Fall 2020 Schedule

The academic core of the First-Year Experience is your First-Year Seminar—a small, interactive class where you explore special topics that interest you. All first-year students enroll in a First-Year Seminar during their first semester at Arcadia University.

FYS courses also serve as Learning Communities, and past students have enjoyed class trips to Broadway, museums, farms, cafés, nature parks, Philadelphia, and New York, while studying everything from the night sky, to Harry Potter, to crime scene evidence, to the history of chocolate, and more.

Expose Yourself to Art!
(FY103.1)
Faculty: Adam Hess, Library
Monday/Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:40 p.m.

Why are some objects defined as art and others not? Who decides, and why does it matter? Through a combination of looking at, writing and talking about, and creating art, students in this course will explore the question “What is Art?”. Close attention will be paid to how artists, curators, and scholars have answered these and other art related questions throughout history. The course will include field trips to local galleries and museums, and will feature lectures and presentations on a wide variety of art mediums and movements. Special focus will be the mural arts/street art and photography, along with trips into Philadelphia to experience art in the city firsthand. Students can expect to gain vital skills that translate to all facets of university learning and scholarship, while being charged to express and defend their artistic points of view using visual, written, and oral means.

The Ethics of Harry Potter
(FY103.2)
Faculty: Rick Arras, Computer Science & Math
Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 1:30 - 2:35 p.m.

Do you wish you could apparate, play quidditch, or ride a hippogriff? In this seminar, students look at the Harry Potter books, not only as compelling stories but as an opportunity to examine their own values and notions of “right” and “wrong.” (Besides, the world isn't split into good people and Death
Eaters. We've all got both light and dark inside us. What matters is the power we choose to act on. That's who we really are. —Sirius Black) (It is not our abilities that show what we truly are, it is our choices. —Albus Dumbledore)

**Girl Detective: Knowledge, Work, & Play**
*(FY103.3)*
*Faculty: Rachel Collins, English*
*Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 12:15 - 1:30 p.m.*
You’re probably familiar with Nancy Drew, the plucky girl detective who drives around town solving mysteries. In this class we’ll take Nancy Drew as our starting point for an examination of the many other female teenage detectives featured in American novels, television shows, and films. Throughout the semester we’ll ask questions like: Why is the figure of the girl detective so powerful? How does she reconfigure our understanding of what it means to know things? Can the process of investigation be a form of play? Can “playing detective” be a form of work? What do these detective stories tell us about the nature of girlhood in the United States today? Who has the privilege of being taken seriously by adults? Who has the ability to go unnoticed by adults? How do these stories define deviance and conformity? What is the relationship between gender, race, class, and independence for American girls?

**Parks & Rec: Leadership and the Power of the Local**
*(FY103.4)*
*Faculty: Lindsay McGann, Public Health*
*Tuesday/Thursday, 8:30 - 10:10 a.m.*
There is a lot to learn from Leslie Knope’s (Amy Poehler) commitment to her community, and why shouldn’t a three legged dog named Champion, a mini horse named Sebastian, waffles, water balloon fights, and friendship be a part of that? Treat Yo Self to “Parks and Recreation,” and learn to harness the local power that is depicted in the TV show. In the fictional town of Pawnee, Indiana, it all starts with Chris Pratt falling into a Pit, but what emerges is so much more. The comedy TV show “Parks and Recreation” gives both hilarity and insight on important topics and issues, including public health disparities, community empowerment, and gender equality. The class will use episodes of the tv show as a jumping off point to explore themes that emerge surrounding the benefits and challenges of local government, community, infrastructure, partnerships and the potential power we already possess to make direct and indirect influential changes to our individual and community at large, and to study these issues as they appear in the real world. Using episodes and corresponding readings, the class focuses on widening and deepening empowerment opportunities locally, the societal shift to ‘bottom up’ approach from ‘top down’ approach, and how change begins in our own backyard; or the Power of Local.

