

AS.001 (AS FIRST YEAR WRITING SEMINARS)

Courses

AS.001.100. FYS: What is the Common Good?. 3 Credits.

What is “the common good”? How do individuals consider this idea, this question, and how are societies led, or misled, by its pursuit? Together, we will explore sources from a range of perspectives: What does Aristotle’s theory of the common good teach us? Or the Federalist Papers, the design of Baltimore’s public transportation system, meritocracy in higher education, the perniciousness of pandemics, proliferation of nuclear weapons, restorative justice, or intimate love? Drawing from film, journal articles, literature, and other sources—authors/creators include Rachel Carson, James Baldwin, Bong Joon-ho, Jhumpa Lahiri, Michael Sandel, and more—this First-Year Seminar is as much about how we ask and interrogate challenging, timeless questions as it is about the answers themselves. Engaging our material and each other, we will work together to hone the habits of scholarly inquiry essential to this practice: reading, writing, talking. The seminar will culminate in a final, collaborative research project that seeks to map, and manifest, versions of the common good.

AS.001.101. FYS: The Hospital. 3 Credits.

Hospitals: Virtually all of us were born in one, most of us will eventually die in one, and in between all of us will spend at least some time in one. Lots of you likely aspire to spend your careers in one. Along the way we, or some third-party payer, will spend a considerable amount of our health care benefits there. Our focus will be on the history of the hospital from its origins in early modern Europe and the Islamic world, through the early modern period, to the rise of the modern urban mega hospital. The Johns Hopkins Hospital has been ranked as one of the nation’s best by US News and World Report since its annual survey began, and spent nineteen straight years at number one. So we will devote some time to its history, and the history of its affiliated programs—The School of Medicine, The Bloomberg School of Public Health, and the School of Nursing. For your major project, you will serve as advisors to the university’s Planning and Architecture committee. Drawing on your extensive knowledge of the history hospitals and medicine, you will re-envision the medical campus of the 21st century

AS.001.102. FYS: Japanese Robots. 3 Credits.

Japan is a world leader in biomimetic robotics. Japanese society enthusiastically embraces robotic nurses, robotic guides, robotic waiters, robotic pets, and even robotic girlfriends. What are the origins of the Japanese love of robots? What role did robotics engineers play in creating the image of loveable robots? What societal fears do Japanese robots assuage and what hopes do they foster? In the course of the semester, students will learn about the evolution of Japanese robotics, and explore the implications of this evolution to humans’ relationship with robots. While learning about Japanese robots, students will acquire skills necessary for college-level education, including how to write an email to a professor, how to organize and manage digital tools, how to navigate the information resources, and how to develop, complete, and present research projects. This course will equip students with skills essential to their success in college and beyond.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.103. FYS: When Worlds Collide - Science Goes Global. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year Seminar, we will explore instances of contact between different world cultures and pre-modern and modern science (16th-20th c.). The premise of the course is the understanding that in addition to the cultural, religious and political negotiations that took place during cross-cultural encounters, science also underwent a similar process. We understand science expansively, as the study of nature and the production of knowledge about it embedded in a particular cultural context. The historical episodes we will discuss are selections of instances where agents of the West—missionaries, explorers, businessmen, colonists, scientists—established prolonged contact with non-western cultures and engaged in conversations about their worldviews. Some cases considered include Jesuits in the Chinese imperial court, Spanish missionaries among the Maya, and English explorers in the Pacific islands.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS.001.104. FYS: The Science of Color. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar is designed to introduce students to the fundamental physical and chemical origins of color and how we perceive them - from the vivid palette provided by the natural world to the brightly colored clothing we wear. Beginning with the basic principles of light and color, we will embark on an interdisciplinary investigation of color, including, but not limited to: color chemistry; color in biology; the physiology of the eye; how color affects human psychology; the history of color and light; and the use of color in art. Discover the physical and chemical explanations behind several noteworthy phenomena such as sunsets, color-blindness, rainbows, fireworks, chameleons and the Aurora Borealis.

AS.001.105. FYS: The Science Behind the Fiction. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year Seminar, we will seek to answer questions including: could you forge Beskar? What would it take to make a light saber? Is “Image, enhance” really possible? What is possible today? What might be possible in the future? And, what may never be possible, as it violates the laws of nature as we know them? We will take an empiricist approach, gathering data on the needed properties via screenings and related research, and then applying physical principles to reveal feasibility.

AS.001.106. FYS: Legal Fictions - Law and Humanities. 3 Credits.

A legal fiction is a fact assumed or created by courts to help reach a decision. In this First-Year Seminar, we study how legal fictions and fictions about law work in order to examine the possibilities and limits of fiction’s (legal) power. Drawing from legal and literary thought, as well as plays, short stories, cases, and legal commentary, we critically explore the capacity of words to reveal (or conjure) some fundamental features of our shared worlds and discuss their impact in contemporary debates about justice. The course is designed with first-year students in mind and requires no prior knowledge of law.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.107. FYS: Thinking and Writing Across Cultures - East Asia and the West. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year Seminar, we will explore what it means to think and write across multiple cultures in the contemporary world. What do we gain and/or lose when we think and write crossing cultural boundaries? How do knowledge and experience of two or more cultures help us think and act critically, creatively, and ethically? What does plurality of cultures mean to universal discourses such as science and technology? How can cultural differences help or hamper our efforts to tackle global problems like climate change? These are some of the guiding questions that we will investigate together in this course by examining novels, essays, autobiographies, travelogues, philosophical writings, and films that engage with multiplicity of cultures between East Asia – especially China, Japan, and Korea – and the West as well as within East Asia.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.108. FYS: Heart Matters. 3 Credits.

To the human imagination, the heart is more than a muscle and thumping pump keeping us alive. From the Renaissance to the present, writers have helped us make sense of our bodies, in health and in illness or pain. The history of the heart, meanwhile, starts in Antiquity, where it shapes our beliefs about life. One of our aims will be to trace the historical, cultural, and subjective meanings our minds have given to this “sublime engine.” The other will be to discover how our scientifically inquisitive minds, backed up with technical skills and technological devices such as the stethoscope, have found new ways to take care of this volatile organ. Our materials will involve a constellation of texts in medical history, modern fiction in the form of poems and short-stories, and recent scientific prose on such topics as heart transplants, heart-monitoring implants, xenotransplants as well as heartbreaks.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.109. FYS: Why'd Your Brain Sign You up for This?. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar will explore the neuroscience of choice. In addition to exploring the neurobiology of choice, we will dabble with philosophical ideas of free will and determinism. We will also touch on questions related to culpability. For example, are people who break the law but suffer from brain damage responsible for their actions? Sound interesting? Well, why stop there? Let's sit back, eat some popcorn and take a look at how popular culture depicts the neuroscience of choice in the movies. Yes, with your help, we can do it all – but will you choose to???

AS.001.110. FYS: How We Read. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar invites you to think about reading as a cognitive process, a cultural obsession, and fascinatingly diverse array of practices. We will consider the act of reading from a range of perspectives (cognitive science, educational, political, sociological and literary) and examine artefacts of reading culture (premodern tablets, manuscripts, books as material objects, the screens that dominate contemporary life). We will activate these perspectives in order to grapple with a range of values associated with reading – moral agendas and political virtues, ideas of isolation and community, shifting concepts of individual and public. There are three broad goals for students in this course:• to develop a critical vocabulary for reading practices & paradigms;• to develop a cross-cultural and historical view of reading;• to develop an active agenda about their own learning beyond this course and the role of seminars in it.

AS.001.111. FYS: What's Music Do?. 3 Credits.

Why do we listen to music? What use is it? Can it help us learn more, run faster, feel happier? Can it improve our lives? Can it cure disease? WMD is for musician and non-musician alike. It is designed for students with all sorts of musical tastes and academic interests. It also challenges the usual “top down” approach of most courses, where the professor decides most of what will be studied before the class begins and delivers most of the class content. By contrast, in this course students are invited to relate their majors or other interests to the power of music and then share these ideas with the rest of the class. For example, neuroscience majors might study how music benefits memory in Alzheimer's patients. Or political science majors, the power of music in diplomatic missions. Students research topics like these and then assign related texts as homework to the rest of the class, including the professor. They're given broad freedom of choice for these texts both in content and form. The goal is not to create a “great books” class so much as a “great questions” class, since great questions can be inspired by terrible or trivial sources, just as awful or insignificant situations can spark epiphany. But whatever the text, I, as the professor, must be willing not to profess. In fact, in this classroom I'm no longer a professor but a professional student, sharing with my fellow students an interest in music and its many possibilities. And yet, even more important than pursuing these shared interests, this course ultimately aims to help students create community by practicing better communication. Even if you forget everything you learned in this class, I hope you will remember your classmates.

AS.001.112. FYS: Story, Song, Food, And Film - A Thousand Years Of Jewish Culture. 3 Credits.

Most Jews in America today are descendants of Ashkenazi Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. This First-Year Seminar will introduce students to the thousand-year history and culture of Ashkenazi Jews through their vernacular, Yiddish. How did Ashkenazi Jews maintain a distinct identity, even while borrowing cultural forms from their non-Jewish neighbors? How did Jews in the modern period challenge tradition and create new forms of Jewish identity? How did Eastern European immigrants adapt to life in America? In addition to studying a wide range of texts—including fiction, poetry, memoir, song, and film—students will learn how to read the Yiddish alphabet, and will explore food culture by preparing Ashkenazi Jewish dishes. No prior knowledge of Yiddish is necessary for this course.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.113. FYS: The Poetry of Music - Lyrics and the Art of Songwriting. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year Seminar we will examine the poetic artistry of American song, from Tin-Pan Alley and Broadway tunes to Folk songs, Billboard's Top 40, and Hip Hop. Our focus will be on the linguistic art of song – the meaning(s), rhythm, timbre, and pitch found in words alone. Taught in a workshop format, the course will encourage students to read lyrics as poetry and then write their own.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.114. FYS: The Politics of Reproduction. 3 Credits.

The idea that the “personal” is “political” finds no greater example than in the politics of reproduction. From inheritance laws, the rights of the offspring of enslaved peoples, or policies to reduce (or increase) fertility, the modern nation state has had a great deal to say about the use and produce of human bodies. In this First-Year Seminar, we will examine how formal and informal institutions have governed reproductive practices over the past 200 years. We will look at how family structures and economic development map onto fertility, and at how technological innovations in fertility control (including birth control and IVF) have influenced women's economic and political participation. We will also consider whether reproductive policies have differential impacts for LGBTQ households. Finally, we examine the “dark side” of reproductive policies – not only sterilization campaigns but also the treatment of sex workers and sex-selective abortion – to understand how state policies have divided households based on race, class, and occupation. Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.115. FYS: Illusions, Delusions, and Other Confusions. 3 Credits.

Most people think the strongest kind of evidence in a criminal case is a confident eyewitness. Most students think re-reading textbook materials or class notes is the best way to prepare for an exam. And all too many people think that measles vaccines cause autism. All three of these ideas are wrong. In this First-Year Seminar, we will explore what modern psychology has uncovered about how our intuitions concerning human nature deceive us, and lead to incorrect ideas such as the ones just mentioned. We will discuss a wide variety of topics including “the attention economy,” groupthink, and subliminal perception.

AS.001.116. FYS: Literature of the Everyday: The Nineteenth-Century Realist Novel. 3 Credits.

The ordinary, the common, the everyday: why does literary realism consider the experiences of the average individual to be worthy of serious contemplation? In this First-Year Seminar, we will read closely a set of novels by Flaubert, Mann, Dickens, Zola, and Tolstoy from the period in which the development of realism reaches its climax. These novels transform the conventions for the representation of lives of lower and middle class subjects, revealing such lives as capable of prompting reflection upon deep and serious questions of human existence.

Prerequisite(s): Students who have taken AS.300.429 are not able to take AS.001.116.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.117. FYS: Composer Biographies in Film. 3 Credits.

“This First-Year Seminar focuses on the lives of Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, and Chopin and the depictions of their lives in film during the 20th century. The seminar provides both an introduction to film analysis and music history biography. In the last module, we will examine the canon of Western art music composers and consider historiographical issues along lines of gender, race, and other American demographics within this inherited tradition—all toward a collaborative final project. Excursions to concerts and other events will be offered. This First-Year Seminar focuses on the lives of Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, and Chopin and the depictions of their lives in film during the 20th century. The seminar provides both an introduction to film analysis and music history biography. In the last module, we will examine the canon of Western art music composers and consider historiographical issues along lines of gender, race, and other American demographics within this inherited tradition—all toward a collaborative final project. Excursions to concerts and other events will be offered.”

