IC Connections: The Illinois College First-Year Experience
First-Year Seminars (FYS) & Learning Communities (LC)

In requiring all first-year students to take a first-year seminar and read a common summer text, we will provide all incoming students with experiences that will allow them to distinguish the standards of college-level work, develop classroom discussion skills, develop critical reading and writing skills, learn the distinct value of a liberal arts education, explore the vital connections among various disciplines and fields of knowledge, understand the values of the Illinois College community and form relationships with their advisors and with a small group of peers.

All first-year seminar participants form academic learning communities with an oral or written communication course. Additionally, a mentoring team comprised of a student affairs professional and student leader work closely with each first-year seminar.

LIST OF SEMINARS FOR FALL 2015

Art and Oratory - AR 130
Professor Jeff Garland
A work of art speaks for itself. If this statement is true, what language is the work speaking and who understands it? Can we take this rhetoric and provide heuristics to deepen knowledge of cultures and artistic practice, develop and hone observational skills, reveal insights into history that other documents can't, and encourage creative, analytic, and autonomous thinking? We know art is important, but do we always know why? Looking at art can provide a much needed refuge for reflection, sympathy, quietude, inspiration, and even ecstasy in this increasingly chaotic world. Art can be funny, and it can make you cry, too. I want you to find a way in and provide the audience with this portal. We will be interpreting artworks and developing a rhetoric that will inform the audience and give voice to these amazing pieces throughout history.
- FYS meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- LC meets MWF 12:00-1:10 (Speech Fundamentals - CO 101 with Professor Chris Oldenburg)

Bizarre Foods (or Else…) - BI 130
Professor Lawrence Zettler
You are one of 7 billion people inhabiting this planet. The world is getting smaller by the day, and feeding everyone here today and those on the way will be a formidable challenge. On the positive side, there are many bizarre, unconventional foods that are “out there” waiting to nourish our bodies—some scary, others downright delectable. The goal of this course is to facilitate awareness of various unconventional foods to help offset world hunger tomorrow. We will focus primarily on foods that are potentially sustainable, and those that are both high in nutrients and calories. Students will also learn to develop proper communication skills aimed at both informing and persuading their peers and the general public.
- FYS meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- LC meets MWF 12:00-1:10 (Speech Fundamentals - CO 101 with Professor Adam Jones)
Fight the Power: Music and Social Change - FR 130  
Professor Devin Bryson  
Music is an incredibly powerful art form that helps us party, relax, and get pumped up for sports and athletics. It expresses and reflects our feelings of joy, longing, happiness, and despair. It also unites people across the globe as it has the ability to transcend place, language, history, and culture. For these reasons music has been used throughout history as a tool for social change, for uniting and inspiring people to fight social injustices. In this course we will study a number of contemporary examples of individuals and communities around the world using music of different genres (folk, rap, punk, metal) to provoke social change. Such an approach will allow us to better understand the specificities of various cultures, as well as the connections between these cultures.

- FYS meets MWF 12:00-1:10  
- LC meets TWRF 11:00-11:50 (Principles of Writing - EN 121 with Professor Betsy Hall)

How to Score! – Notes on Making Music - MU 130  
Professor Tim Kramer  
How do composers write a piece of music? If you want to know more about how concert music is created, this course will take you through that process. You will compose music—even if you can’t yet read music—attend several concerts, review a wide variety of new concert music, and discuss the role of composers in today’s society. The course ends with a performance of one of your own pieces.

- FYS meets MWF 12:00-1:10  
- LC meets TWRF 11:00-11:50 (Speech Fundamentals - CO 101 with Professor Kallia Wright)

Life is a Marathon: An Introduction to Motivational Psychology - PS 130  
Professor Jeremy Turner  
Running a marathon is used as a metaphor for life in this course, which introduces students to the study of motivational psychology and how to apply those principles to achieve goals, both great and small. This interdisciplinary course will provide students with all the necessary exercise science, health psychology, and psychological/behavioral tools needed to complete a 26.2-mile marathon. It is especially designed for those who don’t consider themselves athletes or runners, and no prior interest or experience with running is needed. The class will travel together to Memphis, Tennessee on Saturday, December 5, 2015, where each student will jog and/or walk the St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital Marathon.

