



### Fall 2021 First-Year Seminar Descriptions

#### **FSEM 1010 01**

**Title:** YA Fantasy Across Cultures: Mythologies and Socio-Political Visions

**Instructor:** Kris Deffenbacher

**Meets:** TR 12:50-2:20

Writers of color and Indigenous writers are redefining speculative fiction, conjuring through fantasy the realities of their cultures, histories, and world views. In a range of recent young adult (YA) fantasy novels, writers from minority and marginalized cultures blend deeply-rooted mythologies with pressing socio-political issues to create alternative visions of our collective past, present, and future.

In this FYSem we will use critical reading and individual and collaborative research to examine diverse, award-winning YA fantasy novels in their literary, cultural, and socio-political contexts. We'll begin with Aiden Thomas' *Cemetery Boys* (2020), an urban fantasy that invokes the power of Santa Muerte/Lady Death and brings to life intersecting Latinx and LGBTQ experiences in present-day East Los Angeles. We'll then turn to Justina Ireland's *Dread Nation* (2018), an alternative history of post-Civil War America that resurrects the zombie lore rooted in Haitian slave culture to confront racial oppression, past and present. Finally, we'll explore Cherie Dimaline's *The Marrow Thieves* (2017), a work of Indigenous futurism that blends echoes of history (government agents kidnap Indians and confine them to "schools") with legends of dream magic in a world ravaged by climate change.

#### **FSEM 1010 03**

**Title:** Public presence: Sites of memory, exploration, and expression

**Instructor:** Rachel Tofteland- Trampe

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

We will tour virtual, and hopefully some local, public sites of memory, exploration, and expression (e.g., memorials, parks, art and history museums, sculpture gardens) in order to uncover how the writing and modes of communication surrounding these sites are designed and how they impact visitors. We will identify choices made about perspectives and histories that are present, and not present, and we'll ask a range of questions to better understand the purposes, audiences, and persuasive influences at these sites. In particular: What does this site communicate, and how? Who can access this site? What bodies are welcomed? How is it experienced, and what impact might this site have? In what ways do the technologies used serve as a pathway or barrier to participation or engagement?

Your course texts for class will introduce you to frameworks for analyzing and critiquing these sites and related conversations about bodies, technologies, and accessibility. You will also engage with popular and public-oriented texts (e.g., writing, video, virtual exhibits/tours, and hopefully in-person visits) to learn more about these sites and experience them for yourself. Course assignments will call you to analyze sites from multiple perspectives, critique them, and compose your own digital text(s) for a public site using multiple modes of communication such as writing, images, audio, video, and/or mapping tools.

**FSEM 1010 06****Title:** We're All Born Naked and the Rest is Drag**Instructor:** Curt Lund**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

Over centuries (yes, centuries!), drag performance has swung between mainstream culture and counter-culture; social forces have elevated various forms of drag as popular entertainment, then forced it underground, over and over again. Explore the histories, politics, and cultures of drag, including modern manifestations and influences from beauty pageants to ballroom; from cabaret and camp to club kids and cosplay; from disco to androgynous glam rock to punk genderf\*ck. We'll dig into issues of gender identity vs. gender expression, stereotypes, disparities, cultural appropriation, exploitation, activism, commercialism, and the limits and problems of language and shifting terminologies. Documentaries, archival materials, and first-person narratives will form the core of our research, centering trans and BIPOC voices, with additional readings from key sociology and gender studies scholars -- because reading is what? ("Fundamental!!!")

Drag is a transgressive act, and our explorations into its history may push you out of your comfort zone. You do not need to be a Drag Race superfan to join this FYSEM. You do, however, need to be open and affirming of the humanity and dignity of all people regardless of gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation. We're heee-eere!

**FSEM 1010 08****Title:** Let's Play Magic the Gathering**Instructor:** Kevin Stanley**Meets:** TR 12:50 – 2:20

Obviously, we will play Magic the Gathering. This includes constructed, sealed, and booster draft along with multiplayer variants such as emperor and two-headed giant. If that means nothing to you, don't worry as no previous experience with MTG is required. Additionally, students will be expected to present their analysis of strategies through both essays and oral presentations. Despite the playful nature of the course, all the usual information about university resources and academic planning presented in other first year seminars will find its way into this class as well.