AS.001.118. FYS: Imagined Worlds - Science, Technology and Society. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminars asks how social and technological change are related by reading speculative fiction together with secondary sources from the humanities and social sciences. The imagined worlds we will examine feature technologies that intervene in biological reproduction, and technologies that affect the division of labor by which society reproduces itself, allowing us to probe the relationship between technology, gender, and work. By analyzing imagined worlds conjured by speculative thinkers, we will ask how fictional works mediate between imagination and reality. Students will also experiment with speculative methods—including games, creative writing exercises, and critical design—to probe the social and ethical dimensions of emerging technologies. Potential texts include short fiction by Octavia Butler, T. C. Boyle, Isaac Asimov, Alice Sheldon, and N.K. Jemisin, as well as Boots Riley's 2018 film *Sorry to Bother You*.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.119. FYS: The Nature of Nature. 3 Credits.

How well do we understand the natural world? Are there common principles that can explain everything about it? What remains to be understood? Do we understand our past well enough to predict our future? Can I really take this seminar even if I don't have a background in science or math? Yes you can! In this seminar we are going to emulate the Greeks, who without the benefit of the technological and mathematical armamentarium available today, driven simply by curiosity and their imagination, identified some of the fundamental questions that still puzzle us today. In the process they laid the foundation for modern science. Many of their insights have stood the test of time. We will examine the nature of nature by asking deep questions about the world around us and by examining phenomena we experience in our daily lives. We'll try to identify continuity and connectivity between aspects of nature that are usually treated separately. Perhaps you'll discover that science and religion, and scientific and humanistic inquiry, are more similar than you might think. Our seminar is organized around weekly conversations informed by all manner of sources: popular science writing, newspaper articles, fiction, poetry, and film. We will even do simple experiments in my lab (no lab or science experience necessary) to illustrate the logic of life.

AS.001.120. FYS: U.S. History of the Present. 3 Credits.

Which ideas, movements, problems, and conflicts define the contemporary United States—and where did they come from? In this First Year Seminar we'll study the history of this country over the last three decades to try to answer those questions. Using a range of written and visual materials, we'll investigate the history behind concepts like “globalization,” “the free market,” “identity politics,” “culture wars,” and the “War on Terror,” and discuss the causes and consequences of the debates they provoked in this period. We'll also assess what's appealing and challenging about studying the very recent past and using it to interpret our present.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.121. FYS: Socrates and his Intellectual Context. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar will focus on the figure of Socrates. Socrates wrote nothing, so we depend on others for our knowledge of him. We will examine the ways he is portrayed by several different authors, including Plato. We will also examine some other ideas around in his time - some of which were pretty radical - and consider how he may have reacted to them. Finally, we will examine his influence on later thought.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.122. FYS: Global Cinema in the 21st Century. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar introduces students to the intellectual life of the university by considering some of the riches of contemporary global cinema. After a brief introduction each week, you will watch the assigned film and read some texts to deepen your sense of how to analyze it and think about broader matters the director has taken on. During in-class discussion, we will consider what makes a particular film noteworthy, what the director seems to think about his/her national context, and how local issues intersect with broader questions about the human condition. How does the past shape us? What is justice? What is political action? Who are we responsible to? We will also consider aesthetics. What is a good director? How do we know we are watching good acting (especially when reading subtitles?) What impact do cinematography and editing have on our perception of a film? How do film makers speak to and quote one another?

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.123. FYS: Wired to Read: the Science and the Art. 3 Credits.

Trying to make sense of words I have written. But how do we do we do it? How do mere shapes and lines on the page suddenly begin to mean something? Is our brain wired for reading? Apart from our eyes, are other parts of the body involved? When did humans start to write and read? These are the kinds of questions we'll pursue. This First-Year Seminar will explore two distinctive perspectives: one literary, the other is scientific. We'll divide our attention between the study of chapters and articles that present scientific findings about how we read and a practical exploration of a novel. Literary works tax our brains in multiple ways and our example will show why and how. Maylis de Kerangal's medical fiction *The Heart* will serve as our case study. The book and scenes from its adaptation for the screen will enable us to experience the power of fiction as it transports us into an enhanced reality made of images and words. We'll see how written words are able to redirect our attention in ways that make us more perceptive about a "real" world of human interactions. Slowed down and staged in the book, the life-stories, fateful accidents, and heroic gestures that make up a medical universe can paradoxically bring us closer the life and death decisions that begin in the ER.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.124. FYS: Monuments and Memorials: Shaping Historical Memory. 3 Credits.

Monuments and memorials traditionally serve as placeholders of memory, inviting viewers to remember and reflect. They aim to speak both to their own moment and to posterity, keeping the past present for the future. Yet what they say—and don't say—is highly contested. Recent controversies in Baltimore, across the US, and throughout the world have dramatized their problematic power and volatility and demand our thoughtful attention. Drawing on examples from antiquity to the present, this interdisciplinary First-Year Seminar explores monuments and memorials as political, cultural, social, and aesthetic expressions, and examines the ways they operate within and beyond the historical moment in which they were created. Current debates will be considered along with the ancient Roman practice of *damnatio memoriae*; iconoclasm; and alternative or counter-monuments that intentionally subvert the traditional commemorative lexicon. Particular attention will be given to monuments in Baltimore, with on-site classes whenever possible.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.125. FYS: Matchmaker, Matchmaker! Love, Marriage, and Modern Jewish Identity. 3 Credits.

Should children accept the match their parents make for them, or at least choose a partner their parents approve of? Is marriage a pillar of traditional society, or a passport to new ways of thinking and being? How do questions of love and marriage help us to understand changes in Jewish life and identity in the modern period? In this First-Year Seminar, we will examine these questions in a broad range of stories, plays, and films spanning Europe and America, including the American movie *Fiddler on the Roof* and the stories on which it is based by Yiddish writer Sholem Aleichem.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.127. FYS: Public Opinion and Democracy. 3 Credits.

How does public opinion shape electoral behavior and the contours of democracy in the United States, and how have these relationships changed as techniques for measuring public opinion have evolved since the early twentieth century? To consider this question, the course introduces alternative perspectives on the features of a healthy democracy, including both historical perspectives and current arguments. Interweaved with this material, the course examines how public opinion is measured and interpreted by private pollsters, survey researchers, and data journalists. Emphasis is placed on the alternative claims that opposing analysts adopt, as well as how the technologies of data collection and analysis shape the permissibility of conclusions. Students will learn to interpret public opinion patterns, which requires a brief presentation of basic concepts from survey sampling, including what to make of the polling industry's most boring concept: margin of error.

Distribution Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.128. FYS: Deep Listening and Multimedia Sound Art. 3 Credits.

Sound plays a rich and complex role in our everyday lives and in our various forms of media art. In the past thirty years, sound studies has become a new addition to the study of the human senses, as well as the relationship of these senses to history, aesthetics, epistemology, culture, and art. How do we listen to the world around us? To different media? In this First-Year Seminar, we explore listening to the lived environment, to music, and to multimedia sound art ranging from performance art to cinema. The nexus of questions surrounding listening opens us up to a host of new texts and approaches: those of acoustic ecology, or how we experience sound via the lived and natural environment; those of the relationship between the senses and our emotions; those of the nature of musical listening; and those of the art world as it engages with sound. This seminar is a mixture of sound theory and practice. We will read, debate, and bring in examples. Students will create their own projects, both written and sonic. No prior experience in sound theory or sound practice are required.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.129. FYS: Environmental Poisons. 3 Credits.

An exploration of the occurrence and potential effects of poisons in the environment, from naturally occurring ones such as arsenic to those that may be introduced by mankind such as nuclear waste.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences

AS.001.130. FYS: Evolutionary Psychology. 3 Credits.

In this unique, 1-credit First-Year Seminar, we discuss evolutionary psychology—the idea that the mind can be understood as an adaptation to our ancestral environment by means of natural selection. Topics range from nature vs. nurture and freewill vs. determinism to the exploration of how evolutionary principles speak to broad social issues such as sexuality, gender, social class, and violence.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.131. FYS: Techno - Anthropology. 3 Credits.

This course offers an introduction to anthropological perspectives on technology. We begin the human body as our most basic technology, and survey various tradecraft (fire and animal domestication, time-keeping, inscription, sailing) that have adapted us to diverse environments.

We then examine the consequences of industrial technology, with its emphasis on automation, standardization and scaling. Finally, we turn to the rise of information technology such as social media, and the ways it has transformed senses of communication and place. Throughout we attend to the complex interplay of technological power and social organization.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.001.132. FYS: Exploring Economic Inequality. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year Seminar, we examine inequalities in income, wealth, and working conditions in the United States today. What do the historical trends look like and how do economists explain them? Is economic inequality a significant problem? If so, why? And what tools do we have in the policy arsenal to address it? We will draw on diverse sources, including economics readings, op-eds, podcasts, and short vignettes from literature to motivate our weekly discussions. Students will have the opportunity to present group research and lead class discussions drawing on the economic concepts developed in class. At the end of the semester, students will complete an individual research project exploring some aspect of current inequality, inspired by their own selection from literature, poetry, music, or film.

AS.001.133. FYS: Hot Topics in Education. 3 Credits.

As a public good, public schooling is often the focus of attempts at purposeful change. Politicians, for example, make policies for fixing schools (public) that never would be entertained for fixing families (private). Parents also make demands of schools, as do a host of other interested parties. Together these stakeholders make up part of the external environment to which schools adapt. But the institutional agents of schooling have interests too—e.g., teachers' unions, associations of school administrators, the faculty of schools of education—and they too often try to shape the direction of school reform. This First-Year Seminar examines timely, often controversial, issues of education policy and practice through a sociological lens. We will address these topics with discussions of a documentary film on the history of American public schools, readings in contemporary social science, and our own research into specific policy debates.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.134. FYS: Great Books at Hopkins - a closer reading. 3 Credits.

Modeled after Johns Hopkins's longstanding Great Books course, this Freshman seminar offers a more focused selection of texts to allow in-depth reading and discussion, with greater attention to historical context. Texts will include: *The Odyssey*, *Paradise Lost*, *Frankenstein*, and *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, written by himself, with excerpts from additional slave narratives. In-class lectures and discussions will be supplemented by occasional guest lectures and exhibits from the archives of Eisenhower Libraries. Prior attendance in Great Books at Hopkins is not required; upper class students who have previously taken Great Books may be admitted with permission of instructor.

Distribution Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive

AS.001.135. FYS: Free Speech and Its Limits. 3 Credits.

Freedom of speech, and the related freedom of the press, are core values for democracies -- and for universities, in which the freedom to challenge accepted beliefs is assumed to be essential to advancing knowledge. The 1st Amendment to the US Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and of the press, as do the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the European Convention on Human Rights among other statements. But like other rights, my right to freedom of speech may conflict with yours, or it may infringe on other important rights or societal objectives. As a result, freedom of speech cannot be (and in practice is not) unlimited. In this seminar, we will be asking why freedom of speech has been accorded such importance, and how and why it might legitimately be limited, in politics, in business, in everyday life, and in universities, looking both at the United States and at other liberal democracies. Reading will include opinions (both majority and dissenting) of courts in the United States, Canada, and Europe, with discussion informed by Justice Robert Jackson's quip about the US Supreme Court (but equally applicable to other top-level courts): "We are not final because we are infallible, but we are infallible only because we are final."

AS.001.136. FYS: Cults, Communes, and Conspiracies. 3 Credits.

Cults, communes, and conspiracies are unusual social and ideological organizations. How should we understand their origins, structure, and functioning? In our First-Year Seminar, we will assess the value of alternative explanatory concepts from the social sciences, such as charismatic leadership, organizational ecology, network structure, status competition, social influence, and belief propagation. We will then interpret cases in comparative perspective, asking, for example, how cults differ from religious sects, how communes differ from political movements, and how organized crime groups differ from legal businesses.

AS.001.137. FYS: The Power of Speech: Law, Politics, and the Humanities. 3 Credits.

"What don't we do with words? Even silence makes manifest the power of speech. This course will introduce you to some of the ways that power has been described and thought about. In addition to studying arguments that connect the power of speech to what it means to be human, we will explore various attempts both to protect and limit speech, taking into consideration not only how we do things with words but how words affect us. Topics that will be covered include freedom of speech, censorship, hate speech, talking back, silence, and storytelling. We will read texts in philosophy, political science, law, and literature, and we will watch at least one film or play. While we discuss the power of speech, we will also reflect on the ways in which discussion fosters a community. In other words, the experience of our discussion is a topic for our conversation. First-year seminars are designed to encourage "meaningful civil exchange among students across disciplinary interests and backgrounds" as well as to "foster early, sustained faculty-student interaction and mentorship." We will talk about how such seminars are supposed to work and how they may (or may not) realize their goals. Reading, analyzing, and discussing the texts assigned in this course will help us develop foundational critical thinking skills; how might these activities also establish a sense of (group) identity?

AS.001.138. FYS: Soccer in Brazil: Opium of the Masses. 3 Credits.

Did you know that we can explain various aspects of Brazil and Brazilian society such as race, politics and national identity through studying its national sport? Futebol offers a unique perspective on politics, race and citizenship in Brazil. This First-Year Seminar seeks to understand Brazilian culture through the historic national pastime of futebol. In addition to the main textbooks chosen for the seminar, by reading a variety of texts from newspapers, academic journals, fiction and film, students will be able to find their own approach to understanding the phenomenon of futebol within the social and political traditions of Brazil.

