First Year Seminar Guide

What is a First Year Seminar (FYS) Course?
First Year Seminars serve as the first course in Otterbein’s Integrative Studies (general education) program. The seminars are diverse in topic and disciplinary perspective but share a set of goals and outcomes related to student learning and transition into the Otterbein academic community.

The seminars are taught by a wide range of faculty and are designed to provide students with an introduction to interdisciplinary learning. In other words, they’ll help you understand what Otterbein classes will be like for the next four years. Students should choose a seminar that seems interesting to them; no major requires one specific seminar. Therefore, the seminars are also a great way for students who are undeclared or unsure of their major to explore different topics or areas.

What can I expect from my FYS?
- FYS courses are designed to help with your transition into Otterbein. FYS Classes open the door to campus resources and life-changing experience.
- The courses are rigorous, resulting in a solid foundation for the rest of your Otterbein career.
- After completing your FYS classes, you will have a better understanding of college-level work, which will benefit you in your other classes.
- FYS allows for connections: what you learning your FYS class will relate to the rest of your time at Otterbein – both in and out of the classroom!
- Your FYS course will help you tap into your strengths, accept diversity, engage in intellectual conversations, and develop relationships with faculty, fellow first-year students, and a peer mentor.
- You’ll learn fundamental skills such as time management, decision-making, and self-reflection.

General Guide for Selecting a FYS:
1. Review the comprehensive list of FYS offerings (see attached descriptions).
2. Identify a few FYS classes that sound interesting - remember you can pick any FYS course, regardless of your background knowledge or intended major.
3. Students in the Honors Program should choose from the First Year Seminar Honors, Oneward to Honors, list.
4. In the Course Registration Survey that you will receive through your email, you will be able to preference your FYS courses based on if you really like, like or dislike the course.
5. Have fun with choosing your FYS – this is the first step in your liberal arts education!
**First Year Seminar Course Descriptions**

**Fall 2021**

**SEARCHING FOR SELF:**

**FYS 1055 – Asking the Big Questions**
College is the time for asking big questions: Who am I? What do I want to do with my life? Who will I love? Exploring these questions, and the ways we can use them to make meaning from our experiences in college. What do these questions mean to us as individuals? What do they mean to us as members of a community? How do these questions help us think about the world around us and help us understand the concept of the common good? Service, discussion, readings, films and activities are used to consider the implication of these questions for first year students. Issues of identity, vocation, and relationships will also be explored.

**FYS 1064 – Monsters, Freaks and Outcasts**
Common preconceptions about science and scientists are ingrained within us; from Frankenstein to Dexter's Laboratory we are presented with very specific ideas about who a scientist is. Exploring our expectations of what a scientist is, their identity, behavior, and motivations. Answering questions such as: Are there really mad scientists? What are women in science really like? Why do we think of Albert Einstein when asked to picture a famous scientist? Examining common archetypes in books, television, and movies and compare these to real life examples. The changing identity of scientists through history, efforts to introduce diversity into STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields, and examples of minorities (race and gender) in science. Learning the true identity of scientists through “big picture” discussions, including specific scientists and their contributions to science. The impact of our perceptions and preconceived notions at the individual level to the global scale.

**LEARNING TO LEAD:**

**FYS 1013 – Women’s Leadership**
The meaning and significance of leadership in general, as well as the historic, current, and future challenges and opportunities associated with women seeking and fulfilling leadership roles in their professions and in society. Examining various perspectives on leadership and advice on how to become a leader today and in the future, as well as the social, cultural and economic factors associated with women and leadership. Speakers who work in different sectors will discuss their individual views and experiences related to women and leadership roles.

**FYS 1024 – Leadership Pathways**
The formative paths toward an understanding of leadership principles and practices. Examining and experiencing emergent ways of seeing ourselves, others, and human situations defined locally and globally - all against a background of traditional and non-traditional leadership roles and models. Through critical self-reflection, identifying pathways for joining the sides of the self, achieving common purposes, collaborating, effecting change, and accepting the responsibilities of the engaged citizen. Introduces students to the goals of the Integrative Studies program. Includes participation in FYE and service-learning activities.
FYS 1069 – How to Succeed in Business
An introduction to business and the effects business operations has on its leaders, employees, stakeholders, and the society it serves. The essential functions of business operation, the impact operations have on the local community and overall society, the impact business has on the culture of the regions it markets to, and the ethical questions businesses encounter. Topics include introductions to accounting, finance, economics, business planning, human resources, strategy, marketing, international business, and management. Questions of individual ethics and social responsibility, and understanding the basic rudiments of business, the basic operations of a business, and the challenges faced by businesses in terms of the general components that impact business decision-making.

