**FIRST‐YEAR SEMINAR COURSE DESCRIPTIONS ‐ FALL 2020**

# FS 102 The Afterlife

This seminar explores how cultures in different times and places have imagined what happens to human beings after death.  It will also examine how beliefs about the afterlife are related to questions of power, authority, and ethics in this life.  All major world religions, and some localized indigenous traditions will be covered. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***

# FS 120 Purpose, Meaning, and Happiness

Is the pursuit of happiness the same as the search for meaning? Do activists who dedicate their lives to fighting for freedom and equality consider themselves 'happy'? Are trust-fund recipients automatically happy because they never have to worry about money? Research shows, there is more to life than happiness; and more to happiness than pleasure alone. We will explore these questions in depth to understand the differences between a meaningful life and a happy one in order to gain insight into where you should invest your energy in order to live the life you want. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***

# 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 write personal narratives/memoirs of our own, using what we have learned to further explore the writing process and examine our own lives. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***

# FS‐111 The Examined Life (HONORS)

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# FS‐111 Drama and Culture

This course will introduce students to plays from classical times to the present. Through reading, watching, discussion, and regular writing assignments, students will be challenged to understand the relationships between the theatrical worlds that playwrights have fashioned and the world in which we live. Live performances during the semester may be included as they become available.

# FS‐115 American Environmental Imagination

This course is designed to introduce students to American literary and cultural representations of the natural environment, examining a variety of writings that have shaped the way that we understand and treat nature. We will consider a number of relevant disciplines, including environmental philosophy, politics, aesthetics, and ethics.***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***

# FS‐116 Snow: Art & Science (HONORS)

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. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar. Honors Program Students Only.***

# FS‐118 Performance, Art & Social Justice

This course examines how various forms of artistic performance and visual art are uniquely equipped to engage us in dialogue about divisive issues and lead us toward action to fight social injustice. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***

# FS‐128 Journey Stories

We use stories to make sense of our world and to share that understanding with others. This seminar reads, examines, and listens to the stories people tell. Students will tell their own stories, attend a Moth Story Slam, and interview other people to give them an opportunity to tell their own story. We will use these stories to develop a common language and understand both the inner and outer landscapes of our lives. ***CORE: 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. ***CORE: 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 envision(ed) a more just society and endeavor(ed) to live by that vision. We will study issues such as nonviolence, racism, and social and economic inequality, and individuals such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Paul Farmer. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***

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# FS‐156: Memoirs: Women on Gender, Race, & Sexuality

Marking the 100th anniversary of white women's suffrage and 50th of women's enrollment at our college, this course examines critical autobiographies written by women from around the world that explore structural racism, misogyny, and homophobia, and that offer individual stories of self-discovery and resistance. Grounded in comparative reflections on identity in text and film, the course builds knowledge from the experience of what it means to be different and to act politically. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar***

# FS‐161 Technology & Ethics in Society

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. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***

# FS‐170 Medieval Magic and the Divine

This seminar will explore medieval French epic, heroic, and romantic tales including Marie de France's *Lais*, Chretien de Troyes' Lancelot, and the *Song of Roland* (all in translation), as well as descriptions of the period. Students will gain insight into what these works reflect about medieval beliefs on the topics of magic and the power of God.. ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***

# FS‐182 Social Construction: Humanness

This course will introduce students to the questions: What makes us human? To what extent do variations in characteristics (e.g., sex, gender, dis/ability, stature, body morphology, and race) impact our perceptions of humanness? To what extent is being human biologically determined, socially constructed, or an emergent property of both? Have notions of what it means to be human been fixed or have they varied throughout history? ***CORE: First‐Year Seminar.***