Prerequisite(s): Students who have already taken AS.211.294 are not eligible to take AS.001.138.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.139. FYS: Medicine and Cinema. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar explores the intersection between medicine and film, looking at how medicine, medical providers, and narratives of illness and health are depicted in cinematic works. Some of the questions that the seminar pursues are: What are some of the medical issues that filmmakers focus on? How did the cinematic portrayal of medicine change over time? What role do these films play in shaping public perceptions of medicine, medical providers, and medical institutions? By watching a number of films throughout the semester and reading some accompanying texts, students will develop deeper knowledge both of the history of medicine in cinema and the tools that cinema offers to the telling medical stories.

AS.001.140. FYS: What Everyone Should Know about How Science Works. 3 Credits.

Science and scientists often bear the brunt of public displeasure over current events. Recent debates over CoVID (the safety and effectiveness of vaccines, masks, and isolation), climate change, and many other controversies raise questions about the reliability of scientific results and what it means to conduct research. What is and what is not scientific? How can non-scientists determine whether a scientific result is "right?" In this First-Year Seminar, we will explore what scientists do – the practices of science – and how they set standards of knowledge. Discussions will be organized around current pressing topics, including: What does it mean to "follow the science" or "do your own research" in the age of COVID? Will science save us from the ravages of climate change? Who or what has ultimate authority over the direction of scientific advances? When are new scientific announcements important new results and when are they just click bait hype? Who pays for science and should we care? What is meant by replication and is it bad if it doesn't happen? How does scientific publication work and what issues have arisen? Why do scientists often get bad press, and is it fair?

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences

AS.001.141. FYS: The Art of Mathematics. 3 Credits.

Mathematics is so much more than simply the language of science, or a set of techniques for solving quantitative-based problems. In fact, it is not a science at all, but an art, a construct of the imagination that not only provides structure to the reality of the world, but also gives form to anything and everything we can possibly imagine. Many of its fundamental principles and methods of employment are shared by artists of all types, from musicians to painters, sculptors, and poets. In this First-Year Seminar, we will explore these principles and methods shared by mathematicians and artists, like the notions of abstraction, metaphor, and pattern, the aesthetic quality both mathematicians and artists give to their work, the geometry of representation and visualization, the imagination as a tool of discovery and structure, and the use of mathematics in art, as well as the use of art in mathematics. Along the way, we will talk to artists and mathematicians, and hopefully visit the studios and galleries of each.

Distribution Area: Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences

AS.001.142. FYS: The Physics of Democracy. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar considers what we can learn about democratic societies by thinking of them as complex physical systems. We will discuss voting and social choice theories and their relationship to renormalization and emergence; organization and segregation in complex systems: power laws, inequality, and polarization; and the dynamics of information and opinions: networks, bubbles, filters, and phase transitions.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS.001.143. FYS: Poets, Physicists, Philosophers, and the Ultimate Nature of Reality. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year Seminar we will explore the long and mostly untold story behind the most revolutionary discoveries of modern physics—quantum mechanics and relativity—a story written, astonishingly, in the languages of poetry, fiction, and philosophy. Shuttling between twentieth-century Germany and Argentina by way of eighteenth-century Prussia, with stopovers in Plato's Greece and Dante's Italy, we will pursue the age-old riddle of how the human mind interacts with the physical world; tangle with theologians as they ponder the nature of free will; interrogate cosmologists as they attempt to grasp the shape the universe; and, finally, explore the implications of these profound problems for our understanding of reality today.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.144. FYS: Literary Multilingualism. 3 Credits.

What does it mean to live and to write in more than one language? This is a particularly charged question in today's globalized world. In this First-Year Seminar, we will explore texts and films produced by multilingual writers and directors, who reflect on the experiences of the multilingual subject; their concerns range from the turmoil of living between identities and cultures, to the playful experience of daily life and existence opened up through thinking and working in multiple languages. Main questions will include: In what ways do languages influence how writers write? How does the presence of multiple languages in a text structure a reading experience and for whom? How do texts by multilingual writers destabilize conceptions of national literature? While some texts we will read were originally composed in English, the majority were written by multilingual writers in other languages. Finally, therefore, we will address what it means to read translated into English texts that were, in some sense, already produced "in translation."

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.145. FYS: The Haitian Revolution. 3 Credits.

Long overshadowed by the American and French Revolutions, the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) is now widely recognized as one of the most important events in modern history. The most radical of the Atlantic Revolutions, it began with a massive uprising of the enslaved against the institution of slavery and culminated in the independence of the nation of Haiti. This First-Year Seminar will examine the origins, course, and legacy of the Revolution, addressing such issues as colonialism, racism, slavery, emancipation, human rights, and national sovereignty – issues that continue to shape the contemporary world.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.146. FYS: Nature, Nurture, Cognition. 3 Credits.

Using both seminal and contemporary readings as a foundation, we will explore the foundations of cognition and how they support human cognitive development, focusing on how 'nature' and 'nurture' collaborate to shape development of the human mind. This semester, we will read at least three, and possibly four books, along with supplementary readings, as appropriate. Our focus will be on understanding the roles of nature and nurture in the context of typical and atypical development, including an understanding of how knowledge about objects, language, number, and other minds all emerge during human development, from infancy to adulthood, in typically and atypically developing individuals.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.147. FYS: Reading Ancient Middle Eastern Literature. 3 Credits.

The Middle East is home to some of the world's earliest and most important literature. In this First-Year Seminar, students will read in translation a selection of texts from different traditions that flourished in the pre-Islamic Middle East. Sample readings include the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Descent of Ishtar to the Netherworld, and the battle between David and Goliath from the Hebrew Bible. As we read, we will consider why ancient Middle Eastern literature may be more relevant to our own present moment than ever before.

AS.001.148. FYS: Dining and drinking in the ancient Mediterranean world. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar focuses on the cultures of dining and drinking in the ancient Greek and Roman worlds, with excursions into the foodways of other ancient societies abutting the Mediterranean basin. We will investigate the social practices and values that are associated with conviviality in these societies, and how such practices and values change over time. We will consider the kinds of communities that these practices construct, and how and to what extent different kinds of people are included, excluded, or placed in a social hierarchy by their participation in these practices. Special attention will be given to feasting as represented in the Homeric poems, especially the *Odyssey*; to the Archaic and Classical Greek symposium; and to the Roman convivium and other dining forms extending to late Antiquity. Fueling our investigation and underpinning our discussions will be a wide variety of ancient Greek and Roman texts (to be read in English translation); images and representations of ancient dining in diverse visual media, including Greek vase painting, Roman wall painting, and mosaics; and archaeological evidence for the spaces, settings, and implements of ancient dining and drinking. Throughout, we will engage with key scholarship on aspects of this topic. The seminar includes visits to the Walters Art Museum, the Baltimore Museum of Art, and the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum, all of which house objects that illuminate our inquiry. It may also involve screenings of films or clips featuring modern imaginative reconstructions of ancient dining events.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.149. FYS: What Is Poverty? A View from Economics and the Social Sciences. 3 Credits.

Social science is the scholarly study of society and social behavior. This First-Year Seminar will introduce students to the social sciences by studying poverty in America through the lens of economics and other social sciences, including sociology and anthropology. The quantitative approach taken by economics will be compared and contrasted with qualitative approaches. Illustrations of how the lives of the poor are led as depicted in ethnographic studies, movies, and literature will be studied to learn how integrated perspectives can be formed. Students will learn how to read scholarly articles with a critical eye, to speak about their interpretations of the material, and to write short critical essays. Students will also be introduced to quantitative analysis using graphs and tables. Group projects will be required. Guest lecturers bringing non-economics perspectives will visit the class.

AS.001.150. FYS: Master of the Senate. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar offers an opportunity to think through the nature of political power, political institutions, and political ambition. We make our way through a single book: Robert Caro, *Master of the Senate*, an account of Lyndon Baines Johnson's dozen years in the US Senate, from 1949 to 1961. Through lively discussion centered around this completely riveting text, the class will explore central questions in politics (democratic and non-democratic) that reverberate far beyond the bygone world of the midcentury Senate.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.151. FYS: Citizenship and Society in the United States. 3 Credits.

Popular sovereignty – the idea that the people rule themselves – has been heralded as one of the preeminent innovations of the modern world. And over the course of the last two hundred or so years, a rising tide of nations committed themselves to the principles of popular sovereignty. Yet in recent years, the inevitability, soundness, and very viability of "rule by the people" has come into question. On the one hand, popular uprisings around the globe have rejected the decisions and practices of governing elites on the grounds that they are out of touch with the people's needs. On the other hand, these uprisings have resurrected and strengthened authoritarian practices and have facilitated the erosion of liberal rights long considered instrumental to preserving democracy. The result – turmoil, unrest, and uncertainty about what the future holds – is evident from Venezuela to England, Turkey to the United States. Can popular sovereignty survive? In what form will the people rule, and at what cost? This First-Year Seminar is an investigation into the idea and practice of popular sovereignty in the contemporary United States. We will explore this topic by actively consulting theory and empirical research in the social sciences. We will supplement this with our own research on the 2022 election, media coverage of issues, popular attitudes about democracy, and popular representation in government and by interest/advocacy groups. Additionally, this class is organized as a collaboration between two first-year seminars: one at Johns Hopkins, the other at Williams College. Over the course of the semester, the two seminars will meet frequently via videoconference to share research and discuss readings and ideas. This is intended to broaden the perspectives brought to bear on our investigation generally and, specifically, to allow each group to share real time research on the politics of the region in which their respective institutions are located.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.152. FYS: When Chemistry Changed History. 3 Credits.

The past is littered with discoveries that have altered the course of civilization. In this First-Year Seminar, we will take a deep dive into chemical discoveries that changed history, discussing how they work as well as their impact on society. Topics will range from dirt warfare, to the link between gun powder and workers' rights, to how cats biochemically domesticated humans.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS.001.154. FYS: Phage Hunters - Discovering novel bacteriophages. 3 Credits.

We often think of bacteria in the context of dangerous or annoying infections. However, bacteria themselves can be infected by even smaller and more abundant entities: viruses called bacteriophages. This First-Year Seminar will combine readings and discussion of the fundamental biology of phages and their role in controlling populations of bacteria, with lab work to discover new phages from the Johns Hopkins campus. Phages identified in this class will be added to the Science Education Alliance's archive which is comprised of phages from over 100 academic institutions worldwide and is a resource for phage biologists and physicians directly involved in developing phages as a treatment for disease.

AS.001.155. FYS: Is a Corporation a Person?. 3 Credits.

Corporations are all around us. They interact with us every day in ways minute and profound. We work with them and for them. They have rights and freedoms, for instance, to speech and religious expression. They seem to have intentions, desires, voices, and goals. Yet, they can't take a walk or feel the wind or smell the earth. If they do harm, they are notoriously hard to punish. When they come to an end, no one writes an obituary. This First-Year Seminar will query whether a corporation is a person across a range of sources and perspectives, including from law, politics, philosophy, literature, and popular culture. Can a corporation be a person? Who should decide and on what basis? What are the implications for our understanding of rights, agency, and morality and for pressing global issues such as climate change? And what are the implications for our own understanding of ourselves as "a person"?

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.156. FYS: Cognition, Language, and the Self. 3 Credits.

Inextricably bound with self-identity, human language and cognition remains a research area with more questions than answers. Can we think without language? What are the differences in neural mechanisms of language and cognition? How and why does the pediatric human brain acquire language at exponential rates while taking a lifetime to acquire cognition? What is the role of language and cognition in self-identity? Are we still ourselves without language, without memories? In this First-Year Seminar, we will examine the recursive nature of language, cognition, and self through the lenses of neurology, psychology, sociology, linguistics, and cognitive science. We will learn how language and cognition develops and changes across the human lifespan through case study examination of the lived experiences of individuals with cognitive-communication disorders, such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, aphasia, agnosia, and Alzheimer's disease. We will end our semester by exploring how the interplay between language, cognition, and self makes us distinctively human and how those lessons apply to the field of artificial intelligence. Perhaps most importantly, this seminar provides students an invitation to actively reflect on their own language, cognition, and development of self.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.157. FYS: Leonardo da Vinci - Art, Science, and Medicine. 3 Credits.

