Faculty First Year Seminars: Fall 2013

**Food: Safety, Risk and Technology**
FFYS 197FDSC2 Spire # 40303 Mondays 11:15 – 12:05
Lili He, Food Science, lili@foodsci.umass.edu
This course is a snapshot of the inherent risks in food supply with respect to chemical and microbiological hazards, government and industry controls used to ensure foods are safe and the public perception of these risks. Course is interspersed with case studies, especially hot events students may already hear about, to show why things happened the way they did and what was the effort to reduce those risks. Students will be expected to actively participate in discussion and share with their own opinions. After taking this course, the students will become aware of the magnitude of current food safety issues and begin to understand some key concepts with respect to food safety, food security, applications of technology, and regulations. Grading: Letter Grading w/ option of Pass/Fail

**Know Your Food**
FFYS 197FDSCI Spire # 40277 Mondays 1:25 – 2:15
Yeonhwa Park, Food Science, ypark@foodsci.umass.edu
Learn the science of cooking, food preparation, food supply and safety. This seminar will offer basic knowledge of food science that you recognize from food on your plate. Learn traditional food science along with the latest food technology trends. Topics include all fatty foods, sweeteners, genetically modified foods, organic foods, food borne outbreaks, wine, chocolate, as well as consumer aspects of food development. Grading: Letter Grading w/ option of Pass/Fail

**Ready, Set, Write: Fiction Writer’s Workshop For Beginners**
FFYS 197EDUC5 Spire # 40272 Mondays 1:25 – 2:15
Sally Galman, Education, sally@educ.umass.edu
Are you interested in fiction writing but don’t know where to start? In this course, students will participate in a professional-grade writer’s workshop geared for beginners. With the guidance of the instructor, an award-winning graphic novelist and ethnographic writer, they will read seminal short fiction and instructive texts and participate in group and individual writing exercises. Students will learn to talk about and analyze short fiction and will develop their own pieces through formal workshopping with peers and consultation with the instructor. The course goal is for each student to 1) develop writerly habits, 2) workshop and produce one polished, edited short piece (8-10 pages) by the end of the semester and 3) write short self-assessment about the piece, the writing process and the writer’s life. Grading: Pass/Fail

**Why the Arts?**
FFYS 197CMPL2 Spire # 40270 Mondays 2:30 – 3:20
Laszlo Dienes, Comparative Literature, dienes@complit.umass.edu
The goal of this seminar is to alert our young incoming students to the essential role(s) the arts play in the world, and to the value of becoming familiar with and studying those arts as one of the best ways to become a cultured, informed, educated citizen. The method of this seminar is an open-ended, free-wheeling discussion of what the arts are, how they differ, how they can (and should) be looked at and evaluated, and why (or if) they are important for society and in human life. We would use the internet in class for constant illustration both of the different arts themselves (introducing students to great examples of the visual and performing arts, of music, architecture, film, poetry, etc.), and of the vastly different possible ways of analyzing and interpreting them (by looking at famous excerpts, quotations, and definitions from well-known articles, essays, or books by a wide variety of thinkers from Aristotle to Dienes?). Grading: Pass/Fail

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How Much Arsenic Do We Eat?
FFYS 197CHEM  Spire # 40292  Mondays 2:30 – 3:20
Julian Tyson, Chemistry, Tyson@chem.umass.edu
Is it safe? An introduction to the ideas that we need protect ourselves from naturally occurring toxic chemical substances in our environment, and to deal responsibly with those chemical substances we deliberately distribute into the environment. We will look at the details of what arsenic compounds are in our food, how they got there and whether they are potentially harmful. We will discuss (a) the current regulations concerning arsenic in drinking water, and (b) the reasons why consumer advocacy groups are calling for regulations governing the concentrations of arsenic in food and in rice in particular. The key role of chemical analysis in providing reliable information for the various sciences involved in such studies will be examined, and the current capabilities of chemical measurement technologies will be critically evaluated. Members of the class will make specific recommendations for “arsenic in food” regulations. In preparation for class meetings, participants will read articles, write short papers, or work on numerical problems. In-class activities include lecture, discussion, working in groups, problem-solving, and student presentations. The course will be supported by a Moodle learning management system. Grading: Pass/Fail

