Full Archive-FYS Descriptions

Technology in Fantasy and Society

This course examines the humanistic phenomenon of technological development as it unfolds in diverse scientific, artistic, sociological, and philosophical dimensions. Surveying texts, artifacts, and experiments from classical antiquity to the modern era, students will explore how different advances came to fruition, evaluating how associated ideas were depicted in both fictional and non-fictional works, and qualifying how individuals and communities then voiced reactions to corresponding changes in society. Civilization has always had a complicated relationship with machines. While technology generally brings about improved standards of living, and even periods of flourishing, such as during the Renaissance or the Enlightenment, there are also often unintended consequences, volatilities, dangers. This class will evaluate both the risks and the benefits of scientific development.

Storytelling in Science

This course examines and gives students opportunities to practice the craft of science storytelling. We study works that include Farley Mowat's "Never Cry Wolf," which pushed the idea that wolves are healthy for the environment. It was made into a popular movie and is today considered one of the founding works of environmentalism. Even though key details were made up, it remains revered as a masterpiece of non-fiction writing. Students also examine famous works that include a graphic profile of Marie Curie, narrative profiles of the original microbe hunters, and micro-histories of black holes, overfishing, and racism in biological research. The main lesson is that science-based storytelling often falls short on specificity (and sometimes accuracy as in the case of Farley Mowat) while also educating the public and establishing long-lasting perceptions. As students ask themselves, "Is this OK?," they try their own hand at crafting science-based narratives—including a children's book.

Dining Out

Before restaurants were "invented," how did travelers find a place to eat? How have dining rituals and restaurants changed over time? This course examines the range of social, cultural, and economic influences that have shaped our gastronomic practices from antiquity to the present. We will be reading the diaries of travelers, the observations of men and women at court, the lives of chefs, the business histories of famous entrepreneurs, and the reviews of restaurateurs. Class readings, writing, and independent research will draw on various methods (primary source analysis, participant-observation, and museum

and kitchen visits, even some culinary practice!) to address the larger questions of how the many forms of commensality define our social identities and cultural values. This course has a CBL component required of all students.

Persuasion and Law in Antiquity

The sudden institution of democratic courts in Athens 2500 years ago spawned a new direction in speech. Since by law each citizen spoke for himself before juries of hundreds of his peers under time restraints, successful speakers needed to learn how to arrange broadly attractive arguments and narrate their case economically while consistently maintaining maximum clarity. By the Roman period changes in courts and law called for new strategies, but the Athenian model speeches, written down and savored for centuries, continued to be studied. This course will focus on several specific speeches from each of these historical developments in an attempt to become familiar with the origins of legal speech and its application to education. But more important than historical discovery will be the opportunity for students to enter into this tradition of clear, persuasive language as they focus on improving their own writing and speaking.

The History of Crime and Punishment in Modern British Cities

Cities like London occupied an ambivalent space in the British imagination. They produced both new jobs and profoundly unsettling new forms of squalor – and the crime that often accompanied extreme poverty. They offered the critical mass of population necessary to support institutions like libraries, museums, theatres, and public baths – but also brothels, opium dens, and crime syndicates. Queer men and women found the first public spaces to which they could lay claim, but the police deemed queerness to violate laws on public decency and harassed them. In the empire, fears about criminality led to the wholesale demolition of millennia-old parts of cities if they were deemed to be too difficult to police. Cities were sites of liberation and repression, squalor and prosperity. They gave rise to feelings of greater safety than ever before and perpetual anxiety about criminals lurking around every corner. We will confront and seek to understand these tensions over the course of the semester.

Feedback: An Intro to Artists' Video & Alternative Media

An introduction to video art and alternative media with an emphasis on the United States and Canada. Historical, contemporary, and theoretical texts situate video within a larger cultural, technological, and socio-political framework. Screenings of art media provide first-hand insight into the radical nature of this field, which embraces marginalized voices and perspectives, interdisciplinary methods and research, alternative production and distribution, experimental and activist media. Students are challenged to expand their

visual literacy through seminar discussions, presentations, written and creative work; to ask questions; to consider nuances and think critically; and ultimately, to consider their own subjectivity and agency within a dominant cultural ideology that promotes consumption, familiarity and stasis over diversity, creativity and innovation.

Death and Commemoration in Antiquity

Through literary texts, inscriptions, and monuments from the ancient Mediterranean (including Egypt and the Near East as well as the Classical world), we will explore ancient approaches to death and memorial and what these may tell us about ancient beliefs, social structures, and ideologies. Primary source material will be drawn from: Egyptian tombs and funerary texts; Gilgamesh and Near Eastern funerary monuments; Greek and Latin poetry (works of Homer, Sophocles, Vergil, and others); Greek and Roman historical accounts (such as Herodotus and Suetonius); Greek, Etruscan, and Roman funerary art and epitaphs; and archaeological evidence for burial rituals. Questions we will consider throughout the semester include: Who are graves for—the dead, the living, the gods? How do afterlife beliefs shape funeral ceremonies? What can a funeral tell you about the people involved in it? What meaning(s) do images on grave monuments have? What meaning(s) did objects deposited in a grave have? What can we not learn from burials? How and why did ancient authors use myths about the Underworld and afterlife? What can we learn about actual beliefs and practices from ancient literary sources? And how does one's approach to death affect how one lives life? There will be a community-based learning component, with field trips to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Hollywood Cemetery and participation in the community effort to restore Woodland Cemetery, a historic African American cemetery in Henrico County.

Crime & Punishment in Russian Literature and Film

“Crime and Punishment in Russian Fiction and Film” examines acts of transgression and retribution, two long-standing preoccupations in Russian culture. More specifically, this course investigates how Russians have explored the changing boundaries of propriety, criminality and wrongdoing since the early 19th century. An interdisciplinary course located at the nexus of literature, cinema and history, it examines a variety of texts—fictional, cinematic, even operatic—within their historical context. Close attention is paid to shifts in expression and representation between the imperial and Soviet periods and the (re)interpretation of texts over time. Attention is also paid to how these themes have been reinterpreted abroad outside of Russia. “Crime and Punishment in Russian Fiction and Film” asks an array of important moral questions. What is the nature of individual responsibility? How is one to balance individualism and membership in a broader community? How is one to reconcile individual belief and self-expression with social

convention? What is the individual to do when confronted by a criminal regime? How should the individual behave amid social and/or moral collapse? How much of this is inherently Russian and how much is universal?

The Rights of the Criminally Accused

Welcome to The Rights of the Criminally Accused! This first year seminar course will tackle important and controversial questions surrounding criminal procedure and the role of the Supreme Court in the development of the rights of the criminally accused. In particular, this course will wrestle with the approaches taken by the Supreme Court to balance the constitutional protections of the criminally accused with legitimate law enforcement goals and practices. We will pay special attention to the following topics: (1) The Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches and seizures, (2) The Fifth Amendment's privilege against self-incrimination, double jeopardy issues, and grand jury requirement, (3) The Sixth Amendment's right to an attorney, impartial trial, juries, and speedy trial, (4) The Eight Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment. Throughout the course, we will focus on understanding the limitations the Constitution puts on the government when it comes to police practices, grand jury practices, evidence, investigations, interrogations, juries, trials, and punishment to name a few. We will question the policy implications of how the Supreme Court has interpreted the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments. For instance, what does cruel and unusual punishment mean? What are the consequences of secret grand jury proceedings, what reforms should we consider and why? Does plea-bargaining undermine justice? What does it mean to have a jury of your peers? How have the warrant requirement exceptions influenced law enforcement strategies? How has the Court interpreted the Miranda requirement over time and what can this tell us for the future? What reforms should policymakers consider when it comes to the rights of the criminally accused? Should the Supreme Court consider whether their decision makes good policy sense? In short, the learning objectives of this course are as follows: • To provide students with an understanding of how legal decisions are made, and how to read and interpret judicial decisions. • To provide students with a basic overview of the Supreme Court decisions surrounding the rights of the criminally accused. • Provide the opportunity for students to work closely with a faculty mentor. Specific First Year Seminar Learning Outcomes 1. Written Communication: Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through a variety of written work that utilizes a process to help them develop the basics of academic writing, an initial understanding of disciplinary conventions, and an analysis of appropriate evidence. 2. Oral Communication: Students will demonstrate effective formal and informal oral communication skills within the classroom setting. 3. Critical Thinking: Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through the ability to evaluate, interpret,

and analyze a variety of sources and other forms of expression. 4. Information Literacy: Students will be able to effectively access, evaluate, and make ethical use of appropriate sources of information for different scholarly purposes.

Philosophy and Criminal Law

This course will address three philosophical questions raised by the criminal law. • First, what justifies legal punishment? The answers we will consider include giving wrongdoers what they deserve and deterring future crime. Our investigation will focus largely, though not exclusively, on the moral justifiability of the death penalty. • Second, what makes someone liable to legal punishment? What must a person do to count as attempting a crime? Should those who successfully commit a murder be punished more than those who attempt to do so, but who fail due to factors outside their control? • Finally, what if anything justifies requiring proof beyond a reasonable doubt for a criminal conviction? In addition, we will examine the charge that criminal law practice in the United States contribute to, and are also a product of, race- and class-based injustice, and what follows for practices such as jury nullification and stop-and-frisk policing if that charge is true.

