

First-Term Seminar Selection

Deadline: Submit Registration Preference form online by June 7

Complete the Registration Preference form (gustavus.edu/firstyear/checklist) to indicate your preferences for your First-Term Seminar (FTS) course. In this seminar, students will discuss values related to the course topic, develop critical thinking, speaking, and writing skills, and enhance their understanding of academic and campus life. You will be enrolled in one of your top five FTS preferences. The information you supply on your Registration Preference form will be used to assemble the rest of your fall class schedule around your FTS seminar.

BEYOND MASKS AND SUPERS: HEROIC IDENTITIES IN CONTEMPORARY US COMICS.

This course examines ways that contemporary comics published in the US use the heroic genre to represent diverse and intersectional identities. We will discuss how ideas of the heroic vary between times and cultures, and will also examine the question of whether there are elements of the heroic that seem constant or even universal. We will also look at how the hybrid visual/verbal form of comics and the conventions of the form affect the communication and reception of the ideas these texts embody.

FTS-100-002 Elizabeth Kubek M W F 10:30-11:35 AM

LEISURE QUEST. For one semester, we will examine the most precious commodity in America: time. Specifically, we will explore the role and meaning of leisure time in the United States, on both the individual and societal level, through writings, readings, films, lectures, class discussion and personal experience. Additionally, we will examine how access to leisure experiences develops identity and promotes greater life satisfaction. More importantly, however, we will consider how lack of access to leisure experiences impacts the human experience.

FTS-100-005 Aaron Banks T R 9:45 AM-11:20 AM

TIME. Students in this seminar investigate the conceptions of time—personal time, cultural time, historical time, geological time, and cosmological time. The ways in which we perceive and use time are deeply personal, rooted in our values, our culture, our families, and our professions. This framework also influences how we perceive the passage of time and the value of time in our day-to-day lives. This course will explore these dimensions of time through personal reflection, readings, and class discussion. In addition, we engage with time when we study the past—human history, pre-history, geologic history, and cosmological events. This course will explore these dimensions of time as well—from the Big Bang to dinosaurs to the origin of humans and human history.

FTS-100-007 Julie Bartley T R 12-1:35 PM

FOOD, CULTURE AND IDENTITY. Are you what you eat? Are you more “fast-food” or “fine cuisine”? How do you relate to the foods you consume? What is your favorite recipe? What do your eating habits, favorite dish, or culinary traditions reveal about you as an individual or as a member of a larger community (e.g., family, nation, global village)? In this class, we will explore and reflect on the way food, an essential component of our cultures and traditions, helps us shape and define who we are (our identities/sense of self), connects us to others (e.g., other cultures), or alienates us from them. Using a variety of texts from different genres and hearing from multiple perspectives, we will take a closer look at the various roles of food in our lives: food as pleasure, survival, communication, community-building, activism, or even as oppression.

FTS-100-008 Séverine Bates M W F 2:15-3:20 PM

VITAL SPEECHES. This seminar represents the intersection of current events and speech analysis. Students will learn to write critiques of important public speeches, while also developing and sharing their own views on contemporary issues. All of the speech texts will have appeared during the past year in *Vital Speeches of the Day*, a magazine containing speeches by globally recognized public and private sector leaders with diverse perspectives. The texts will be organized around three main themes (1) Speeches that Affirm Propositions of Value, (2) Speeches that Intensify Social Cohesion, and (3) Speeches that Create Concern for Problems.

FTS-100-016 Mark Braun T R 8-9:35 AM

FTS-100-017 Mark Braun T R 9:45-11:20 AM

ETHICS FOR EVERYDAY LIFE. When we make a decision, how do we know that we are doing the right thing? Do individuals just make up their own morality based on their subjective preferences? Is morality relative to culture? Are there objective rights and wrongs? Is selfishness a virtue? Do we owe anything to a stranger? Is morality based in religion, the greatest good for the greatest number, or the categorical imperative? Should we follow the Golden Rule? In answering these questions and more we will consider different theories about morality such as ethical subjectivism, cultural relativism, moral objectivity, ethical egoism, utilitarianism, deontology, rights ethics, virtue ethics, natural law theory, and moral development. We will also apply ethics to contemporary issues such as euthanasia, abortion, violent vs. nonviolent resistance, capital punishment, affirmative action, dropping the atomic bomb, world hunger, and human experimentation, among others. Students will consider their own view of morality and how that guides their own moral development.