**FSEM 1010 09****Title:** Educational Inequity and Justice**Instructor:** Rebecca Neal**Meets:** TR 12:50 – 2:20

In this course, you will explore how societal influences perpetuate educational inequities, and you will work to create solutions. This First Year Seminar exposes students to our society's hidden fabrics that seek to marginalize some while advantaging others. Using Sociocultural Theory and Symbolic Interactionism as a framework, you will investigate systemic issues in education with a focus on equity and justice.

**FSEM 1010 10****Title:** Everything You Need to Know About Business**Instructor:** Jae Hwan Lee**Meets:** TR 12:50pm-2:20pm

This course helps students to understand challenges and opportunities in the Covid-19 era by investigating various functions of business and applying analytical tools and frameworks in solving business problems. Students will read and discuss news articles, cases, and business magazines, as well as participating in business

simulations. Throughout the course, you'll also be gaining valuable skills for your future semesters at Hamline and beyond.

### **FSEM 1010 11**

**Title:** Resources or Relatives? The Ethical Status of Non-Human Animals

**Instructor:** Mark Berkson

**Meets:** TR 12:50pm-2:20pm

Why do we affectionately pet the newborn calves and piglets at the State Fair baby animal tent and then have a burger with bacon at a nearby food stand? Why do we differ so much in the treatment of our beloved family pets and of the animals used for food or cosmetic testing? Why are most works of children's literature filled with animals to which children feel a deep connection, and at the same time our culture emphasizes our separation from and superiority to non-human animals? Why do some religions prominently feature animal sacrifice while others strictly forbid harming any kind of animal? And how is the Covid-19 pandemic related to our treatment of animals?

From our earliest origins to the present, human beings have been living with, breeding, loving, killing, worshipping, and using non-human animals. Human attitudes and behaviors towards other animals range over a vast continuum, from Jain monks in India who sweep the ground in front of them so that they don't accidentally step on bugs, to people who kill animals simply for sport. In this seminar, we will ask two primary, closely related questions: 1) What do we know about non-human animals? and 2) How should we treat them? The first question regards issues about the characteristics, capacities, and experiences of animals. Do humans possess features animals do not, and what is the moral relevance of these differences? We will evaluate the answers given to the question "What makes humans unique?" We will consider, among other things, language, tool use, and morality, and see how the latest scientific research responds to them. We will then analyze and critique the treatment of non-human animals in a variety of contexts, including killing animals for food (whether small family farms, large factory farms, or hunters), using animals for cosmetic and medical testing, putting animals in zoos and circuses, training working animals, and having animals for pets. We will look at the treatment and view of animals in a range of religious and philosophical traditions, we will hear from a number of guest speakers (from vegans and animal rights activists to hunters and scientists who use animals for experiments), and we will explore the ways animals are presented in popular culture. We will also look at diseases that leap from animals to humans ("zoonotic diseases") and pose a grave threat to humanity, and consider the way they are shaped by our treatment of animals. We will try to formulate an answer to these questions: Are animals essentially resources available for our use or are they members of our extended family? Can they be both?

### **FSEM 1010 13**

**Title:** Melting the Poles: Bringing People Together Across Deep Divides

**Instructor:** Ken Fox

**Meets:** TR 12:50pm-2:20pm

Whether it is climate change, election results, or talking with your uncle about the pandemic, Americans seem to be more deeply divided than ever. Were we always this way? Is it possible to be true to yourself and also connected to those with whom you deeply disagree? Through readings, watching the news, activities and conversation, we will explore the differences among facts, meaning, perspectives, and worldviews and how to melt the ice that keeps us apart. Throughout the course, you'll also be gaining valuable skills for your future semesters at Hamline and beyond.