- FYS meets MWF 12:00-1:10  
- LC meets TWRF 11:00-11:50 (Principles of Writing - EN 121 with Professor Beth Capo)

Mathematics: A Universal Language - MA 130  
Professor Mary Marshall  
This course explores twelve of the great "masterpieces" of mathematical theory. Its focus is on understanding the context of the particular mathematical results in the history of mathematics and of society at large. There will be an emphasis on the biographical background of each mathematician considered. No advanced mathematical background is necessary to enroll.

- FYS meets MWF 12:00-1:10  
- LC meets MWF 1:20-2:30 (Speech Fundamentals - CO 101 with Professor Adam Jones)
**Myth and Technology - GE 130**  
**Professor Bernd Estabrook**
As you begin your college experience, you will be asking yourself many important (and often unfamiliar) questions about yourself. Among them will be: Who am I? What could or should I be? The focus of this course is to help you with these questions by exploring the roles of myth and technology in our understanding of ourselves and our culture. What do the great stories of our civilization tell us about ourselves? How has the technology that surrounds us shaped our behavior? This course will look at films, essays, novels, podcasts, websites, speeches, and music that explore how the great stories of our culture and our rapidly expanding technology have shaped the ways we think and feel. Our goal will be to understand the fascinating relationships among our stories, our machines, and our values.

- FYS meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- LC meets MWF 12:00-1:10 (Principles of Writing - EN 121 with Professor Naomi Hahn)

**Philosophy of Sport - PH 130**  
**Professor John Laumakis**
In this seminar, we will use philosophy to examine the nature and moral dimension of sports—in particular, sports in the United States of America. We will begin by defining “sport” and studying some basic philosophical theories of ethics. We will then use those theories to examine moral issues in American sports. We will do this first by briefly considering some themes that have recurred in the history of American sports from colonial times to the present, including immigration, gender, economic class, religion, violence, and the connection between athletics and a morally good character. Then we will focus on the moral dimension of American sports today by considering topics such as the nature of competition, fairness, performance-enhancing drugs, gender, race, collegiate athletics, professional sports, and the link among athletics, moral education, and social responsibility. Our discussions, which will cover many sports, such as boxing, baseball, football, basketball, horse racing, cock fighting (is that even a sport?), rowing, tennis, and track and field, will be a good introduction to philosophical thinking about logic and ethics. So, if you enjoy wondering about things, if you enjoy thinking about difficult issues, if you like sports, and if you are concerned with living a good human life, this is the seminar for you.

- FYS meets MWF 12:00-1:10
- LC meets TWRF 11:00-11:50 (Principles of Writing - EN 121 with Professor Jim Kerbaugh)

**The Politics of Climate Change - PO 130**  
**Professor Winston Wells**
For many observers, the rapid warming of the world’s oceans and land masses is a “planetary emergency.” After examining the causes and consequences of climate change, we will explore the domestic and international politics of this pressing environmental problem. What steps have countries like the United States and China taken to address climate change? What political and economic challenges remain, and how in the years to come will governments around the world adapt to the realities of a warmer planet?

- FYS meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- LC meets MTRF 9:00-9:50 (Principles of Writing - EN 121 with Professor Jim Kerbaugh)
Radicals, Rebels and Rascals: Artists and Counterculture - FR 130
Professor Emily Adams
Artists are often viewed as rebellious outsiders who live, dress, and work “differently” than other members of society, especially when they join together to form groups. Sometimes they are political; sometimes they are trouble-makers; sometimes they are ostracized and sometimes they are idolized – but almost never are they seen as “normal.” Why are artists so tightly associated with countercultural trends? Is it something basic to the artistic impulse? Is this a product of how people in Western cultures view art and artists’ lives? Are these writers and painters, dancers and musicians trying to live up to a myth of what an “artist” should be? Students will look at a wide range of artistic groups or movements, from the bohemians of 19th-century Paris to Beatniks of the 1950s, from the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 30s to the radical ravers of the contemporary Burning Man festival.

