Socialism? Government Takeover of Medicine? What’s the Truth about the Affordable Care Act

**FFYS 197PUBH5**  
Spire # 79695  
M 10:10-11:00 AM

**Michael E. Begay, Public Health, begay@schoolph.umass.edu**

Before and after the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was passed in March 2010 there has been considerable debate about the new law. Critics have described the ACA or “Obamacare” as a “government takeover of medicine”, creates “death panels” for seniors, and undermines quality health care. Opponents have characterized Obamacare as a failed policy. However, supporters argue that the ACA improves access to quality health care, reduces the number of uninsured, maintains quality health care, and helps to reduce the national debt. In this course, we will discuss and analyze the politics surrounding the passage and implementation of the ACA. We will also go beyond the rhetoric by examining the substance of the legislation to discover how the ACA actually reforms the health care system. Finally, we will also discuss the future of the ACA and its impact on the American health care system.

Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

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Design Drawing

**FFYS 197ART6**  
Spire # 79674  
M 11:15-12:05 PM

**Stephen Schreiber, Art, Architecture & Art History, Schreiber@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. Pass/Fail grading.

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Economics in the News: Theory and Practice

**FFYS 197ECON6**  
Spire # 79697  
M 11:15-12:05 PM

**Gerald Friedman, Economics, gfriedma@econs.umass.edu**

There are implicit assumptions and economic theories behind much public discourse on issues ranging from unemployment insurance to social welfare policy, health-care reform, and foreign trade policy. We will select one news story each week on a subject of popular debate and we will discuss the economic theory behind the different sides and the empirical work done by economists. Pass/Fail grading.

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Common Read: The Prison-Industrial Complex and the Prison Abolitionist Movement

**FFYS 197CR2**  
Spire # 79654  
M 12:20-1:10 PM

**Sigrid Schmalzer, Social Thought & Political Economy, sigrid@history.umass.edu**

The Pioneer Valley is a hotbed for prison abolition activism -- a movement that seeks not only to improve conditions for prisoners but to dismantle the “prison-industrial complex” that many argue continues the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow. In this course, we will analyze writings, hip-hop music, and art produced by prisoners and prison abolitionists, discuss their perspectives on race, class, gender, and sexuality in the prison system, and debate their tactics. The format will break down the walls and hierarchies of a traditional classroom experience: we will regularly bring in activists from local grassroots organizations, and the instructor will collaborate with an advanced undergraduate student activist to facilitate class discussions based on an anti-hierarchical model of community organizing. The course will thus provide opportunities to learn not only about prisons, but also about how faculty, students, and community can work together on issues that concern us all. Pass/Fail grading.
Faculty First-Year Seminars

Full Descriptions

Getting Medieval: On Being a Student in the Middle Ages
FFYS 197ENGL5 Spire # 79681 M 12:20-1:10 PM
Jenny Adams, English, jadams@english.umass.edu
How and what did students learn in the Middle Ages? Did they have a syllabus? Where did they obtain their books? What exactly did they read, and how did they read it? Did they pull all-nighters before exams? “Getting Medieval” will ask twenty-first century students to take a look at their medieval predecessors with an eye to the aspects they do and don’t share with us. The highlight of the course will be a recreation of a medieval classroom. Pass/Fail grading.

Sport and Society: A Historical Perspective
FFYS 197HIST12 Spire # 79661 M 12:20-1:10 PM
Joel Wolfe, History, jwolfe@history.umass.edu
This First-Year Seminar will introduce students to debates about the ways professional and amateur sports are both shaped by and shape society. We will read articles on the history of baseball, football, basketball, hockey, soccer, and the Olympics. We will discuss sports as both entertainment and businesses, and analyze how issues in American society are often reflected in sports. We will consider the question of whether or not sports lead the way in social change or lag it. Students are required to complete all the assigned readings (one article per week) and prepare a short reaction paper (one to three paragraphs) for each week. Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

