THE FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR PROGRAM

All students at Saint Michael’s College must enroll in a First-Year Seminar during their first or second semester. Although there is a range of topics, the seminars are more alike than they are different. All of the seminars are writing-intensive, requiring frequent engagement of critical reading and thinking.

The class size of about 15 students encourages discussion and requires active learning.

Students intending to participate in the Honors Program are not required to take an Honors First-Year Seminar, but it is advisable.

FIRST-YEAR SEMINARS - FALL 2015

FS 111 The Examined Life

In this course we will examine our lives by writing about them, using "lenses" from various fields (literature, history, philosophy, or psychology, for instance) to see ourselves from different angles. We will each write a memoir of our own, using what we have learned to further explore the writing process and examine our own lives. LSC: First-Year Seminar

FS 113 Tries: Creative Writing Seminar (one Honors section)

This is a course in creative writing. An essay (from the French essayer, to try) is a try, an attempt to articulate a world. We will read models in a variety of genres and then write our own tries, in a workshop format. No previous experience in creative writing is required. LSC: First-Year Seminar

FS 114 A River Runs Through It: The Literature and Craft of Fly Fishing (Honors Only)

This seminar introduces students to the rich literature and passionate practice of fly fishing. It seeks to do so by blending the formal classroom with the larger "classroom" of nature. Classic texts will be illuminated and deepened through an interdisciplinary exploration of film, biology, entomology, ecology, philosophy, history, poetry, fly casting and fly tying. LSC: First-Year Seminar

FS 116 Snow: The Art & Science of Alpine Crystals

This course offers an introduction to the literature, science, and technology of alpine crystals, as well as an exploration of "winter mountaintop sublimity." Our focus will be on reading, writing, and animated discussion about snow and ice crystals as they are featured in prose, poetry, and scientific experiments. Coursework requirements include four formal essays, a longer essay with a research component, an oral presentation, and a field trip. LSC: First-Year Seminar

FS 123 On Memory

What is memory? Why do we remember? What role does memory play in constructions of self and society? Can we exist without memory? This course will explore such questions on memory, which have been posed and debated since antiquity. Our study will be interdisciplinary, considering these problems through the lenses of psychology, sociology, neuroscience, and history. LSC: First-Year Seminar

FS 136 Globalization

This seminar offers an interdisciplinary study of globalization drawing upon both the humanities and social sciences. It invites students, through writing and discussion, to explore the increasing interconnectedness of people and places around the globe and to examine the social and ethical implications of this contemporary phenomenon. LSC: First-Year Seminar
FS 140 Place and Placelessness
This seminar examines conceptions and experiences of place. We live in a world of distinct, memorable and meaning-infused places. By exploring spaces and places which seem to resonate with meaning, we will probe how the essence of the meaning of place can be imposed and maintained (or resisted and denied?), and how we define ourselves and others through and within places. LSC: First-Year Seminar

FS 153 Peace and Justice
This course is designed as an introduction to the subject of social justice through the study of social justice issues in the context of the lives of individuals who envisioned a more just society and endeavored to live by that vision. Course units will focus on Gandhi and non-violence; MLK, Jr. and racism; Dorothy Day and poverty; Paul Farmer and global health. LSC: First-Year Seminar

FS 161 Technology and Ethics in Society (Honors Only)
The interplay of technology, sociology, and ethics will be considered in this seminar course. We will consider both recent and historical impacts of technological innovation on the American landscape as well as the broader and more recent influence of globalization. Course participants will study current research and trends in computing and consider their impact on our society and the world. We will consider the ethical, sociological and economic dilemmas created by the introduction of new technologies. LSC: First-Year Seminar

FS 184 Robotics, Technology and the Evolving Self
As the world of technology becomes increasingly complex, we must be able to combine imagination with logic. Imagination allows us to dream beyond what is; while logic helps us to operationalize those dreams. Key elements of this course are related to underlying concepts in physics. FYs is a writing intensive course. Concurrent enrollment in PY-104: Physics and Robotics is required. LSC: First-Year Seminar