**FSEM 1010 14**

**Title:** 100 Ways to Reverse Global Warming—Can Science Do It?

**Instructor:** Jerry Artz

**Meets:** TR 12:50pm-2:20pm

How do we or can we, as a society, undergo a transition from fossil fuels to a renewable energy future? How rapidly can we influence change? Can scientists and engineers do this in a manner that is so gradual and economically manageable that the ordinary person can buy in? What are the sustainable energy and environmental science professions of the future? Through a combination of discussions, speakers, readings, videos, field trips and student presentations, we will explore tangible ways in which scientists can meaningfully contribute to a sustainable energy future. This course will revolve around the New York Times Bestseller: Drawdown, The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming. Possible content includes such things as wind and solar energy, biomass, energy storage, nuclear power, food, buildings and cities, land use, transportation and materials. Alas, there may be more questions than answers, but, through this seminar, we will give it our best effort.

**FSEM 1010 15**

**Title:** Life 3.0: Big Data, Social Media, AI and Bots

**Instructor:** Suda Ishida

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

Amidst the rapid rise of artificial intelligence and the use of big data in social media, this first year seminar course will help students explore the evolving relationship between humans and machines. What are the social and political implications of bots and their impact on our work and lives? Do they unite or divide our world? As a student in this class, you will be encouraged to examine how you use social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook to consume and create media in your daily lives. You will analyze the effects of data and surveillance capitalism on society and develop strategies to avoid getting caught in the “Echo Chamber Club,” through awareness of the ways algorithms control and personalize information and the social media experience.

Assignments include examining and analyzing how you, your peers, your friends and family members, and politicians and celebrities use social media to express viewpoints and share lifestyles and social and political beliefs.

The course includes readings, films and discussions. You will be asked to bring in, share, and discuss examples that you have found, observed, or experienced in your social media life. Text: *Digital Detachment: How Computer Culture Undermines Democracy* by Chet Bowers

**FSEM 1010 16**

**Title:** Wild Creation!

**Instructor:** Bonnie Ploger

**Meets:** TR 12:50pm-2:20pm

Come on a multidisciplinary adventure investigating the wild through outdoor exploration, artistic creation, and thoughtful analysis using methods from the arts, sciences and humanities. In this course we'll ask questions such as these: What do wilderness and nature mean to you? To others? How are these views affected by your family and cultural heritage, where you live, your access to green spaces, and your experiences of racism or other types of discrimination?

We'll examine some of the many ways scientists, writers, and artists of various cultural backgrounds answer these questions in their writing and creative artwork. As you investigate their connections to the natural world, you will also examine your own as we explore some of the surprising diversity of environments from prairies to woods and wetlands that exist nearby, even in our Hamline-Midway neighborhood. Through our readings, art investigations and while wandering outside, you'll learn some natural history, basic scientific principles of ecology, and gain ideas for artistic creation. We will use observation, imagination and intuition to make visual art inspired by and, sometimes, in collaboration with nature, as we experiment with natural objects and traditional art materials. In the process, we'll also consider our own relationships with the natural world and our own personal creativity, our own creative natures. The focus of the course will be on investigation and discovery: artistically, scientifically, culturally, and within ourselves.

### **FSEM 1010 17**

**Title:** Immigration: Its History and Literature

**Instructor:** Nurith Zmora

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

Immigration is currently at the forefront of U.S. political debate, but to better understand it we need to examine the history of immigration and listen to the voices of the immigrants themselves, then and today. In this class, we will be reading literary works by immigrants or about them. We will analyze the novels, place them in historical context, and try to understand the peoples and their time. We will be focusing on your critical thinking, text analysis, class participation, research and writing skills, and on class presentations of your research.

### **FSEM 1010 18**

**Title:** History in Literature: Russian Literature in History

**Instructor:** John Mazis

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

Art and literature do not exist in a vacuum. They are informed by the time and place they inhabit and in which they are created. Literature is written by people who are the products, and the shapers, of history. Good literature can often help us understand the past better than traditional history. For historians, literature is also a valuable primary source, a way for us to communicate with a bygone era.

In this class we will be examining short works of literature, putting them in their proper historical context, and, in the process, understanding better both the literary works and the times in which they were created.

### **FSEM 1010 19**

**Title:** Uses and Misuses of Algorithms

**Instructor:** Craig Erickson

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

Data scientists have used algorithms for many great things: Netflix's recommendation system; building teams that go on to win the World Series or the Stanley Cup; proving the existence of the Higgs boson; and early detection of cancer. Others have used algorithms with malicious intent: targeting of vulnerable people by payday loan companies, and for-profit higher education companies that provide little---if any---benefit to their students; using social network bots to spread misinformation and sow discontent within a country. Sometimes algorithms have unintended negative effects: the firing of skilled teachers in Washington, D.C.; racial discrimination in the lengths of prison sentences and the granting (or not granting) of parole; and discriminating against job applicants (including racism, sexism, and ableism).