Public Health News Over Lunch
FFYS 197PUBH6 Spire # 79698 M 12:20-1:10 PM
Louis Graham, Public Health, lfgraham@schoolph.umass.edu
This course seeks to introduce and familiarize students to the concept and field of public health as distinguished from clinical medicine and healthcare by focusing on current national and local public health news. Through identification and critical examination of public health current events, students will be able to conceptualize and contextualize the relevance of core public health principles for society and their lives. Historically significant events and trends will be linked to current public health issues. This discussion based course will invite students to think broadly, synthesize information, and assess credibility of sources to analyze current public health problems. Students will take note of and consider the ways in which public health issues are reported on and covered in mainstream and alternative media, particularly with respect to language use and narrative construction. Students will bring their ideas and perspectives to bear on current public health debates. Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

Introduction to the Art and Craft of Creating Theater
FFYS 197THEAT5 Spire # 79676 M 12:20-1:10 PM
Penny Remsen, Theater, remsen@theater.umass.edu
Collaboration is key to the process of creating theater. This First Year Seminar will provide students with a framework for collaboration while also introducing them to the process and resources of The Department of Theater at UMass. In our discussions, students will gain an understanding of the working relationships between artistic and technical collaborators, emphasizing the importance of creativity and craftsmanship in theater. Through course topics, students will build solid foundation for continued theater study and cultivate a broad understanding of theater making and feel ready to join faculty, staff and their peers in our production season. Pass/Fail grading.
Faculty First-Year Seminars

Full Descriptions  Fall 2014

What’s Watt
FFYS 197PHY2  Spire # 79702  M 1:25-2:15 PM
John Dubach, Physics (retired), dubach@umass.edu
The intent of the course is to enable students to better understand energy-related issues at the local, national, and global levels both in terms of the technical side but also the economic and policy influences and implications. The first two or three meetings will be “lecture” on the basic physics concepts and practical concerns behind energy production and usage. The remainder of the course will consist of the students, individually or in groups, analyzing and presenting their analysis of energy issues of their own choosing or my suggestion ranging anywhere from, e.g., comparison of different types of light bulbs, to hybrid/electric vehicles, to potential for energy production worldwide. Clarity of the assumptions that enter and documentation of facts that support the analysis will be emphasized. A “blog” or other type of compendium of these analyses will be maintained. Letter grading with option of pass/fail.

Career and Happiness
FFYS 197SE1  Spire # 79660  M 1:25-2:15 PM
Weigo Hu, Polymer Science and Engineering, whu@data.pse.umass.edu
Career and happiness sound like mutually exclusive life goals. However, according to David Starr Jordan, founding president of Stanford University, they are inseparable from each other: “There is no real excellence in all this world which can be separated from right living.” This statement is the opening quote of The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, one of the most influential self-help books in history. This class will use the concepts discussed in The 7 Habits and The Analects (by Confucius) to explore career, happiness, stages of personal development, and other related topics. Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

The Science of Predicting the Future
FFYS 197PSY10  Spire # 79672  M 2:30-3:20 PM
Adrian Staub, Psychology, astaub@psych.umass.edu
In this class we will read the book “The Signal and the Noise: Why So Many Predictions Fail – But Some Don’t” by Nate Silver, who is well known for predicting political elections and sports outcomes with great accuracy. The book explains how careful use of data can lead to better predictions in many areas, including many areas of everyday life. The only requirements for the class are attendance and participation in class discussions. Pass/Fail grading.