**Making Moves: Strategic Nonviolence and Civil Disobedience in American Culture**
*(FY103.5)*
*Faculty: Allyson McCreery, Historical and Political Studies*
*Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 8:30 – 9:35 a.m.*
Throughout American history strategic nonviolence and civil disobedience have led to significant transformations in American political, economic, and social spheres. The strong force of nonviolent resistance in American culture, represented through actions such as peaceful protests and boycotts, has changed the course of American history. Civil rights and liberties often compose the platform of strategic nonviolence and civil disobedience as citizens exhibit resiliency in their efforts and motivations to change the status quo. This course will investigate why and how civil resistance works, noting both successes and failures across several decades from the Civil Rights Movement to current day. Utilizing primary and secondary sources, students will expose the role of the protestor in initiating change through demonstrations, boycotts, and other nonviolent measures.

American Horror Story: Exploring America’s Violent Past

(FY103.6)
Faculty: Favian Guertin-Martin, Sociology, Anthropology & Criminal Justice
Tuesday/Thursday, 10:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

This course explores America’s violent history through the lens of the television show American Horror Story. The popular television show highlights several notorious and horrific events in American history such as the Salem Witch trials, Slavery, Voodoo in New Orleans, serial killers, and traveling freak shows. Drawing on readings and viewing several episodes of the television show, students will contextualize the socio-historical and political eras of American history as it relates to crime, murder, and social problems. In doing so, students will be exposed to elements of criminology to explain and understand the factors that contribute to these horrific events.

Backwards and in Heels: Gender Inequity in the Entertainment Industry

(FY103.7)
Faculty: Jeanne Buckley, Library
Tuesday/Thursday, 10:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

This course will explore gender, power and the recent Me2 Movement in four American entertainment industries: Hollywood film, network and cable television, the news industry and contemporary music. We will examine how power, money and male privilege have combined to create an environment of “looking the other way” that has controlled these industries to the detriment of women who have worked within them. Together, we will read firsthand accounts of women who have found the courage to speak out against their abusers, whether their roles were in front of the camera as performers, or behind the scenes as directors, producers or production assistants. We will also explore the notion of ‘voice” and ‘power’ within each of us that can propel us to speak out or take action when injustices occur.

Questioning Gender

(FY103.8)
Faculty: Ellen Murphey, English
Tuesday/Thursday, 12:20 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.
This course asks questions about how we think about gender. When a baby is born the first question asked is usually, “Is it a boy or a girl?” Is gender just about biology or are there other forces at play? Focusing on the U.S., we’ll explore how the idea of two “opposite” genders, each with their prescribed attributes, has been culturally enforced through marketing, media and other avenues. We’ll also look at how gender has begun to be re-defined during the last 50 years, as terms such as transgender, intersex, gender-queer, and gender-fluid have entered mainstream conversation. The course will include lots of discussion, readings, videos, guest speakers, and a field trip to downtown Philadelphia.

From Tent to Stage: Contemporary Circus in America
(FY103.9)
Faculty: Kate Hanley, Provost’s Office
Tuesday/Thursday, 12:20 - 2:00 p.m.
When Ringling Brothers announced its closure many thought that the circus was over, and perhaps traditional circus is ending but a new, exciting genre is taking its place. Contemporary circus strips away the grandeur of traditional circus and puts the raw art onto a new canvas – a theater, concert hall, converted church, even a garden. It’s an intimate, connected, intensely personal adventure for the audience that magically combines a multitude of performing arts disciplines. This course explores the rich history of circus from its origins in the rituals of primitive man through its evolution into this exhilarating new genre. We’ll investigate why contemporary circus is flourishing in other countries and why it has taken so long to pitch its tent here in America. To gain further insight into contemporary circus, students will attend local performances, meet artists working in the genre, and even try their hand at training like a circus artist.

Theater in Philadelphia: An Introduction
(FY103.10)
Faculty: Kevin Glaccum, Theater
Tuesday/Thursday, 10:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
There's nothing wrong with feel-good Broadway-style musicals. But at its finest, theater is a serious art that provokes ambitious thinking, self-examination and social engagement. This seminar exposes students to thoughtful dramatic productions on the Arcadia campus and around Philadelphia, explores the creative process involved in staging serious drama, and examines how Philadelphia-area artists are using the stage to engage with the vital political, cultural and social questions of our time. Students attend performances, speak with theater artists, and develop critical skills for analyzing what is seen on stage.