FTS-100-045 Lori Carsen Kelly M W F 11:45 AM-12:50 PM

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MEDITATION IN ACTION. Mindfulness practices, such as guided meditation, yoga, etc., are usually seen as a “time out” from our stressful, daily activities. In this course we will expand the concept of meditation as a practice to be applied to daily life. A major goal of this course is to help you cultivate focus and peacefulness when engaging in your activities at Gustavus, for example; studying for an exam, writing a paper, engaging in musical, athletic, or other practices, etc. Together, we will think and discuss how meditation in action will enhance the whole of your college experience. This course is divided into three sections: 1) An overview of some basic ideas from the Hindu and Buddhist contemplative traditions; 2) the possibilities of applying meditative exercises to everyday life based on readings from the Hindu text, the Bhagavad Gita, and select Buddhist texts; 3) an individualized final project to create practices for your own needs in college.

FTS-100-051 John Cha M W F 11:45 AM-12:50 PM

FILM AS SOCIAL PRACTICE. Film is contradictory. Is film entertainment? Or social critique? Escape? Art? Activism? This course investigates how film engages in complex social, cultural, and economic issues and represents America’s 20th and 21st-century social history. We will explore how film intersects with the issues of race, gender, and class, and study such topics as the impact of war, science, the rise of consumerism, changing attitudes toward urban centers and the environment, the police, and the military. We will examine movies that adopt a confident view about America’s place in world history and politics and films that express anxieties about American institutions. This course is an opportunity to build skills in close reading, visual analysis, knowledge of film, and American film history.

FTS-100-052 Sean Cobb M W F 9:15-10:20 AM

A PLACE CALLED HOME. What brings people together? Ask yourself: In which communities do you feel a sense of belonging? In which do you feel you do not belong or are excluded? Were you ever made uncomfortable by how cafeteria tables were arranged at school, separated by color, place of origin or status? Through the study of various community building strategies, we will learn how to foster inclusive and equitable societies, both at a micro level (our classroom, our campus) and macro level (the Midwest, our country, the world). In this class expect to learn about intersectionality, identity politics, racial construction, and privilege as we discuss U.S. ethnic minorities, multiculturalism and migration.

FTS-100-080 Angelique Dwyer M W F 1:00-2:05 PM

ANCIENT AND MODERN ODYSSEYS: LOVE, LOSS, AND TRANSFORMATIONS OF IDENTITY.

Who are you? How are your identity and values shaped by your connection to people and place? This course focuses on the theme of journeys and identity transformation. Using Homer’s *Odyssey* as a jumping-off point, students will engage with ancient Greek and Roman as well as modern literary and artistic work for self-reflection, exploration of values, and personal development as they journey through college. Students will create a vibrant and collaborative cohort by engaging in class discussion, writing about personal experiences, crafting presentations, and reflecting critically on individual and communal values.

FTS-100-148 Yurie Hong M W F 10:30-11:35 AM

“ATTICA! ATTICA!”: THE ATTICA PRISON UPRISING AND ITS LEGACIES. The most significant, bloody, and infamous prison uprising in US history occurred at the state prison in Attica, New York, in September 1971. Unfolding over several days, it was national and international news at the time, and its reverberations continue to the present. This course focuses on the origins, daily realities, and outcomes of the uprising. Major topics include the experiences of prisoners, guards, and their families then and since; the fateful decisions of state authorities at the time; media coverage of the uprising; the uprising’s intersections with the intertwined histories of the Sixties, the Black freedom struggle, and race, class, and gender (especially masculinity) in the postwar U.S.; its relationship to the modern U.S. “carceral state”; the subsequent coverup; the victims’ long struggle for justice; and the uprising’s place in collective memory and popular culture. Discussion-based course with writing assignments based on primary and secondary sources.