Common Read FFYS: Orange is the New Black
FFYS 197CR3  Spire # 79655  M 4:00-4:50 PM
Alexandrina Deschamps, Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies and CHC, afd@wost.umass.edu
This is an opportunity to be engaged in discussing, reading, thinking through some pertinent themes, and contemporary issues linked to the ‘common read’ Orange is the New Black. Spend this time partnering with each other, and using your own competencies for critical engagement with the book. You will be delighted with the outcomes. Letter grading with option of pass/fail.
Network Fever

FFYS 197COMM3     Spire # 79696     M 5:30-6:20 PM
Briankle Chang, Communication, bchang@comm.umass.edu

Are you willing to let go of your smart phone or laptop for a week, a month, a year, perhaps even longer? What if you were not even permitted to use the telephone or to write letters? If not, why not? What do you think you might lose in these situations? What would your life be like? Would it be better or worse and why? It seems clear that we now live in what is called network society: we live in networks; we work hard to network with one another; and perhaps we have become networks in some way. More than that, we are also surrounded by talks about networks. I call this condition Network Fever. In this course, we will reflect on this condition, starting with our experiences of networking. A set of brief readings will be provided to establish our topics of discussion. And I encourage you to suggest readings or topics for discussion as well. Network fever is here to stay. Let us see if we should cool down or raise the temperature. Or is the temperature just where it should be? Pass/Fail grading.

Physical Computing for Everyone

FFYS 197ECE     Spire # 79669     M 4:00-4:50 PM
David McLaughlin, Electrical & Computer Engineering, mclaughlin@ecs.umass.edu

The goal of this seminar is to expose the enormous potential of computers and electronics to the wide university student audience in an intellectually stimulating, yet non-threatening way. Students participating in this seminar will design and build an elegant piece of electronic jewelry or other wearable electronics, an interactive art exhibit, a temperature measuring station, an electronic pet collar, or some other “widget” of their choosing. The seminar will revolve around experiments and projects with the “Arduino Uno” embedded computing platform. As stated in the arduino.com web site, “Arduino is an open-source electronics prototyping platform based on flexible, easy-to-use hardware and software. It’s intended for artists, designers, hobbyists, and anyone interested in creating interactive objects or environments.” No prior computer programming or electronics experience is needed. Pass/Fail grading.

Bio/Nanotechnology

FFYS 197PSE2     Spire # 79701     M 5:30-6:20 PM
Harry Bermudez, Polymer Science, bermudez@polysci.umass.edu

My vision for this FFYS is to provide weekly topical discussions on different types of bio/nanotechnology. This includes how they are developing in the research community as well as how they are being incorporated into our daily lives. Examples include genetically-modified proteins (which might be in foods), the engineering of microbes to produce therapeutics or liquid fuels, and the development of novel drug delivery vehicles and biosensors. The idea behind the progression of topics is to gradually increase in complexity, starting with an understanding of the science and moving to public perception and policy. The small size and informal atmosphere of the FFYS also promotes dialogue between all participants. Such dialogue is critical especially to engage non-STEM students who may nevertheless have concerns or interests about the rapid pace of technological change. Pass/Fail grading.

Inequality: It’s Causes and Consequences

FFYS 197POLI2     Spire # 79675     M 7:00-7:50 PM
Dean Robinson, Political Science, deanr@polisci.umass.edu

Economic inequality has risen in recent years to rival one of the most unequal periods in US history - the 1920s. This course will examine the social, political and economic origins of inequality in the United States. It will also draw on social science literature that examines the impact of inequality on health, violence, educational performance and economic opportunity. Pass/Fail grading.
**Faculty First-Year Seminars**

**Full Descriptions**

**Common Read FFYS: Privilege and Helping Professions: Insights from Orange is the New Black**

FFYS 197CR1  
Spire # 79653  
Tu 8:30-9:20 AM  
Jacqueline Mosselson, *Education*, jmosselson@educ.umass.edu  
On NPR, Piper Kerman pointed out that networks and publishers needed a white protagonist to tell the “tales of Black women, Latina women, and old women and criminals” she “discovered” in prison. In this seminar, we will use OITNB as a launch pad to discuss white privilege and its impact on meaningful ‘social work,’ that include but are not limited to education, development, community service learning, and notions of ‘wanting to give back’ in general. We will explore the structural inequities that OITNB discusses, and examine issues of privilege and relatability as we apply it to complex questions about ways in which to engage collaboratively with communities both domestically and internationally to reverse inequities with responsibility & respect. The class will introduce participants to social theories of education, cultural studies, development studies, and critical psychology as we think more generally about engaging critically and responsibly with communities. Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

**To Bee or Not to Bee: Cause & Impact of Honeybee Decline and Colony Collapse Disorder**

FFYS 197PSIS3  
Spire # 79680  
Tu 10:00-10:50 AM  
John Burand, *Microbiology*, 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.