Loss and Remains

Loss is part of every human life yet makes life come apart. How we reconstitute what remains after great loss transforms memories and possibilities This course explores different experiences of loss and different approaches to all that remains for the world afterwards. We consider losses that occur through bodily damage, moral injury, environmental destruction, and the death of loved ones. In each case, we analyze how losses inspire transformed imagination of the material, social, religious, and inner worlds.

Health Care Politics in US and Around World

The United States has a more limited and targeted welfare state than most other wealthy democracies and is widely believed to be more committed to individual initiative, personal responsibility, and free, unregulated markets. American health care policy is a reflection of this idea of “American exceptionalism” with the U.S. being the only country among wealthy democracies (and even many less economically developed countries) to have no program of universal health insurance. Even the recent expansion of coverage under the Affordable Care Act (the ACA, aka “Obamacare”) has been very controversial. The American health care system – or lack thereof – is one of the factors that most clearly distinguishes America’s public policy from other countries. This course will look at how the U.S. health care system compares to those in other affluent countries in terms of access, cost, and quality and examine the major ways that health care systems are organized and funded. Americans often think European systems are all socialized medicine. While some are,

many have systems of universal health care with a much larger role for private insurance than in the U.S. The course will explore why countries developed different types of systems with a focus on why such a fragmented and expensive system emerged in the U.S. In doing so, the course will look at major theories proposed to explain why some countries have more generous welfare states in general than others. The course will also look at how the ACA attempted to bring the U.S. into closer alignment with other countries, while still maintaining a distinctly American approach to health care.

Digital Marketing and Communications (Digital Communications and Society)

This course will provide a general overview and perspective on the emergence of digital communications. It will teach specific digital communications skills that are applicable in the work environment. Also, the course will help you think critically about recent digital communications trends.

Angst Years Hormones High Anxiety Happiness

Students will explore the complex lives, expectations of, and pressures on middle and high school children, including social, physical, developmental, emotional, and academic challenges that are unique to adolescence. The class will investigate diverse ways of learning, autonomy and independence, and expectations for this age group. Students will determine whether they find legitimacy in the popular concept that boys and girls learn and should be taught differently, and how adolescence might influence learning and academic success. Students will visit public and independent K-12 schools, and single-sex and coeducational classrooms to develop positions for and participate in debates regarding educational issues that affect adolescents. We will also study and create adolescent literature in a visual diary format.

Banned in the USA: The Rise of Book Censorship in America

While the topic of censorship is not new, conversations about book banning and challenges to instructional materials in schools, libraries, and universities are on the rise in nearly every corner of our nation. In this course, students will examine the history of book banning in the United States with special emphasis on the recent surge due to an intensely polarized political environment. Students will explore both excerpts and full texts of several challenged books and will be encouraged to develop their own opinions. Through discussion, readings, interviews, and writing, students will deconstruct this controversial topic through the lens of multiple stakeholders including students, teachers, school leaders, parents, policymakers, and themselves. Finally, students will consider if, what, and how books contribute to inclusivity and belonging and what implications book banning may have on teaching and learning. Students enrolled in the course will: -examine the

history of book banning in the United States; -study the process of challenging a book including the roles and rights of the complainant (private individual, political official, or organization)n and governing bodies of schools and libraries; -analyze which books are most frequently challenged or banned and why -consider if books contribute to societal norms including themes of social justice, inclusivity, and belonging; -explore diverse perspectives and debate the importance of representation of different demographics (race, ethnicity, gender identity, socio-economic status, religion, etc.) in books at all levels; -understand students' and parents' rights to provide input or feedback on books or instructional materials in classrooms, schools, libraries, and universities; -search for, inspect, and critique current proposals for book bans; and -reflect upon and make sense of their own feelings about and experiences with banned books and potential impacts on overall teaching and learning.

Double Life of Paris

Paris is one of the most idealized and romanticized cities in the world. Even for those who have never visited, Paris easily conjures recognizable images and reliable stereotypes, from the Eiffel Tower to the Arch of Triumph, and from famous fashion houses to the typical Parisian cafe. In this course, we will challenge this first clichéd version of Paris by contrasting it with another version: Paris and France as a space of political unrest, social conflict, and troubling history. Through literary texts, film, newspaper articles, historical documentation, and essays, we will explore the long trajectory of the double life of Paris.

Dreams and Islam

This is a first-year seminar that focuses on dreams and visions in Islamic societies. This course is designed to explore several key topics in the study of dreams and visions in Islamic societies, and the topical content the course includes: the religious milieu of the Late Antique Near East; the prophet Muhammad; the emergence of Islam; fundamental concepts in Islam; the relationship between revelation, prophecy, and dreams; Sunnis and Shiʿas; mystical Islam and Sufi brotherhoods; popular piety and saint veneration; modern developments in Islam; dreams in contemporary Egyptian society; and dreams and visions in the contemporary world. The approach in this course is both chronological and topical. Readings are drawn from both secondary sources and primary sources in translation. We will read a rich corpus of Islamic materials that address dreams and visions, including excerpts from the biography of the prophet Muhammad, the Quran (Muslim revealed scripture), and hadith (reports about the sayings and deeds of the prophet Muhammad). We will also read secondary sources that analyze and contextualize these primary sources, including a book-length anthropological study of dreams in contemporary Cairo. This course grounds all discussion of course material in its appropriate historical contexts and

analyzes the historical factors, social processes, and theological principles that have shaped approaches to dreams and visions in Islamic thought and societies. This course has no prerequisites. We will meet the FYS learning objectives through response papers to documentaries and films, class discussion, three essays, two weekly Blackboard posts, and a final presentation. We will read deeply and broadly.

Seeing Believing Knowing

This course is designed to satisfy the requirements of the UR First-Year Seminar. The four learning outcomes of the FYS for our general education program are as follows: Written Communication: Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through a variety of written work that utilizes a process to help them develop the basics of academic writing, an initial understanding of disciplinary conventions, and an analysis of appropriate evidence. Oral Communication: Students will demonstrate effective formal and informal oral communication skills within the classroom setting. Critical Thinking: Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through the ability to evaluate, interpret, and analyze a variety of sources and other forms of expression. Information Literacy: Students will be able to effectively access, evaluate, and make ethical use of appropriate sources of information for different scholarly purposes. In this individual section, we have an overriding topic of “Seeing, Believing, Knowing.” Did you ever see something that wasn’t there? Or fail to understand what you just saw with your own eyes? Can you always believe everything that you see? What does it mean to see? What does it mean to “know?” These are the fundamental questions of this course that we will return to over and over again, though with nuance and difference each time we do. Through a consideration of photography, art, film, and other media, this course will explore three central questions: What is the relationship between what we see and what we understand, or what we see and what we believe, or even what we see and what we know?

Bond Franchise

This course is designed to satisfy the requirements of the UR First-Year Seminar. The four learning outcomes of the FYS for our general education program are as follows: Written Communication: Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through a variety of written work that utilizes a process to help them develop the basics of academic writing, an initial understanding of disciplinary conventions, and an analysis of appropriate evidence. Oral Communication: Students will demonstrate effective formal and informal oral communication skills within the classroom setting. Critical Thinking: Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through the ability to evaluate, interpret, and analyze a variety of sources and other forms of expression. Information Literacy: Students will be able to effectively access, evaluate, and make ethical use of appropriate

sources of information for different scholarly purposes. In this individual section, we have an overriding topic of “The Bond Franchise.” The James Bond films are fun, blockbuster movies. But in this course, we are going to approach them seriously and with rigor. As a group, we will explore the series of Bond films with an eye to ways in which they represent and embody an evolving set of cultural values over the last sixty years. Of special interest will be issues of gender and class, nationalism and globalization, technology and late capitalism. Our work will be on viewing, at a close level, how the individual films operate as texts and how the telling of the story has a profound effect on how viewers respond to the film and to the characters. Moreover, a central element of our work will be the consideration of the individual film in the cultural context of its moment of production and distribution. What is Bond like in the 60s, the 70s, the 90s? What about the turn of the century and post-9/11? How is he a figure of the Cold War and how does he evolve following its end? We will consider elements of plot and story, of production and character, of location and setting and theme. All of this has to do with what the Bond films tell us about ourselves. And watching them closely and having the opportunity to talk about them seriously should be a good deal of fun – and that is a great byproduct of this course!

Human/Nature

Explores divergent understandings of "the human" and "nature" across historical and geopolitical contexts. Focuses on influential texts shaping philosophical, literary, legal, and scientific conversations, inviting students to explore how contemporary debates are shaped by the past.

Faith Difference in America: Learning to Live Together

Religious faith is central to the daily life and identity of a majority of the population in the United States. As a result of globalization, individuals and communities with diverse worldviews - both religious and secular - interact more closely than ever before, with results ranging from insightful dialogue to violent discord. Furthermore, religious convictions shape debate about a range of policies in domestic affairs, leading at times to unified action for peace and justice, and at other times to rancor and mistrust. This course will investigate these tensions in light of students’ own commitments and beliefs, those of others, and the increasingly diverse society in which we live.

