

2020 FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR COURSE CATALOG

A Dog's Life: Lessons on a Life Worth Living **Seminar led by Professor Kate Johnston**

From the well-trained search and rescue dog, to the couch surfing family pet, canines are our best friends. They are empathetic, curious, adaptable, loving, enthusiastic, inclusive, and loyal animals. Simply put, dogs teach us how to live well. In this course, we will explore the variety of roles that dogs play in teaching us how to be better humans. Discover these key lessons through your study of novels, films, comics, academic articles and research, and a variety of guest speakers. Expect to think critically and curiously while engaging with the campus and local community. Get ready to incorporate your own series of inquiries to better understand the relationships formed between humans and dogs. At the end of the course, you will create a culminating project representing a blend of content knowledge, skills, and inquiry to showcase your learning to your peers.

iStudent: Using Technology for Your Own Good **Seminar led by Dr. Justin P'Pool**

We live in a world with unprecedented access to information of any type. In a single year approximately 200 million new web pages will be published, 37 billion hours Facebook video will be watched, and 35 billion Instagram pictures and stories will be viewed. You and I have 24 hours every day to spend as we please, and we can opt to invest them in such a way that huge dividends are paid toward our future. In this course, we will look at academic work as well as bestselling books to discover how best to leverage technological connectedness and disconnectedness in our busy lives to maximize success in campus life as well as the professional world.

Justice for All? How Young Adult Literature Promotes Social Change **Seminar led by Professor Kellie Schmidt**

What social justice lessons can we learn from Katniss Everdeen, Harry Potter, and Starr Carter? How is young adult (YA) fiction uniquely able to tell these powerful narratives of social justice? What is it about these stories that appeal to adolescents and adults alike? Throughout the course, we will work together to answer these questions by reading YA literature and exploring topics such as power, racism, diversity, and class. We will analyze the ways in which YA literature allows us to examine our own lives and beliefs and increases our capacity to think critically and historically about social justice, social identities, and structures of power. Furthermore, we will have the opportunity to serve in the community, partnering with the Peace Learning Center to deliver peace education lessons to local elementary school students in order to actively promote social justice. We will connect our real-world experiences to the fictional depictions we read about in class and explore the value of young adult literature in shaping our capacity to think critically about structures of power, privilege, and oppression.

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Life Examined: In Pursuit of Your Best Self **Seminar led by Dr. Jason Jimerson**

“The unexamined life is not worth living” said Socrates, which implies “an examined life is worth living.” But, how does a person examine his or her life to create a life worth living, instead of just making a living? This is the question we will ponder in this seminar. We will review and discuss a variety of texts that ask, “What constitutes a good life?” We will contemplate answers from philosophers, social scientists, motivational speakers, and others. We will also interview people about their lives and ask them how they answered these questions. We will examine our own lives by keeping diaries and assessing key experiences. In the end, each student will present “life lessons” derived from his or her investigations. Students will post their answer the question – “How will he or she examine his or her life and, thereby, create a life worth living?”

Everything I Know about Psychology I Learned from Star Wars (sorta) **Seminar led by Dr. Bill Eiler**

A Long Time Ago, In A Galaxy... not so far away... George Lucas introduced us to a modern epic in Star Wars. As with previous epics, Star Wars touched the collective unconsciousness and became an instant cultural phenomenon. In this course we will examine why the Star Wars universe so deeply touches our collective psyche and how psychological principles present in everyday life (psychological disorders, mindfulness, gender, conformity and obedience, and more) are evident throughout the Star Wars universe.

Sitcoms: A Binge-Watcher’s Guide **Seminar led by Professor Robin Roberts**

So, you’ve just watched that one episode of *The Office* (or *Friends* or *Big Bang Theory* or *How I Met Your Mother* or *It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia* or *Will & Grace* or *Frasier*) for the fifth time. You know all the lines and all the jokes, yet you still enjoy it and laugh just as much as you did the first time you saw it. Ever wonder how it started? When were sitcoms created—and why—and how have they changed over the years? In this course we examine the history and evolution of one of TV’s most popular and enduring genres as well as the different types of sitcoms—family, workplace, and gang. We’ll read articles, essays, and reviews as well as biographical sketches of some of sitcoms great innovators. And we’ll also watch a few episodes. “Pivot!” “That’s what she said.”

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Sounds of the Silver Screen – Music in the Movies **Seminar led by Professor Casey Hayes**

Music in movies can be as memorable as our favorite scenes and lines. It can have a powerful effect on the audience and our emotions. Throughout the semester, we will explore the techniques employed by composers as they collaborate with directors as well as the functions of music in Hollywood narrative film. You will gain a basic knowledge of film history and film music and develop an awareness of the variety of musical style in works composed for film. Further, our goal will be to study film music in context of historically significant and beloved films and to discover what purposes music serves in an art that is by nature collaborative. No prior knowledge or background in music or film studies necessary to enroll or succeed in this class.

The Study of Expertise: Talent, Hard Work, or Luck? **Seminar led by Professor Mark Britner**

Have you ever wondered if you could become the next LeBron James? Mark Zuckerberg? Jay-Z? How did these people reach the top of their field? Was it natural talent? Something they were born with? Working harder or practicing longer than anyone else? Or just plain luck – being in the right place at the right time? In this course, you will examine current research and best practices on achieving expertise. You will self-assess your own strengths, weaknesses and motivational style and connect how that impacts attaining expertise. By applying the concepts of deliberate practice and developing a growth mindset, the goal of the course is to help put you on the path to achieving expertise in whatever area of interest you may have. The First-Year Seminar is a reading-intensive course that invites students to explore provocative topics, ask meaningful questions, and engage in academic discourse. This course helps lay the foundation of the undergraduate research experience by asking students to evaluate and effectively use information sources.