CREATIVITY, LANGUAGE, AND CULTURE:

FYS 1038 – Identities, Dwellings and Off the Grid Living
Exploring a new approach to residential dwelling design aligned with personal identity and energy efficiency. By meeting the certification standards of the Passive House Institute, United States (90% efficiency), it is possible to construct a building that requires no furnace or a/c units. Examining the role of “Identity” as a marketing objective in our society and reviewing the applications where it is most prevalent. Investigating a design of a residential dwelling aligned with our personal identities. The design will also explore sustainable building materials and techniques. Intended for anyone who is interested in contemporary home design. One need not be overly concerned with technical abilities. Rather, we will focus primarily on creative ways to incorporate unique and energy efficient design into a home as well as reducing material and energy cost significantly making unique home ownership accessible to more individuals.

FYS 1042 – Music and Ideology
Examining ways in which philosophy, art, literature, and mathematics have altered the course of Western music history. Using a chronological approach, examining the effects of Enlightenment thought, Romanticism, ‘Sturm und Drang’, Nationalism, Symbolism, Modernism and other seminal ideas and philosophical approaches. Key topics from mathematics and music, including temperament and the golden ratio, will be included.

FYS 1045 – Alcohol/Food in History & Culture
Examining the roles that food and alcohol play in shaping societies and culture. Exploring questions of how food and alcohol consumption shapes and reflects our individual and cultural identity as well as differences in gender, class and race. Tracing the history of food and alcohol production and consumption and reflecting on how the modern food system (including science) shapes our behavior. Exploring the roots of contemporary issues related to cultural identity, industrialization, globalization, and sustainability.

FYS 1074 – History of Musical Theatre
Musical theatre is a complex and absorbing art form that has existed since the creation of opera in the Italian Renaissance of the early 1600s. Three hundred years later, American musical theatre has drawn on the talents and sensibilities of creative and insightful composers, lyricists, directors, choreographers and performers throughout the twentieth century and into the present. In this course, we will survey the entire history of musical theatre, beginning with a unit on the current state of the art and Lin-Miranda’s Hamilton. We will then travel back to trace that history from the first operatic masterpiece, Monteverdi’s L’Orfeo (1607) through the
twentieth century. Instead of spending a few moments with many works, we will explore in some detail a series of epochal masterworks, which hold a mirror to American society, and provide a framework for discussion of race, class, gender, ethnicity and the American project. Shows we will discuss and view in part include: *Show Boat*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Oklahoma!*, *West Side Story* and *Cabaret*.

**FYS 1081 – Chocolate Chip Cookies and the Eiffel Tower: Studies in Art and Cultural Heritage**

The Pyramids of Egypt. The historic city of Venice and its canals. The Buddhist Temple of Borobudur in Indonesia. These monumental sites and many more around the globe survive today due to conservation efforts of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and their World Heritage list. But what is heritage? Throughout this course, we will consider the many facets of heritage from local, national, and global perspectives and the importance of preserving cultural diversity. We’ll learn about sites around the globe, from Serpent Mound here in Ohio, to the Eiffel Tower in France, and the ancient Pyramids of Egypt. Class meetings will include visits to cultural sites in and around Columbus, and we’ll explore career paths in Cultural Heritage Management as well as ways to keep learning about cultural heritage no matter where your life takes you.

**FYS 1082 – Ghosts, Zombies and the Unquiet Dead**

Why do we tell ghost stories? What might be the relationship between stories of ghosts and the walking dead and colonialism, war, and capitalism? This course tracks the complex interrelations between stories of unquiet spirits, ghoulish transformations, and living-dead bodies and histories of slavery, colonization, and economic exploitation. We will examine such stories through examples like films, histories, and ethnographies. This will allow us to raise questions about the haunting effects of past violence in the present and to examine ghost narratives as grassroots history writing, historically oppressed peoples’ critical analyses of global political and economic trends in the form of story, song, and ritual.

We will take up examples of deceased and not-quite-deceased superhuman beings from Europe, the Middle East, the US, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia, situating them in their particular socio-political, cultural, and economic contexts, including instances of ritual conjurations and conjunctions, stories of enslaved spirits and dead bodies, and popular cinema representations of the dead rising from their graves and the end of the world. We will ultimately learn that the real monsters were the friends we made along the way.