Power to Change World

This First Year Seminar course will provide students with the opportunity to explore the impact sport has ignited in regards to social change throughout history. Nelson Mandela so famously quoted, “Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does.” This course will investigate how

sport is a major catalyst for greater societal change in the global world. Students will critically engage through discussion, text, films, and speeches, in an effort of interrogating the intersections between sport, power, inequality and freedom.

Ever After: The Literary Lives of Fairy Tales

Fairy tales are among the most enduring and popular stories in human culture. Although they may seem to be simple stories for children, they were most often written by adults with serious intentions and literary aspirations. Over the course of the semester, students will explore the history of fairy tales and consider why we tell stories, what they reveal about us, and how stories are adapted to suit new contexts. Students will read multiple versions of some classic fairy tales as well as contemporary adaptations, and their investigation will be framed by readings from scholars of fairy-tale literature.

Making Meaningful Space

This seminar will focus on the spatial dimensions of the world in which we live. Students will learn various ways to analyze space and to reflect on the sensory aspects of embodied experience. How does the configuration of space influence our thinking, our behaviors, our feelings? In what ways does it convey a sense of welcome or exclusion? How do spatial policies and practices help to create (or inhibit) a sense of community? a sense of identity? What role does the practice of story-telling and myth-making play in the creation of space and place? In what ways do spaces themselves tell stories and reveal their histories? Following Katherine McKittrick's challenge that "we are all implicated in the production of space, and how geography—in its various formations—is integral to social struggles," we will engage with stories of lived experiences in two settler colonial spaces – South Africa and the United States – to understand the forces that shaped and continue to shape our world.

Say What Exploring Second Language Acquisition

Students will explore the complexities of second language acquisition (SLA). Students will study how languages are learned, and how second languages are taught. The class will investigate important aspects of English language acquisition including general linguistic concepts, applied socio-linguistics, and the socio-cultural context of language teaching.

Meaning and Value

This course is a quest to identify the features of a good human life. In our quest to unravel the components of such a life, we will also gain some insight into how we can improve our own lives by, for instance, instilling our lives with greater meaning and finding ways to become happier. Some more specific questions we will consider are the following: What

things are worth pursuing? What is the relationship between a good life and a life of pleasure, happiness and virtue? What are some barriers to living a good life? Is there any meaning or purpose in human existence and can such meaning be found without a faith in God or religion? What role do love, hope, and creativity play in a meaningful life?

Monumental Change

The removal of the Confederate statues lining Richmond's Monument Avenue between summer 2020 and fall 2021 marked, for many, a moment of "monumental change," gesturing to a transformation in the city's-built environment and reckoning with its past. While the symbolic power of the statues' removal is indisputable, this course asks you to consider: • What constitutes so-called "monumental change"? • How does change take place? • What role can we, as individuals and collectives, play in making change? Over the course of the semester, we will visit sites of change and change-making throughout the city of Richmond and state of Virginia while interacting with its change-makers.

Art of Picture Book

What makes a successful picture book in the 21st century? Students will learn design elements, how to evaluate them on their own and in conjunction with the text, and how the picture book can be an aesthetic production. Humorous, inspiring, or even subversive, picture books also support recreation, informational needs, and making sense of one's world. Students will consider numerous issues related to picture books, including audience, format, representation, marketing, publishing, controversial content, and censorship. Engagement with a variety of picture books, critical reading, and research will lead to free writing, critical reviews, academic writing, and project-based writing.

The Politics of Sexual Education

Examines contemporary practices of sexual education in schools, and the controversies surrounding them, in light of a longer history of sexuality as a concept, drawing on biology, sexology, political history, educational philosophy, and feminist and queer studies. Studies the emergence of "sexuality" as a scientific and political concept in the nineteenth century and examine how state-regulated institutions—especially the school and the hospital—have operationalized sexuality as a means of regulating the behavior of individuals and the "health" of populations.

Poetry and Music

This course studies modern and contemporary poetry by reading, discussing, and writing about it. We begin with poetry of English romantic poet John Keats whose poem "To Sleep" employs poetic form and devices (sonnet form, poetic feet, simile, metaphor, etc.)

common in poetry from Shakespeare through to the close of the nineteenth-century. Our study continues from pathbreaking poets Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost and Irish poet Nobel Prize winning William Butler Yeats four pioneer leading up to modernist poetry of Nobel Prize winner T. S. Eliot, and the poets William Carlos Williams, and Wallace Stevens. African American blues and the modernist poems of the Harlem Renaissance follow on with poets such as Langston Hughes, Robert Hayden and Black Arts poets such as Gwendolyn Brooks and Amiri Baraka. Our study concludes with the poetry of late twentieth-century greats Elizabeth Bishop, John Ashbery, W. S. Merwin, Robert Creeley, Jorie Graham, Yusuf Komunyakaa and climaxing with poetry of the 2020 Nobel Prize winning Louise Glück. The course will also engage in a small amount of listening to related music. This includes a musical setting of John Keats' "To Sleep," another of Dickinson's "Nature" and another of Whitman's "When Lilacs last in the Dooryard Bloomed." Later we hear blues, bebop, and protest music in the context of America's ongoing struggle people to have more equitable and inclusive relations as a society of individuals. I also include two poems associated with specific pieces of visual art: Yeats' "Leda and the Swan" which echoes Greek Mythology and Graham's "At Luca Signorelli's Resurrection of the Body" which portrays a central belief of Christianity.

History of Eugenics

This course explores the global history of eugenics, which proposed a variety of policies for supposedly improving the hereditary quality of "race" by controlling human reproduction. Armed with pseudo-scientific evidence, self-proclaimed eugenicists asserted that most problems such as criminality, alcoholism, pauperism, prostitution, insanity, and others were transmitted genetically. They aimed to reduce the numbers of the so-called "defective," or dysgenic (cacogenic) people while pushing to increase the number of eugenic people, or those presumed to have "good genes." We examine how eugenics nearly became a global movement, its connections to other ideologies, and the public and scientific responses it triggered.

Unexplainable: Abstraction, Surrealism, Absured

Here is the catalog description for this course: "Language, at its root, is a representational system that makes it easier for people to define the world around them. It provides structure and clarity. Literature, as an artistic deployment of language, similarly strives to illuminate the human situation. So how do writers respond when they face an idea or dynamic that cannot be easily rendered in conventional language? Or to flip that question, why do writers sometimes take events or images that seem straightforward and make them opaque?

Space, Time and Relativity

This course examines the logical foundations of Einstein's theory of relativity and explores its implications for how we understand time, space, speed, length, gravity, and various other phenomena in physics. We will encounter wildly counterintuitive ideas such as objects contracting when they move at high speeds, twins on different spacecraft aging at different rates, and why one cannot even in principle travel faster than the speed of light. Our approach to the subject will be quantitative, deriving expressions that describe how space and time are transformed for observers moving at different speeds, and then applying those equations in new situations. Computer simulations and algebraic problem solving will play prominent roles in this course.

Democracy and the Deficit

This seminar focuses on the fiscal, economic, political, and moral dimensions of the federal budget deficits and the compounding national debt. The challenge ultimately raises questions about accountability, representation, equity, fairness, and leadership. How do democratically-elected policymakers—faced with the obstacles of electoral motivations, organized interests, political parties, public opinion, and the news media—deal with a large and complex problem?

Naked and Afraid

Naked and Afraid is a popular reality TV show in which contestants are dropped into the harsh wilderness without food, water, or clothing in small groups and are filmed trying to survive for 21, 40, and even 60 days. The demands of survival sap them of focus, energy and patience, and only those with the right mix of survivalist and teamwork skills succeed. This course will introduce the practices of television criticism by studying NAA and related programming, with a special focus on the small group communication skills required to succeed.

Science, Pseudoscience anti Persp/Future Leaders

This First Year Seminar course examines the intersection of science and society in the modern world. Scientific knowledge and advancement underlie every aspect of contemporary life. Yet in many ways the misunderstanding of science and the acceptance of anti-scientific ideas have never been more prevalent. We will journey across modern society to explore the issues at the heart of this paradox: 1. What defines science? Why is science beneficial? 2. Contemporary manifestations of pseudoscience and anti-science 3. What are the limits of science? Can science address morality? 4. Why do pseudoscience and anti-science have the wide appeal and traction that they do? 5. How are conspiracy

theories at the intersection of anti-science and politics? This is not a science course. It is a course about society for anyone who is interested in society, in science, or both.

Life on Mars

Since the advent of the Space Age (coincident with widespread environmental degradation on Earth) humans have sought to answer the question, is there anywhere else we can live? With current space travel technology, the planet Mars represents the only possible alter-Earth that could serve as a refuge for humanity. Through a combination of readings, discussions, and presentations we will interrogate the history of description and exploration of the red planet. We will combine examination of scientific research, science fiction, and popular discourse to assemble a picture of what it really would take to survive on Mars. Topics will include historical accounts, the progression of space exploration, how we have looked for life, the science of terraforming, and fictional portrayals of Martian life and lifestyles. We will even attempt to grow some potatoes in Mars-like soil. The overarching goals of this course, as a First-Year Seminar, are for you to practice and improve your written and oral communication skills and to enhance your critical thinking and information literacy.