**1989/2014: Twenty-Five Years After the Fall of the Berlin Wall**

FFYS 197HIST2  
Spire # 79663  
Tu 11:30 – 12:20 PM  
Jon Olsen, *History*, jon@history.umass.edu  
From this seminar students will gain a better understanding of the East German revolution in 1989 and its lingering legacy 25 years later. Throughout the fall we will look back at events in almost real-time to learn about how East Germany went from a dictatorship to a democracy in the span of only a few month. Readings will draw from eyewitness accounts, television footage, and scholarly publications. Pass/Fail grading.

**Common Read FFYS: A Semester in the Life: Writing Your Way into College**

FFYS 197CR4  
Spire # 79656  
Tu 2:30-3:20 PM  
David Fleming, *English*, dfleming@english.umass.edu  
As any journal-keeper, or blogger, knows, writing can be a good way to work through major changes in your life. And starting college is a major change! For most of you, you’ll be leaving home for the first time in your life, moving into a dorm with hundreds of strangers, and beginning a phase of your education that will be more demanding, and more dependent on your own initiative, than ever before. With Piper Kerman’s *Orange is the New Black* as inspiration, you’ll use writing to work your way through your first semester here: recording, describing, narrating, analyzing, interrogating, trouble-shooting, and communicating your experience for yourself and others. We’ll do lots of writing, some reading, and a good bit of sharing. You’ll not only produce a non-fiction record of your first semester here; you’ll get a good introduction to the intellectual and creative life of college itself. Letter Grading with the option of pass/fail.
Faculty First-Year Seminars

Ready, Set, Write: Fiction Writing Workshop For Beginners
FFYS 197EDUC5 Spire # 79684 Tu 2:30-3:20 PM
Sally Galman, TECS- School of Education, sally@educ.umass.edu
Are you interested in fiction writing but don’t know where to start? In this seminar, 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 work shopping 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-assessments about the piece, the writing process and the writer’s life. Pass/Fail grading.

What is Authenticity?
FFYS 197 PHIL2 Spire # 79679 Tu 2:30-3:20 PM
Ernesto V. Garcia, Philosophy, evg@philos.umass.edu
What is the nature of the self? What makes us really us? Do we create ourselves, or are we just the products of our environment? What does it mean to be an authentic individual as opposed to an inauthentic person living in ‘bad faith’? Is there even a true self at all? This course examines the ideal of ‘authenticity’? The main text will be Charles Guignon’s On Being Authentic, which offers an insightful survey of classical and modern views about authenticity. In addition, we will read a few short literary works including Tolstoy’s The Death of Ivan Ilyich, Kafka’s Metamorphosis, Sartre’s No Exit, and J.D. Salinger’s The Catcher in the Rye. Our main goal will be to explore what it means to be ‘authentic’? or to be ‘true to ourselves’? from the perspectives of literature, psychology, religion, and philosophy. Pass/Fail grading.

Culture, Community and Language
FFYS 197ANTH2 Spire # 79686 Tu 4:00-4:50 PM
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. Pass/Fail grading.