Faith and Reason **Seminar led by Professor Justin Gash**

In the age of big data and the rapid development of the natural and social sciences, believers in God must synthesize messages from both scientific and faith-based perspectives. Our culture analyzes the question of God's existence using lab results and religious texts, but there are other ways to tackle the important question of God's existence. In this course, you will learn what modern philosophy has to say about the existence of God: It is reasonable to believe in God. We will begin the course by understanding what sound logical arguments look like. You will explore the question of God through texts written by essayists and philosophers, and finally, you will listen to debates between theist and atheist scholars on the existence of God. Whether you're a believer in God or not, you will leave the course with a rationale for belief in God and an understanding of that rationale's limits.

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Climate change and sustainability - why all the hype?

Seminar led by Professor Amber Yount

Are we really killing our planet? What about the future of human health? This class will explore the facts surrounding global warming, climate change, and what it means to live sustainably. We will also examine the human role in our changing environment, and how climate change impacts public health. We will investigate practical opportunities we can utilize to make a difference locally and strategies that have been proposed to help us adapt to change globally. We must protect our planet- our lives depend on it!

Ahead of the Game: Sports Law and Policy

Seminar led by Professor Alli Fetter-Harrott

Look at the world of sports in a new way. This course will examine the connection between law and policy and the fields of amateur and professional sports. The course will explore the structures and organizations that govern major sporting pursuits in the United States and abroad, such as the NCAA, the NFL, and the International Olympic Committee. It will examine the major laws that govern play, such as Title IX, contract law, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and more. Students will examine the efforts to keep the game pure, as government and associational actors fight doping in sports from baseball to cycling. The class will additionally consider major issues of the day in the world of sports business and law, such as whether athletes enjoy free speech on the field, whether college students should be paid to play, or whether a professional league should be held responsible for private misconduct of owners. Together, students will examine the ways in which sports unite members of small and global communities. This is the best place to study sports policy, as students will connect theory to practice via field visits to various locations in Indianapolis, a global hub of sports industry. Students who love athletics or are interested in the study of fairness, community, power, and excellence will be highly challenged and engaged with a diversity of readings, audio-visual resources, and field experiences.

What's For Dinner?: Farm to Table and Everything in Between

Seminar led by Professor Sara Colburn-Alsop

Let's be honest, most of us have little idea about the process it entails for food to reach our table. Still, that hasn't stopped us from blissfully gobbling down the Big Mac with a large Coke, right? It's time that we investigate, examine, and, yes, digest all tenets of the U.S. culture of food to become more informed food consumers and critics. We will do this by looking at the system of agricultural production, food processing, governing politics and economics, environmental and animal ethics, and the safety and health of its consumers. Expect to engage with readings (both fiction and non-fiction) and view documentaries that bring the issues to light. Furthermore, we will participate in the following activities: local farm tours, visits to farmers' markets, as well as a healthy cooking workshop. In the end, we should have enough understanding of the food system to say "Bon Appetit" and mean it.

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"Let's Play!"

Seminar led by Professor Cecilia Iaconi Hashimoto

If you think kindergarten was all “play and games,” think again. Principles of learning theory lie behind the activities we all engaged in as preschoolers and beyond. In this course, you will study the ways that play and games are key tools in education. You will also design your own activities based on learning theory models and explore global variations in several culturally universal games. Along with your classmates, revisit your childhood and gain new perspectives on how humans learn and grow. Let's Play!

Your Personal Data: Who has it? What are they doing with it? What can you do about it?

Seminar led by Professor Kerry Smith

In this course, we will take a deep dive into how our personal data is retrieved, stored, and used by businesses both large and small. Through social media, smart phone apps, and online accounts, we are giving companies very sensitive personal data about ourselves, our family, and our friends. When a major company suffers a data breach, what happens to our personal data and how should we respond? What impacts do the data breaches have on the companies and on the customers who entrust these companies with their personal data? In this course, we will examine the most prevalent types of data breaches, the methods that are used, and the damage that they can do. Finally, we will discuss and explore several practical techniques that we can use in our daily lives to help protect our data from malicious attacks.

Grown-Up Lessons from Children's Stories

Seminar led by Professor Steve Scheer

Have you ever read children's stories through the lens of an adult? In this course, students will examine what is known by scholars about children's literature and discuss what the creators might have intended in their work and writings. You will analyze children's stories such as Grimm's Fairy Tales, Dr. Seuss, nursery rhymes, as well as study iconic characters such as Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy. Exploring the moral and social messages, lessons and mindsets in fun, whimsical rhymes and gruesome fairy tales may lead you to reconsider your childhood memories of some of these stories. Join your critical, discerning classmates to spend an intense, enjoyable semester being a kid again.

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In Vogue: The World According to Fashion **Seminar led by Professor Nicole Dular**

Fashion is extremely powerful. According to Edith Head, “You can have anything you want, if you dress for it.” It can also feed you better than food, as Carrie Bradshaw famously testified when she said “When I first moved to New York and I was totally broke, sometimes I would buy *Vogue* instead of dinner. I felt it fed me more”. And, according to Rihanna, it can even defeat your enemies: “She can beat me, but she cannot beat my outfit”. In this course, we will explore the various powers and constructs of fashion, from the personal to the political to the aesthetic, from the closets of mainstream America, to the streets of Japan, to the couture shows in Paris. In doing so, we will consider fashion’s role in historical social-political movements like the Civil Rights Movement, fashion’s role in self-expression and the construction of gender, fashion’s role in contemporary ethical dilemmas like environmental issues and workers’ rights, and fashion’s role in culture. We will also analyze some of the most abstract questions about fashion (Is it art? What makes something fashionable?), and some of the most concrete case studies of fashion movements and designers (the rise of streetwear and athleisure, Alexander McQueen).