Split Selves Growing up Billingual Graveyard of Languages

In this course, we explore the challenges and benefits of growing up bilingual/multilingual in the the United States, whose reputation for monolingualism and rapid generational language loss has led researchers to call it "a graveyard of languages." Questions that we will confront together include: (1) Why do schools prioritize some types of bilingualism and stigmatize others? (2) What makes many immigrant parents oppose bilingual education for their children? (3) Do bilinguals think or behave differently in each of their languages? To address these (and other) questions, we will analyze memoirs, conduct interviews, and chat with experts in bilingual language acquisition.

Rise of the Crips: Disability & Identity in US

I want students to gain an understanding of the history of those with disabilities in the United States. The course will explore the rise of the disability rights movement and examines the similarities and differences between the disability rights movement and other social movements in the United States. The Course will also give students the opportunity to understand disability as a marker of social identity. Students will scrutinize the ways in which the identity of disability can empower and constrain those who have disabilities.

Capitalism and Its Discontents

This course will consider how philosophers, fiction writers, social reformers, economists, and ordinary people have understood, promoted, opposed, and sought to reform capitalism since the eighteenth century. Focused on the history of the United States, the course will encourage students to think, discuss, and write about the social and political implications of capitalist and anti-capitalist ideologies. Readings will examine inequality, work, gender roles, meritocracy, and class and racial hierarchies in the past and today. Authors include Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Booker T. Washington, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Charlie Chaplin, John Maynard Keynes, Rose and Milton Friedman.

Race and Law in the United States

This First Year Seminar introduces laws and judicial decisions that made racial status the basis for political and social hierarchies in the United States. We address issues of citizenship, freedom and property, segregation and exploitation, mass incarceration and disenfranchisement. The course advances the argument that legal institutions and legal actors play key roles in fashioning racial categories and their political and social import. We will read five books to explore this argument. Along the way, we will see how racial categories and their consequences were contested at every point, offering durable, conflicting visions of American democracy. Class members will be required to speak and write about the class materials. Moreover, we will consider how our own experiences are reflected in contests over race matters in the United States.

Education and Society

The student will learn about the history of K-12 education from the early-American period until today. The student will be able to analyze the interaction of citizenship and democracy through the lens of K-12 education. The student will understand how schooling in the U.S. has been utilized for individual and collective purposes. The student will examine the historic and contemporary impact of double segregation by income and race in U.S. schools. The student will be able to analyze the changing demographics in U.S. schools and the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusivity. The student should have an enhanced understanding of the topics at the forefront of current K-12 educational policy. The student will understand the relationship between housing and educational policy. The student will become familiar with the kinds of questions asked by education scholars, policy makers and practitioners.

Salsa Meets Jazz

Salsa Meets Jazz M Davison FYS Students in this course will explore the beginnings of Cuban music and American jazz music and the transformation of these two styles into separate and distinct musical genres. We will also discuss the historical and social context

of these styles and places. The syllabus reveals the different learning strategies with the students: 1) We will form a band (Salsa Meets Jazz Salsa Ensemble!) and perform and record at the end of the semester. Experiential learning by performing on instruments. 2) Critique/react to live concerts and write about them. 3) Eat Cuban food at my house. 4) Dance 5) Read and write about my Cuban stories. These 32 stories are about my time in Cuba and contain everyday events. The students learn about communism/socialism and the culture within a socio-political environment that each system creates. They have to explain their feelings. My goal is to get them to gather facts. With fake news and AI, their generation has to be aware of establishing truths. 6) Watching videos and learning about sound. Sound 'quality' is difficult to explain, but I lead them down a sound 'tunnel' and teach them how to listen and the vernacular involved in writing and talking about music and musical style. 7) The main goal, which is established through learning about something foreign (music & culture) is to ask better questions of themselves. 8) Final video documentary project. (see attached) Since I have been to Cuba almost 50 times and am completing my second documentary on the music of Cuba, I believe there is a sense of the truth when studying the Cuban people and culture. The students are presented with the historical information and make decisions for themselves. The students also learn that 'you cannot put a fence around sound' and in spite of our differences, the sound mixes; and has been mixing all along!

Civic Journalism and Social Justice

In this course, students will learn that journalists don't just report the news, they often have a responsibility to tell stories that inspire social change. This course explores the role and responsibility of journalism in identifying social issues and uncovering ways to resolve them.

Human Trafficking: Myth or Scourge

Human trafficking is a social justice issue that has gained prominence and attention in the media and through a variety of academic disciplines in recent year. However, human trafficking as a construct is embedded in conflicting and problematic paradigms and discourses that manipulate the concepts in political, economic and social ways that may perpetuate the underlying structures and issues causing exploitation. From humanitarian and development perspectives, to law enforcement, education, policy and social science orientations, the varying discourses related to human trafficking will be explored and students well grapple with challenging questions through a writing intensive approach to inquiry.

Reading the Past: Epics, Legends and History

This seminar challenges students to consider the meanings of "history", "fact", "fiction", "literature", “epic”, when using the following texts: Gilgamesh, selections from Virgil's Aeneid, Beowulf, the Song of Roland, an Arthurian Romance of Crétien de Troyes, and selections from Dante's Inferno. A central question will be how historians can use narratives to understand the the past. In essence, the course asks students to consider how their understanding of the past has been and is being constructed. UR’s First Year Seminars offer a hands-on introduction to academic inquiry with small classes, a diverse array of topics, and close contact with faculty. First year seminars serve as an introduction to academic inquiry and the modes of expression that lie at the heart of a liberal arts education. They foster habits of mind fundamental to students’ intellectual and academic development, including critical reading and thinking; sharing ideas and research through discussion; and the ability to write and think clearly and effectively. Integrating explorations of specific questions and topics with the development of skills, seminars aim to foster intellectual curiosity and students’ ability to act on it. Learning Outcomes: 1. Written Communication: Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively through a variety of written work that utilizes a process to help them develop the basics of academic writing, an initial understanding of disciplinary conventions, and an analysis of appropriate evidence. Students will write drafts of their formal essays; they will write blackboard discussion posts; there will be peer-review in class of paragraphs and outlines. 2. Oral Communication: Students will demonstrate effective formal and informal oral communication skills within the classroom setting. Students will do in-class oral presentations; students will do final project presentations. 3. Critical Thinking: Students will demonstrate critical thinking skills through the ability to evaluate, interpret, and analyze a variety of sources and other forms of expression. Reading the assigned texts and discussing them is critical thinking. 4. Information Literacy: Students will be able to effectively access, evaluate, and make ethical use of appropriate sources of information for different scholarly purposes. Lynda Kachuyk and I will lead a course-appropriate session on finding and working with scholarly sources.

<u>On Strategy: National, Societal, Personal</u>

The focus of this course is strategy and its efficacy. You know what they say about the best laid plans. Do strategies really work? Can we set clear and achievable goals to move into the future? What is needed for a strategy to succeed? What happens when they fail? Can strategies be adapted?

<u>Dao of Leadership</u>

“Dao of Leadership” examines paradigms of leadership in ancient China (c. 550-100 BCE), focusing on perceptions of the leader’s role, as well as mechanisms to maintain it.

Emphasizing the development of writing and reasoning skills, this course explores ways of wielding control, inspiring motivation, and sustaining authority. T

Staging Conflict: Opera, Politics, and Society

Opera is more than entertainment. Like works of literature, operas address the concerns of individuals, families, societies, and nations. They reflect the times in which they were created and the times in which they are performed. This course approaches opera from a thematic perspective, examining works that address class conflict, political unrest, cultural clashes, and gender roles. Through reading, viewing, and discussion, we will explore these themes in their historical contexts and relate them to contemporary experience. Students will learn to decode the language of opera by watching videos and attending performances. No musical knowledge or experience is required.

Sport and Religion in America

This FYS explores the intersection of sport and religion in America. We will study the ways in which religion, race, sport, and social justice intersected the lives and careers of athletes such as Muhammad Ali, John Carlos, and Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf. We will establish the historical, social, and political contexts for these athletes and their generations. In doing so, we will explore the racialization of Islam and Muslims in America and the role of race in religious movements calling for social justice. We will also explore issues explicitly related to gender, sport, and religion, focusing on female athletes in fencing, basketball, and track who have worn the hijab (or head covering).

The Psychopathology of American Capitalism

This course applies psychoanalytic and Marxist techniques in order to analyze economic inequality and the suppression of the capitalist welfare state in the US. After WWII, democrats and republicans effectively eliminated the communist and socialist parties, suppressed their allied labor movements, and fabricated a false opposition of left and right that does not correspond to political oppositions in the industrialized democracies. Marxist psychoanalysis can explain why Americans vote within a two-party system that neglects the lower classes, and why the working class votes against its own interests. Numerous contemporary political issues are analyzed through applications of Marxist psychoanalytic theory.

