

## FIRST YEAR SEMINARS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND COURSE PROPOSAL

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

First Year Seminars are intended to serve as an introduction to academic inquiry and the modes of expression that lie at the heart of a liberal arts education. They aim to 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, these seminars will, it is hoped, foster intellectual curiosity and students' ability to act on it.

### FYS COMMON GOALS

1. to expand and deepen students' understanding of the world and of themselves;
2. to enhance their ability to read and think critically;
3. to enhance their ability to communicate effectively, in writing, speech, and other appropriate forms;
4. to develop the fundamentals of information literacy and library research; and
5. to provide the opportunity for students to work closely with a faculty mentor.

### PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

As you prepare your course proposal, please keep in mind how your course will address the goals of the FYS program as stated above through specific assignments and course design. The members of the FYS Committee who review proposals realize that this represents the first iteration of a course plan; a proposal is not a finished syllabus. Nevertheless, the strength of the proposal rests on its ability to provide careful consideration of its pedagogical aims that are in keeping with the larger goals of FYS. FYS courses may expose students to various academic disciplines and areas of study, but they remain unique as courses aimed to help students gain valuable skills in reading, writing, research and speech through a topical focus.

## FYS PROPOSAL FORM

Please complete each of the sections below and save as a PDF file. Email the completed proposal to the FYS Committee Chair. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the FYS Committee Chair. Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) can be found on the FYS webpage at <http://fys.richmond.edu/faculty-resources/faq.html>.

### Section I: Course Information

1. Name:

2. Department/School:

3. Is this the first course you have proposed for FYS? Yes or No (circle one)

3b. If you replied "No," when did you complete your FYS training (summer institute, four workshops)?

4. Have you sought approval of your Department Chair or Dean? (yes/no)

5. Availability (Year; Fall and/or Spring Term) (one or two sections):

6. Course Title for FYS website:

7. Course Description for FYS website (100 words or less)

### 8. Overview of Course

In about 500 words, give an overview of this topic of study in terms of its course goals. *What are the big questions that you want students to explore throughout the semester? In what ways or through what means does the course ask students to grapple with the complexity of these questions?*

### 9. Area(s) of Expertise

Briefly describe the area(s) of expertise that you draw on in preparing to teach this course. *Any topic can be proposed as long as the course is in keeping with the goals of FYS. Subject matter, however, must be related substantially to a professor's expertise. If you have questions about the appropriateness of a topic, please don't hesitate to contact the FYS Committee Chair.*

## Section II: Pedagogy

Briefly describe how the course will seek to achieve the five goals of the First Year Seminar:

**I. Expand students' understanding of the world and of themselves.**

Please indicate how the course will challenge students either to think about important questions and issues they may not have thought about before, or think about them in ways they have not thought about them.

**II. Enhance their ability to read and think critically.**

Helpful materials include a preliminary list of books and articles you intend to include as required reading, and/or exercises or pedagogical methods that will be used to improve critical reading and thinking.

**III. Enhance students' ability to communicate effectively in writing, speech, and other appropriate forms.**

Please describe the type and number of writing assignments students will complete, the opportunities students will have to develop their writing and oral communication skills, and other ways in which they will be asked to communicate their ideas. Keep in mind that all FYS courses have a 5,000-word (roughly 20-page) academic writing requirement.

**IV. Develop fundamentals of information literacy and library research.**

Please describe the ways in which your course will ask students to make use of library resources and build research skills. Keep in mind, all FYS students complete one library research session outside of class. The goals for the fall and spring sessions can be found on the FYS Faculty Resources Lib Guide at <http://libguides.richmond.edu>.

**V. Provide the opportunity for students to work closely with a faculty mentor.**

Please indicate the specific efforts you will make to interact with each student, learn more about each student's interests and abilities, and provide appropriate guidance for their intellectual growth.