2017 First Year Seminar Courses

Ting-Yu Chen
Chopsticks, Calligraphy and Zen(dance): A Taiwanese approach to culture, etiquette and the Arts
This course focuses on team and community building, enhancing creativity, and intercultural understanding through experiential learning of cultural rituals and artistic traditions. Students will explore Taiwanese culture, etiquette, and the arts through the lens of the instructor Ting-Yu Chen who is a native Taiwanese. A Taiwanese tea ceremony will engage students to learn about the art and health benefit of tea, teamwork, and shared responsibilities. Through Chinese calligraphy students will experience peace and harmony by creating their own distinct brushwork art. Zen(dance) will facilitate students to find ease and comfort with themselves in their bodily homes and explore the depth of expression that engages a person’s mind, body and spirit. This course encourages students to question, interpret, and evaluate their own culture and other cultural traditions in the global community with awareness and respect. Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/mQ81I6slVWo

Jess Clawson
Speaking of Sex: Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation in Global Perspective
Ever wonder why a show like The Bachelor prevails on American television, a reality television show where the winner receives a rose and a marriage proposal? How is gender, sexual orientation, and American culture constructed and constrained in such a snapshot of "reality"? This course asks you to closely examine how you experience gender and sexuality in your everyday life and then challenges you to broaden that experience to exploring how cultures outside the U.S. construct gender identity and sexual orientation. Why are only some kinds of sex legitimized and institutionalized as the proper form of sexuality? Why are only some partnerships considered legitimate or normal? This course provides a framework for addressing questions such as these; together we will look globally to find answers, question those answers, and question our own perceptions of what is "normal." Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/wKRECzlIEDE

Jeff Coker
Borders Real and Imagined: How Africa Became Africa
If I were to ask you to picture Africa, what you would see? What do you know about this vast continent—a land four times larger than the United States, home to 54 countries, over 1500 spoken languages, and more than 1 billion people? Africa is both ancient and new. Modern and traditional. Peaceful and war torn. We’ll spend the semester exploring Africa and seeking to separate reality from stereotypes. We’ll watch African film, read African literature, and discuss African history. We’ll see cities on the rise today where global business opportunities are emerging, but also areas where poverty, instability, and disease run rampant. Are you interested in going to Africa someday? Are you just curious about a part of the world that you might not know a lot about? If so, this course is for you. Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/izzQx1V44Qs

Casey Eriksen
Humor and Satire in the Digital Age
This seminar, Humor and Satire in the Digital Age, will focus on the social and cultural roles of contemporary satire vis-à-vis the media landscape of Facebook, Twitter, and the 24-hour news cycle. We will explore televised as well as internet-based satire, focusing mainly on primary-source texts from the United States, Mexico, France, and Germany. Over the progression of the semester, the class will examine the following broader questions: What functions (artistic,
political, economic) does comedy serve? Are there any forms of humor or satire that are virtually universal? How much is dependent upon context? Why are some aspects considered humorous in one culture—but not funny in or for another culture? Students will examine primary-source documents—videos, news articles, photos, and scholarly publications—to articulate their own reactions and feelings in exploring the role of satire and humor within the immediacy of the digital age.
Here is the video preview:  https://youtu.be/rV5kh6yMFxY

**Tracy Fitzsimmons and Bethany Galipeau-Konate**  
**Chocolate, Chili, Chorizo and Chickpeas...The Politics and Culture of Food**
In this course we will explore how the availability, production, distribution and consumption of food impact and reflect politics and culture at the global, national and individual level. To what extent has food (or the scarcity of it) ignited armed conflict? How does food reflect - and influence - cultural, political and national identity. How does consumption of food in one place affect the availability of food elsewhere? How can food affect the outcome of political campaigns, the tenor of family reunions and the relocation of entire ethnic communities? We will explore these questions while we also cook, eat together, and visit different restaurants and kitchens.
Here is the video preview:  https://youtu.be/XOChCXFJ2D0

**Ginger Garver**  
**Ghost Stories and Legends**
How to stop a zombie? What is a pookah? What is the one way to escape a Cajun werewolf? the answers to these questions and more wisdom on the supernatural await you in the FYS adventure Going Global: Ghosts and Legends. Our class explores the lore of specific cultures as well as the universal themes that unite all cultures from ireland to Mexico to Eastern Europe. It turns out we all have the same fears, hopes, and dreams. Listen to a real paranormal investigator. Record ghostly voices. Create a project on the Top Ten Haunted Locations.
Here is the video preview:  https://youtu.be/LPHHw0v4YzE