How does a notary's son trained as a painter gain expertise in the construction of machines and acquire knowledge of the principles of optics, human anatomy, the flight of birds, the dynamics of air and water? How did an artist/engineer who brought few projects to completion come to have such a huge impact on later generations? This First-Year Seminar will focus critically on the myth of Leonardo's singularity while showing his achievements to be characteristic of the artisanal culture of his time.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.158. FYS: Love, Anger, Fear, and Hope. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year Seminar, we will examine the roles of love, fear, anger, and hope in our lives. We'll ask questions about their value, danger, and appropriateness or inappropriateness in our lives at both the individual level and the level of political life. Some examples of questions we'll consider are these: Should we love those who have wronged us? Is enjoying a horror movie morally problematic? How is fear used in political rhetoric and how should we respond to it? Is anger acceptable, or perhaps even necessary, in protest? Is love necessary for meaningful social change? When and how is hope justifiable and useful? We'll also draw connections between these emotions and engage with related concepts such as forgiveness and trust. While our engagement with these concepts will be primarily through philosophy, we will also consider works of art and think about the value of portraying and evoking these emotions through various forms of art. Students can expect to read philosophical texts, journalism, occasional fiction and poetry, and to watch at least one horror film, among the sources for the course. Possible authors include Berit Brogaard, Noël Carroll, Myisha Cherry, Raja Halwani, Stephen King, Adrienne Martin, Martha Nussbaum, Edgar Allan Poe, Jason Stanley, and Desmond Tutu. We will take at least one field trip to a location in Baltimore during the semester. Students will emerge from this course with a more nuanced understanding of these powerful and often controversial emotions, and the ability to talk about them in an academic and public context.

AS.001.159. FYS: Apartheid as Analogy - Structures of Racial Hierarchy in South Africa, Baltimore, and Beyond. 3 Credits.

Sites of racial conflict, from Palestine to Baltimore, have been compared to South African Apartheid. This First-Year Seminar examines the creation of a totalizing system of racial segregation and exploitation in twentieth century South Africa, and how it can help us understand histories of race elsewhere in the world, including our own city.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.160. FYS: The Neuroscience of Learning and Memory. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar will cover multiple topics related to what we know about how the brain allows one to learn new facts and skills and to remember the daily events of our lives. We will cover such topics as classical conditioning (e.g., Pavlov's Dogs), operant conditioning (e.g., how to train your dog), how we remember events in our lives (e.g., when you received your acceptance to JHU), how memory can go wrong (e.g., fallibility of eyewitness testimony), how artificial intelligence and deep learning are similar and dissimilar to the brain, and how memory is affected in aging and in diseases like Alzheimer's.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.161. FYS: Books, Authenticity, and Truth. 3 Credits.

We are living through a crisis in how we take in information. Bombarded by information of all sorts coming at us on phones, tablets, and computer screens, it can be difficult to make sense of it all and harder still to determine whether something is true or false, authentic or inauthentic. The scale and speed of the change in media that we are undergoing is unprecedented in human history. Nevertheless, people in the past have faced moments of crisis – moments when writing seemed unreliable, when the format of written information changed, and when new publication formats forced reevaluations of the nature of truth. This First-Year Seminar will take us from Greco-Roman antiquity to the modern age, with stops along the way in the European Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Enlightenment. We will read selected texts that illuminate the place of writing, books, and the search for truth, think about the structure of libraries in the western Middle Ages and Renaissance, do extensive hands-on work with rare books, and visit other repositories of information, all toward the end of evaluating how the history of books and information can help us in our current quest to make sense of our world.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.162. FYS: From Shakespeare to Baltimore. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar is designed around what is on stage in Baltimore and DC this fall. We will attend several plays, both professional productions and student productions at JHU. We will pay attention to the interpretation of plays on the page, and to the ways that scripts materialize as performances on the stage. We will place these performances in the context of larger theatre histories, studying great plays from the age of Shakespeare to contemporary American theatre. No acting experience is required – just the desire to explore the theatre of today. A great way to find out about the lively theatre scene on campus, and a great way to get to know your new city.

AS.001.163. FYS: Black Baltimore Archives - From Frederick Douglass to Billie Holiday. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar carefully considers the lives and works of two globally famous Black Baltimoreans: the abolitionist and statesman Frederick Douglass (1818-1895), and the premier jazz vocalist Billie Holiday (1915-1959). While we will explore key writings and performances of their work, the course also wants to use their historical lives in Baltimore to enrich our knowledge of the city and archival resources that reveal its past. During the semester we will consult a variety of primary resources like newspapers, novels, photographs, rare documents, correspondence, and recorded sound to investigate the complex and intraracial world of Baltimore in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Among the questions we will be considering: How did the city's black abolitionist and religious networks contribute to Frederick Douglass's evolution as a journalist and politician? What was the role of Chesapeake Bay black musical culture—ragtime, marching bands, banjo and fiddle ditties, and riverboat music—in the creation of Billie Holiday's unique stylistic expression and singing? In what manner did Baltimore's racial segregation and racism define her life and art? Students are required to visit three archival repositories during scheduled in-class trips, including a visit to the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. The final project is an archive-laden digital story map.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.164. FYS: Curating Women. 3 Credits.

From the women who created the Museum of Modern Art in New York City to the "Because of Her" working group across the Smithsonian's museums, this First-Year Seminar investigates the hidden women of many distinct social positions, racial and ethnic identities whose labor shaped the museums we know today and considers how museums tell the stories of women, including transgender women, in the arts, sciences, and history.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.165. FYS: Biology in Deep Time. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar will explore seminal ideas in macroevolutionary theory through both classic and cutting-edge studies. Topics would include the relationship between evolution and development, how fossils shape our understanding of biological systems, and the logical basis of evolutionary inference. Students will also gain an appreciation for the historical development of these ideas and their application in modern science and beyond.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.166. FYS: The Pleasures of the Imagination - British culture in the eighteenth century. 3 Credits.

Music, Art, Theater, Novels, Autobiographies, and Material Culture all expanded dramatically in Britain in the long eighteenth century (c. 1714-1830), creating a culture celebrating 'happiness', 'beauty', and the 'pleasures of the imagination'. This First-Year Seminar will introduce students to themselves experiencing and discussing these exciting cultural forms, with students attending and watching plays and movies from plays, discussing Jane Austen novels as read and as filmed, reading and discussing an Afro-British autobiography, listening to performances of different kinds of music, and discussing works of art and architecture both in the classroom and in the museum.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.167. FYS: The Natural History of the Homewood Campus. 3 Credits.

Johns Hopkins University Homewood campus and its surroundings is a wonderful green space in the middle of Baltimore City. This First-Year Seminar will introduce students to both the visible and cryptic organisms living above- and belowground. A combination of observational and sampling techniques will be used to demonstrate how ecologists collect data about plants, insects, and other organisms. In the classroom, these field observations, combined with reading material will be used to discuss global environmental issues including climate change on biodiversity, invasive species, and human impacts on the landscape. By the end of the course students will be able to generate research questions based upon field observations and appreciate the diverse life forms both in Earth and in our backyard. Students should be prepared to spend many hours outside.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences

AS.001.168. FYS: The Psychology of Mass Politics in the U.S.. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar looks at the deeper psychological motivations of the American electorate. We begin by discussing the meaning of democracy and establishing a common understanding of American democracy specifically, placing the current moment into historical and international context. We then gradually dismantle the "folk theory" of democracy that assumes all voters are rational and economically-minded. Instead, we apply theories from social psychology to understand some essential questions about voter behavior. Why do people vote? How do they understand politics? How are their feelings and judgments affected by their own identities, biases, information sources, and by the messages they hear from leaders? Why have Americans grown so polarized? What role do racial and gender-based prejudice play? Is American politics headed toward a more violent future? We use evidence-based research from political science, sociology, and psychology to answer these questions.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.169. FYS: Inventing a City - Exploring Baltimore Through Maps and Mapping. 3 Credits.

Using maps from the 17th century to the present, students in this First-Year Seminar will explore the historical and contemporary landscape of their new hometown – Baltimore. These primary sources will show how Baltimore was invented and developed in popular imagination to become the most vital port on the US Eastern Seaboard, but also a symbol of American post-industrial decline. Students will have the chance to map how they see Baltimore, by learning and applying Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and converting geospatial data into visual stories. With the goal of fostering a deeper understanding of this complex city, and a student's place in it, the class will include explorations outside of the classroom. The course will culminate with the creation of a small exhibit whose content and venue will be decided upon mutually by students during the course of the semester.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.170. FYS: Vive la Différence? The Love-Hate Relationship Between France and the USA. 3 Credits.

What do French views on culture, society, and politics tell us about ourselves? France is frequently misunderstood and criticized in US media, yet books and articles touting various aspects of a "French" lifestyle are bestsellers. French media, for its part, commonly engages in US-bashing, yet the popularity and influence of American culture there are undeniable. Why have many prominent Black American writers sought refuge in France, while many French intellectuals have chosen to bring their academic work to American universities, including The Johns Hopkins University? A cross-cultural examination will allow this First-Year Seminar to bring to light many aspects of the complex relationship between these two countries that are historical allies yet oftentimes rivals. We will explore and discuss food, language, cinema, diplomacy, and health, as well as conceptions of friendship, family, identity, and social justice. Course includes a meal at a French restaurant, a museum visit, film screening, and guest speakers.

AS.001.171. FYS: Rough Magic - Shakespeare and Power. 3 Credits.

"This, therefore, is the praise of Shakespeare, that his drama is the mirror of life." Samuel Johnson's judgment applies particularly well to Shakespeare's account of politics. This First-Year Seminar will explore how Shakespeare depicts the acquisition of power, its exercise, and its voluntary or forcible relinquishment. Through a close reading of whole plays and selected scenes and speeches it will examine political education, intrigue, conspiracy, coups, demagoguery, politically motivated assassination, the theater of violence, rhetoric, insurrection, the launching of war, civil-military relations, and ghosts, among other topics. Combines lectures and discussion with close reading of texts, analytic memos, and assignments such as the composing of a contemporary soliloquy. This course will be taught at JHU's SAIS campus in Washington, DC. All transportation costs are included as part of the course. Private shuttle transportation provided to/from campus.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.172. FYS: Privacy and Surveillance. 3 Credits.

Few topics are more pressing to contemporary society as the right to privacy, in the face of both state and corporate and state surveillance. But the idea of a "right to privacy" has not always been with us. As E. L. Godkin put it in 1890, "Privacy is a distinctly modern product." Indeed, even 300 years ago, many of our own expectations of privacy would have been unheard of. This First-Year Seminar looks at the relation of privacy to modernity, through the lenses of literature, law, and social practices. How can works of art and thought from the past help us understand our own present?

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.173. FYS: Taking TV Seriously - Analysis and Interpretation. 3 Credits.

If Shakespeare were alive today, he would be writing for TV. So would Jane Austen. With the advent of cable networks, DVDs, the internet, and live streaming, TV—once considered a "vast wasteland"—has become the most dynamic and creative medium for storytelling, attracting a host of talented writers, directors, and actors. This First-Year Seminar explores the innovative narrative strategies, structures, and character studies that transformed that wasteland into extraordinarily fertile terrain and ushered in a new Golden Age of TV.

AS.001.174. FYS: Women and Family in Chinese Film. 3 Credits.

From the early 20th century, Chinese society underwent a turbulent process of modern transformation. Industrialization, urbanization, and democratization challenged previous gender and family norms. Meanwhile, at exactly this time, the Chinese film industry flourished, especially in the modern metropolis of Shanghai. Women and family provided a useful microcosm through which to explore national questions related to revolution, war, and modernity. They also entertained a public eager for new leisure pursuits. Popular feature films not only recorded but also interpreted and helped shape family and gender roles. Using filmic representations as the main material this First-Year Seminar will survey the "family question" (and "the woman question") in 20th century China.

AS.001.175. FYS: Music and Shakespeare. 3 Credits.

The plays of William Shakespeare contain many musical cues. In *Hamlet*, Ophelia expresses herself through song when she is unable to through speech. In *The Tempest*, the spirit Ariel lures the shipwrecked Ferdinand to the shore by singing a song. In this course, we will think through the role of music in Shakespeare's plays, reading *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Othello*, with attention to the sonic worlds they create. In addition, we will explore the various musical pieces that these plays have inspired, from film to stage, opera to musical theater, delving into the methods by which they have been adapted to meet the needs of diverse audiences. In addition to the recorded audio-visual materials we will view together, we will seek out opportunities to view a Shakespearean adaptation with a musical component performed live.

AS.001.176. FYS: Microbe Hunters - Student-sourcing Antibiotic Discovery. 3 Credits.

This First-Year-Seminar covers concepts of biology taught through the lens of microbes and antibiotic resistance. Using environmental samples, students actively engage in the hunt for novel antimicrobials. Broader concepts include the meaning of disease, how that meaning has changed over time, and the implications of widespread antibiotic resistance for society. This is a research-based project lab course in which students participate as part of an international consortium of undergraduates at other colleges. Students will isolate and characterize antibiotic-producing bacteria from the environment using modern molecular biological techniques. This seminar is open to all students, regardless of major. No prior lab experience necessary.

Distribution Area: Natural Sciences

AS.001.177. FYS: The Right to the City - Race, Class, and Struggle in Baltimore. 3 Credits.