Nature Writing
FFYS 197HIST8  Spire # 40273  Mondays 3:35 – 4:25
David Glassberg, History, glassberg@history.umass.edu
Each week, students will read and discuss short examples of American nature writing in chronological order, and have the opportunity to write and share some of their own. Authors will include H.D. Thoreau, John Muir, Mary Austin, Aldo Leopold, Rachel Carson, Wallace Stegner, Wendell Berry, Terry Tempest Williams, and Gary Snyder. Grading: Pass/Fail

From Cotton to Kevlar: Fashion History Meets Digital Humanities
FFYS HIST10  Spire # 40299  Mondays 4:40 – 5:30
Jon Olsen, History, jon@history.umass.edu
Marla Miller, History, mmiller@history.umass.edu
Clothing from any time and any place is a historical document: it sheds light on values, technologies, aesthetics, gender and class expectations, politics and economics associated with past cultures. From the boycotts of the American Revolution to the cotton market during the American Civil War to the 20th century development of high-performing fabrics like rayon and Kevlar, fashion history is inextricably entwined with larger developments in our history. Today, digital tools are helping scholars from a range of disciplines research and write about clothing and fashion history. Students in this course will expand their knowledge of and competencies with digital tools like high resolution imaging, database management and Internet publishing as they read and write the history of American apparel.” The aim of the course will be to excite students about the history of clothing and dress as a window onto larger historical themes, and to introduce them to the concepts and skills of digital humanities. Grading: Pass/Fail

Voices for the Voiceless – Journalism in Revolutions
FFYS 197JRN1  Spire # 40298  Tuesdays 9:05 – 9:55
Shaheen Pasha, Communication, spasha@journ.umass.edu
This course would explore the role that journalism has played throughout historic revolutions. While we will examine specific revolutions such as the American Revolution and the most recent uprisings in the Arab World, we will also explore the role journalism played in revolutions such as the civil rights movements from the days of abolition to the Freedom Riders. We will examine how female journalists paved the way for women’s liberation. The course will be structured through reading and documentaries and will explore traditional media to social media. Grading: Pass/Fail

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Introduction To Sustainability, Science and Culture
FFYS 197RP4       Spire # 40300       Tuesdays 11:15 – 12:05
Flavia Montenegro – Menezes, Landscape Architecture & Regional Plan, flaviamontm@larp.umass.edu
This interdisciplinary course will address the theory and practice of sustainability. Its primary goal is to introduce concepts and help students to develop a framework to better understand the challenges surrounding the transition towards sustainability, with regards to both human well-being and the protection of the environment. Class discussions will involve a broad range of topics related to global climate, ecosystems, quality of life, poverty and affluence, and provide a basic overview of the complexities involving social, ecological, political, cultural and economic goals. Students will become acquainted with different approaches and sub-disciplinary fields concerned with sustainability issues, as well as with the roles of scientists, practitioners, public involvement and decision-makers in transitioning towards sustainability. This course will utilize the compilation of published scholarly articles, edited by Robert Kates in 2010. PDF copies of additional readings will be available on the Moodle web site one week before each class. Grading: Pass/Fail

Agriculture, the Environment and Human Health
FFYS 197ANML2       Spire # 40302       Tuesdays 1:00- 1:50
Mark Huyler, Veterinary & Animal Sciences, mhuyler@vasci.umass.edu
United States agricultural practices have shouldered the brunt of the blame for degradation of the environment, food safety, and animal health concerns. In some cases this has been with good reason, in other cases the blame may be misplaced. This seminar course will investigate the intersection of Agricultural / Environmental / and Human Health related issues, discuss the problem(s), and explore the root cause(s). In cases where agricultural practices run counter to environmental interests and human health concerns, changes in production practices will be proposed and evaluated for cost, efficacy, and practicality. In cases where agricultural practices are not the major contributor to environmental /human health degradation, attempts will be made to identify potential source(s) of the problem. Weekly discussions of subject matter will be based on published literature (required reading). Grading: Letter Grading w/ option of Pass/Fail