**Joey Gawrysiak**  
**Global Gaming: Video Gaming in Our World**
This course will explore video gaming around the world and examines how video games are valued in various countries and societies. From social inclusion to professional gaming to fun, video games offer a wide array of outcomes and serve the needs and desires of people around the world. The purpose of this class is to educate students of the various uses video games serve in our contemporary global environment as they relate to cultural values. Emphasis will be placed on active learning, discussion, and small and large group work. Field sessions will be required.
Here is the video preview:  https://youtu.be/EM0cBq0lyOk

**Salli Hamilton**  
**Supersized: A look at the Global Epidemic Obesity Epidemic**
This course will guide students through an examination of the global obesity epidemic. Students will investigate the prevalence, the causes and the possible solutions of what the World Health Organization calls “one of the most serious public health challenges of the 21st century.”
Here is the video preview:  https://youtu.be/fBuQNzARon4
Rachael Hammond
Can You Hear Me Now? The Whistleblower's Journey
Leonardo da Vinci said that evil prevails when good men do nothing. Sometimes doing the right thing comes at such a cost that many “good” people ignore an injustice. --Yet others find the courage to address that same problem. What inspires this difference? How has social media affected the whistleblower’s journey? --And how does that journey change depending on setting (politics, religion, workplace, etc.)? During this course, students consider the bystander effect as well as the journey, obstacles, and sacrifices of a whistleblower. Key figures of study include: Edward Snowden, Julian Assange, Jeffrey Wigand, Josey Jenson, Kathryn Bolkovav, Valerie Plame, and others. Students analyze the connections between whistleblowers and activists while also reflecting on the potential of their own voices and journeys.
Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/RtUBEdO5cHk

Brenda Johnston and Katherine Brendell
Nuts Quacks and Icepicks
For centuries, persons labeled as mentally ill have struggled to find a welcoming place within society. Unfortunately, this struggle has been met with the common belief that “mad equals bad.” As a result of this belief, persons with mental illness were frequently warehoused in asylums. Asylums were originally created as safe places, however, they transitioned into institutions that warehoused not only the mentally ill, but, the poor and other persons deemed “unworthy.” How did these asylums become the starting point for the rise of eugenics, the practice of forced sterilization, icepick lobotomies, insulin and electric shock therapy? How did these institutions under the leadership of physicians, nurses and often religious communities commit atrocities that tore at the fabric of our humanity? Housed within the walls of psychiatric hospitals rest the secrets of persons in professions that had very little direction and oversight yet they were charged with providing care to the most vulnerable. This course will tell the story of insane asylums from the view of the residents who lived and died within their walls.
Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/gjMWSk4XptQ

Keith Jones Pomeroy
Skin Deep: The Walking Dead and What it Means to Be Human
This immersive, discussion-based course will explore the question of what it means to be human in our world. We will address facets of human identity such as race, gender, class, and religion through the lens of popular culture and particularly the television series The Walking Dead. Who decides the defining characteristics of humanity? Who is in/out? The answers to these questions have significant implications on the future of humankind and the natural world.
Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/4-BhRaBRFGU

Michael Maher
Appalachia to Tibet: Traditional Music and the Sense of Place
this course examines how traditional music defines a sense of place, home and belonging within a global community. Using music as a model, music of other cultures will be explored for their ability to define a sense of place.
Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/DUypvD2zU6w

Anne Marchant and Beth Dodson
Eye in the Sky: Using Drones for Humanitarian Relief Efforts
This project based course will focus on the mission of mapping a mock famine-stricken area or disaster zone in a developing country in order to deliver humanitarian aid. Students will first research the afflicted region and develop a plan for communication and interaction based on cultural considerations. Using a drone, students will map a simulated disaster area and learn
some basic data analysis techniques. Working in teams to fulfill the mission, students will learn teamwork and project management skills. 
Here is the video preview:  https://youtu.be/M5nGL4Ps9_E

**Maggie McCampbell Lien**
**You don’t have to be Ghandi: Student Activism on a Global Perspective**
Famous activists like Martin Luther King, Jr., Ghandi, and Mother Theresa created major change in our world—but they all started somewhere. What injustices do you see around you? What fires you up? Examine controversial global issues like racial inequality, animal rights, drug laws, and sexual violence from multiple perspectives. Discover what inspires you to step up and learn the leadership skills you need to “be the change you wish to see in the world.”
Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/XhTcZqDFWzY

**Jonathan Noyalas**
**Why You Should be Fearless in the Face of "a Thousand Mutilations": The Uses, Abuses, and Purpose of the Past**
Although some regard the study of the past as merely the collection of mundane facts and dates, history is among the most useful and contentious of subjects. This FYS will explore the various purposes and usefulness of the past. It will examine why it is important to preserve the past, in written from as well as part of the landscape. The seminar will also afford students an opportunity to gain a deeper sense of how the telling of history has been manipulated at all times and in all places across the globe to advance particular agendas—creating what some might classify today as “alternative facts.”
Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/ytZyc6Prh2M

