history of baseball portrays America's engagement with race, immigration, political corruption, the role of women, and the conflict between labor and management as well as such personal character issues as substance abuse, performance enhancing drugs, and gambling.

Global Poverty (S)

Stephen Minister (Philosophy)

We often hear that more than one billion people live on less than a dollar a day. But what does this really mean? And why does this happen? 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.

Matters of Life and Death (T)

Leigh Vicens (Philosophy)

In this course will consider bioethical questions (questions arising from developments in medicine and biology) facing patients, doctors, researchers, policymakers, and voters. We will study some (or all) of the following issues: abortion, surrogacy, prenatal screening for the selection of offspring, cloning, genetic engineering, animal testing, experimentation on human subjects, the donation and sale of bodily organs, physician-assisted suicide, and the rationing of scarce medical resources. We will consider arguments for various positions on these issues, and formulate and defend our own.

How to Begin to Solve Wicked Problems in Environmental Ethics and Policy (U)

(Wicked Problems Envirn Policy)

David O'Hara (Philosophy)

Wicked problems are problems that are especially difficult to solve because of factors like incomplete information, changing environments, and complex or interdependent systems. Often the solutions to complex problems generate new problems. This course considers several "wicked" problems concerning nature and the resources we extract from it. Students will learn to analyze the problems, examine proposed solutions, and apply interdisciplinary resources from literature, philosophy, religion, and law to formulate ethical and practical approaches to these problems.

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

(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 this possibility.