The Shock of the Sixties
(FY103.11)
Faculty: Jo Ann Weiner, English
Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:00 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.
The 1964 Civil Rights Act. The Feminine Mystique. Haight-Ashbury. Woodstock. Flower power. The Vietnam “conflict.” “The White Album.” The assassinations of JFK, RFK and MLK. The Graduate. The lunar landing. All of these are part of one of the most interesting decades in recent American history – the 1960s. The course is not simply about sex, drugs, and rock and roll. We’ll read, view, and listen to a
variety of texts in art, history, film, music, politics, and science of the time in order to understand how all of these areas intersect. Each student will work extensively on an individual topic that interests him/her.

Citizenship and the Law
(FY103.12)
Faculty: Chris Cerski, Historical and Political Studies
Tuesday/Thursday, 4:00 - 5:40 p.m.
As a citizen of the United States, do you know why every state in the union has a 21-year-old drinking age; or why our money reads In God We Trust; or why you can burn the American flag? You will. This seminar explores the characteristics of an engaged citizen by studying milestone U.S. Supreme Court cases, which will provide you a better understanding our government, history, and cultural norms. The class will complete a civics project called “Did You Know?” which will help create a discussion on campus about interesting topics you choose. To explore our culture, we will travel to Washington, D.C. or sites in Philadelphia.

The Hero’s Journey: Ancient Myth to Modern Story
(FY103.13)
Faculty: Frankie Mallis, English
Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 11:00 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.
Harry Potter, Frodo Baggins, and Katniss Everdeen all have one thing in common: they are all heroes, and their authors all used a theory known as the Monomyth to create their stories. Though these three heroes go on vastly different journeys, in this class we'll examine the ways in which the steps of their journeys are actually the same. This heroic structure can be applied to just about any story from ancient mythologies to the latest novel, television show, or movie to capture your interest. Through the study of mythic patterns, psychology, and even modern day theories of the heroine's journey, this class will allow you to decode the ancient structure of any story and prepare you to write your own. Anyone who ever wanted to begin understanding the way J.K. Rowling, J.R.R. Tolkien, or Suzanne Collins plotted their stories, this class is for you.

Up Your Game
(FY 103.14)
Faculty: Tim Belloff, Academic Technology
Monday/Wednesday, 4:00-5:40 p.m.
Do you play video games? Have you ever wanted to learn more about them, the history behind them, how they have changed society or made impacts in the culture of the United States? This course will focus on the impact that Video Games have had on our society in various aspect. We begin with a survey of the video game world and discuss its humble beginnings from Pong to Mario to Halo and Beyond. From there we will look at historical based video games and compare them to actual events in history and then also look at how popular culture has been affected by our penchant for video games. Finally we explore the cultural effects video games has had on our society from opposing viewpoints.
Must Love Dogs: An Exploration of the Human-Canine Relationship
(FY103.15)
Faculty: Linda Pizzi, Academic Development
Tuesday/Thursday, 4:00 - 5:40 p.m.
In recent decades, our relationships with our canine companions have changed radically. Unlike prior generations, both dog-owners and scholars today accept that dogs possess intelligence, have emotions, and can communicate. Current studies indicate that dog-owners are generally healthier and happier than most. How do we know this? How have dogs and humans evolved together and changed each other? What are the social and psychological ramifications of living with dogs? These are just a few of the many questions we will tackle as we learn from biologists, anthropologists, psychologists, historians, ethologists, and each other about the human/canine relationship.

The Hunger Games and Social Reality
(FY103.16)
Faculty: Rhianon Visinsky, English
Monday/Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:40 p.m.
The power of a good story lies not only in its ability to entertain, but also in its capacity to educate. They resonate on a deeper social, cultural, political, and even personal level and leave us changed. The Hunger Games and its sequels are great examples of stories that hold greater meaning for those willing to delve a little deeper - which is exactly what this class requires of you. After critically reading the novels, you’ll begin to explore how the dystopian future that Suzanne Collins envisioned is actually a reflection of our current social reality. Through weekly themed discussions, research, critical thinking exercises, and personal exploration, we will see just what this series reveals about who we are and how we affect the world around us. Some of the topics we will discuss include: gender roles, the environment, economic disparity and global inequality, revolution, war and violence, political oppression, reality TV, consumerism, and love. Volunteer as tribute, if you dare.