FTS-100-175 Gregory Kaster M W F 9:15-10:20 AM

SURVEILLANCE, THE STATE, AND SOCIETY. This seminar focuses on issues surrounding the history and contemporary role of state surveillance in the modern world. Have you thought much about the role of the state in your life and how much power they have to observe your behavior? In this course students will explore the past and present implications of how states identify “enemies” and imagine threats as they develop systems of surveillance and bureaucratic institutions to monitor their population. Students will also consider the various ways people respond to living in a society under surveillance. We will look at case studies of surveillance in the past and present from Orwell’s *1984*, to the Stasi of East Germany, to the role of surveillance in the contemporary United States.

FTS-100-182 Kathleen Keller M W F 10:30-11:35 AM

THE POLITICS OF HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS. In this seminar, we will analyze housing and homelessness in the United States—why people live in the housing, communities and neighborhoods they do, and where homelessness exists, who it affects, and what is being done to address and (ideally) solve the problem of homelessness.

FTS-100-199 Richard Leitch M W F 9:15-10:20 AM
FTS-100-203 Richard Leitch M W F 10:30-11:35 AM

BEAUTY AND JUSTICE. Is beauty the handmaiden of the privileged; does it distract us from greater social causes, or does the experience of beauty prompt us towards ethical fairness and a greater concern for justice in society? How do various positions on beauty affect our perceptual, moral and emotional lives? By engaging in a variety of arguments and primary source readings from a range of perspectives the class will study how themes and attitudes about beauty in politics, humanities, the sciences and in our culture as a whole have evolved.

FTS-100-208 Kristen Lowe M W F 10:30-11:35 AM

THEATRE. In this seminar, we will investigate life performance by studying, rehearsing, and presenting a play or selections of plays to a live audience. The seminar emphasizes the importance of creative thinking, risk-taking, and collaboration. During the semester, students will have the opportunity to participate in a creative process through various acting exercises and regular rehearsals. Likewise, students will have the opportunity to discuss and reflect upon their own creative process while exploring the applicability of performance techniques to other facets of their personal and professional lives.

FTS-100-209 Henry MacCarthy M W F 1-2:05 PM

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST: CREATING THE “IDEAL AMERICAN”.

Americans have debated what it means to be an American since the founding of the country. This debate took on a new urgency at the end of the 19th century, when the country changed dramatically because of the abolition of slavery, rapid industrialization, imperialism, immigration, and urbanization. Through the careful examination of immigration policies, naturalization and anti-miscegenation laws, sterilization programs, debates over abortion and birth control, detention and deportation programs, scientific racism, and social Darwinism, students in this course will analyze how the United States have imagined, shaped, and fought over what it means to be an American over the last century. These debates inevitably excluded some groups, created a second-class status for others, and limited the chances for belonging for yet other groups.

FTS-100-210 Maddalena Marinari T R 9:45-11:20 AM

AMERICAN MUSIC & POPULAR CULTURE. This course examines the crossroads between video game music, film music, Broadway musicals and society, culture, politics, the First Amendment, and so much more. Through this course we explore how *Final Fantasy*, *Star Wars*, and *Wicked!* compare to historical music genres like opera and its relevance. How do films like *The Godfather* collide with musicals like *West Side Story* and provide meaningful commentary on our society today? How do these musical art forms intersect with politics today? Students will also pursue an in-depth study of a musical selection of their own, exploring the crossroads of the composer's, music's, and society's contexts.

FTS-100-237 James Patrick Miller M W F 9:15-10:20 AM

POP MUSIC, U.S.A. This course examines American culture through the study of popular music. Students will develop the skills necessary to express, both orally and in writing, a critical understanding of American pop culture. Writings designed to elevate consideration of mindset, career, and purpose are also included, providing insight into the personal choices we make within the daily torrent of societal pressure. With popular culture providing a contrasting edifice for our thinking, we will work to come near our goal of leading a self-examined life.

FTS-100-239 Scott Moore M W F 2:15-3:20 PM

THE GOOD LIFE. Ask most people if they want to live a good life, and they will answer with a resounding, “yes!” Push them a little further to elaborate on what's included in that life and they will offer some descriptions and highlight certain features. Compare individuals' conceptions of a good life and there will be some similarities and dissimilarities. Start to compare across time periods and cultural epochs and those similarities and dissimilarities are really fascinating. In this course, we will cruise around China in 500 BCE over to ancient Greece in 300 BCE and end up in the United States in the 20th century! Think of this course as one big platter of philosophical samples about the good life.