“A Legacy of Brutality”: Punk and American Underground
FFYS 197GER2 Spire # 79677 W 10:10-11:00 AM
Jonathan Skolnik, German, jskolnik@german.umass.edu
A study of the punk movement in the USA from the mid-1970s through the 1990s, which will introduce first-year students to critical theory and the study of popular culture. Pass/Fail grading.
Sustainable Community Forestry

**FFYS 197ECO1** Spire # 79665 W 11:15-12:05 PM

**Brian Kane, Environmental Conservation, bkane@eco.umass.edu**

It’s estimated that 80% of the U.S. population lives in cities and towns, and the trend is expected to continue into the foreseeable future. Increasing population in urban and suburban areas increases the demand on the infrastructure of such places to sustain the residents. Trees are an integral part of the infrastructure, providing many environmental, economic, and social benefits; they make it easier for us to live sustainably. This is why so many communities (like Boston, New York, Washington DC and others) have started to plant more trees. It sounds simple: plant more trees and things will be fine. But there’s more to it: in order to realize the benefits that trees can provide, you have to plan and maintain the “urban forest”. We will discuss how best to do so in this course. 

Pass/Fail grading.

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Negotiating Culture in Global & Local Contexts

**FFYS 197ESL1** Spire # 79662 W 12:20-1:10PM

**Ingrid Holm, English as a Second Language, 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. Pass/Fail grading.

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Impact of Insects on Human Culture and Sustainability

**FFYS 197ST1** Spire # 79671 W 1:25-2:15 PM

**John Stoffolano, Stockbridge School of Agriculture, stoff@umass.edu**

Goals of this seminar are to introduce students to the problems of writing a book, reading on specific topics that reflect the writers overall message(s), and examining the literature used to support the ideas. Another goal is to help students understand how insects have impacted human culture and have drastically altered human sustainability. Students will read various chapters from *Tonino*, discuss the reading, and utilize any supportive material(s) such as already prepared power points and/or streaming video clips supporting the weekly topic/chapter. In addition to learning about the problems in writing a book and selecting the materials for the book, students will obtain information about the topics and will be able to answer the following questions: What is culture?; Are we hard wired for culture?; Why do people have different colored skin?; Why are insects used so much in the arts and literature? Have insects impacted human culture? What is sustainability? Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.
Neuroengineering and Rehabilitation: Hope, Hype, Reality
FFYS 197KIN1 Spire # 79693 W 2:30-3:20 PM
Julia Choi, Kinesiology, jtc@kin.umass.edu
The human brain is an information processing system without parallel. It excels at identifying objects and carrying out actions in ways no current computer or robot can achieve. Neuroscientists are studying the neural mechanisms by which we feel, act, learn and remember. Recent research has generated a rapidly evolving field of high-profile discoveries. The new knowledge is critical for understanding normal brain processes, and has important implications for the rehabilitation of abnormal functioning after neurological damage (e.g., concussion, stroke). However, media attention has sometimes outstripped the limits of what current science can really tell us. This seminar aims to convey a clear sense of this field by focusing on current controversies regarding organization and function in the nervous system. Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

What is Rastafari? Religion or Social Movement?
FFYS 197POLI6 Spire # 79691 W 2:30-3:20 PM
Carlene Edie, Political Science, cje@polisci.umass.edu
Known to many as only a religious and global cultural trend associated with glorifying the late Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, weed smoking and wearing dreadlocks, Rastafari’s pivotal role as a key agent of cultural resistance to black oppression in modern Jamaica is often neglected. Originating in the poorest communities in Jamaica, this movement had a significant impact on Jamaica’s national identity and political change in the post-independence period. This seminar seeks to provide students with an understanding of the political and socio-economic context in which the Rastafari movement developed in 20th century Jamaica, highlighting the repression it faced by both the State and the society. A secondary focus will be on the instruments (including Reggae music) used by Rastafari to challenge the existing Jamaican power structure. The seminar closes with reflections on the global spread of Rastafari beyond the Caribbean to North America, Africa, Asia, Europe and Australia. Letter grading with the option of Pass/Fail.