**LITERATURE, FILM, AND MEDIA STUDIES:**

**FYS 1009 – Teens on Screens**

“All we are not stares back at what we are.” – W.H. Auden. Contemporary teen film – films that take adolescent and adolescents seriously – and the identity scripts that “stare back” at us. Teen Cinema's depictions of what we are, and what we aren't, as we come of age. How movies document the “Identity assemblages” of youth, gender sexuality, race, class nation, ability, etc. that are written on teen cinematic bodies. How film dramatizes the realities of a twenty-first-century adolescence: Sex, drugs, love, rage, violence, poverty, alienation, rebellion, etc. Screening films, such as: *The Breakfast Club*, *Heathers*, *Thirteen*, *Elephant* *Almost Famous*, *Juno*, *Pariah*, and *Winter's Done*. Reading relevant theory and criticism.
FYS 1053 – Orientation to Media Genres
The far-reaching impact of the modern day media landscape is enough to make someone say "OMG!" An orientation to media genres that encourages a deeper understanding of today's media platforms as an interconnected global industry. Gaining an appreciation for the importance of media professionals to actively pursue public engagement and social responsibility. Reflecting on how media programming provides images, lifestyles, and stories that relate to the identity of the human self and its place in the world.

HISTORY AND POLITICS IN THE PAST AND FUTURE:

FYS 1035 – Political Scandals
Examines political scandals of the 20th and 21st century to evaluate why political officials and decision makers risk their political careers and personal lives for sex, money and power.

FYS 1046 – Eastern Encounters: Identity and Change in Modern East Asian History
An examination of Asian history through the lens of identity. How personal and collective identity interacts with and informs larger political, social and cultural transformations. Inquiring into the nature of political power, the succession of dynasties and military regimes, the assertion of territorial and ethnic boundaries in the past and in the present, and the transformation of family structures, economies, and diplomatic relations. Focuses on the modern history of East Asia (China, Japan, and Korea) from the eighteenth century onward, including the national histories of each of these countries, and also develops a comprehensive understanding of the broad and lasting cultural heritage of East Asian civilizations.

FYS 1072 – Fake News and Political Conspiracy Theories: Critical Thinking Strategies to Unmask the Truth
Controversy has recently erupted regarding conspiracy theories, fake news, and the fourth estate. The media plays a crucial role in America's checks and balances by helping to inform citizens. However, with the explosion of the internet and an information glut in contemporary society, it is difficult to know what sources to trust. Developing critical thinking skills and unmasking sources that lack credibility. A campus, community, national, or international problem area to focus on will be chosen in development of research, critical thinking, and argumentation skills.

FYS 1077 – Our Voices: Race and Ethnicity in America
Explores the experience, analysis, and critique of race in America from its founding to the present, while also examining institutional racism as a force that has shaped the nation, as well as the counter-movements undertaken to reshape racial narratives and enact social and racial progress. We will read Ta-Nehisi Coates, Between the World and Me for its analysis of whiteness in America; Toni Morrison's new book The Source of Self-Regard on what it means to be a person of African descent in the US; excerpts from Ibram X. Kendi's Stamped from the Beginning and Howard Zinn's A People's History of the US for historical context on indigenous and enslaved people in America; and other selected readings and films. We'll ask how institutions of higher learning position us to think about race and racial injustice.
ONWARD TO HONORS:
(Students who have been invited into the Honors Program are required to take one of these courses)

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FYSH 1054 – The History of Rock & Roll
An introduction to the history and culture of rock and roll. An overview of ancestors and influences: blues, boogie-woogie, jazz, country and western, and gospel, in particular, and the success in the 1950s of rhythm and blues musicians that marked the birth of rock and roll. The musical and social trends of the 1960s, including the influence of the British Invasion, the rock explosion and social upheaval of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and the emergence of new genres such as punk, reggae, disco, funk, new wave, heavy metal, and grunge during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. An exploration of current musical trends and genres including rap and hip-hop. Exploring the historical progression of rock and roll while also examining topics such as cultural geography; rock and roll as a working-class art form; race, gender, and class relations; generational conflict; youth cultures and subcultures; and the business of rock and roll.

FYSH 1076 – Gangsters and Grifters: The Cinema of Crime
In this course, we will consider the role of crime and the various figures of the criminal in cinema. Topics will include the gangster film, the heist film, the crime thriller, film noir, and the caper. We will consider a variety of national cinemas and periods, including U.S. mafia films, classical Hollywood and New Hollywood, French New Wave and British New Wave, and contemporary Hong Kong cinema. Students will be introduced to film as an academic discipline and will study the history of film as well as basic elements of film form and analysis. The course also serves as an introduction to the Honors Program at Otterbein University and provides essential advising, mentoring, and co-curricular opportunities for academic success in Honors.
Transfer Year Seminar:
(These sections are open to transfer students who have completed at least 30 credit hours prior to their arrival to Otterbein or have completed a First Year Seminar at another institution. Advisors will use discretion when registering about appropriateness for students)

TYS 2999 – Transition Year Seminar
Assists students transitioning into the Otterbein campus community, specifically those who are arriving at Otterbein with some college level academic work. How past experiences shape who we are and how we approach our educational journeys. Understanding the unique richness and rigor of an Otterbein education. Orientation to campus resources and services that will help achieve personal and academic goals.