The Social Construction of Addiction

What is addiction? Is it a physiological disease, a mental illness, a behavioral consequence of profound social alienation, or is it a myth that reinforces sacred Western values like individual autonomy and self-determination? Where is addiction? Is it in the brain, in the

substance or activity on which one grows dependent, in the relation between the individual and her environment, or does it reside solely in the culture's collective consciousness? Who is an addict? Are individuals genetically predisposed to addiction or is addiction learned social behavior? Did addicts exist prior to the twentieth century? Prior to the nineteenth century? Is "addict" a medico-legal classification or a social identity? Both? Neither? In this course, we will explore these and related questions by engaging critically with over two hundred years of addiction scholarship. A highly interdisciplinary field, we will review literature from neuroscience, sociology, psychology, cultural studies, and philosophy among other disciplines. Further, we will reassess popular media like films, novels, and television programs as vehicles for the propagation (or subversion) of prevailing addiction theory. This is a course for skeptics, iconoclasts, and rebels unafraid to question sacrosanct ideas.

Global Studies and Public Policy

This course examines how public problems are defined, how different policy solutions are crafted, and the ways in which we judge their effectiveness in the U.S. and around the world. As the art of political decision-making, public policy reflects the reality that: (1) penalties and incentives (“sticks and carrots”) are what primarily drive much of modern life; (2) information is key to structuring effective penalties and incentives; and that (3) thinking analytically and empirically, knowing what to measure and how to measure it, is as important as thinking normatively. This course uses the countries we visit “in class” to illustrate the different ways that countries craft public policies, why they do so, and what the tradeoffs and consequences are.

The Power and Prejudice of Language

This course in particular seeks to answer some big questions that concern sociolinguists, including: • How and why do we manipulate our speech to negotiate social interaction and forge our identities? • Why do certain ways of speaking sound better or worse to us than others? • Who decides what is “standard” or “proper” English, how and why?

Life After Death

This First Year Seminar explores the concepts of death and the afterlife. We will study concepts of the afterlife, heaven, and hell, and discuss whether they exist and what they entail in a range of religious traditions. The course is focused on Islam but also considers comparative perspectives, including Judaism, Christianity, ancient Mesopotamia, and pre-Islamic Arabian tribal religions. We will also consider non-monotheistic and non-theistic traditions, including Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Shintoism.

Art, Technology, and Our Lives

Everyone says we live in a technological age—but what does that really mean? In this class, we'll explore changing ideas about the nature of technology and how it shapes our identities through the framework of art and visual culture. Focused primarily on the United States, topics will range from the use of photography to define post-emancipation life; to the rise of mass media and the society of the spectacle; to the way computers and the internet have redefined how we live, work, and see the world. In order to gain experience with different sources and methods for scholarly study, we'll explore these topics through a variety of texts, including research-based scholarly analysis, critical theory, and exhibition catalogs, as well as primary sources such as artists' writings, historical lectures, manifestos, and works of contemporary criticism. We will also have the opportunity to develop our academic voices through multiple styles of writing, including reflection, exposition, and research-supported argumentation. The class is discussion-based so staying caught up on reading is key for full participation, and we will practice giving both group and individual presentations in a mutually supportive environment.

Monumental Conversations

The purpose of this course is to guide students through contemporary discourses concerning public space and national monuments. Learning to understand public space allocation and memorialization goes hand in hand with understanding the history of a place, regionally, nationally, and on a global level. Students will learn to search for, appreciate, and engage critically with both what is present, and what is missing, as very often these public landmarks have been constructed under a certain politic, and can have the affect of replacing what was there before it. We will start by thinking about monuments, their symbolics, their formal methods of construction, the contexts which they were created in, and the legacies that they perpetuate. This research will be augmented by the recent monument audit by the Philadelphia non-profit Monument Lab, which details the landscape of US monument culture: when they were built, by who, and who they have predominantly memorialized. We will then extend our critical lens to understand the relationship between these monuments and the history of public space allocation, and segregation in our country, in order to understand the historical creation of many public parks, highways, manmade lakes, oceanfront's, and similar shared resources, and then relate this back to the history and legacy of public monuments. Students will even be challenged to consider to symbolic circulation of ideology present in things like national currency, flags, and other popular iconographies, in order to expand our definition of what we might call a monument. Students will also be introduced to counter cultural movements, public artworks, and performances around the globe that have existed in resistance to or in between the lines of popular hegemony, in an effort to give a balanced survey and introduction to some of the many ways different people have engaged with

public space throughout history. This research and our class conversations will be guided by readings, films, artist visits, class presentations, and field trips to the (previous) sites of local Richmond monuments. Their final paper will ask students to propose their own public "monument" will ask them to thoughtfully consider: What kind of public art project(s) do you propose? Who will the space being designed for? How do you envision this project(s) meeting your design goals? Who will create this public art project(s), and how? How will you involve community members in your project (if at all), and consider a variety of stakeholders?

Psychology of Design

What makes something "user-friendly" or accessible? How do professionals design products and environments that are intuitive to navigate? In this course we unfold the fascinating intersection of psychology, design, and ergonomics. Students will grasp how psychological insights shape the design of products (e.g., phones, vehicles, websites), systems (e.g., healthcare protocol, air traffic control), and environments (e.g., workplaces). We will cover the essentials of human factors psychology and principles of human-centered design, which highlights the importance of optimizing system or product performance with consideration to human well-being, capabilities, and limitations. The course involves an exploration of key principles through a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical applications, encompassing various domains such as technology, healthcare, transportation, architecture, and workplace environments. A primary goal of this course is to equip students with a robust understanding of the role of psychology in design, enabling them to critically analyze and contribute innovatively to the creation of user-friendly, efficient, and safe products and environments.

Friendship, Love and Desire

What is friendship? Is friendship more important than justice within a community? What is philia? Agape? Eros? This course will explore various perspectives on friendship, love and desire through the lenses of philosophy, literature, cinema, and the arts. Excerpts from the philosophical works of both Eastern and Western cultural traditions will lay the foundation for inquiry into these notions. The course will start with an investigation of friendship as a personal relationship as well as an individual experience informed by particular values and principles. We will subsequently examine the role that friendship plays in building stronger and more peaceful societies and communities and explore the continuities and tensions between friendship and love. Throughout, we will examine the concepts of love and desire in literary and cinematographic texts that span different cultures, historical periods, and continents.

Expansion of Europe, China and India into Africa

What is China or India doing in Africa today? The course is a critical examination of the main ideas that underlay the inroads into Africa by Europe and Asia, from the 15th century to now. If Europe's incursion into Africa was the result of discoveries and expansion into the New World (the Americas and Africa), today's steady presence of China and India occurs within the context of clearly defined national boundaries and trade regulations. Officially, equality and mutual respect are the driving forces behind these ties. "It is a win-win situation," say Chinese and Indian investors. How equal are the partners in that relationship?

Space is Big

This course focuses on three periods when scientific understanding of the size of the Universe, and the nature of space itself, underwent major shifts. We first consider the Copernican revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries, when the idea that the Earth orbits the Sun took root. We then shift to the early 20th century, when Einstein's relativity overturned our understanding of space and time and, at roughly the same time, astronomers discovered the existence of vast numbers of galaxies extending far further than anyone had previously realized. Finally, we consider present-day speculative theories that posit that our observable Universe is part of an almost incomprehensibly larger "multiverse."

Silk Roads and Atlantic Triangles: Connections in the Premodern World

Global connectivity may appear a hallmark of modernity, but it has a long history. Since complex societies began, humanity has never lived in ethnically, religiously, or otherwise segregated societies. People have always travelled, exchanging ideas, commodities, and DNA. In this interdisciplinary seminar, we will explore the ways in which human societies were connected between ca. 1200 and ca. 1800. We will consider how old globalization actually is, how interdependent human societies have been for centuries, and how connections and exchanges transformed the world. Our explorations will take place under two broad themes: "Strangers in Strange Lands" and "Consuming the World." The first will consider travellers and travel narratives by individuals who crossed oceans and cultures, not always willingly and often but not always in search of economic opportunities. The second will consider the commodities exchanged and traded in the pre-modern world. We will consider how global connections and exchanges have changed over the centuries, and how have they have, in turn, transformed the world for better and worse.

Geek Chic

This FYS explores two issues: “geek” or “nerd” culture, and the practice of ethnographic research. As Andrew Harrison of the The Guardian observed in 2013, “From superhero movies to techy sitcoms to captains of industry, geeks have been running the show for years.” If you have ever been interested in “geek culture” products and activities such as D&D, Star Trek, Eurogaming, anime/manga, and cosplay, here is your chance to study that community. This course explores the cultural phenomenon of “geek chic” through the lens of cultural studies. Students will learn about geek culture by participating in it and by interviewing members of the culture, comparing personal experiences to the existing research on the topic. The course culminates in a critical ethnography examining some aspect of “geek chic.”

Ancient Philosophies of Life

This course will engage students to articulate and examine their core values and beliefs about what would make their lives happy and fulfilling and what would create a more flourishing society as well. It also aims to help students develop healthy writing habits and a basic understanding of several ancient philosophies of life.