In this course, we will investigate both successes and failures of algorithms. We will discover that algorithms are efficient at learning from data, including learning and amplifying biases within the data. We will also get hands-on experience working with data, including investigating data for evidence of bias, using algorithms to make predictions, and using data and algorithms to inform decision-making. No prior experience in statistics or programming is necessary. The only requirements are the desire to solve problems using data and an interest in the ethical use of data.

***Course is part of the WISE program, and must be taken in conjunction with BIOL 1510-01.***

### **FSEM 1010 21**

**Title:** Who Am I & What Do I See: An Exploration of Identity, Perspective & Experience

**Instructor:** David Everett

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

Multicultural understanding refers to awareness of and comfort with difference. Understanding difference, whether race, ethnicity, class, gender, or others, can be instrumental in leadership development. This FYSem will explore the dynamics of difference to help pursue the goal of inclusive excellence by engaging a balanced range of ideals and ideas so that students find a way to converse honestly, rationally, and in an informed way about issues currently facing society and institutions. Learners will deepen their understanding and appreciation of ways in which the understanding and application of difference has, and continues, to shape individuals as well as the systems and structures they inhabit.

### **FSEM 1010 22**

**Title:** Flashpoint Conflicts in American Politics

**Instructor:** Joe Peschek

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

On issues from climate change to immigration to racial justice, American politics today reveals deep and intensifying conflicts among both citizens and political leaders as to how problems should be understood and what, if anything, should be done. Growing numbers of both Republicans and Democrats not only disagree with members of the other party, but regard the other side as an actual threat to the country. At times different groups of Americans seem to inhabit parallel universes. In this course, we will discuss and examine political conflict, difference, and polarization in American politics today. How real are these apparent conflicts? Is polarization deepening? What are the causes of flashpoint conflicts? Is conflict rooted in basic value differences among people, such as differences in religious views?

We will explore flashpoint politics by focusing on particular conflict-ridden issues: immigration, same-sex marriage, policing and criminal justice, attitudes towards Islam, taxation and spending, climate change, and economic inequality, among others. Through rigorous written and oral exercises, and by drawing on a wide range of multi-media sources of scholarly and popular analysis and information, students will demonstrate their ability to explain and interpret flashpoint conflicts.

### **FSEM 1010 23**

**Title:** Tax the Rich, Tax the Poor, Tax Them 'til There Are No More

**Instructor:** Nancy Webber

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

In this FYSem, we explore the U.S. income tax system. Students will look at the evolution of taxes in America, and will also develop the life skill of preparing an individual tax return. Students will also be exposed to lively debates on tax law and look at alternatives to the present system. Coursework entails preparing increasingly

complex tax returns from fictitious fact patterns. In addition, students will research a tax topic and write a paper summarizing their finds. This class is ideal for students who have an interest in pursuing coursework in business-related classes.

### **FSEM 1010 24**

**Title:** The City as University: Hamline Without Walls

**Instructor:** Jim Scheibel

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

Hamline University is located in the heart of Minnesota's capital city. Saint Paul is vibrant, with a wealth of assets, though it also faces challenges in public safety and providing economic opportunity. This course explores the seven wards of the city--their demographics, history, culture, arts, businesses, and community-building initiatives. Particular attention will be paid to how the city has been challenged and changed by COVID-19, the murder of George Floyd, and civil unrest in these areas and beyond. Students will conduct their own research in addition to meeting with and hearing from city leaders and community members. This course values discourse, with guest speakers joining the course weekly, and helps to make the process of becoming a citizen student, both on and off campus, accessible.