FTS-100-250 Peg O'Connor T R 8-9:35 AM

ECONOMIC LITERACY. Economic Literacy will apply basic concepts of economics to current public and social issues, such as globalization, immigration, climate change, economic growth and inequality. Monitoring current economic issues will be a priority, so course content will adapt as events and interest warrant. The Nobel Conference topic will also play a prominent role in the class. We will read, discuss, and write about books, articles, and blogs written by economists for a broader audience. The principal objective is to learn how to look at decision problems using economic theory: that is, to think like an economist. As we will see, this way of thinking can be applied to many situations beyond the scope of what is usually considered economics.

FTS-100-255 Jeffrey Owen M W F 9:15-10:20 AM

NOW YOU SEE IT: GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN GLOBAL

FILM. In this seminar, we will analyze how contemporary global film (i.e. produced outside North America) portrays the human experiences of gender and sexuality. We will emphasize ways of understanding these phenomena that might be less prevalent in North American mainstream culture and media. We will address a wide range of issues within the topics of sexuality and gender, while keeping focus on the intersection of social justice, gender equality, and sexual rights. We will also attempt to address the distance between representation (what we see/present) and identity (who we are/might be).

FTS-100-283 Darío Sánchez-González M W F 2:15-3:20 PM

EAST ASIAN POPULAR CULTURE. What is popular culture? To what extent have your values, attitudes, behaviors, and lifestyles been shaped and influenced by pop culture? What's the impact of East Asian pop culture on America and yourself? What accounts for the global popularity of Chinese martial arts movies, Japanese manga and anime, and K-pop? What “Asian values” do pop culture products from China, Japan, and Korea exemplify? This course aims to provide students with a variety of critical approaches and case studies to enable them to explore these and other practical and intellectual questions. Students will analyze East Asian pop cultural phenomena ranging from manga to popular music, film to anime, advertising to fashion to explore how larger issues of gender, globalization, youth culture, nationalism are shaped by or relate to pop culture.

FTS-100-287 Lianying Shan M W F 9:15-10:20 AM

FAST FOOD AND POLITICS. This seminar explores government policies affecting the industry and efforts by the fast food industry to influence government. Topics may include the minimum wage, workplace safety, immigration, public health, and environmental protection.

FTS-100-294 Kate Knutson M W F 9:15-10:20 AM

THIS LAND. The Dakota dream of returning to their homeland, restoring the environment, and restoring community. How can we help realize this dream? In particular, how can we who, historically and to this day, profit from the extermination and exile of the Dakota change our ways and join together in the movement for restoration of land, water, air, and community?

FTS-100-315 Anna Versluis M W F 9:15-10:20 AM

DEBATING NOBEL. This seminar will introduce students to the college environment and will familiarize them with the goals and objectives of a liberal arts education. The topics being debated relate to the Nobel Conference theme *Sleep Unraveled*. The course will develop student skills and habits in reasoning and critical thinking. It will provide extensive practice in written expression. It will help students improve their public speaking skills—both in informal discussions as well as during formal presentations—and it will engage students in moral, ethical and value discussions. The seminar will provide students with academic advising for at least their first year at Gustavus, and the instructor will help them understand the Gustavus curriculum and the plethora of opportunities that it provides. In addition, the seminar will enable students to become more proficient at constructing valid and well-supported arguments, and critiquing the arguments advanced by others. As part of this dual focus on argument creation and critique, students will participate in a series of debates and will critique the arguments advanced by their classmates.

FTS-100-316 Phillip Voight T R 8-9:35 AM

PRAIRIE. Prairie once stretched from the Minnesota River to the Rocky Mountains, a great rolling ecosystem of grass, lakes, and rivers that was populated by millions of bison, grizzly bears, wolves and other animals. Over the span of a single human life that ecosystem essentially disappeared, converted to the breadbasket of North America. What was the prairie like before it disappeared? What was the experience of those that lived in that time? What have we gained and what have we lost with this conversion? We will use ecology, history, literature, ethics and more to learn about the prairie and its peoples. Some outdoor work will be required, with at least one field trip.