From Blues to Hip Hop: Introduction to African American Expressive Culture
FFYS 197ANTH4       Spire # 40268       Tuesdays 1:00 – 1:50
Whitney Battle-Baptiste, Anthropology, wbbaptiste@anthro.umass.edu
This seminar will explore the foundations of African American expressive culture, from work songs heard on the plantation, to the ring shout performed in churches, to the Blues of the Great Migration. By understanding how these early forms of expression have influenced generations of song, dance, culture and style, we gain a clearer appreciation of Hip-Hop as a culture and art form. This seminar is designed for anyone who wants to understand how history, memory and culture are related. Grading: Pass/Fail

How the Mind Might Work
FFYS 197PSY9         Spire # 40293       Tuesdays 1:00 – 1:50
Adrian Staub, Psychology,
This seminar will provide an introduction to a particular theory about how the human mind works. According to this theory, which is known as the computational theory of mind, the mind is a digital computer. This idea sounds very strange at first, but actually it is central to cognitive science, which includes research in psychology, computer science, linguistics, and philosophy. We will read How the Mind Works, by Steven Pinker, which explains the theory and the evidence for it in an accessible way. The only prerequisites are an interest in minds, brains, and/or computers, and a willingness to read about and discuss some very interesting issues. Grading will be based on in-class discussion and (short) weekly homework assignments. Grading: Letter grading w/ option of Pass/Fail
Hot Topics in Education: Beware of Simple Answers!
FFYS 197EDUC6  Spire # 40294  Tuesdays 2:30 – 3:20
Clement Seldin, Education, caseldin@educ.umass.edu
How do teachers and schools determine our future? The world of schools has 50 million students and 3 million teachers. It is complex and reflects our culture, history, finances, and politics. In this seminar, we will explore a series of hot, controversial topics in education. Video clips and case studies will open each session and provide a catalyst for discussion and debate. The experience, background, and interest of students will drive the weekly analysis. The goal of this First-Year Seminar is to help students appreciate the complexity and interconnectedness of each issue and to illuminate the conclusion that being an absolutist on controversial issues undermines children and education. Grading: Pass/Fail

Culture, Community and Language
FFYS 197ANTH2  Spire # 40271  Tuesdays 4:00 – 4:50
Jean Forward, Anthropology, jforward@anthro.umass.edu
This course will examine the relationship between language, community, and culture. The human body evolved, adapting to the use of language for communication. The intimate relationships between culture, community, and language reveal a culture’s worldview, community system, values, identity, and much more. Colonization, commercial expansion, and digital technologies have impacted communities and their languages and cultures. This course will introduce students to the concepts of culture, community and the integration of language within cultural systems. Grading: Pass/Fail

When People Get Together: The Good, The Bad and The Funny
FFYS 197SCH1  Spire # 40296  Tuesdays 4:00 – 4:50
Rommel Salvador, Hospitality and Tourism Management, rsalvador@isenberg.umass.edu
Through games and experiential exercises, students in this seminar will be provided the opportunity to reexamine assumptions about interpersonal relations and human behavior in organizations. Topics will include social perception, group dynamics, managing conflict, and celebrating diversity. The application of concepts and topics covered to careers in the field of business, especially hospitality and tourism management, will be explored. Grading: Pass/Fail