Summons to Conscience: Questioning Civil Rights Leadership and Popular Misconceptions of the Freedom Struggle

In popular memory, we often attribute the American civil rights movement and the civil rights bills to a handful of activists and policymakers. While Martin Luther King, Jr. helped organize direct-action tactics and President Johnson’s appeals for an equality of results standard shaped the civil rights bills, everyday people were also integral to civil rights activism and policy creation. This course uses contemporary literature from the mid-20th century and recent historical scholarship to interrogate the strategies civil rights activists used to upend Jim Crow segregation, arguably the most discriminatory set of policies in American history. Prepare to examine mid-20th century social movements and the ways civil rights legislation influenced American equality after 1965. We will also question how ostensibly unremarkable Americans were central to the development of not only the civil rights movement, but also modern liberalism.

Games, Game Theory, and Leadership Studies

The course focuses on the principles of games and gaming; the relevance of game theories to society, history, and geopolitics; and on the importance of these principles to issues of leadership and leadership studies. We will use a variety of games – board games, videogames, and game theory – to examine significant concerns and issues relevant to discussions of leadership theories and practices. Over the trajectory of the course, the students will create and develop their own alternate reality games (ARGs) using ARIS

software and set on the University of Richmond campus. Students will be asked to consider their role in the creation and development of these games in teams, and will have to implement leadership skills practically in their teams, in addition to studying the principles of both leadership and game theory with relation to game-situations and “real life.”

Hollywood Genres

FYS 100 Hollywood Genres is an opportunity for students to explore how Hollywood's genre system was created and evolved across the twentieth century. Though the genres under consideration will change, this iteration will look at the private detective film, which has long operated as one of Hollywood's enduring genres. This FYS will explore nature and evolution of the detective film across the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, with units on: 1) the early silent adaptations of classical detectives such as Sherlock Holmes and The Lone Wolf; 2) Classical Hollywood’s 1930s iterations of Golden Age detectives such as Holmes, Hercule Poirot, and Charlie Chan; 2) the dark turn to Film Noir detectives in the 1940s - 50s, and then their reconfiguration as Neo Noir films in the 1970s; and 3) and the emergence of atypical detectives (women, Black men, etc.) in the 1990s. We will conclude by considering the current vogue for retro-pastiche mysteries suggested by the popularity of Johnson's *Knives Out* and Branagh’s recent Poirot adaptations.

Women & Coloniality: Latin Amer, Latinx, Indigenous Female Writers

This class explores the discursive and aesthetic strategies developed by four female writers to deal with colonial structures and discourses of power in Latin America and the United States. Ranging from contemporary western U.S. to seventeenth-century Mexico City, each writer’s work provides an opportunity for students to learn about coloniality and the way it manifests through race, gender, religion, and class.

Puzzles and Paradoxes

What are we to make of the sentence "I am lying now" or the possibility that there is an infinite amount of stuff in the universe or that if backward time travel were possible it seems you could prevent your father from ever meeting your mother? This course will explore potential solutions to these, and many other, conundrums from a wide range of problem areas. In addition, we will explore the process of producing solutions and the impediments to producing solutions.

Understanding Managing Risk Implications of Business & Society

This course will discuss the topic of risk as it relates to business and society. Students will explore the origins and concepts of risk; understand and debate risk issues using multiple

perspectives; reflect on how risk issues were addressed in the past and how they should be addressed in the future; and explore how to consider risk, uncertainty, and resilience in their own decisions.

The Literature of Animals

This course asks: How can literature bring us closer to the lives of animals? How can the human imagination and creative forms of storytelling and manipulations of language help us to access animal life? How can poetry and fictional prose get us to think carefully about issues like animal ethics and animal psychology? In this class, we will take up these questions by looking closely at a wide range of poetry, novels, and short stories, as well as some films and works of philosophy, that engage with animals.

Ethics in International Relations

This course examines pressing ethical and moral questions in the arena of international affairs. The main areas of focus will be international conflict, international economics, and intrastate conflict. Course content will include a variety of primary texts, scholarly articles, podcasts, and films revolving around important ethical debates. Students will write analytical papers, co-lead discussions, and participate in in-class debates, all designed to help develop the skills that will help them succeed in the rest of their time at the University.

Sensing Place: Art, Literature, and the Environment

How do writers and artists imagine and reimagine natural places? How might we learn to observe as they do and bring our observations and ideas into the world? And how might we use such abilities to bring positive change in a time of environmental peril? We'll work together in this course to explore these questions, studying novels and artworks as we develop our abilities to observe, write about, and draw (no experience necessary) the environment around us. Central to all our work will be strengthening artistic and environmental agency—learning how ideas can be created, refined, tested, and brought into being. The course will culminate in the class creating and building a "micro park" in UR's Eco-Corridor.

Athletes of Piety

This seminar examines the lives of Christian ascetics in late antique eastern Mediterranean who espoused a set of practices called monasticism. In the narrow sense, asceticism denotes various forms of abstinence. Textual sources construe Christian ascetic practice as one that renounces the material world and traditional social structures. Literary portrayals of monasticism emphasize withdrawal, fasting, sleeplessness, ceaseless prayer, and celibacy. Monks are said to have migrated into the demon-infested desert to lead a

spiritual combat against fornication and other vices. Their mortified bodies are said to have emitted “ascetic stench” that attested to their holiness. Monastic texts depict ascetic practitioners as athletes of piety to highlight their spiritual prowess. They thus allude to classical models of askesis, that is physical and intellectual training. Instead of the well-defined body of Greek and Roman athletes, the monks’ emaciated bodies stood for spiritual fitness and exuded the ethos of religiously defined masculinity. Many of the early Christian monks and nuns resided in Egypt, the “bread basket” of the Roman Empire with trade routes to virtually every corner of the Mediterranean region and beyond. The arid climate of Egypt, Sudan, Palestine, and Syria preserved substantial material remains of various expressions of monasticism, from secluded caves for hermits to enclosed communities for cenobitic practitioners.

Lost in Translation?

What is translation? How does it affect our lives? How does translation shape the world we live in, and our relation to it? In this course, we will explore how translation impacts communication across languages, cultures, and time. We will investigate how translation attends to linguistic nuance, social mores, cultural values, historical understanding, political organization, and power relations. What are the goals of translation? How can it aid or impede understanding? How are translators and interpreters perceived in different contexts (literary, diplomatic, legal, etc.)? How can translation increase our appreciation for the connections between language, culture, and history?

From Frankenstein to AI

This course will examine Mary Shelley's Frankenstein and its enduring influence as a touchstone for cultural anxieties or fears surrounding technological advancements. We will read and analyze the 1818 text using the recent MIT edition, which provides insightful annotations and essays that explore the novel’s portrayal of scientific creativity and ethical responsibility. We will then consider how the trope of Frankenstein -- a manmade creation exceeding its creator's control – has been adapted across literature and film to express evolving fears about technology. We will focus on understanding how these adaptations both reflect cultural attitudes and anxieties surrounding technological progress and help shape society's evolving relationship with science and technology. (Note for "Has this course been taught before?": Carol has taught it for SPCS, 300-level Knowledge Management multiple times and SPCS graduate ENG 598U once).

From the River Jordan to Jazz & Beyond Music of African Americans

An introduction to the numerous styles of African American music developed in the United States since 1619. Beginning with the oral traditions of Africa and culminating with jazz and

the music of contemporary African American composers, this course will familiarize you with the styles, forms, and composers of these genres. Additionally, you will attain an understanding of certain social, economic, and political conditions in American history that have affected the evolution of African American music and culture.

The Rhetorical Lives of Maps

This course is a historical and critical interpretation of how maps aided and complicated America's rise to international power. The processes, production, display, and circulation of maps gave way to a "geographic imagination" that constrained both policy and popular culture - in turn, Americans saw their place in the world in very spatialized ways. From a rhetorical perspective, maps gave us specific and partial perceptions of the globe and cartographers from a host of different institutions and with various national and international interests (government institutions like the State Dept., the CIA, the Department of Defense, academic institutions like the American Geographic Society, popular magazines like National Geographic and Time, and corporations as diverse as Rand McNally and Google) sketched the contours of American identity in both longitude and latitude. The course teaches students how to critique maps as systems of visual codes and also contextualizes for them how maps are used as rhetorical strategies by American elites and publics; by both the powerful and those challenging the powerful. Not only then is this a course on cartography; it's a course on the wild world-making processes of U.S. geopolitics and international space.

Making Poverty History

In 2015, the United Nations declared that its top priority in the new millennium would be to end poverty by 2030. Many commentators applauded the UN's ambition, but the pledge raised questions about what poverty was, how it was measured, and whether it could truly be ended. This course takes on these questions by exploring the history of the poverty idea in the work and activism of moral crusaders, social reformers, scientists, politicians, and humanitarians. We will work with primary sources—novels, manifestos, music, film—to uncover the possibilities and limits of global initiatives to end poverty, past and present.

The Italian-American Experience: from Ellis Island to the Sopranos

"People take pride in being Irish-American and Italian-American. They have a particular culture that infuses the (whole) culture and makes it richer and more interesting. But it's not something that determines people's life chances and there is no sense of superiority or inferiority." (Obama, 2007)

Great Filmmakers of the World

What makes a great filmmaker? Is it someone who has made their mark in the history of cinema? Someone whose films have had success at the box office, or, conversely, someone unknown to the general public but recognized as a “genius” in intellectual or academic circles? Must a great filmmaker exhibit through their film a strong social or political consciousness? Or can greatness be defined solely by a capacity for formal innovation? In this course, we will try to answer these questions by watching and discussing films from different national traditions and showcasing different styles of filmmaking. My choice of film is by nature subjective. In that sense, this FYS is not an “Introduction to Film Studies”. I have selected a few American films but this collection of films is meant to highlight creative perspectives from all over the world.