- **FYS** meets MWF 12:00-1:10
- **LC** meets MWF 1:20-2:30 (Principles of Writing - EN 121 with Professor Cynthia Cochran)

Science in the Public Eye - ED 130
Professor Daniel Meyer
In 2006, Pluto was demoted from the planet status that generations of students grew up learning. What was unusual was not that it was a change in scientific knowledge, but that the change was a major public news event. While science is crucial to modern society, the public generally only sees its final products, not its process. This has led to significant misconceptions about the process of forming scientific knowledge and the nature of the knowledge that is produced. Occasionally, however, events do occur that open up the black box of knowledge creation to public view. In this course, we will use several such episodes to examine science and public portrayals of science.

- **FYS** meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- **LC** meets MWF 12:00-1:10 (Principles of Writing - EN 121)

Theatre and Right Action - TH 130
Professor Aasne Daniels
Why do we make theatre? Is it to escape our world, learn about other cultures, other people? Identify with people we would like to be? Laugh, cry, think, change the world? The answer is all of the above, depending on the purpose of the writers, producers, and audience members. What can we learn about ourselves through theatre/film? Specifically, we will explore the ways in which playwrights and filmmakers raise social consciousness through their art; we will examine the difficult decisions characters at times face, and how they choose—or whether they choose—to stay true to their own integrity or to buckle under pressure from outside forces. What are the consequences of their choices? How hard is it to “do the right thing?” We will read three plays and see two films. We will research a moral dilemma and write a play based on our findings, culminating in a staged reading/performance here at Illinois College. In this way, we will participate in a powerful tradition and become theatre artists in the pursuit of right action.

- **FYS** meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- **LC** meets MWF 12:00-1:10 (Speech Fundamentals - COM 101 with Professor Hacker Daniels)
Think Like a Freak - EC 130  
Professor Andrew Nahlik  
This course will be an introduction to how to think and analyze decisions like an economist. What does this mean? We focus on incentives. All people and businesses respond to incentives in their everyday lives when they make a myriad of decisions throughout the day. These decisions could be as simple as choosing which restaurant to eat at for dinner. However, they could be as complex as why do you choose to procrastinate rather than do your homework? Why do you choose a certain major? How can you change your behavior? In our textbook, Levitt and Dubner analyze the decisions we make, the plans we create, and the morals we choose, and they show how their insights can be applied to daily life to make smarter, harder, and better decisions. Using other sources for current economic thought such as the freakonomics and planet money blogs will make this course very interactive and stimulate a lifelong curiosity for how you can optimize your decisions big and small. Linked with Principles of Writing, the bond between these two classes makes you think about how written arguments and data can influence decisions.

- FYS meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- LC meets TR 12:00-1:40 (Speech Fundamentals - CO 101 with Professor Nick Sciullo)

Thinking like an Engineer - PY 130  
Professor Jeff Chamberlain  
Designed for students wishing to major in engineering or physics, this seminar focuses on design and teamwork, problem solving, and engineering communication. Projects like programming a robot to escape a maze, building a balsa wood bridge that can support twenty pounds, and constructing an electronic circuit to convert light intensity to sound will allow students to explore their talents and interests in science. The learning community will connect oral communication and engineering through engineering ethics, decision making, and project presentations.

- FYS meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- LC meets MWF 12:00-1:10 (Speech Fundamentals - CO 101 with Professor Zac Goldman)

Who am I? Exploring Identity - IS 130  
Professor Beth Nahlik  
In this course students will explore societal expectations, cultural influences, and the stories we tell ourselves all in the name of identity formation. Through film, literature, music, interest inventories, and scholarly research, we will come to understand how each of our own identities have been, and will continue to be, formed and how to use this knowledge for personal success. Enrollment limited to Yates Fellows.

- FYS meets MWF 12:00-1:10
- LC meets MWF 1:20-2:30 (Speech Fundamentals - CO 101 with Professor Kallia Wright)

The World of Computer Science - CS 130  
Professor Jim Streib  
Computers are part of everyday life and can affect much of what one does. Understanding how computers work means going far beyond knowing how to send emails, surf the web, create documents, or play computer games. A deeper knowledge of the areas of Computer Science will help one understand the scope and limits of computer technology. This class is a broad overview of Computer Science. Topics can include an introduction to the history of computing, data manipulation, algorithms, operating systems, networking, database systems, programming languages, theory of computation, software engineering, computer security, and ethics. The class includes some in-class laboratory work.

- FYS meets TWRF 11:00-11:50
- LC meets MWF 12:00-1:10 (Principles of Writing - EN 121 with Professor Nick Capo)