Over the past decade, cities have become more important than ever before. Protests against policing, against increasing inequality, as well as attempts to rollback societal shifts all have the city as its core. While some suggest these struggles represent larger struggles over the relationship between labor and capital, Black Radical thinkers connect these struggles to anti-black racism. In the wake of one world challenging movement – Black Lives Matter – and one world altering crisis – the Covid-19 pandemic - this First-Year Seminar will reflect critically on these two traditions of thinking about the city by using Baltimore as a case study. This class will be taught alongside similar courses at other universities, offering students a deep dive into Baltimore.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.178. FYS: Words in Public. 3 Credits.

Does it matter what we read? Of course. But how? And how does what we read and hear shape our lives, particularly in democracy? This First-Year Seminar explores these questions across broad categories: social sciences; public writing of all kinds (for children and adults); and the sciences. For instance, we will explore how teachers' words of encouragement affect children across demographics, and what the implications are for future civic participation. We'll ask what happens when a victim of hate crime publicly forgives the perpetrator, how poems and stories shape life choices, and how cognitive neuroscience can contribute to social justice. Our inquiry will be rooted in intellectual life at Homewood, ranging from Earth & Planetary Sciences research to SNF Agora Institute events. We will close with a symposium reflecting our debates and discoveries.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.179. FYS: Race Before Race - Difference and Diversity in the Ancient Mediterranean. 3 Credits.

How did the Greeks, Romans, and other ancient Mediterranean peoples understand human difference and diversity? How did they form their senses of self in relation to others and articulate kinship and commonalities across ethnic lines? Did skin color, birthplace, language, and lineage matter in constructing social hierarchies? How did their concepts of class and citizenship, beauty and belonging, differ from ours? Did they have anything akin to modern constructions of race and racism, blackness and whiteness, the 'west' and the 'rest'? If not, when and why were such ideas invented, and how was Greco-Roman culture conscripted in their support? Finally and crucially, what can we do to make "classics" today more equitable, inclusive, and accurate to the multicultural reality of the ancient Mediterranean? This First-Year Seminar examines these questions, and many more, through the literature, art, and history of ancient Greece and Rome, with forays into Egypt, Persia, Judea, and northern Europe. It will introduce you to the diversity of the ancient Mediterranean world, hone your ability to critically interpret and discuss art, literature, and scholarship, and explore how systems of categorizing human difference have historically served power. This course will give you a wider historical lens through which to understand race, racecraft, the "classics," and "Western civilization," revealing all to be dynamic and historically situated discourses that have been used to exert authority, to include or exclude, and to build communities. It will also build student community and comfort discussing sensitive subjects through a combination of field trips, guest lectures, movie nights, and communal meals.

Prerequisite(s): Students who have taken AS.040.212 are not eligible to take AS.001.179.

AS.001.180. FYS: Lunar Histories. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar will take us on an exploratory journey through the history of our Moon, both as a physical body in its own right and as a formative presence in the cultural imagination. As we examine theories about the Moon's nature and role in the cosmos - from antiquity to our modern period, and from science to make-believe - we will delve deep into perplexing questions such as the relationship between scientific and imaginative thought, the role played by conspiracy-theory and hoax in our society, the origins of speculation about extraterrestrial life, and what it means to map and write the history of other worlds... This seminar will include sessions of practical observation of the Moon from the JHU Observatory.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.181. FYS: Introduction to Lives in Medicine - Exploring the Experience of Patients and Practitioners. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar is designed to introduce you to the human side of medicine by exploring ways in which patients and medical practitioners describe their personal experience. It has been structured to allow you to engage that material by reading it, viewing it in film, discussing it, writing about it and meeting with a practicing physician. Its a course not only about content, but also about process, the process of thoughtfully and openly engaging work about the lives of others. It is a seminar style course that emphasizes a friendly, protected setting in which to explore these issues. The course is facilitated by an experienced member of the Hopkins Medical Faculty, and has been designed to open a window through which you can begin to study the human concerns of patients and practitioners. The course is most likely to appeal to premedical and pre-health related students who are interested in exploring the human side of medicine, but also to students interested in biography, memoir and life-writing. At the end of this course, you will have gained an appreciation for some of the ways in which people express themselves about the illness experience or about working with the sick. You will have had a chance to develop longer, more personal relationship to such accounts than you are likely to have in clinical encounters in medical schools, training programs or even in clinical rotations. It takes time to listen. The course draws a small sample from a very wide range of such accounts that number in the thousands, so there is no attempt to generalize; rather, every effort is made to immerse ourselves into one account at a time and to understand one person's experience at a time. Through this kind of immersion, you will develop a sense of how illness can affect a life, and the way in which practitioners become involved to find themselves in their own work.

AS.001.182. FYS: Seeing Things. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar will explore diverse aspects of how we see and fail to see the world. We'll discuss questions such as: What can we learn about vision from illusions and hallucinations? What explains why we sometimes miss things even though we're looking right at them? Does what we believe and desire affect what we see? What happens to our visual experience when the brain is damaged, for example in conditions such as "blindsight," "neglect" and "visual form agnosia"? And: Is there such a thing as subliminal or unconscious perception? Though primarily psychological, the course will draw on other disciplines, especially the philosophy of perception. We'll also think about some of the ways visual artists and magicians exploit the workings of our visual systems to achieve their aims. This will likely involve at least one outing to a local art gallery to look for examples of what we've learned, an in-class screening, and hopefully a guest speaker or two.

Distribution Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.183. FYS: What Does It Mean to Be Religious? Creativity, Experience, and the Individual. 3 Credits.

What do we mean when we say that something or someone is "religious?" Our First-Year Seminar unpacks this question through a comparative approach, and pays special attention to the ways in which this term has been applied to the study of Islamic cultures and Muslim experience. Through an exploration of the categories of experience, creativity and the individual, we offer a less presumptuous and more open-ended way of imagining the many things it may mean to be religious.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.184. FYS: The Mathematics of Politics, Democracy, and Social Choice. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar is designed for students of all backgrounds to provide a mathematical introduction to social choice theory, weighted voting systems, apportionment methods, and gerrymandering. In the search for ideal ways to make certain kinds of political decisions, a lot of wasted effort could be averted if mathematics could determine that finding such an ideal were actually possible in the first place. The seminar will analyze data from recent US elections as well as provide historical context to modern discussions in politics, culminating in a mathematical analysis of the US Electoral College. Case studies, future implications, and comparisons to other governing bodies outside the US will be used to apply the theory of the course. Students will use Microsoft Excel to analyze data sets. There are no mathematical prerequisites for this course.

AS.001.185. FYS: Why We Science?. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar will explore how some important results in physics and astronomy are discovered, their transformative implications to the basic understanding of nature and their impact on the progress of society. Students will explore how simple rules obtained from the lab or in idealized settings imply the complex behaviors and dynamics observed in the natural world, and how they back-reaction on society. The seminar will explore the motivations for doing scientific research in various context, and how they relate to the application of scientific discoveries. An example of topic that will be explored is General Relativity, a subject that emerged purely from theoretical considerations by Einstein which have revolutionized our basic understanding of the physical world and have reshaped the fields of physics and astronomy. On the other hand, General Relativity is necessary for satellite timing which revolutionized communication in human society. Another example is the basic physics experiments and research that lead to the invention of the transistor and the ensuing revolution of the information age. The students will explore the value of scientific thinking and its necessity in building a more robust society that can effectively serve its citizens. We will have regular visits and talks from leading researchers throughout the Hopkins ecosphere. This will help guide the in-class discussions.

AS.001.186. FYS: Tuberculosis. 3 Credits.

This seminar will introduce students to the disease tuberculosis, to human innate and adaptive immune systems and to the molecular biology of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, an intracellular pathogen which infects humans and manipulates the human immune response to escape detection and elimination. We will even grow cultures of Mycobacterium smegmatum, M. tb's harmless relative. In addition, millions worldwide have tuberculosis, and this disease is a case study in the measures that are being used to control the spread of an epidemic disease.

AS.001.187. FYS: Gender x Aging x Health in America. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year Seminar students will develop an understanding of the ways in which gender structures health and well being through adulthood and later life. The experience of sexual minorities and the intersection of gender with class and ethnicity will also be discussed. Students will be expected to participate actively and lead discussions on specific topics.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.188. FYS: Skepticism - Ancient, Modern, Contemporary. 3 Credits.

Can we gain knowledge of reality, or is everything a matter of opinion? Does it matter? Why do we want (or need) knowledge anyway? Questions like this have been the stock in trade of philosophical skeptics throughout the entire history of our Western philosophical tradition. This First-Year Seminar will involve close readings of some classic works on the topic of skepticism with a view to understanding some of the main arguments for (and against) skepticism: how they work and how they may have changed over time. Readings include selections from Sextus Empiricus, Descartes, Hume and Wittgenstein.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.189. FYS: Language, Advertising, and Propaganda. 3 Credits.

Advertising pervades our culture; interactions with advertising are an unavoidable fact of modern life. This class uses tools from linguistics and cognitive science to analyze these interactions, and understand the impact of advertising on its viewers. A central theme is to treat ads as communicative acts, and explore the consequences – what can theories of communication (from linguistics, psychology, and philosophy) tell us about ads? How do ads use central features of human cognition to accomplish their aims? Do ads manipulate, and if so, how successfully? The theories of communication we explore include Gricean pragmatics, theories of speech acts, linguistic theories of presuppositions, and more. Students will collect, analyze, and discuss advertisements in all mediums.

Distribution Area: Humanities, SN, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.190. FYS: Poisons! A History. 3 Credits.

Poisons aren't what they seem. Sometimes they look like food. Sometimes they look like drugs. From cinnabar to cinnamon, from dragon blood to goat bezoars, poisons result from careful human construction, collection, and creation. They are objects of early chemistry. Far from killing us, poisons have been central to the history of medicine. Physicians in the past and present monitor dosage, drug combination, and drug preparation to mitigate poison toxicity while still maintaining drugs' therapeutic potencies. Knowledge about poisons, in other words, quietly undergirds most of human civilization. Poisons are what keep us alive. Or not. This First-Year Seminar comes to understand poisons in three ways. First, it takes on individual poisons (mercury, opium, among others) to introduce major themes in the history of science and science studies. Second, it engages with global perspectives in the history of medicine to understand how poisons were deployed, refined, and neutralized around the world. Third, it introduces frameworks in the philosophy of chemistry to analyze the social, conceptual, and practical demands on empiricism. Together, these three perspectives will shift students' perspectives on poisons from objects that kill to critiquing them as objects that are intimately tied to ideas of cure.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS.001.192. FYS: How Not to be Afraid of Poetry. 3 Credits.

What is poetry? And why don't we like it? Can poetry save the world? Can it save us? This seminar will explore what makes poetry turn ordinary language into something extraordinary, something necessary to our world. Assignments will include attending to details small and large in poems, doing a recitation, becoming an expert about a single poet, exploring banned poems, attending poetry events (JHU poetry readings, attending the Baltimore International Poe Festival, visiting the Poe sites, going to bookstores), keeping a poetry journal that you will submit three times over the course of the term, and creating an anthology of poems (group or individual) for a final project. The class is a seminar, and requires you to talk and think aloud: requirements are attendance, class participation, a poetry recitation (weeks 4-6), a presentation of your chosen poet (Weeks 9-11), and a group final project presentation (last day of class).

AS.001.194. FYS: The Arrow of Time. 3 Credits.

This First-year Seminar will study the direction of time, pointing from past to future. It will primarily be based on the physics of entropy and the Second Law of Thermodynamics, covering aspects of statistical mechanics, probability, and cosmology. But it will also touch on how time's arrow manifests itself in the macroscopic world, including questions of memory, prediction, aging, and causality.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences

AS.001.195. FYS: Chemistry and Everyday Living. 3 Credits.

This first year seminar will delve into the surprising ways that chemistry weaves its way through our day-to-day living. We will discuss topics that cover a variety of useful applications from "Chemistry in Medicine" to "Chemistry in Cooking & Baking". We will explore the material covered in our weekly discussions some more, by carrying out a few experiments to enhance our learning. No prior knowledge of chemistry is required.

AS.001.196. FYS: What is Love?: A Long History. 3 Credits.

"Love is mad, love is obsessive, love can be a painful or tragic, or on the contrary an experience to be treasured forever. That's what books have taught us, by giving poetic souls a chance to imagine and develop romantic ideas – on paper. These books have in turn inspired films, or in earlier days, great operas. This course is offered to those of you who might miss the experience of getting lost in a book or story! As a historian of ideas and a specialist of narrative with a keen interest in bodies, minds and feelings, and in gender, I will explore with you in this seminar a few favorite love stories. Each is chosen because it helps us uncover a universe of romantic feelings, often in conflict with social conventions (as is Romeo and Juliet for example). Our course will also involve the study of a film (Jane Campion's *Bright Star*) and possibly of the opera, *La Traviata* – as well as a class trip to the movies to see, if available, a recent presentation of our theme. Among the readings for this class: *The Legend of Tristan and Isolde*, Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*; a selection of contemporary short stories.

AS.001.197. FYS: Doctors and Patients: A Few Case Studies. 3 Credits.