Dances for EveryBody

In this community-based First Year Seminar, we will turn to the expressive language of the body to address social justice issues and activate meaningful conversations. The arts have served as a generative medium for healing and activism. How can the performing arts, in particular dance and theater with their emphasis on the body, action, and meaning, serve as a practice of freedom both individually and collectively? How do we nurture collaboration and set the stage to imagine and co-create a more just and equitable world?

Politics and Literature

This course aims to meet the requirements of the First Year Seminar experience through the field of politics and literature.

Friendship, Collaboration and Conviviality

This seminar examines the theme and role of friendship in Early Modern European culture, especially in Renaissance Italy, and the way in which friendship informed and inspired intellectual and artistic collaboration and conviviality. Texts from both Greek and Roman antiquity and the European Renaissance on the value of friendship as a source of love, solace, inspiration and delight form the core of the readings, as will works of art that represent collaborations between artists, poets and humanists. Based in conversation, this course in turn considers how conversation between friends, both serious and comical, inspired artistic and scholarly activities.

Writing About Food

Food is an essential part of our daily lived experience, no matter where we may fall on the live-to-eat or eat-to-live spectrum. Beyond taste itself, food tells us about culture, class, regionality, and access. How do we

convince a picky friend to try a new restaurant, or verbally capture the taste of a favorite meal? What group can stake claim to a certain dish, and who teaches us how to make it? This class looks at four distinct hallmarks of food writing— description, criticism, instruction, and exploration—as a way of learning the goals of academic writing. Course materials will include film, short stories, podcasts, nonfiction essays and articles, cooking instruction, and direct observation of Richmond's culinary scene.

(Anti)Heroes and Villains

Outlaws, sympathetic villains, antiheroes, recuperated bad guys— the function and characterization of antiheroes and villains (the grey and black shades of morality and human behavior) tell us as much about the society in which a text originates as they do the text itself. In this class, we will examine written and visual media from the Early Modern period through the contemporary to answer questions such as: how do antiheroes and villains shape narratives? What are the emotions or responses they create in readers? How do certain representations (an evil villain instead of a "misunderstood" one) influence our responses?

What's Hot in the City?

The Earth is getting warmer. Nowhere is this more true than in cities where over half of the world's population resides and urban heat islands make it increasingly difficult to live, work, and play. How can society create and sustain thriving, equitable environments in modern cities? We will hear firsthand from local environmental leaders to learn about recent environmental initiatives in Richmond like RVAgreen 2050, the City's ongoing effort to create an equity-centered climate action plan to help the community adapt to climate impacts of extreme heat, precipitation, and flooding. We will reflect upon the legacy of housing and other discriminatory policies in shaping our current environment, and we will contribute to local initiatives to build a more resilient and sustainable city by proposing new policies and actions in collaboration with our community partners.

For the Love of Books

The answer to "What is a book?" has changed dramatically in the past few decades. The digital explosion has altered not just the format of a book and how it is created and transmitted, but it also impacted how readers interact with the books that they read.

Climate Fiction and Social Change

“Climate fiction” is often used to characterize works of literature that imagine the environmental consequences and social effects of phenomena such as rising sea levels, water shortages, animal extinctions, and regional epidemics. Through close analysis of climate fiction and through application of various theories of social change, this course considers intersections between climate change, environmental degradation, social change, literature and science fiction. This course offers students the opportunity to fine-tune close reading and research skills, to critically analyze a wide-variety of fictional and non-fictional texts, and to work collaboratively with others to improve reading and writing abilities.

Microfinance and Entrepreneurship

The birth of microfinance marks the inception of the global fight against poverty via entrepreneurship particularly within the informal economy. Such a statement represents the views of scholars and development experts who believe that microcredit schemes provide solutions to the problem of lack of “small” amounts of money (microcredit) for businesses, particularly among women entrepreneurs in the Global South. However, in the last three to four decades of its popularity across the globe as a development intervention strategy, microfinance has also witnessed significant criticisms vis-à-vis several “-izations,” for example, internationalization, neo liberalization, and financialization of microfinance. Reflecting upon these realities and contentious positions, in this First Year Seminar, we take critical and pragmatic approaches, among others, to examining conceptual analysis and case studies about microfinance and entrepreneurship in ways that allow students to engage in discourses about development and social transformations intended by microfinance and entrepreneurship. Beyond examining the conceptual perspectives and theoretical approaches to entrepreneurship students are asked to think about what constitutes a ‘good’, ‘fair’, and ‘sustainable’ entrepreneurship in the context of local and global challenges confronting humanity today (the Anthropocene epoch) all in pursuit of ‘survival.’ This course also draws students’ attention as future business owners and leaders to issues of ethical dilemmas in entrepreneurship.

Art as Political Action

Art has served as a pivotal and powerful element of politics for centuries, across time, space, ideas, and media. Whether we look at the socio-political battles that raged in Renaissance Florence, as families and rival governmental factions fought a propaganda war using the stage of the city itself – its streets, homes, and civic buildings, at the socio-cultural and artistic encounters between Europeans and indigenous peoples of

the Americas (and contemporary explorations of these encounters), or at the socio-cultural and political battles of contemporary America, in which artists and activists create works whose messages are seen on the streets and in institutions of power (governmental, artistic, academic), art has long been political action – meant to sway, provoke, and mold public opinion, to express, argue, and create individual and institutional identities. This course focuses on a series of fascinating examples in art and architecture from the late medieval and Early Modern era to today, in which art is persuasion, propaganda, narrative, counter-narrative, activist act, protest, counter-protest, revolution, and more, enacted on individual and civic bodies and the body politic alike. No prior knowledge is assumed, and all are welcome!

Slavery in the Contemporary Imagination

This course explores the history of U.S. slavery and its manifestations in popular culture today. We not only will learn about the historical context of slavery, but we also will explore contemporary films, music, art, literature, and public history sites that grapple with slavery and its legacies in our society today. We will watch and analyze award-winning films like 12 Years a Slave and Black Panther, read the science fiction graphic novel Kindred, and visit the Richmond Slave Trail, to name a few of our class activities. Prominent historian Ira Berlin's seminal article, "American Slavery in History and Memory and the Search for Social Justice," will serve as a framework for our exploration. Berlin asserts that U.S. history cannot be understood without slavery, yet it has only been in the 21st century that prominent dialogues about the continuing meaning of slavery have taken place. Berlin argues that slavery has become "a language, a way to talk about race in a society in which race is difficult to discuss." This course, then, will give students a strong grounding in the history of slavery in the U.S. then focus on analyzing popular cultural material to better understand this "language." We will grapple with the following questions throughout the semester: • How have interpretations of slavery changed over time, both by historians and in popular imaginings? • What does it mean that an institution abolished 150 years ago still has such a seminal place in U.S. reality and imagination today? • What might such a strong cultural emphasis on slavery today say about contemporary race relations and society's hesitancy or willingness to frankly discuss issues of racial injustice and reconciliation? • What conflicts arise between history, what Berlin calls "the careful, dispassionate reconstruction of lived experience," and memory, a deeply personal, embodied experience?

Buckwheat and Caviar: The Idea of Sustainability in Russian literature, science, and culture

Global warming, loss of biodiversity, climate justice: these are urgent challenges and opportunities for change. This course looks at sustainability challenges and change in the huge territory occupied by Russia and Siberia. Our materials range from thought-provoking science fiction, to the war-torn story of the world's first seed bank, to contemporary plans to resurrect the Siberian woolly mammoth. Across time and cultural differences, these narratives address issues we face today.

Latin American Politics through Film

Prior to the 1980s, democracy had a difficult time taking root in much of Latin America. Most countries in the region oscillated between authoritarianism and restricted versions of democracy. In this class we will explore development, democracy, authoritarianism, and regime transitions in the specific case of Chile. The course will push you to ask big and important questions about the political world, including: what is democracy? why do democratic regimes sometimes break down?; what brings about democratic transitions?; how do democratic regimes address the human rights violations carried out during dictatorships?; and how can states in the global periphery build stable and representative democracies? In this way, the course will encourage students to think critically about one of the most intensely contested concepts in Political Science: democracy. The course will also focus heavily on writing and oral communication skills, enhancing students' ability to analyze the political world and make well-supported and logical arguments about issues related to Latin American democracy and development. Finally, the course provides you with an introduction to the research process, including how to use and analyze a wide variety of sources.