FTS-100-342 Jon Grinnell M W F 10:30-11:35 AM

GLOBALIZATION OF ECONOMY FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES. This seminar will explore the issues generated by globalization from the aspects of cultural awareness, economic perspective, environmental conflict, historical background, and political reckoning. While economists are setting up a solution that is at best temporary, they miss the point that the world is finite. We don't have infinite resources or unlimited ability to handle excess pollution. Throughout this course, students will discuss benefits and challenges related to globalization.

FTS-100-347 Sheng-Ping Yang T R 9:45-11:20 AM

IT'S JUST NOISE (MUSIC). This course will provide a historical survey of electroacoustic—acousmatic, computer music, algorithmic composition, tape music, glitch, circuit bending, electronic, musique concrète, noise, laptop performance, DJ culture, organized sound—and discuss some of the most salient questions associated with it, from both a compositional and musicological point of view. Topics up for discussion include: What is music? What is electronic music? Possible definitions of musical sound and musical instruments; musique concrète and other pioneering ideas: what makes them innovative and ahead of their time; analysis of tape music and computer music in the United States versus that in the world; analysis of electroacoustic compositions; how to convey ideas through sound; sampling and intellectual property; algorithmic and computer-aided composition: structures and forms; live versus studio compositions.

FTS-100-349 Louis Yu M W F 2:15-3:20 PM

ANIMALS IN LITERATURE AND FILM. Welcome to Animals in Literature and Film! In this seminar, we will consider how animals in novels, film, and short stories are used to represent and help us think through human values and concerns. As we analyze the forms animals take when they show up in literature and film, we consider the following questions: what do these stories teach us about humans and our relationships to animals; in what ways do animals in fictional stories shape our more general understandings of and relationships to animals in the world; what strategies do authors take to represent animals in literature; and how do animal representations provide entry to various social issues and ethical questions within and beyond the text?

FTS-100-377 Martha Ndakalako M W F 11:45 AM-12:50 PM

UNVEILING SCIENCE: NAVIGATING TRUTH, BIAS, AND DIVERSITY IN DISCOVERY. In this seminar, students will explore the intricate relationship between race, gender, and science, delving into questions that challenge conventional scientific discourse. We will critically examine the notion of race's reality, the existence of gendered brains, and the implications of viewing sexuality as a choice. By framing race, gender, and sexuality as biosocial constructs, we will dissect their roles in shaping debates surrounding biology and society, nature and culture, and human similarity and difference. Moreover, we will contextualize these debates within the historical evolution of Western science, shedding light on the profound impact of cultural understandings of race, gender, and difference on scientific development. Through engaging discussions, critical analysis of texts, and reflective writing exercises, students will investigate contemporary scientific inquiries related to genetic diversity, sexuality, medicine, and technology. This seminar serves as a platform for students to confront challenging questions and interrogate the intersectionality of race, gender, and science.

FTS-100-381 Darsa Donelan M W F 11:45 AM-12:50 PM

ANIMALS IN THE BIBLE. The original authors and audience of the Bible lived in much closer contact with animals than most of us do now. Not surprisingly, animals appear in many biblical stories, from Noah's ark to Jonah and the big fish to Jesus's donkey on Palm Sunday. This course explores Biblical texts about animals from the perspective of animal studies, an interdisciplinary field that examines human-animal relationships and their impact on how we understand what it means to be human. We will also use historical and archaeological evidence about animals in the ancient world and recent science about animal behavior to better understand portrayals of animals in the Bible. Topics for discussion include relationships among God, humans, and animals; similarities and differences between humans and animals; the religious significance of animals; and our ethical responsibilities toward animals, especially in light of climate change and the current extinction crisis.

FTS-100-401 Blake Couey M W F 2:15-3:20 PM

HOPE AND DESPAIR. What is hope, and how does it shape the lives of individuals and communities? Is hope a positive force in human experiences ... or can it be dangerous? This course explores the problem of hope and despair through an interdisciplinary study of mythological, religious, and philosophical sources.

FTS-100-423 Casey Elledge M W F 9:15-10:20 AM

MY TOP 5 CHOICES IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Indicate these choices on page 4 of the Registration Preference form found on your Enrollment Checklist.