Popular Culture and Media Images of Asians and Asian Americans
FFYS 197SOC Spire # 79668 W 2:30-3:20 PM
C.N. Le, Sociology, le@soc.umass.edu
Institutional trends such as demographic diversification, globalization, and transnationalism continue to make the U.S. and Asian countries more politically, economically, and culturally intertwined and inter-dependent. Within this context, this seminar asks the question, how have Asians and Asian American fit into this dynamic? The seminar will use a multi-level perspective to look at how Asians and Asian Americans have been portrayed in different media and popular culture throughout U.S. history. A preliminary schedule of weekly topics include: introductory concepts such as racial/ethnic inequality; historical examples such as the anti-Chinese movement of the late 1800s; anti-Japanese propaganda during WWII; changing demographics and U.S. culture beginning with the 1965 Immigration Act; media representations of Asian women vs. men; seemingly-positive portrayals such as martial arts & the model minority; Asian Americans portraying themselves in Better Luck Tomorrow and Joy Luck Club; Anime and K-Pop; China Rising and shifting geo-politics. Pass/Fail grading.
The “N Word”: Does it Have a Place in the English Language?

**FFYS 197EDUC8**

**Benita J. Barnes, Education, barnsebj@educ.umass.edu**

The “N word” has a unique history in the English language. On the one hand, it was used as the ultimate insult and was intended to demean, degrade, and to torment generations of African Americans; it was a term that authorized violence and influenced racist public policy. On the other hand, over time, the word has been refashioned as a term of endearment and is now often used in casual discourse and in popular culture. During this seminar, we will dissect the historical meaning and the contemporary use of the N word as well as examine the impact of language on identity and in the social world. In short, we will be thinking about the legacy and meaningfulness of this word in relationship to American history, culture, and consciousness. Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

The Power of Free: Causes and Consequences of Irrational Economic Decisions

**FFYS 197ECON5**

**Diane Flaherty, Economics, gibson@econs.umass.edu**

This seminar will examine the concepts of rationality and irrationality in economics with reference to how consumers make decisions in the market. From the perspective of behavioral economics, we will explore first how people form identities from individual experience and social norms and how these identities affect their decisions as consumers. For example, consumers make different decisions depending upon the social context in which they decide. People also react ‘irrationally’ in the face of free goods. Both of these behaviors leave consumers open to being influenced by the way advertisements frame alternative choices. The second part of the course will examine the ways in which our decisions affect the economy as a whole. This section includes analysis of links between irrationality in decision-making and economic crisis, unemployment, poverty and discrimination in the labor market. Letter grading with the option of Pass/Fail.

The Sex Lives of Animals

**FFYS 197BIO3**

**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

New” ways of Making Families: Adoption and Assisted Reproduction Technologies

**FFYS 197CHC1**

**Martha Yoder, Commonwealth Honors College, marthay@history.umass.edu**

While neither assisted reproduction nor adoption are entirely new, both have radically increased in recent decades, potentially transforming 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 participation of single and same---sex adoptive parents. This is not a lecture course, but a readings---based discussion course. Students enrolling in it should be interested in and committed to discussing the many ethical, psychological, and cultural issues arising from these “new” ways of making families. Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.
Full Descriptions

Common Read: The Role of Lawyers in the American Criminal Justice System
FFYS 197CR6 Spire # 79670 Th 2:30-3:30 PM
Jennifer Merton, Management, jfmerton@isenberg.umass.edu

This is a wonderful opportunity to use the Common Read book, “Orange is the New Black”, to explore the role that lawyers play in our criminal justice system. We will begin the class by looking at how criminal statutes are enacted (with an emphasis on modern drug laws at the state and federal level and the role that lawyers play in policy development and the legislative process.) Next, the class will explore the role of the lawyer at the arrest and bail stages, the plea bargain stage, the motions stage, and, finally, the trial stage of the criminal system. The class will then look at the role lawyers play in the appeals process. Last, the role that lawyers play in safeguarding incarcerated inmates will be examined. The importance of advocacy in our system will be a primary focus, with opportunities for students to engage in various forms of advocacy. Case Law, Statutes, and other legal sources will be utilized, as well as readings from literature, the social sciences, philosophy, and business. Film excerpts will also be incorporated into the class. This course will provide students with research and writing opportunities, along with instruction in the use of various communication technologies (allowing students to engage in hands on learning about website design, blogs, and social media.) Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