Rhetoric of American Sport

In this section of FYS, we will explore the "Rhetoric of American Sport" by focusing on how journalists, broadcasters, and the public rhetorically frame sports in America and how they employ particularized language in how they write about athletes, games, and sports. Some of the rhetorical themes we will consider include the prevalence of military language about games and players, the language of "family," the idea of athletes as heroes and the mythologizing of them, and how fans imagine themselves as part of the team, including how they use "we" and "us" when talking about their team. Other elements include what it means to discuss college athletes as scholar athletes as opposed to thinking about them as laborers or workers and what it means to call professional athletes highly paid entertainers vs considering them as employees. Through a consideration of the contemporary American sporting scene,

we will explore these issues and more as we examine the language we employ when we talk about sports and athletes – and what that language reveals about how we think ideologically about the game.

Write Your Way: writing through the transition

Writing is one of the best ways to make sense of this world, as well as an indispensable skill for college and for life. In this FYS course we will read and write our way through the transition to college, exploring models for a variety of kinds of writing, developing our own writing, and researching both topics of our own and the ways writing can help us grow and learn.

Regarding Disability

Disability is an aspect of identity that can be remarkably flexible across time and that rests both on physical realities and cultural assumptions. Accordingly, this course asks students to think critically about the establishment, performance, and maintenance of identity, particularly as it pertains to the categories of ability and disability. Students will acquire the analytical tools necessary for that inquiry by working with a combination of theoretical texts and cultural engagements with disability, including examples from literature, film, law, medical discourses, architecture, and pop culture. As part of the class, students will produce work that is both scholarly and creative, as well as visit relevant locations and cultural events in Richmond.

Vampires and the Undead in Slavic Cultures

This semester, we will explore the role of the 'undead' in Slavic cultures. Along from being a popular and commercially successful archetype, what lessons do vampires and other 'undead' characters offer us? What do they tell us about the cultures and historical settings in which they're created and, more importantly, what can they teach us about our understanding of ourselves? In this class, we will look at vampires, zombies, and other 'undead' beings as oft-used embodiments of repressed traumas, memories, and desires on both the individual and collective level. Due to their decidedly unique (and uniquely fascinating) histories, Russian and other Slavic cultures offer a plethora of undead characters. As just examples, our texts include vampires, demons, tricksters, post-apocalyptic monsters, ghosts of victims past, and even a giant magical cat. So, get ready to read and get ready to learn! We have a lot to do.

Tsars, Saints and Serfs

Why did Peter "The Great" place a tax on bearded men? Was Rasputin really the lover of the Russian queen? How did a warrior princess

become one of the first Russian saints? Find out in Tsars, Saints, and Serfs. In this class we will survey major historical, cultural, and artistic moments in Russia's past. We will start in the Kievan period move through the medieval period, and into the modern era with Peter "The great" up until the end of the Romanov Tsars. We will watch as famous orthodox ikons and the seat of power moves from Kiev to Novgorod, to Moscow, and finally settles in the newly constructed St. Petersburg. We will look at important art, paintings, and ikons and we will read the literature of the great Russian authors. Students will come away with a better understanding of where Russian culture and history started and how the Russian Empire expanded to the events leading up the end of the monarchy.

Drugs in America: A Cultural History

This is a course about the sale, use, advertising and media portrayal of mood-altering drugs in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Although alcohol and tobacco are drugs, we will not be discussing them here. And although some of the drugs we study are not always illegal (marijuana, LSD, prescription opioids, for instance), we will focus on the role of these drugs inour culture over time. We will look at who takes these drugs, and how these drugs and their consumers are portrayed in the media and treated by the law.

New Media, Cyberpunk and Digital Art

This course is about media and technology. How do we consume media? What is our relationship to technology? Are we in control of our own use of technology or are we perhaps living in a cyberpunkdystopia? How do we participate in this system through the creation of our own media, art, and interactive content? In this class, we will think critically about what it means to be a self-directed person in an age of rapidly changing technology and media formats. We will examine the work of philosophers, digital artists, and technologists to understand our relationship with new media and the implications for the future.

Ecotourism and Sustainability

This seminar explores diverse global and national landscapes and geographies while analyzing alternative approaches to sustainable tourism. Travel to unique Virginian ecotourism sites allows us to record firsthand how social, economic, and ecological processes are interconnected.

The Disruptive Business of Branding

This First Year Seminar is designed to help students understand the relationship between branding, customer loyalty, and business success. Yet most incoming students currently lack the knowledge of what a brand is (even though many are loyal to some brand), how brands work, and why certain brand promises exist. Through textbook readings, case studies, articles, and real-world examples, students will synthesize information and use their research and critical thinking skills to understand how brands use disruption to attract/keep customers and attain, maintain, and even reclaim category dominance through their unique brand promises and strategies.

Faulkner and After

This seminar introduces students to the fiction of one of the most important American writers of the 20th century and, beyond that, traces his work's influence forward to our own time. Winner of the 1950 Nobel Prize in literature, William Faulkner stands at mid-century as an enormously prolific as well as accomplished figure. His novels are dense, profound meditations on the U.S. South and on American social life generally; they are famous for their innovative use of techniques such as stream of consciousness, non-linear narrative, and multiple points of view. More importantly, he used his books to mount a sustained indictment of the racial attitudes and practices that defined his native region.

Crime and Punishment in Russian Fiction and Film

"Crime and Punishment in Russian Fiction and Film" examines acts of transgression and retribution, two long-standing preoccupations in Russian culture. More specifically, this course investigates how Russians have explored the changing boundaries of propriety, criminality and wrongdoing since the early 19th century. An interdisciplinary course located at the nexus of literature, cinema and history; it examines a variety of texts—fictional, cinematic, even operatic—within their historical context. Critical attention is paid to shifts in expression and representation between the imperial and Soviet periods and the (re)interpretation of texts over time. Attention is also paid to how these themes have been reinterpreted abroad outside of Russia. "Crime and Punishment in Russian Fiction and Film" asks an array of important moral questions. What is the nature of individual responsibility? How is one to balance individualism and membership in a broader community? How is one to reconcile individual belief and self-expression with social convention? What is the individual to do when confronted by a criminal regime? How should the individual behave amid social and/or moral collapse? How much of this is inherently Russian and how much is universal?

Going Places

How have people traveled to learn over the past few centuries-- and what can we learn from their narratives, their experiences, and their ways of learning? This class uses primary and secondary travel narratives and analysis from around the world to consider how the whole process of learning through travel happens.

Devil in the Details: Microhistory & Historical Narrative

Witches and heretics, religious prophets and confidence men, Indian captives and murdering mothers, cat massacres and slave conspiracies: these are the subjects of "microhistory," a distinctive approach to the study of the past that seeks to reveal broader forces of historical change through detailed stories of obscure individuals and unusual events. In this First-Year Seminar, you'll learn how scholars research and write these gripping historical narratives. We will probe beneath the grand narratives of conventional history textbooks and develop theoretical and methodological competencies in the subfield of cultural history. The seminar will provide opportunities to read and analyze a challenging array of primary texts, from newspapers to private journals. Toward the end of the semester, you will research and write your own microhistories about a bizarre religious sect known as the Vermont Pilgrims.

Philosophy Through Film

The goal of our first-year seminar will be to study philosophy through film. We won't be studying philosophical questions about the nature of film; instead, we will be using film as a tool to illustrate and imagine important philosophical issues. For example, we will study philosophical theories of forgiveness and will look at how forgiveness plays out in films like Calvary. Film is a medium that allows us to inhabit an idea in ways that simply thinking theoretically on its own does not allow. In Unit 1, we will examine epistemological and metaphysical topics that are portrayed in film. In Unit 2, we will cover issues in ethics and political philosophy through films. Lastly, in Unit 3 we will address issues in the field of aesthetics as they come up in film.

Is Rational Moral Disagreement Possible?

Disagreements about controversial issues are often either shouted or typed in a comment section, neither of which seems particularly productive. Can these discussions be useful, or should we engage differently? Is it possible to rationally disagree? How can we productively discuss morally charged topics, and how can we approach trying to change each other's minds? In this course, we'll construct and

participate in philosophical arguments about specific moral issues, and about disagreement itself.

Gender, Violence, & Rome

What role can literature from and influenced by the Roman world play in universities in the 21stCentury? Ovid's works will launch a careful examination of gender, race and ethnicity, and violence in the Roman world and in contemporary society. Gender, Violence, & Rome will study the ways that ancient literatures, especially epic and tragedy, have offered solace and resistance against gendered and racialized violence, and, by contrast, been read as supporting power hierarchies that enable violence against women, men, and non-binary people. In this course, students will meet Roman literature, and novels and drama inspired by Roman culture in writers such as Luis Alfaro, Cherríe Moraga, Shakespeare, Toni Morrison, and in film. This FYS will look to different forms of performance texts to explore questions about human identities, belonging, community, power and justice now and in the ancient Roman empire.

Writing With/Against AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) is, for better or worse, everywhere. From the time we proposed this course to the time you read this; the ways we understand AI have already evolved. Representations of AI in various media (literature, film, games, news, comics) shape how we perceive its possibilities and challenges. What can stories about AI – both factual and speculative – reveal about human creativity, labor, and personhood? How do these portrayals engage with the social, political, and cultural contexts in which they are created? How might science fiction, in particular, serve as a tool for helping us to critically conceptualize the rapidly evolving technological advancement of artificial intelligence? In this course, we will explore these questions and others through independent and collaborative reading, research, and analysis.