FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR PROGRAM

The First-Year Seminar program offers a diverse array of courses open only to first-year students and designed with first-year students in mind. Enrollment in seminars is limited to fifteen or eighteen students, depending on the nature of the course. Most seminars meet twice each week and do not, unless otherwise noted, presume any prior experience in the field. Students must apply and preregister for first-year seminars before the beginning of each term. To ensure that all applicants share an equal chance at enrolling in a seminar, students are admitted by lottery from among those who apply. Students who do not preregister may be considered for placement at the instructor’s discretion if space is available. Information regarding application procedures may be found on the program’s website.

Courses

* AMST 025b / WGSS 025b, The American Essay Tradition  Greta LaFleur
Exploration of the American essay tradition, from some of its earliest moments to more recent iterations. Consideration of the essay as a rhetorical form, a political tool, and a literary tradition. Authors include Thomas Paine, Claudia Rankine, Benjamin Franklin, Virginia Woolf, James Baldwin, Cherrie Moraga, Sherman Alexie, and Hilton Als. Students will write political essays, as well as develop competencies in literary analysis. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU

* APHY 050a / PHYS 050a, Science of Modern Technology and Public Policy  Daniel Prober
Examination of the science behind selected advances in modern technology and implications for public policy, with focus on the scientific and contextual basis of each advance. Topics are developed by the participants with the instructor and with guest lecturers, and may include nanotechnology, quantum computation and cryptography, renewable energy technologies, optical systems for communication and medical diagnostics, transistors, satellite imaging and global positioning systems, large-scale immunization, and DNA made to order. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  SC  RP

* ART 004b, Words and Pictures  Halsey Rodman
Introduction to visual narration, the combination of words and pictures to tell a story. Narrative point of view, counternarrative and counterculture, visual satire, personal history, depictions of space and time, and strategies and politics of representation. Sources include illuminated manuscripts, biblical paintings, picture-stories, comic strips, and graphic novels. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU  RP

* ART 006b, Art of the Printed Word  Richard Rose
Introduction to the art and historical development of letterpress printing and to the evolution of private presses. Survey of hand printing; practical study of press operations using antique platen presses and the cylinder proof press. Material qualities of printed matter, connections between content and typographic form, and word/image relationships. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU

* ART 007b, Art of the Game  Sarah Stevens-Morling
Introduction to interactive narrative through video game programming, computer animation, and virtual filmmaking. Topics include interactive storytelling, video game development and modification, animation, and virtual film production. Students produce a variety of works including web-based interactive narratives, collaboratively built video games, and short game-animated film production (machinima). Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU

* ART 011a, New Voices in Photography  Matthew Leifheit
An introduction to the landscape of emerging and contemporary voices in the field of photography as contemporary art. Students are exposed to relevant conversations through visits by new and emerging curators, writers, publishers, and dealers as well as rising artists. The program of guests and visits to exhibitions is interlaced with a series of focused discussions and short lectures in the classroom, based on a schedule of assigned and recommended readings by new voices in art criticism and theory. Students read critical responses to photographs in publications both online and in print, and bring sources to share with the class. The course concludes with the production and circulation of a publication on a topic chosen by the class for the community at Yale and perhaps beyond. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU  RP

* ART 012b, On Activism: The Visual Representation of Protest and Disruption  Pamela Hovland
An introduction to the visual representations of protest, struggle, and revolution in this country from the Vietnam War to the present moment. The course explores a range of historically significant social and political movements, visual (communication) and dissemination strategies, and working methods. The primary goal of this studio-based course is to investigate and expand the designer/artist’s ability to express a point of view, transform contemporary understanding of local and national issues through a series of exercises, iterative making and experiments in distribution methods via solo and collaborative work. The students’ practice is supported by close readings, independent research, case studies, field trips, and presentations from a diverse collection of people directly involved in activism. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.  HU  RP

* ART 013a, Temperamental Spaces  Staff
Spaces can sometimes appear as idiosyncratic as the people within them, taking on characteristics we usually ascribe to ourselves. They can appear erratic, comforting, uncanny—even threatening. Working like a therapy session for architecture, the body, and the objects around us, this seminar analyzes a diverse collection of readings and works, ranging from Renaissance mysticism to conceptual art and
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The principles and practice of sustainable development explored in the context of Haiti's rich history and culture, as well as its current patterns and processes, are approached from a multi-disciplinary framework and within the context of the surrounding landscape. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.