Is The United States an Empire?
FFYS 197HIST11  Spire # 40306  Wednesdays 9:05 – 9:55
Richard Chu, History, rtchu@history.umass.edu
What is an empire? Is the United States an empire? The course will investigate this question through the reading of certain primary and secondary source materials pertaining to the history of American colonization of the Philippines in the early twentieth century. Grading: Letter grading w/ option of Pass/Fail
To Bee or Not to Bee: Cause and Impact of Honeybee Decline and Colony Collapse Disorder
FFYS 197PSIS3  Spire# 40269  Wednesdays 10:10 – 11:00
John Burand, Plant, Soil and Insect Sciences, jburand@microbio.umass.edu
The dramatic decline in honeybees over the past several years related to Colony Collapse Disorder has raised the public’s awareness to the importance of these insects in our everyday life. This seminar will use the popular book Fruitless Fall: The Collapse of the Honeybee and the Coming Agricultural Crisis by Rowan Jacobsen as a guide to examine the importance of bees in our society, the possible causes of declining honeybee health, as well as learn more about the biology and social society of bees. Students in the seminar will have a chance to get “up close and personal with bees” with a trip to a local apiary, a lesson from a master beekeeper and an inside look into a beehive. Rowan Jacobsen’s book Fruitless Fall: The Collapse of the Honeybee and the Coming Agricultural Crisis will be used as a guide for weekly seminar discussion. Grading: Letter grading with the option of Pass/Fail

Negotiating Culture in Global and Local Contexts
FFYS 197ESL1  Spire # 40274  Wednesdays 12:20 – 1:10
Ingrid Holm, Undergraduate Advising & Learning Communities, holm@acad.umass.edu
With today’s emphasis on globalization, many students have become interested in learning about culture and cultural diversity, thereby enhancing their understanding of their own cultural heritages and that of others. The course examines the unifying fabric of American culture, comprising socio-cultural values, attitudes, and traditions. To help students develop their intercultural competency for global contexts, the course offers units on the diversity of ethnicities, race, and religions that represent contemporary global worldviews; gender roles; and the issue of stereotyping. The course also offers a number of useful strategies to help students adjust to the local university culture. Included are practical strategies for improving oral communication skills; enhancing the development of critical-thinking skills; and writing and reading more effectively in the academic register, all of which are necessary for successful professional work in local and global contexts. Grading: Pass/Fail

Climate Change: Biological Effects of Global Warming and Air Pollution
FFYS 197PSIS4  Spire # 40276  Wednesdays 12:20 – 1:10
William Manning, Stockbridge School of Agriculture, wmanning@microbio.umass.edu
An introduction to climate and weather followed by consideration of the cause(s) of global warming and air pollutants, such as ozone and sulfate aerosol. Biological effects of global warming and air pollution on humans animals and plants and major ecosystems will be considered in depth. Goal is to take away a basic understanding of how global warming affects you and the world around you. Grading: Letter grading w/option of Pass/Fail

Manipulating Fortune’s Wheel: Machiavelli and the Prince
FFYS 197LLC  Spire # 40301  Wednesdays 1:25 – 2:15
Elizabeth Mazzocco, Languages, Literatures and Cultures, mazzocco@frital.umass.edu
Celebrating the 500th anniversary of Nicolo Machiavelli’s writing of The Prince, we will focus on this short but brilliant treatise. its importance in the Renaissance and its significance today. Machiavelli has suffered from a bad press since Shakespeare dubbed him the ?murderous Machiavel? and The Prince was banned in Elizabethan England. What is in this book that made those in power want to ban it? Who was the real Machiavelli? Did Machiavelli say ?the end justifies the means?? What is Machiavellian virtue and how does one use it to tame the whims of Fortune? Why did Machiavelli write The Prince in 1513, and is it pertinent in 2013? Together we will delve into the text to find the answers to these questions and others. Grading: Letter grading w/option of Pass/Fail
Microbes and Man
FFYS 197BIO Spire # 40297 Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:20
Margaret Riley, Biology, riley@bio.umass.edu
Microbes run the world. It’s that simple. Although we cannot usually see them, microbes are essential for every part of human life indeed all life on Earth. Every process in the biosphere is touched by the seemingly endless capacity of microbes to transform the world around them. This course is designed for undergraduates with little background in the biological sciences, who are curious about this unseen life on Earth and who want to understand how microbe have influenced essentially every aspect of biological evolution. Grading: Pass/Fail