### **FSEM 1010 25**

**Title:** The Classic Rock Era of Music

**Instructor:** Bruce Bolon

**Meets:** TR 12:50pm-2:20pm

This First-Year Seminar will take an in-depth look at American and British music released during what is commonly referred to as the "classic rock" era of popular music, which began in the late 60's and ended around the mid 80's. While much of the focus will be on classic rock music itself, we will investigate many other styles prevalent at that time as well. We will explore musical, cultural, sociological, and other factors that led to the classic rock era, as well as the factors that caused it to end. We will pay particular attention to the influence of American blues and R&B on British bands of the 60's, and the subsequent influence those British bands had on American music.

We will also investigate subgenres of classic rock, such as progressive rock, art rock, and symphonic rock. We will also focus on legendary musicians on the standard instruments (including vocals) found in classic rock bands. We will study many specific bands that were highly influential in bringing about musical change, even though such bands are often not the ones that get the credit. We will also discuss both positive and negative effects related to the increasing control artists had on their own music.

Disclaimer:

Students who are already fans of the classic rock era, or who are interested in learning more about it, are highly encouraged to sign up for this course. Students who are not interested in that era will be in for a long semester.

### **FSEM 1010-26**

**Title:** Who gets to be a scientist?

**Instructor:** Jodi Goldberg

**Meets:** MWF 10:20am-11:20am

What makes a person a scientist? Who gets to work in STEM fields? When do students begin to look at themselves as scientists? In popular culture, many stereotypes about natural scientists are played out. If you ever watched the Big Bang theory, there was one woman and four men in the original cast. The female

character, Penny, was a waitress and actor, while all the male characters were physicists or engineers. What message does that send to young girls who might want to be physicists? What about in real life? What STEM scientists can you name? Which have you seen on the news or in social media? How many of those scientists are women or people of color? This FYSEM will explore the challenges to embarking on a career in the natural sciences, especially for first generation college students. We will consider how natural science courses are traditionally taught and who benefits, and therefore who doesn't, from those teaching approaches in their pursuit of a STEM career. We will also explore the careers of some well-respected STEM scientists who come from underrepresented groups within STEM disciplines, and we'll examine the hurdles they faced as they developed their scientific identity. Students will also begin forming their own scientific identity by reflecting on what they learn and on their own scientific identities, and by co-enrolling in the BIOL 1510: Integrated Concepts of Biology course.

***Course is part of the WISE program, and must be taken in conjunction with BIOL 1510-01.***

## **Writing Intensive First-Year Seminars**

### **FSEM 1020-01**

**Title:** Border Histories

**Instructor:** Kate Bjork

**Meets:** TR 12:50 – 2:20

Writing Intensive First Year Seminar: Border Histories

This seminar focuses on the history of borders and borderlands in North America over the last five centuries, with particular attention to the border between the U.S. and Mexico. We will examine some of the key events (wars, treaties, colonization, migration and settlement) that have remade borders over time and discuss the significance that diverse groups of people have attached to the creation and enforcement of such “lines in the sand.” We will also inquire into the distinctive hybrid cultures that distinguish borderlands. While one of the effects of borders has been to define and divide nations and peoples, international boundaries have also provided strategic opportunities for dissidents and outlaws to seek refuge and foment revolution, often with important political and cultural consequences. Course readings and discussions will also engage the contemporary significance of borders and immigration in our hemisphere as well as globally.

**Because this is a writing-intensive First-Year Seminar: you do not need to register for FYW 1120.**

### **FSEM 1020-02**

**Title:** Fight the Power: Music and Social Justice

**Instructor:** Matthew Sumera

**Meets:** MWF 10:20-11:20

This class will explore how people worldwide have used music to address issues of social conflict, exclusion/inclusion, and justice. In particular, we will explore a range of cross-cultural and historical examples that speak to how artists, musicians, producers, audience members, political activists, and fans alike have turned to music as both a source of inspiration and as a key component of various social justice movements. By reading ethnographies, exploring various case studies from around the world, and watching documentary films, we will examine both the global history of popular music as well as its various local connections. Throughout, we will ask ourselves one simple, though oftentimes elusive, question: Why music? What does music provide protest movements that other forms of performance and communication don't? What do such uses suggest about the flexibility of musical meaning? What does popular music mean to these movements and the people engaged in them? And how have specific political uses of popular music changed the ways we hear and listen to such sounds?



**Because this is a writing-intensive First-Year Seminar: you do not need to register for FYW 1120.**