* EVST 020a / F&ES 020a, Sustainable Development in Haiti

* EVST 007a, The New England Forest

* ENGL 025a / LITR 023a / SAST 059a, Modern South Asian Literature, 1857-2017

* ENGL 023b / HUMS 072b, Reading Recent North American Short Fiction

* ENGL 015a / AFAM 016a / AFST 015a, South African Writing after Apartheid

* ASTR 030b, Search for Extraterrestrial Life

* CPSC 035b, Twenty-First Century Electronic and Computer Music Techniques

* CLCV 052a, The Myths of Oedipus

* ENGL 010b, Jane Austen

* ENGL 015b, Fiction and Consciousness

* ENGL 050, The Evolution of Beauty

* CLCV 052a, The Myths of Oedipus

* EVST 007a, The New England Forest

* EVST 020a / F&ES 020a, Sustainable Development in Haiti
* FREN 096b, Women's Narratives of Self in Modern French Literature  Maryam Sanjabi
The course explores women's autobiographical literature, demonstrating their uniqueness from an individual perspective and capturing the social, economic, religious, and ethnic themes of the period and their authors' intellectual standpoints. The selected books represent a variety of literary genres ranging from memoir to journal, graphic novel, and film scripts with a focus on the 20th and 21st centuries as they appear in the works of: Colette, Simone de Beauvoir, Nathalie Sarraute, Lucie Aubrac, Hélène Ber, Assia Djebar, Ken Bugul, Agnès Varda, Marjane Satrapi, Marguerite Duras, Annie Ernaux, and Camille Lauren. This course thus aims at a critical awareness of what modernity has meant in women's experiences and why debate about its consequences often revolves around women's lives. While some authors explore the coming of age of European gender awareness, others deal with the war and resistance and more recent non-Western voices in French pose the question of identity of the "Other." Course readings include short theoretical essays and a number of secondary works. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU

* FILM 099a / LITR 099a, Film and the Arts  Dudley Andrew
A study of cinema as it developed into a significant art form, including its interactions with fiction, theater, and painting. Focus on André Bazin's reflections on cinema in response to Chaplin, Welles, and Cocteau, as well as to writers such as Faulkner, Sartre, and Malraux. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU RP

* G&G 010a / EVST 010a, Earth, Resources, Energy, and the Environment  Mary-Louise Timmermans
Humankind's interactions with, and place within, the natural world. Plate tectonics and natural disasters, biological evolution and mass extinction, human evolution, population growth and ecology, industrial resources, groundwater and pollution, fossil fuels and energy transitions, the carbon cycle and greenhouse gases, paleoclimates, current global warming, alternative energies, and a planetary perspective on the Earth as a singular oasis in space. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. SC

* HIST 015b, History of Food and Cuisine  Paul Freedman
The history of food from the Middle Ages to the present, with a focus on the United States and Europe. How societies gathered and prepared food; culinary tastes of different times and places. The influence of taste on trade, colonization, and cultural exchange. The impact of immigration, globalization, and technology on food. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. HU

* HIST 022a, What History Teaches  John Gaddis
An introduction to the discipline of history. History viewed as an art, a science, and something in between; differences between fact, interpretation, and consensus; history as a predictor of future events. Focus on issues such as the interdependence of variables, causation and verification, the role of individuals, and to what extent historical inquiry can or should be a moral enterprise. WR, HU

* HIST 033a / WGSS 033a, Fashion in London and Paris, 1750 to the Present  Staff
Introduction to the history of Western fashion from the mid-eighteenth century to the present, with a focus on Paris and London. Approaches, methods, and theories scholars have historically employed to study fashion and dress. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

* HIST 040a, Comparative Women's History  Rebecca Tannenbaum
Comparative perspective on the lives of women and their experiences, the ways in which historical forces shaped gender roles in different cultures, and the similarities and differences in gender roles across different time periods and around the world. Topics include work, family roles, political participation, health and sexuality, religious roles, and global feminisms. WR, HU

* HIST 041a, The Americas in the Age of Revolutions  Marcela Echeverri Munoz
The connections, contrasts, and legacies of revolutions in the British, French, and Spanish Atlantic empires in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Interactions between liberalism, black politics and antislavery, indigenous autonomy and citizenship, and revolutions in the Atlantic world between the 1760s and 1880s. Topics include the foundations of the Atlantic empires, strands of anticolonialism across the Americas, social aspects of the revolutionary movements, abolitionism and emancipation processes, and relations between the emergent American nations. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