**Bryan Pearce-Gonzales**
**Why Didn't the World End in 2012?: Understanding the Ancient Mayan Worldview.**
*Why Didn't the World End in 2012?: Understanding the Ancient Mayan Worldview* offers a scholarly exploration of ancient Mayan civilization, culture, literature, ideology, and cosmology in order to better understand the Mayan worldview, religion, and intellectual achievements. Class time will be devoted to class discussion regarding the thematic content we are studying, and students will be encouraged to perceive and discuss this content from different perspectives. By the completion of the course, students should be able to express and appreciate the Mayan people, its culture, and its worldview, thereby fostering a respect for cultural diversity as well as an understanding of how to interact with individuals from cultures other than your own.
Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/s7xR4bpenpk

**Laurel Rodgers and Michael Zimmerman**
**Science, Pseudoscience and Bullshit**
This course will focus on aspects of how science is viewed, understood and misunderstood by the general public. First, we will explore how controversial topics, such as vaccines and genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are viewed throughout the world. We will discuss the issues that drive each controversy and how a topic may be highly controversial in one country, but not in another. Next, we will have fun discussing the role science plays in popular culture, including television, books and blogs. During these discussions we will explore the fact that science is often distorted in popular culture and the reasons why, such as simplifying a plot or attracting more followers. Students in this course will have the opportunity to research countries of their interest and visit museums in Washington D.C.
Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/_Se9ILTFi4c
Alanna Ropchock with Christina Trinidad
The Medical Case Files of Western Music History
People from nearly every historical era and cultural background share both a love for music and a concern for health. This seminar examines music and health through the lens of western (European and American) music. For instance, how did Ludwig van Beethoven compose his ninth symphony when he was completely deaf? And what was life like for deaf people in the early nineteenth century? We will examine a variety of other cases in which a health matter played a role in the life and works of a famous composer or performer. We will also talk about how learning about the history of medicine and the history of music together can impact our work in these fields today. Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/mjaxcoMUPUA

Amy Sarch
A Global Perspective on Violence Against Women
Domestic and sexual violence against women and girls in all forms—from emotional and physical abuse to female circumcision to sexual slavery — is shockingly common worldwide and too frequently accepted as “normal” by men and women. We will examine the global epidemic of violence against women and girls locally and globally from the perspectives of race, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation and other ‘social marker’s that impact the manifestations of violence. Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/wfxklyMyo7g

Petra Schweitzer
Remnants of Genocides: Remembrance and Prevention
This course introduces students to a world of genocide and extermination in the Twentieth and Twenty-First-Century. Focusing on atrocities such as “The Destruction of the European Jewry” (1939-1945) “the Bosnian”, “The Cambodian” (1975-1979) and the “Rwandan Genocide” (1994) students engage in a comparative study of these genocides within the framework of Crimes against Humanity. We explore the terms of violence, repression, rape, terror and mass murder through written and visual testimonies of survivors. The course is divided in four parts: 1) The Origins of Genocide; 2) Modern Genocides and man-made Mass Murder, in particular with regard to Race, Gender and Nation; 3) Gender & Genocide and 4) International Criminal Court and Global Justice. Students will visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/yApVd9AyFnA

Doug Stump
Global Perspectives in Poetry and Film: Identifying Common Human Values Through Poetry and Film From Other Nations
Global Perspectives in Poetry and Film is designed to give students the opportunity to both experience a diversity of cultures as well as broaden their understanding of common human values as expressed through two literary and art forms: poems and film. Poetry is one of the most ancient written forms, and remains a vital means through which we record our desires, dreams, fears, despair and love. Students will learn to connect with poetry as a literary form while reading poems from around the globe. Film, as a modern literary and art expression, also captures commonalities of the human experience, while highlighting cultural differences and addressing current issues in a way that both challenges and invites viewers. Students will have the opportunity to study films made in other countries as a way to both explore other perspectives while redefining their own. Here is the video preview: https://youtu.be/tws_YNi3CBU
“With freedom comes responsibility.” Eleanor Roosevelt and Spiderman both made this same point. Campuses across America are seeing a resurgence of interest in civil liberties – freedom of speech and expression, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and petition. When your personal passions catch fire, how do your talk and your walk align to create positive change? What can we learn from marches and movements of the past and present? Experience a walk in the woods and a walk in our nation’s capital. Practice using your gift of speech effectively in personal relationships and in public forums. Our class will form a close community on the move and even plan our own campus march. Use your talking and your walking to make a difference!

Here is the video preview:  https://youtu.be/B0A6TFXaYYU