Seems Legit: What’s Real and What’s Fake on the Internet
(FY103.17)
Faculty: Melissa Correll, Library
Monday/Wednesday, 4:00 - 5:40 p.m.
Fake news. Deepfakes. Rumors, hoaxes, lies, and propaganda. It’s easier than ever to find information - and misinformation - thanks to the constant evolution of media and technology. So, how do we know what to believe? What strategies can we use to navigate the media landscape and learn about what is happening in the world around us? By studying how and why people react to and spread misinformation and by critically analyzing media coverage of current events, students will practice media and information literacy skills that they need to be savvy and well-informed citizens. Students will also examine their own relationship with the internet, social media, and news, and develop skills to be more intentional about their online behavior.
Can't We All Just Get Along? Performing Integration in American Culture

(FY103.18)
Faculty: Jonathan Shandell, Theater
Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 1:30 - 2:35 p.m.

African-Americans and white Americans certainly ought to find ways live, work and co-exist in a spirit of harmony and mutual understanding. This widely attractive ideal in theory has proven elusive, problematic and messy as the United States has pursued it throughout history. The nation’s performance culture—theater, film and television—has played a crucial role in envisioning the possibilities, and debating the problems, inherent in integration. This seminar will examine representations of black/white integration in each of these artistic genres, across the last century. Readings, class discussions, assignments and activities (play performances, film screenings and TV watching parties) will expose students to stories of African Americans and white Americans dreaming of, protesting against, aspiring toward, wrestling with, debating and sacrificing on behalf of an envisioned future of meaningful integration and true racial justice. We will seek out points of connectivity among various cultural forms of expression, consider connections between past and present cultural narratives, and examine the underlying cultural attitudes these narratives reflect and reinforce in the national consciousness. With no illusions of arriving at a definitive answer to the question of “Can’t We All Just Get Along,?” we will digest and discuss some of the ways that this fundamental question (with all of its inherent problems) has inspired American artists to examine our society and provoke urgent debate.

Bodies in Motion: Foundation for Physical Therapy

(FY103.19)
Faculty: Christian Porter, Physical Therapy
Tuesday/Thursday, 8:30 -10:10 a.m.

What is movement? What is the relationship between anatomical structure and function? How is movement acquired? What alters movement? What is physical ability and disability? This seminar introduces students to the science of movement and bioengineering as tools for analysis and adaptation. Visual observation of different kinds of human motion within varied locations and contexts serves as the framework for discussion of the individual’s, society’s and science’s approaches to the concept of physical ability. Strategies to address mismatches in physical ability and environmental demands underscores the seminar topics as students are guided toward an understanding of physically active individuals.

Fabulous Foodie Culture

(FY103.20)
Faculty: Tracey Levine, English
Tuesday/Thursday, 2:10 - 3:50 p.m.

This course aims to explore and study our national and global obsession, appreciation, and criticism of food and the culture surrounding it. Students will engage in critical analysis of journalistic writing and
literature, and also the multitudinous media products. Students will conduct a food journal, write a food autobiography, write a critical analysis and research paper on an identified food issue, and participate in a group project that highlights a particular cuisine and its history.

Tyrants, Cult Leaders, and Heads of State: Unpacking the Myth of the Perfect Leader

*(FY103.21)*

*Faculty: Breann Donnelly, Student Affairs*

*Tuesday/Thursday, 2:10 - 3:50 p.m.*

There are leaders who inspire us to take risks, who we empower to lead us, and others who are responsible for some of the greatest atrocities in the world. What’s the different between a good leader and a terrible one? Do Nelson Mandela and Charles Manson have any common leadership skills? Are Oprah and Margaret Thatcher cut from the same cloth? This class will explore traits-based and skills-based leadership theories and dissect the leadership resumes of some of the world’s best (and worst) leaders. From our study we will determine how to build leadership capacity … and a cult following.

Do Animals Feel? The Psychology of Animal Emotions

*(FY103.22)*

*Faculty: Juan Duque, Psychology*

*Tuesday/Thursday, 10:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.*

Does your dog actually feel happy when you get home? Does it feel shame when it does something bad and has its tail tucked between its legs? Can ants have emotional experiences? What are emotions and how are they different between human and non-human animals? Can we objectively measure emotions in other animals? In this course, we will explore animal emotions from multiple interdisciplinary fields, including biology/nature and animal behavior, psychology and the human experience, and empathy/morality. Among other assignments/activities, students will participate in class discussions over assigned readings, reflect on how their own emotions affect their behavior and thoughts, work in teams to investigate a cool animal behavior, and visit the Philadelphia Zoo and gather behavioral data.