A famous, very experienced clinician used the phrase "The Soul of Care," signaling that medicine is not merely about fixing bodies. He wants to remind us that scientific knowledge involves mastery as well as empathy. "Narrative medicine" as this domain is called, assumes that the close study of stories can play a decisive role in preparing doctors for the challenging humanistic aspects of their profession. We focus in this First-Year Seminar on stories connected to medical cases, stories that can take us beyond medical questions to deeper issues connected to the human condition. Our seminar will be centered on discussions, often prepared in teams, based on your attentive close reading and research. The aim is to exercise your observational skills and imagination. What is at stake, medically and humanly speaking, is our capacity to uncover problems, dilemmas, ethical questions woven into texts that take us into the worlds of doctors and patients. Readings will involve a combination of modern and contemporary short stories, some of them more obviously fictional than others, some of them geographically or culturally more remote. Part of our study will also involve one longer text, namely *When Breath Becomes Air*, by Paul Kalanithi, and a small "anthology" of documents of a preparatory kind. We'll have at least one guest speaker, and also see a film together.

AS.001.198. FYS: Secret Science. 3 Credits.

In this course, we will examine the concealment of scientific knowledge from the Scientific Revolution to present day. Although science is regularly described as a public good, it has often been a private affair. Why have various scientists, institutions, governments, and media outlets chosen to restrict the flow of scientific knowledge? How have their efforts fared in practice, and what factors explain their successes or failures? More generally, how does our picture of modern science change if we highlight work done behind closed doors? This First-Year Seminar will explore these questions through case studies on alchemy, trade secrecy, nuclear physics, and climate change denial. Students will work with formerly classified sources during several weeks of the term.
Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.199. FYS: Technology and Globalization. 3 Credits.

In times of pandemic, trade war, and restrictions on the export of strategic technologies, it has become common to predict the 'death of globalization.' Such predictions are hardly new, however, and neither are the protectionist technology policies that are currently in vogue. In this First-Year Seminar, we will examine how technology historically has both helped connect people in different parts of the world and contributed to division and inequality at national and global levels. Focusing on the period from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, we will pay special attention to the impact of transportation and ICT technologies ranging from the telegraph and container ship to the airplane and the internet. But we will also consider the consequences of globalization and technological change in areas such as mining and agriculture, taking into account the perspectives of a variety of actors including multinational enterprises, governments, standard-setting scientists and engineers, and the anti-globalization movement. The local effects of globalization will be discussed on a class trip to the Baltimore Museum of Industry, and students will have the opportunity to develop a research project on a topic of special interest to them in consultation with the instructor. Course readings will be made available on Canvas; they include both original historical sources and studies by historians and social scientists.
Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.200. FYS: Great Adaptations in the Animal Kingdom. 3 Credits.

Animals have evolved a vast array of sensory systems that support a rich repertoire of natural behaviors. Some animals live in dark environments and use tactile, chemical, electrical and auditory sensors that allow them to operate in the absence of light. Other animals rely heavily on vision and take advantage of colors that humans cannot see. In this First-Year Seminar, we will explore extraordinary adaptations of sensory systems in animals that live on land and under water. Our focus will be on sensory systems that guide navigation and foraging behaviors in species as diverse as star-nosed moles, weakly electric fish, honeybees, and echolocating bats. As we delve into understanding the extraordinary sensory systems of selected species, we will also consider how these animals have inspired literary and visual artists. We aim to introduce students to a rich interdisciplinary experience that opens their eyes to new areas of inquiry as they take advantage of local resources, such as the National Aquarium, Baltimore Zoo, Wyman Park, Peabody School of Art, and Baltimore Museum of Art.

AS.001.201. FYS: The Four Great Cosmic Questions: Dark Matter, Dark Energy, Black Holes and the Origin of Life. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar combines current state of the art issues in Cosmology, Astrophysics and Biology around the Scientific American level. Discusses the history of thought on these issues ranging from Aristotle, Lucretius, Galileo, Newton, Einstein...to the Hubble and JWST era. For the last part of the seminar, we will consider existential issues for humanity in our Universe. Excellent books to read to start thinking about this are by Toby Ord: *Precipice* and Martin Rees: (1) *The Future of Humanity* and (2) *If Science is to Save us*. Our discussions and investigations will likely lead us toward many interesting and innovative paths.

AS.001.202. FYS: The Human Face of Addiction. 3 Credits.

The current paradigm for understanding addiction is a brain disease of compulsion, investigated in large part through animal models. Yet addiction in humans has dimensions of meaning and suffering alike that cannot be captured by neuroscience or modelled in animals. This First-Year Seminar explores addiction by combining what we know from addiction science with what we know from philosophy and the humanities, as well as therapy, journalism, film, and autobiographical narratives. We will work to understand the puzzle of why people use drugs in ways that can come to destroy their lives through these various lenses and without recourse to stigma, dogma, or dehumanization. This interdisciplinary course will develop students' skills in reading, analytic thinking, and writing; we will also visit an animal lab.

AS.001.203. FYS: Eataly: Constructing Identity through Food. 3 Credits.

When thinking of Italy, food is one of the first things that come to mind. But what is beyond a lavishly decked table? What are the questions that can be explored through food and its practices in Italy, but also in Italian communities around the world? This First-Year Seminar explores the relationship between food and the formation of identity through the lenses of migration, gender, race, ideology, nationalism, and diaspora. The seminar will analyze literature on food studies at the crossroads with anthropological, sociopolitical questions. We'll discuss the relationship with memory, as well as with cultural reproduction in immigrant communities and the tension with a critical discourse around political propaganda on the notion of authenticity in contemporary Italy. Other topics include the formation of taste in conjunction with sociopolitical modes of exclusion and social class, through history, but also exemplified in films. For instance, the class will be presented with movies and readings on Roman-Jewish culinary traditions, its diasporic experience, and the contemporary cultural appropriation. The screening of the movie *Big Night*, on the other hand, will provide an opportunity to approach a reading through a phenomenological apparatus, and analyze the impact of Italian cinema on American and Italian American culture. A guest speaker will be invited to present their scholarship, followed by a discussion.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.204. FYS: French Identities: Race, Gender, Religion, and Sexual Orientation in Contemporary France. 3 Credits.

How should a just society come to terms with persistent inequalities? France, the country of liberty, equality and fraternity, that offered sanctuary from US racism to such figures as James Baldwin, Richard Wright, and Miles Davis and legalized same-sex marriages two years before the US did, is now deeply divided. This First-Year Seminar explores the tensions and contradictions between the universalist and color-blind ideals of the French republic and the realities of discrimination in contemporary French society. Topics studied include the status of the concept of race in political discourse; the law forbidding signs of religious belief in the public schools and responses to it; how American initiatives like Black Lives Matter, #metoo and critical gender studies have both sparked French activism and political movements and generated a powerful backlash; and what Americans can learn about how to fight injustice—and how not to—from the French. We will look at a wide variety of texts, including writings by activists, historians, and journalists, along with sociologies of the police and young adult novels, and will listen to popular French music and watch a number of contemporary French films.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.205. FYS: Games: History, Theory, and Practice. 3 Credits.

From game theory to gamification, games have become a central part of everyday life. More and more, in fields as diverse as economics, entertainment, and education, the game has become the principal model for interpreting and interacting with the social world, and with ourselves. This First-Year Seminar will look at the history of games in the modern world, with an eye to understanding their increasing prominence in the 20th and 21st centuries. What social and technological changes brought about this shift? And yes – we will play, and seek to analyze, some games as well (both analog and digital).

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.207. FYS: Looms and Computers: The analog origins of our digital world. 3 Credits.

The loom is the ancestor of the modern computer. We owe our digital existence to an analog woven structure. In this First-Year Seminar, we will examine the digital screens that surround us, the faces and images projected upon them, and how we can understand them better through fiber art processes. Through discussions of traditional and modern artists as well as hands-on fiber experiments and techniques, we will explore the relationship between the tactile and the digital. With visiting artists and museum trips, we'll discover new ways to engage with the screens, textiles, and pixels that surround us.

AS.001.208. FYS: Imagining War. 3 Credits.

"Napalm, son. Nothing else in the world smells like that. I love the smell of napalm in the morning." (Lieutenant Colonel Bill Kilgore, *Apocalypse Now*). These iconic words, uttered in an iconic film inspired by an iconic novel, invite us to think of the smell of war as a pleasurable experience, indeed, a joy. But what about the mere joy of watching a film, listening to music, viewing a painting or reading a poem about war? In this First-Year Seminar, we will ask ourselves what is the place of war in our cultural imagination? What attracts us to the "heart of darkness" and how and why does popular culture make this violent experience aesthetically pleasurable? We will cover various media, such as films, television shows, visual art, music and literature from various countries in an attempt to answer these questions and others. The seminar eschews a chronological approach organized around major historical wars in favor of a conceptual framework. As we will see, the creative impulse extends far beyond the representation of historical and particular events reaching deep into the realms of memory and trauma, hate and love, heroism and fear, cruelty and empathy. We will discuss the author/ filmmaker/ artist's perspectives and methods and will engage in questions of ethics and moral choices in relation to the cultural artifacts we examine. Our main focus will be modern representations of war, but we will also discuss earlier periods and cultures for the sake of comparison. For projects, students will have the option to choose their topics, works, media and format (analytical paper, creative writing, a short documentary, creative film or a short podcast).

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.209. FYS: Feminism and Media. 3 Credits.

What is feminism and what does it have to do with media culture? This question will be investigated in reference to such historical movements as the suffrage movement and current movements such as #metoo. We will also highlight the extent to which media technology might intrinsically help feminism, as could be argued with film animation and science fiction writing; or, rather, cases in which technologies hinder feminism, as when the pressures of social media negatively impact the social development of young women, particularly affecting the vulnerability of the female body.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.210. FYS: Democratic Erosion. 3 Credits.

In a moment in time in which our very democracy at risk, this First-Year Seminar will investigate why democratic erosion is occurring, its ramifications, and how to address it. Led by Scott Warren, the co-founder and former CEO of Generation Citizen, a national civics education organization, and a current Fellow at the SNF Agora Institute, this seminar will be heavily discussion-based, relate to current events, and will explore the dynamics and interplay between the realities of democracy in the US and around the world, social entrepreneurship, social change, and policy. This course aims to introduce students to some of the most important issues and debates surrounding democratic consolidation and erosion around the world. Students will study different case studies of democratic erosion and social transformation (or proposed social transformation) from across the United States and world. We will also explore how movements across the world in response to authoritarianism and anti-democratic sentiment are driving the themes explored in the course.

AS.001.211. FYS: Getting a Life. 3 Credits.

Every person has a life to live, but what is this thing, “a life”, that every person has? To begin with, it’s just the temporally extended existence of the person, the proverbial three score and ten. But a person’s life is more than that, because it follows a natural progression of life-stages, from childhood to adolescence to middle age to senescence. And it’s even more still, since it is partly the creation of the person living it, who can plan it, evaluate it, anticipate its future, and remember its past. In this First-Year Seminar, we will explore these and other aspects of a person’s life through works of literature and philosophy. What makes you the same person throughout the different stages of your life? How does the passage of time color your perception of life? What makes for a good life? A meaningful life? Should you be grateful for having been born or dismayed at having to die?

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.212. FYS: Democracy, Diversity and Identity. 3 Credits.

What would a just form of democracy look like in a highly diverse society? What policies and laws should the state adopt to counter long-standing injustices, and how do they fit—or conflict—with the universalist ideals on which liberal democracy is founded? In this course, we will try to answer these questions by discussing different philosophical views on topics from equity to free speech, and from cultural appropriation to lived experience.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.213. FYS: Explorations in Contemporary Poetry. 3 Credits.

In this seminar we’ll explore the many ways that contemporary poets tell stories, make music, and create meaning. We’ll read a wide range of contemporary lyric poems, and every week you’ll have the opportunity to apply what you’ve learned in fun, low-pressure writing exercises. (No previous poetry-writing experience required!) Planned activities include classroom visits by contemporary poets as well as off-campus trips to poetry readings around town.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.214. FYS: Doing Things With Maps. 3 Credits.

In this First-Year seminar, we will ask why maps and mapping technologies have become useful – some would say central – to the pursuit of new knowledge. Do they clarify, simplify, amplify, organize, reveal unexpected connections, point the way forward, or severely complicate our thoughts and send us back to the drawing board? We will learn/review some GIS basics, and those among you with previous experience in these technologies will be welcome to contribute ideas and share skills (no previous experience is required). Over the course of the semester students will pursue their own group projects, developed in class discussions and visits to various mapping technology hubs around Hopkins, such as Geospatial Data and GIS technologies at Milton S. Eisenhower Library, brain mapping technologies at Biomedical Engineering, and approaches to mapping the heavens at the Space Telescope Science Institute. We will also ground ourselves in the Humanities by reading *The Odyssey* of Homer (trans. James Lattimore, any edition) and testing out various mapping techniques on the intersecting adventures of Odysseus, his son Telemachus, and his wife Penelope. A series of short close reading assignments on selected passages from *The Odyssey* will help to refine analytical and writing skills, and a final group or personal project report on a topic of your choice will address the (very) general subject of “How maps enhance, change, clarify or complicate ideas.”