* HIST 052b, Latin America from the Nineteenth Century to the Present  Marcela Echeverri Munoz
Introduction to Latin American history, beginning with the independence processes that led to the creation of the region's nations in the nineteenth century. Focus on nationalism, race, revolution, and development. Exploration of ideas, technology, economic forces, and people that have transformed Latin American landscapes and politics. WR, HU

* HIST 053b, A History of Modern London  Staff
Chronological and thematic exploration of modern London as a metropolitan and imperial center from the late-nineteenth-century to the present day. Topics include race, gay rights, women's rights, consumer culture, the experience of war, and the development of a multi-racial society. The fashion, food, and popular music of London emerge as important components of the city's global identity in the twentieth century. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

* HIST 089b / HUMS 090b, Thinking about History  Stuart Semmel
An introduction to the discipline of history. Exploration of influential historical narratives; the philosophy of history; the emergence of historical subdisciplines including history from below, microhistory, the new cultural history, and Big History; and interdisciplinary
engagement with anthropology, literary criticism, art history, and psychology. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

* HIST 080a, The Vietnam Wars  Staff
Exploration of the history of twentieth-century wars in Vietnam, including but not limited to the "American War." Through course readings and independent research, students examine the nature of Vietnamese colonial experience, the post-World War II settlement, and the growing anti-colonial conflict that had a dramatic impact on Vietnam, the United States, and the world. Students use fictional accounts, documentaries, and news reports as well as historians’ writings to deepen their knowledge of the Vietnam Wars, at the same time using these sources to contemplate how historians write history—and how all of us understand the past. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

* HSAR 007a, Art and Science  Carol Armstrong
The historical relationship between art and science in the West, from the Renaissance to the present. Case studies illustrate the similarities and differences between the way artists and scientists each model the world, in the studio and the laboratory. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required. Please go to the following website to enter preferences for seminars: https://students.yale.edu/ocs-preference/select?select?id=2041 WR, HU

* HSAR 010b / HSAR 417, The Classical Tradition: from Roman to Renaissance Art  Felicity Harley
The influence of classical Greco-Roman antiquity on early Christian, medieval, and Italian Renaissance art explored through study of objects in the Yale Art Gallery (statuary, coins, textiles, gems, and paintings). Topics include: the lure of antiquities; collecting and birth of the museum; naturalism and nudity; sculpture and iconophobia; religion and iconoclasm; iconographic models of paradise, beauty, power, and authority; and patronage and propaganda. HU

* HSAR 015a / SAST 060, Ten Indian Objects  Staff
A 5000-year-old stone seal, a 20th century comic book, an emperor’s painted portrait, a processional bronze god, a miniature temple, an inscribed pillar, a rock crystal reliquary, a serene Buddha, an animated film, and a towering female figure. Through rigorous explorations of these ten objects from South Asia this seminar teaches close looking, vivid writing, and narrating history through things. It considers both the biographies of the objects and their involvement in the wider social, political, artistic, and cultural histories of the Indian subcontinent. Students engage some of the most exciting scholarship in the field of South Asian art, and observe, draw, and write about things in museums and art collections on a weekly basis. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU

* HUMS 071a, Intellectual Circles  Charles Hill
Study of the creative interactions produced by informal associations of innovative minds in literature, philosophy, politics, science, psychology, the arts, war, and law. Courtiers, advisors, disciples, and disputers around Confucius, Socrates, Lincoln, Freud, Wittgenstein, and Niebuhr are among the circles considered. Groups include American Founders, quantum physicists, computer scientists, Gertrude Stein’s “Lost Generation” of Americans in Paris, “The Georgetown Set” of Cold War friends and rivals, and the Supreme Court. HU

* HUMS 075a, Mastering the Art of Watercolor  Adam Van Doren
An introductory course on the art of watercolor as a humanistic discipline within the liberal arts tradition. Readings, discussions, and studio work emphasize critical, creative thinking through a tactile, “learning by doing” study of the watercolor medium. Students analyze and imitate the classic techniques of J. M.W. Turner, John Singer Sargent, Georgia O’Keeffe, and Edward Hopper, among others. Studio components include painting en plein air to understand color, form, perspective, composition, and shade and shadow. Basic drawing skills recommended. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU

* HUMS 078b, Shakespeare and Music  Judith Malafronte
The use of music in Shakespeare’s plays, from the original stagings and seventeenth-century adaptations to modern productions. Consideration of operatic versions of the plays from the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. Includes a field trip to New York City. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU RP

* HUMS 080a, Transforming Literature into Opera  Judith Malafronte
Examination of ten operatic masterpieces and their literary source material, with consideration of the roles of the composer and the librettist in fashioning poems, short stories, and plays into operatic works. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU

* HUMS 092b / RLST 012b, Divine Law in Historical Perspective  Christine Hayes
Exploration of the divergent notions of divine law in Greco-Roman antiquity and biblical Israel; the cognitive dissonance their historical encounter engendered and attempts by Jewish, Christian, and contemporary secular thinkers to negotiate competing claims. Topics include: debates over the attributes and nature of divine law versus human law; the grounds of divine law’s authority; law as a religious expression versus law as debasement of the divine-human relationship; the impact of divine law debates on secular legal theory. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU

* MBB 050b, Topics in Cancer Biology  Sandy Chang
Introduction to cancer as a genetic disease, with a focus on major discoveries in cancer biology that offer mechanistic insights into the disease process. A brief history of cancer; influence of the genomic revolution on cancer diagnostics; molecular defects underlying specific cancers; current and future cancer therapeutics. Patient case studies highlight specific molecular pathways and treatment strategies.
Enrollment limited to first-year students with a strong background in biology and/or chemistry, typically demonstrated by a score of 5 on Advanced Placement examinations. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. SC

* MB&B 060a, Molecular Medicine  Sandy Chang
The main purpose of this course is to use benign and malignant hematological disorders to introduce fundamental concepts in molecular and cellular biology. Students emerge from this course with a firm understanding of the molecular pathways perturbed in various hematological disorders and the therapeutics currently used to exploit these pathways for disease treatment. Through lectures and reading of primary scientific literature, students learn about landmark discoveries in hematology and how these discoveries contribute to understanding of the normal hematopoietic system, and when perturbed, how diseases arise. Students also learn to (1) read primary scientific literature, (2) synthesize this material to present to the class and (3) learn how to write a short grant proposal. These skills are essential for any successful scientist or physician, and it's important to master them early. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. Prerequisite: score of 5 on the AP Biology exam or AP Chemistry exam. SC

* MCDB 040b, The Science and Politics of Cancer  Robert Bazell
Fundamentals of cell biology, Darwinian evolution, immunology, and genetics that underlie cancer; the history of cancer science and treatment; historical and current policy issues. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. SC

* MCDB 060a, Immunology and Microbes  Paula Kavathas
Introduction to the immune system and its interaction with specific microbes. Attention both to microbes that cause illness, such as influenza, HIV, and HPV, and to microbes that live in harmony with humans, collectively called the microbiome. Readings include novels and historical works on diseases such as polio and AIDS. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. SC RP

* MCDB 065a, The Science and Politics of HIV/AIDS  Robert Bazell
Study of the basic virology and immunology of HIV/AIDS, along with its extraordinary historical and social effects. Issues include the threat of new epidemics emerging from a changing global environment; the potential harm of conspiracy theories based on false science; and how stigmas associated with poverty, gender inequality, sexual preference, and race facilitate an ongoing epidemic. For all first-year students regardless of whether they are considering a science major. Prerequisite: AP Biology or equivalent. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. SC

* MUSI 007a, Noise  Brian Kane
The topic of noise as an introduction to the problems of sound and signification. The surplus of information in white noise, and the meaning perceived when noise is filtered. Contexts in which noise has become filtered for political and aesthetic ends. Topics include sound poetry, literature, electronic music, noise pollution, and consumption. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required. Please go to the following website to enter preferences for seminars: https://students.yale.edu/ocs-preference/select/select?id=2041 WR, HU

* NELC 001b / AFST 001b / ARCG 001b, Egypt and Northeast Africa: A Multidisciplinary Approach  John Darnell
Examination of approximately 10,000 years of Nile Valley cultural history, with an introduction to the historical and archaeological study of Egypt and Nubia. Consideration of the Nile Valley as the meeting place of the cultures and societies of northeast Africa. Various written and visual sources are used, including the collections of the Peabody Museum and the Yale Art Gallery. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU

* NELC 003a / HUMS 077a, Medieval Travel and Exploration  Shawkat Toorawa
Introduction to the motivations for travel and exploration in the Middle Ages. For adventure, for commerce, on pilgrimage, and for conquest, travelers include Christian, Jewish, and Muslim merchants, ambassadors, scholars, geographers, explorers, sailors, and soldiers. All material in English translation. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. WR, HU

* PHYS 040a / ASTR 040, Expanding Ideas of Time and Space  C. Megan Urry
Discussions on the nature of time and space. Topics include the shape and contents of the universe, special and general relativity, dark and light matter, and dark energy. Observations and ideas fundamental to astronomers’ current model of an expanding and accelerating four-dimensional universe. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. SC

* PLSC 030a, Law and the Limits of Freedom  Alexander Rosas
This course evaluates the desired role of law in free and modern societies and dissects, more broadly, the relationship between law, the state, and the individual in such societies. Particularly, this course considers when, if ever, it is appropriate to use law to limit freedom in the name of equality, security, community, utility, and/or morality. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. SO

* RLST 017a, Authenticity  Noreen Khawaja
The origins of personal authenticity in Western thought and the impact of this idea on modern notions of truth, sincerity, and identity. The “true” self as a historical idea and as a social performance. Readings in philosophy, literature, and religious thought from antiquity to the present. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU

* SCIE 030a and SCIE 031b, Current Topics in Science  Douglas Kankel
A series of modules in lecture and discussion format addressing scientific issues arising in current affairs. Topics are selected for their scientific interest and contemporary relevance, and may include global warming, human cloning, and the existence of extrasolar planets.
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Credit for SCIE 030 upon completion of SCIE 031; one course credit is awarded for successful completion of the year’s work. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. SC ½ Course cr per term

* SPAN 060a, First-Year Colloquium: Literary Studies in Spanish  Noël Valis
Introduction to the study of literature in general and to some of the most important texts in Hispanic literature. Selected texts in Spanish include short stories, essays, lyric, and theater. Open to students who have placed into L5 courses. Counts toward the requirements of the Spanish major with permission of the director of undergraduate studies. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. L5, HU

* THST 097a, Anatomy in Motion  Bronwen MacArthur
The connection between advances in human anatomy and kinesiology—the science of human movement—and dance practices from the early 1900s to the present. Study of seminal texts and practical exercises that drove the research of Frederick M. Alexander, Mabel Elsworth Todd, Barbara Clark, and Lulu Sweigard and the application of their ideas in contemporary movement practices today. Topics include the synthesis of dance and science; the reeducation of alignment, posture and balance; the use of imagery; and the unification of mind and body. No prior dance experience required. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.

* THST 098a, Composing and Performing the One Person Play  Hal Brooks
First-year actors, playwrights, directors, and even students who have never considered taking a theater class, create their own work through a combination of reading, analysis, writing, and on-your-feet exercises. Students read texts and view performances that are generated by one actor in an attempt to discover the methodology that works best for their own creations. The course culminates with a midterm and final presentation created and performed by the student. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program.

* THST 099b / FILM 045b, Dance on Film  Emily Coates
An examination of dance on film from c. 1920 to the present, including early Hollywood pictures, the rise of Bollywood, avant-garde films of the postwar period, translations of stage choreography to screen, music videos, and dance film festivals. The impact of industry, circulation and audience, aesthetic lineages, and craft in the union of the two mediums. Students develop an original short film for a final class project. No prior dance or filmmaking experience necessary. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program.

* WGSS 030a, Neoliberalism and Sexuality  Evren Savcı
Sexuality is often imagined as a private and intimate affair, experienced individually, marked by personal histories and preferences. This course argues otherwise. Specifically, we consider the intersections between the current dominant political economic mode, referred to as neoliberal capitalism, and sexuality as a field of power. We analyze how subjectivities are formed under this current system, how desires are produced and discourses incited, and how the particular moralization of economic behavior has implications for a range of issues including reproductive justice, definitions of kinship, sexual liberation movements, and contemporary states of war and emergency. Thinking of sexuality as a field of power that is predicated on notions of normality and abnormality enables us to see what other “undesirable” subjects are produced under conditions of neoliberal capitalist modernity with whom sexual others are always in kinship. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. SO

* WGSS 032b, History of Sexuality  Maria Trumpler
Exploration of scientific and medical writings on sexuality over the past century. Focus on the tension between nature and culture in shaping theories, the construction of heterosexuality and homosexuality, the role of scientific studies in moral discourse, and the rise of sexology as a scientific discipline. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. WR, HU