Fabulous Beasts, Remarkable Creatures

*(FY103.23)*

*Faculty: Willow DiPasquale, English*

*Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 12:15 - 1:30 p.m.*

Why are fantastical creatures so popular, and what can a legacy of past “animal” stories illuminate about ourselves now? We’ve looked to these stories to understand animals, but can they also help us recognize what it means to be human? As a class, we’ll explore a variety of literary and artistic works: medieval beast tales, 17th and 18th-century animal satires, and recent fantasy literature (including J.K. Rowling and J.R.R. Tolkien). Our purpose will be to examine how these works present the values,
challenges, and unique human experiences of their times, and how they continue to resonate with and shape contemporary culture.

Election 2020
(FY103.24)
Faculty: John Noakes, Sociology, Anthropology & Criminal Justice
        Alison Lalond Wyant, Office of Social Impact & Innovation
Tuesday/Thursday, 10:20 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
When this course begins, the 2020 Presidential campaign – which promises to be historic and consequential – will be in its final months. In this course, we will use the campaign as our primary “text.” Among other things, students will learn how to read polls, how to decipher the framing of political messages, why we use an electoral college and how it works, and delve into the key policy issues debated by the candidates. As the counties surrounding Philadelphia are key battlegrounds in national elections, we will also explore a wide variety of local community activity - some overtly political, some less so. Together we’ll discuss how that work intersects, and not, with the issues at hand in the presidential election, and we'll consider what types of political and community action most effectively drive social change.

Naked Words
(FY103.25)
Faculty: Sara Wenger, English
Tuesday/Thursday, 2:10 - 3:50 p.m.
Bring your voice to the table. Reading poems aloud, sharing original work, and learning the art of critique will allow us to share dreams and disappointments. Our seminar, based on published and unpublished poems--yours and others'--will provide an opportunity to understand poetry's role in healing, creativity, and inspiration. We'll also explore how poetry can function as a form of celebration, mourning, or social critique. No prior knowledge is necessary; this course is open to both experienced and inexperienced writers.

Reading Between the Rhymes
(FY103.26)
Faculty: Stephen Tyson, Education
Monday/Wednesday, 5:45 - 7:25 p.m.
This course examines dimensions of diversity and social justice issues. Elements of hip-hop culture (music, graffiti, spoken word) and mass media (such as television and film) will be used as tools to critique what we teach and learn in our society about gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, social class and more. We will examine the influence of pop culture on our critical consciousness for social change and use our creativity to explore solutions for a more just society.

Sherlock Holmes: A Study in Character
Who is Holmes? Is he Doyle’s egotistical and flawlessly brilliant consulting detective stalking the fog-swirled, cobblestoned streets of Victorian Britain? The far more vulnerable and complex character of page, stage, and screen—susceptible even to the risks of love—appearing in the century to follow? Is he the high-flying, fisticuffing, texting superhero translated into our contemporary moment by Robert Downey, Jr. and Benedict Cumberbatch? Why does this odd, infuriating, eccentric man continue to shape our concepts and standards of intelligence, strength, self-discipline, and self-worth? Why does he use drugs? Is Holmes a self-centered madman or a true patriot? In this course, we will peer through the magnifying glass, comparing the original with films, television shows, literature, comic books, and other artistic interpretations to investigate the identity of Sherlock Holmes. Students will transport themselves to the past for answers, write a piece of fan fiction or a letter to Holmes...and perhaps even meet the world’s greatest consulting detective in the flesh.

Investigating (In)Equality in Health Care

Faculty: Teta Barry, Public Health
Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9:45-10:50 a.m.
Should health care be an individual right or a commodity? Do we live in a society or an economy? Why doesn’t America have Universal Health Care? What would happen if it did and everyone had access to medical care regardless of insurance? This first-year seminar explores the challenges to and constraints on the pursuit of health care equity in the United States. Using contemporary examples, film, discussion, and self-inquiry, this course is designed to encourage students to critically analyze the distribution of medical care and its impact while discovering their personal ethic with regard to health care access. We will use the COVID-19 pandemic as a living example of what happens when the health care playing field is leveled—who gets access now?