AS.001.215. FYS: Mosques, Museums, and the Mind’s Eye: Discovering Islamic Art in Person. 3 Credits.

Despite its association with distant regions and time periods, Islamic art has a flourishing presence in today’s America, represented by rich museum collections, modern buildings designed in historical styles, and vibrant scholarly networks. This seminar explores how we, from the vantage point of twenty-first-century Baltimore, might experience works of Islamic art in ways that are informed by their own cultural contexts while also acknowledging the challenges involved in bridging this gap. We will spend much of the course engaging with objects and architecture in person, with visits planned to the recently reinstalled Islamic galleries at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, the Islamic Center of Washington, DC, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. You will be invited to handle artifacts in person and to try your hand at calligraphy, one of the most distinctive and esteemed Islamic artforms. In the classroom setting, we will read and discuss translations of primary sources written by historical practitioners and consumers of Islamic art, along with examples of modern scholarship that seek to understand the Islamic tradition from a variety of perspectives. As well as learning about such perspectives, you will be encouraged to develop and share—in presentations and written assignments—your own ideas about Islamic art, building on the close, firsthand encounters that run throughout the seminar.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.216. FYS: The Literature of Food. 3 Credits.

Using literature as our primary lens, in this First-Year Seminar we will explore our complex relationships with food, considering it as both material fact and literary symbol. We will read prose and poetry by writers such as Chang Rae Lee, Kevin Young, Mary Oliver, Naomi Shihab Nye, Gary Soto, and Joy Harjo, engaging issues of food and community, food labor and production, climate change, and more. As part of our explorations, we’ll spotlight aspects of Baltimore food culture and history, and students will be asked to examine and share their own personal and cultural relationships with food. Assignments will include creative writing exercises that draw on both research and personal experience.

AS.001.217. FYS: From Cell Phones to Hydrogen Cars: Are the Needed Metals Sustainable?. 3 Credits.

Where do critical metals that we use every day for our technologically advanced society come from? We will discuss questions surrounding the exploration and ownership of metallic resources and their exploitation. We benefit, but at what cost to others? To address these questions, we look at individual critical metals and their exploitation in a variety of countries from Africa, to South America, and Southeast Asia including Australia. As an example, cobalt is currently crucial for electric car batteries: see the book by Siddharth Kara (2022) "Cobalt Red: How the Blood of the Congo Powers Our Lives". Should we alternatively get cobalt by the proposed mining of the deep ocean floor? Who has the right to do that? Weekly readings and discussions, and guest speakers lead to mini-research projects on such topics.

AS.001.218. FYS Means of Persuasion: The Communication of Climate Change. 3 Credits.

How does language get entangled in our cultural and social understandings? How do we learn to locate a person correctly in a particular social class or ethnicity? This course aims to show the ways in which language is at the center of our daily interactions and our institutions. We will learn conceptual tools to examine the ways in which writers and leaders attempt to persuade their publics in important matters such as climate change, party politics, and religious differences.

AS.001.220. FYS: Reproduction in the 21st Century: Biology and Politics. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar course will explore how 21st century childbearing conditions have changed, and the relationship of politics to these changes. Among the topics to be discussed are the impact on male and female infertility of assisted reproductive technologies that promote birth, including in vitro fertilization and intracytoplasmic sperm injection. But beyond how these technologies function, such topics as how decisions are/should be made about issues such as the acceptability of using genetic material from someone other than the hopeful parents to aid couples in having children will be addressed. Also to be discussed are how genetic technologies can be used to modify sperm, eggs and embryos, including risks, benefits, ethics and politics, and how, when and whether stem cells obtained from in vitro fertilization "leftovers" can be used. The ways in which these new approaches are perceived by the general public and by politicians, and how these perceptions affect the use of the new approaches, will be explored. Topics also will include whether abortions should be disallowed, allowed only under specific circumstances such as fetal anomalies observed during prenatal screening, or available as a women's (or couple's) right to choose. Contraception, both female and male, also will be explored. Thus, in addition to the science, this course will focus on when and how decisions are made regarding issues related to childbearing, including the roles of politics and social media.

AS.001.221. FYS: Music, Religion and Healing. 3 Credits.

Our class will explore how religious and spiritual communities have understood and practiced music as a healing and reparative force, with a particular focus on Sufi spirituality and the living South Asian musical tradition of khayal. Khayal is both a vocal practice and a system of spiritual self-development, and singers are trained to activate the healing that resides in sound. We will take this journey through essays, film, music, meditative listening, and conversations with musicians as well as practitioners of reparative and healing education in the arts. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in an ethnographic project on music and healing with artists and creators in Pakistan.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.222. FYS: Exploring Intellectual Property from Marvel to Zombies to Ed Sheeran and Beyond. 3 Credits.

What does it mean to "create"? Who is the "creator" of a beloved comic book or a best-selling song and by what standard(s) is that determined? What rights, if any, does "creation" convey legally, or even morally? In this First-Year Seminar, we'll take an in-depth, interactive, inside look under the hood of intellectual property rights and the battles that shape the multi-billion-dollar global entertainment industry. Reading sections of Supreme Court and lower Federal Court decisions, as well as relevant outside articles, we will explore (allegedly) stolen award-winning films and hit songs, understand why zombies eat copyright for breakfast, investigate why artists behind iconic Marvel and D.C. superheroes believe their rights—and staggering sums of profit—got zapped far across the multiverse, and much, much more. The seminar will involve weekly readings and/or screenings, and will culminate in a final project where you, the class, will serve as the (mock) jury on a real copyright infringement case involving three of the most popular, diverse and wealthiest entertainers of all time.

AS.001.224. FYS: Critical Playlists: 1961-1989. 3 Credits.

Set against the background of the Cold War and highlighting the soundtrack of Stranger Things Season IV, this class asks students to bring their own playlist of five songs from the 60s, 70s, and 80s. In the course of the semester we will use these lists as a springboard to compile a final playlist that reflects the values and lived realities of the class. Some of the questions that will guide our evaluation of the song-texts are: What is the relationship between our taste and what we find beautiful? Can we find something ugly and repellent beautiful? How do the songs that we promote impact our society's understanding of what is good and important? Readings will include excerpts from Lessing, Hume, D. Albright, J. Chang and their critics.

AS.001.225. FYS: Figures of Thought: Dangerous Women. 3 Credits.

Why are we drawn to female figures such as Medusa and Mystique? How do representations of women, especially in paintings, film and theater, mediate our understanding of who or what is desirable, dangerous and powerful? In this course we will practice reading visual cues from female figures, taken from history, pop culture, and visits to the BMA, in order to explore the relationship between fiction and reality, and to ask questions about how art depicts women. Course texts include Kant, Kingston, Cass, Paglia and Friedan. Figures for study include Antigone, Medea, Salome, and Bong Joon-ho's Mother.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.001.226. FYS: Science Fiction. 3 Credits.

This course explores how science fiction functions as a literature of social and political critique just as much as it offers readers an imaginative escape to future or alien worlds. Students will read classic novels, novellas, short stories, and view films that confront such themes as artificial intelligence, posthumanism, ecological catastrophe and the role of technology in creating dystopias and utopias. The combination of reading, writing, discussion, and in-class presentations offers students a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a particular genre as they journey "where no one has gone before."

AS.001.227. FYS: Writing with Pictures: an introduction to writing picture books and graphic novels. 3 Credits.

A picture is worth 1000 words, or so goes the old saying. This hands-on writing workshop, explores the often-overlooked importance of TEXT in award-winning graphic novels and children's picture books. Over the course of the semester, we will delve into a wide range of topics, from understanding the relationship between image and text and thinking cinematically, to effective techniques for storyboarding and creating forceful dialogue. And like all good writers, we will work on developing the kind of rich characters, strong dialogue, and compelling themes that captivate readers. To enrich our writing efforts, we will embark on various outings during the semester. These will include visits to an illustrator's studio and an independent bookstore specializing in graphic novels. We will also interact with an array of professional writers and editors both in class and at extra-curricular events. The central goal of this course is to build a community through writing. No prior experience in creative writing or visual art is necessary. All that is required is enthusiasm for the topic and a willingness to share your work with others.

AS.001.228. FYS: Peripheral Nerves in Health and Disease. 3 Credits.

All organs in the body are innervated by peripheral nerves, which deliver biological signals between the central nervous system and the rest of the body. This First-Year seminar will investigate how peripheral nerves interact with different organs, and how diseases and disorders of the peripheral nerves effect core bodily functions such as voluntary movement and temperature sensation. Following short lectures on each topic, students will analyze research papers and other material, discuss sources in small, rotating groups and present their findings to the rest of the class. We will also visit various research labs across campus, hear from leading researchers, and participate together in Grand Rounds at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

AS.001.229. FYS: Medical Wastes. 3 Credits.

This course combines historical and ethnographic investigations of the wastefulness of modern medicine in ecological, economic, and bodily terms. Why, in the past half-century, has the production of medical waste skyrocketed? Who bears the environmental costs of the incineration of disposable medical technologies? What new sustainable solutions might be retrieved from past practices? At the intersection of medicine, science, and humanities, this course explores the human and planetary costs of our wasteful healthcare systems, and what can be done to envision a more sustainable future. Readings will be centered in historical and ethnographic investigation but will stretch across other humanities and social science disciplines, in conjunction with primary source readings from medical and public health journals, lawsuits and Congressional hearings, and new approaches to materials design for sustainable healthcare. Experiential partnerships with local, regional, and international advocacy groups will be important for this course as well, including the Planetary Health Alliance based in the Bloomberg Center in Washington DC, the Sustainability Leadership Council of Johns Hopkins University, and local environmental justice advocacy surrounding the Curtis Bay Energy medical incinerator, which was recently the subject of the largest environmental fine in Maryland history.

AS.001.230. FYS: Understanding and Addressing Wasted Food. 3 Credits.

How should we, as individuals and a society, reduce wasted food and create a more resilient food system? The course asks students to apply diverse perspectives to understand and address the complex problem of wasted food. Students will be exposed to a scope of up-to-date research from sociocultural, health, technological, environmental, economic, political, and justice-oriented lenses through guest speakers, multimedia resources, and community engagement on and off campus. By conducting their own examination of this real-world issue and proposing solutions, students in this course will develop critical thinking, research, and presentation skills valuable for future coursework and careers in any field.

AS.001.231. FYS: Death and Daring, Dollars and Discrimination in the Modern Intensive Care Unit. 3 Credits.

The class will learn by readings from books such as *The White Plague* by Rene' and Jean Dubos, *The Microbe Hunters* by Paul de Kruif, *The Aetiology of Tuberculosis* by Robert Koch and *Fever* by John Fuller, videos, class interactions and discussions, and after the introductory portion of the course, by presentations of research papers about *M. tuberculosis* pathogenesis and treatment.

AS.001.232. FYS: German Thought, German Theater: Tragedy, Comedy, Cabaret. 3 Credits.

Over the past 250 years, Germany has produced some of the most influential currents of philosophy as well as drama—at the same time that it has been the site of the greatest horrors of the modern era. In this course, we will read (and view) tragedies, comedies, and cabaret scripts that address developments in German thought and society from the Enlightenment to the present. We will ask: How effective are performances at transmitting ideas and values? How do they balance emotional involvement with intellectual understanding? What is the function of words, gestures, music, and staging, and how do they interact? And what are the relative strengths of the various genres: tragedy, comedy, cabaret? The sources will range from classics of 18th-century drama (Lessing's *Nathan the Wise* and Goethe's *Faust*) to highlights of 20th-century theater (the plays of Brecht, cabaret songs and skits). We will read most of the works as texts, but we will also view videos and films, and perhaps (depending on the offerings of local stages) attend performances.

AS.001.233. FYS: The Science of Human Individuality. 3 Credits.

How we become unique is one of the deepest questions that we can ask. The answers, where they exist, inform how we think about morality, public policy, faith, health care, education, and the law. Although investigating the origins of individuality is not just an endeavor for biologists, many of this topic's most important aspects involve fundamental questions about the development, genetics, and plasticity of the nervous system. The good news is that recent scientific findings are illuminating this question in ways that are exciting and sometimes counterintuitive. The better news is that it doesn't just boil down to the same tiresome nature-versus-nurture debate that has been impeding progress and boring people for years. Genes are built to be modified by experience. That experience is not just the obvious stuff, like how your parents raised you, but more complicated and fascinating things like the diseases you've had (or those that your mother had while she was carrying you in utero), the foods you've eaten, the bacteria that reside in your body, the weather during your early development, and the long reach of culture and technology. So, let's dig into the science together. Our sources will be not only books and articles but also visits by guest scientists and artists as well as engagement with films and stories that explore human individuality. It can be controversial stuff. Questions about the origins of human individuality challenge our concepts of nation, gender, and race. They are inherently political and incite strong passions. Given this fraught backdrop, we'll do our best to play it straight and synthesize the current scientific consensus (where it exists), examine the controversies, and point out where the sidewalk of our understanding simply ends.