Common Read FFYS: Prison Writing
FFYS 197CR5 Spire # 79657 Th 2:30-3:20 PM
Suzanne Daly, English, sdaly@english.umass.edu

This class will place this year’s Common Read selection, Piper Kerman’s Orange is the New Black, in the context of major works by US prison authors. To help the class consider in more depth how incarcerated US writers have represented their lived experience, throughout the semester I will provide short excerpts of work by prisoners including Angela Davis, Jean Harris, Kim Wozencraft, and Malcolm X that relate to our two central texts, Orange is the New Black and On the Yard (1967). Much of the semester will be spent reading Malcolm Braly’s classic prison novel On the Yard a few chapters at a time and discussing its treatment of topics including psychiatry, sexuality, mental illness, labor, social hierarchies, and the drug trade in prison in relation to Orange is the New Black. We will conclude by analyzing a few episodes of the TV series Orange is the New Black. Pass/Fail grading.

The Janus Face of Nanotechnology: Promises, Products and Problems
FFYS 197CEE1 Spire # 79666 Th 4:00-4:50 PM
Boris Lau, Civic &Environmental Engineering, borislau@engin.umass.edu

Nanotechnology can be a double-edged sword. The same unique properties that enable the beneficial use of nanomaterials in novel applications also make their unintentional interactions difficult to anticipate. Increasing entry of engineered nanomaterials into the environment has resulted in growing environmental and health concerns as the field of nanotechnology continues to expand. Nanomaterials are not only found in our latest gadgets, they are also ubiquitous in the environment. Such natural nanomaterials influence important environmental processes such as the transport of contaminants. This seminar will explore a wide range of topics related to the applications and implications of natural and engineered nanomaterials. Students will learn about 1) what makes nanomaterials functional and safe/dangerous, 2) their potential human and ecosystem health effects, and 3) their beneficial use in various technologies. Letter grading with the option of Pass/Fail.
Faculty First-Year Seminars

Positive Psychology: The Science of Happiness, Creativity and Accomplishment
FFYS 197PHY1  Spire # 79659  Th 4:00 – 4:50
Mark Tuominem, Physics, tuominen@physics.umass.edu
Positive psychology is the study of well-being and flourishing. This course will teach common sense—although not yet common practice—concepts and practices backed by scientific research that students can apply directly to their lives in college and beyond. Research is showing that the application of tools from applied positive psychology serve to enhance professional accomplishment and personal happiness. Research also shows that people learn effectively and exhibit marked creativity in situations where this is substantial autonomy and real-world relevance. Coursework activities will center on personal application of the subject matter though action and reflection. Course topics include appreciative inquiry, intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation, fixed versus growth mindset, flow (engagement), creativity, the value of play, integrity, resilience (grit), gratitude, positivity boosters, mindfulness, observation, design thinking, innovation and resourcefulness, power of collaboration, and leadership. The research studies discussed in this course lightly introduce students to a variety of modern research methods. Letter grading with option of Pass/Fail.

Campus Treasures- Art, Science and Everything in Between
FFYS197BIO4  Spire# 79690  F 10:10-11:00AM
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Our campus has amazing collections of art, natural history specimens, minerals, and cultural and historical artifacts that are used in research and teaching. However, the vast majority of our collections are not accessible to the public. In this seminar we’ll talk about the kinds of research that UMass faculty are doing with collections and get “behind the scenes” tours of collections including art, archaeology, film, minerals, historical documents, living plants and animal skeletons. This is an excellent opportunity to learn about current research in a broad array of fields (arts & sciences) and to see our hidden treasures up close. The collections are housed in many different buildings, so as a bonus we’ll be learning all the best short-cuts across campus too! Pass/Fail grading.