The Sex Lives of Animals
FFYS 197BIO3 Spire # 40304 Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:20
Bruce Byers, Biology, bbyers@bio.umass.edu
In this seminar, we will explore the amazing diversity of animal mating and reproduction. We will investigate how animals find and select mates, how male and female sexual imperatives differ, the wide variety of means and methods by which animals reproduce, and more. We will also ponder some “why” questions, such as “Why do males and females differ?”, “Why are many sexual behaviors so extreme and elaborate?”, and “Why does sex exist?” Grading: Letter grading w/ option of Pass/Fail

An Unknown Kingdom – Fungi, Food, Forests and Pharmaceuticals
FFYS 197ST Spire # 40305 Wednesdays 2:30- 3:20
Daniel Cooley, Stockbridge School of Agriculture, dcooley@umass.edu
Mushrooms magically spew forth from the earth in the hours that follow a summer rain. Fuzzy brown molds mischievously turn forgotten peaches to slime in the kitchen fruit bowl. And in thousands of other ways, members of the kingdom Fungi do their part to make life on Earth the miracle that it is. Yet most of us know little of this often-overlooked group of organisms, which differ radically from both animals and plants. They destroy our food crops, yet growing plants rely on them. They provide us with bread and wine, but can also poison us. The may give us visions of the sublime, and at the same time recycle our garbage. In this seminar, we’ll explore the curious world of magical mushrooms and mysterious molds, and hopefully come out with a better understanding of the natural world around us.

“New” Ways of Making Families: Adoption and Assisted Reproduction Technologies
FFYS 197CHC1 Spire # 40291 Wednesdays 3:35 – 4:25
Martha Yoder, History, marthay@history.umass.edu
While neither assisted reproduction nor adoption are entirely new, both have radically increased in recent decades, potentially transforming the face of the American family. No longer performed in secrecy nor limited to heterosexual couples, assisted reproduction methods such as sperm and egg donation, in vitro fertilization, and surrogacy have become increasingly sophisticated. Meanwhile the landscape of adoption has been redefined by transparency, the rise of transracial and international adoption, and the partial acceptance of single and same-sex adoptive parents. In this reading- and discussion-based course we will explore and debate ethical, psychological, and cultural issues arising from these ?new? ways of making families. Grading: Letter grading w/option of Pass/Fail

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Faculty First Year Seminars: Fall 2013

**Introduction to Design Drawing**
FFYS 197ART6  Spire # 40295  Thursdays 1:00 – 1:50
**Stephen Schreiber**, Art, [Schreiber@art.umass.edu](mailto:Schreiber@art.umass.edu)

This course will introduce students to fundamental "design thinking" and graphic communication skills in architecture. Students will gain an understanding of drawing as a vital means to see, analyze, and represent essential aspects of the visual environment. Emphasis will be placed on freehand drawing and sketching, using UMass buildings as case studies. Grading: Pass/Fail

**The Polymer Age**
FFYS 197POLY  Spire # 40275  Thursday 4:00 – 4:50
**Samuel Gido**, Polymer Science & Engineering, [spgido@polysci.umass.edu](mailto:spgido@polysci.umass.edu)
**Shaw Hsu**, Polymer Science & Engineering, [slhsu@polysci.umass.edu](mailto:slhsu@polysci.umass.edu)

The rise of human civilization is marked by the development of ever more advanced materials: Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age. How will future historians refer to our time? The Silicon Age, or Perhaps the Age of Polymers? Polymers encompass a broad spectrum of our world from the mundane, such as plastics for packaging, to the cutting edge, such as the wings of advanced aircraft, or flexible electronic devices. The DNA that encodes the blueprints for life, and the proteins that build our bodies, are also polymers. First year students will be introduced to polymer enabled advances and opportunities in biomedical engineering, electronics, energy, packaging, clothing and other important applications. Grading: Pass/ Fail

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