AS.001.234. FYS: Bringing the Past to Life with Poetry. 3 Credits.

Unlike Disney's talking teapots and candlesticks, "real life" objects can't tell their own stories. Through research and writing, however, we can "animate" and contextualize art and artifacts with our words, illuminating the people who made and used those objects, particularly those whose own voices have been historically marginalized. How can creative writing bring the past to life both imaginatively and responsibly? How do writers choose and use literary techniques to reckon with history? Poems we will examine and discuss include "Ode on a Grecian Urn" by John Keats, "Voyage of the Sable Venus" by Robin Coste Lewis, "The Museum of Obsolescence" by Tracy K. Smith, "In the British Museum" by Thomas Hardy, "mulberry fields" by Lucille Clifton, and "How to Look at Pictures" by Rebecca Morgan Frank. This course is an experiential collaboration between the Writing Seminars* and the Homewood Museum*, where students will explore the museum's collection and curate a public exhibition featuring their writing. *By way of introduction, The Writing Seminars is Johns Hopkins University's creative writing department, offering both a major and a minor to undergraduate students, as well as a Master of Fine Arts graduate degree; Johns Hopkins University's Homewood Museum is an early nineteenth-century National Historic Landmark site focusing on the enslaved families who lived and labored on the land that would later become the university's main campus. With a focus on early American decorative arts, Homewood's collection provides students with the opportunity to have hands-on experience with museum objects and to consider the role of museums and antiques in a new and creative light.

AS.001.235. FYS: Painting, Poetry, and the Novel. 3 Credits.

Poets, novelists, and essayists have gravitated to painting and its powers as a way of testing the powers of their own medium; the visual arts have served them as stimulus and challenge. This course broadly concerns the relation of these two art forms; more narrowly, it concerns attempts by writers to respond adequately to paintings that moved them. We are likely to read work by Virgil Lessing, Virginia Woolf, Ali Smith, W.H. Auden, Mark Doty, and Rainer Maria Rilke; and study paintings by Cezanne, Klee, Brueghel, Morisot, Turner, and Monet.

AS.001.236. FYS: Nonhuman Speech. 3 Credits.

Humans are increasingly thinking about their relationship with nonhumans, ranging from AI to animals to corporations, including what it means to communicate with nonhumans or nonhuman systems. AI speech can now be mistaken for human speech but is commonly thought not to have meaning or intention in the same way. Many animals have complex verbal and nonverbal modes of communication; elephants, for instance, raise distinct sounds of alarm based on the kind of danger that is coming. Corporations in the United States have legal personhood, which includes the right to free speech, and are often talked about as if they have intentions, values, and desires. This class will query how we should interpret nonhuman communication across a range of sources and perspectives, including law, literature, philosophy, science, and popular culture. How do we know what such communication means, or if it has meaning, and according to what criteria? What is the relationship between communication and rights, including the right to personhood? And how does nonhuman communication change our understanding of how humans create meaning and connection with one another?

AS.001.237. FYS: Calling Home. 3 Credits.

What do we call "home"? It seems that when we call (something) home, we are all reaching out toward different places or ideas. Is it a haven? a source of identity? the object of longing? a domain of hierarchy and oppression? This course offers a critical examination of the apparently self-evident notion of home. Through the lens of disciplines like anthropology, literature, or socio-legal studies, we will explore home in diverse cultural settings, as realms of care, intimacy, and belonging yet also as sites of subjection, discrimination, and gender/racial inequality. Our analysis will extend to a variety of media such as films, podcasts, music, museum exhibits, and personal experiences.

AS.001.238. FYS: Italy through Different Eyes: Women and others on the Grand Tour. 3 Credits.

Traveling through Europe has been an enriching experience, with its apex in the 18th and 19th century. The Grand Tour of Italy is "the most interesting of all possible voyages" wrote Abbé Gabriel-Françoise Coyer in his travel journal (1763). It was a sort of "gap year" but represented much more. It was a formative journey, where the young elite would deepen their knowledge in classical literature and refine their taste for art and architecture. It was also an immersion in the leisure that traveling offered. The phenomenon of the Grand Tour produced an immense amount of travel literature, journals, and provided a backdrop and inspiration for countless novels. It also played and defining role in constructing identity, individual and national, setting a canonical cultural path. How can we retrace part of this path through Italy through a different point of view? Introducing a less normative dominated reading of the lived experience of the Grand Tour? In this course we will (re)discover Italy in the glory of the Grand Tour golden era through the writing of women writers, the American antislavery activist Fredrick Douglass and A range of queer and other rubbles and outcast visiting Italy. In class, we will look at excerpts of texts including some by Mary Shelley, Vernon Lee, Margaret Fuller, Madame De Stäel, J.A. Symonds, Goethe, Lord Byron. We will take advantage of the great collections of art like (Waters Museum and BMA) becoming grant tourists ourselves and discuss and analyze the styles and subjects of art and architecture of Italy (mostly in Venice, Florence and Rome). We will also take advantage of the Special Collections at the Sheridan Library that houses rare books and documents that we can look closely. Every week the material will be presented in different forms, book excerpts, articles, collections, but also movies, theater pieces and music.

AS.001.239. FYS: What's Up Mr. Disney?. 3 Credits.

"The question of what makes Disney characters so popular will guide us through this First-Year Seminar as we examine the films and particular Disney figures, embedded in narratives, from an angle that is both celebratory and critical. We will curate the characters to be analyzed and place them in their social, cultural, literary and filmic contexts, while taking special note of the global, political, economic and technological issues that have shaped the animation enterprise. A special emphasis of the course will be on the question of audience, and our own responses to the aesthetic, ethical, and visceral aspects of select Disney characters – including Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Maleficent, and Mother Gothel.

AS.001.240. FYS: Death in the Renaissance. 3 Credits.

During the Renaissance, Christians frequently depicted the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, the personifications of disease, famine, war, and conquest. Nearly half of all children died before the age of five and ten percent of women died of childbirth or of pregnancy related complications. Wars consumed the continent during the bloody sixteenth century, thanks to advances in military technology and religious violence. With no knowledge of the cause of disease and absent antibiotics, disease was as terrifying as mass murder. In this class, we explore death, dying, health, and hope in early modern Europe. How did death and the fear of death shape society? How did it affect politics and economics, gender and family? At the center of death – and life – was religion; in this chaotic world, disease was a punishment and God the only cure; as a result, we will explore how religion was the other side of the coin of death and disease. We will learn how to read primary sources of Renaissance people grappling with their mortality and examine Renaissance art. In the process, we will investigate one of the biggest questions human beings confront: What is the meaning of life in the face of death?

AS.001.241. FYS: Nobel Physics. 3 Credits.

Is physics a noble science built on inspiration, ingenuity, and ideas? What does it mean to win a Nobel Prize? Why was the prize established? What ideas are awarded? Who gets credit? How long does it take? Has a prize ever been rescinded? How well do Nobel ideas stand the test of time? - Sources that we will explore include library archives, the speeches of Nobel Laureates, and released records of nominees, as well as some of the topics for which the prizes were awarded- We can explore JHU's influence on Nobel-awarded physics research, and at the University's involvement in Nobel-based or Nobel-related physics and astronomy research- Experiential components of the semester may include looking at how Nobel prizes are depicted in the media and popular culture, documentaries and biopics of prize winners and research (e.g. the movie Particle Fever for the Higgs) and popular-level books; recreations of demonstrations or laboratory setups of Nobel-winning experiments; recordings of an awards ceremony; class discussion and activities related to the 2024 prizes that will be announced during October/ November 2024; invitations to guest speakers; and possibly a museum or laboratory visit.

AS.001.242. FYS: Johns Hopkins: Toward a New Biography of the Founder. 3 Credits.

In this course you will learn about the life and legacy of Johns Hopkins – his ancestors, his family, his Quaker faith, his business career, his philanthropy and what we know about why he decided to found the university that you now attend. Along the way, we will examine rare artifacts, explore archival records, discuss current controversies, and visit some of the most important local landmarks associated with Johns Hopkins' long and eventful life.

AS.001.243. FYS: Diamonds. 3 Credits.

In this seminar, students will learn about the hardest mineral on earth, diamond. Its unique Crystal structure, Chemical makeup, unusually low Compressibility, and unusually high thermal Conductivity are some of the physical properties that make it extraordinarily useful. We will also learn about geologic formation, diamond mining, the gem industry, and modern replacements. Class materials will include textbook excerpts, the movie Blood Diamond, and a field trip to the Smithsonian Hall of Geology, Gems, and minerals.

AS.001.244. FYS: Death and the Meaning of Life. 3 Credits.

It is difficult to think about the fact that you will die. It is confusing theoretically and it is confusing emotionally. We will be spending the course trying to think our way through the confusions. On the theoretical side, thinking about the fact that you will die raises a cluster of philosophical questions. What are you? Are you necessarily the sort of thing that ceases to exist when your biological life ends? What is it that connects you to your childish self and makes some person in the future you? And does the fact that you die diminish the value of your life? If it means the end of your existence, does it make life absurd, or meaningless, or only more precious? We will address these questions as well as whether death should be feared, whether death is bad, and whether immortality would be desirable. Being confronted with the fact of your death can also help focus questions about how you should live. It presses you to think about what makes life worth living? What makes a life meaningful? Are there objective answers to what makes a life meaningful, or is this a personal choice? If meaningfulness involves some kind of overarching project (e.g., achieving something, leaving something behind, participating in something larger than ourselves) is meaningfulness worth pursuing, or should we instead throw off the tyranny of purposes and just live? These are the things we will be talking about over the course of the semester.

AS.001.245. FYS: American Indian Philosophy. 3 Credits.

More than 500 federally recognized Native tribes and many more who are not federally recognized live within the borders of the United States. Each of these communities has its own history, identity, traditions, relationship to the land, and story of survivance. This First Year Seminar will examine the philosophical views of some of these American Indian communities as they relate to topics like truth, knowledge, identity and the self, causation, and ethics. We will compare these Indigenous approaches with one another and with Euro-American approaches. We will also explore contemporary American Indian thought as it relates to colonialism and anti-colonialism, land, futurity, sovereignty, and resistance.

AS.001.246. FYS: Imagining Climate Change. 3 Credits.

Climate change poses an existential threat to human civilization. Yet the attention and concern it receives in ordinary life and culture is nowhere near what science tells us is required. What are the causes of this mismatch between crisis and response? What accounts for our collective inability to imagine and grasp this new reality, and how can it be overcome? In pursuit of these questions, we will pair literary works and films with texts from politics, philosophy, literary theory, and religion, that frame climate change as a fundamental challenge to our ways of making sense of the human condition.

AS.001.247. FYS: African Cities: Past and Present. 3 Credits.

What are the implications of Africa's urban revolution? In the last century, Africa's cities have boomed at a dizzying pace, witnessing the most rapid urbanization in human history. This trend is unstoppable; yet it comes with opportunities and challenges. This first-year seminar invites students to explore Africa's cities, their evolution from precolonial times to the digital age, their quest for modernity, and the unique repertoires of urban life they have registered thanks to the creativity of their overwhelming young denizens

AS.001.248. FYS: Who has an accent? Dialects of English. 3 Credits.

Language is at the heart of human interaction. What are the linguistic habits that unite or divide us? This First-Year Seminar introduces students to dialects of English speakers around the world. Students will explore the major properties that cross-cut different varieties of English, including regional or socially-driven accents of North America, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia, as well as other World Englishes. Particular attention will be paid to pronunciation, so students will practice the International Phonetic Alphabet and learn acoustic analysis through hands-on activities, but discussion will also focus on dialectal differences in word choice, sentence structure, and linguistic meaning. We will engage with known and emerging varieties of English by drawing on academic sources, multimedia materials, and real-world experience. Who speaks with an accent? Everyone!

AS.001.250. FYS: Queer Archives. 3 Credits.

This First-Year Seminar offers an in-depth exploration of Baltimore's queer and trans archives, expansively defined, engaging with interdisciplinary scholarship on "the archive" within queer and trans studies. Beginning with a brief survey of U.S. LGBTQ history, students delve into archival research methods and hands-on explorations in JHU Special Collections. We then engage with queer theory, performance studies, and public humanities scholarship to ask what we can know of the recoverable past and what silences the archive might contain, approaching the queer archive as a complex record of activity that includes ephemera of events, shows, and collective affect; innuendo and gossip; residues of queer nightlife; performance and gesture. We ground these theoretical explorations by visiting Baltimore-based institutional and non-institutional archives, where we engage with 1970s LGBT newspapers and 1960s medical documents, oral histories recorded by local trans artists, street youth photography, and the embodied archives of vogue performance. Throughout the course, we underscore the transformative potential of engaging with the queer and trans past to forge solidarities in the present and map more just and gorgeous futures.