Fall 2020 First Year Seminars

All students must complete a First Year Seminar in the Fall or Spring of their first year. In no instance will a cap for a First Year Seminar exceed 20 students.

Actuarial Science

**ASC 150 Forecasting the Future**

*FY1 MWF 12:20-1:10 Whitaker | FY2 MWF 1:25-2:15 Whitaker*

Actuaries identify, evaluate, and quantify risk. This first year seminar course will examine techniques used by actuaries to forecast the future. The course will be interactive and will make extensive use of simulations based in Excel. Students will learn to make predictions based on past patterns, ranging from sports statistics to bond prices and insurance premiums. There will be classroom debates and group discussions on the challenges actuaries face in reconciling mathematical and social equity. Sample topics will include debating whether younger drivers should pay more for car insurance, discussing if affordable health insurance is a right, and examining the fairness and future of the social security system. Risk management professionals and actuaries will be featured as guest speakers during the semester. Basic Excel spreadsheet skills will be demonstrated and taught.

Art History

**ARH 150 Blasphemy and Devotion**

*FY1 TR 12:30-1:45 Hage*

This course explores artists’ and architects’ varied and often controversial responses to issues of religion and spirituality. Prompted by today’s unprecedented globalization and the centrality of religion in politics worldwide, it analyzes artworks and buildings from the late nineteenth century to the present. Students investigate creative reactions to Catholicism, as well as Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and other forms of Christianity through reading a broad range of texts, writing, individual research, and class discussions.

Biology

**BIO 150L Bio I: Cells Lab Phage (Honors)**

*HN1 TR 12:30-2:25 Lee-Soety*

This two-semester Phage Genomics Laboratory Honors course satisfies the lab components of BIO 101: Cells and BIO 102: Genetics. The Fall 101 lab also satisfies the first-year seminar requirement. The genomics lab provides a unique opportunity to participate in an authentic research experience rather than a “cookbook” lab. Designed for freshman Biology, Chemical Biology, or Environmental Science majors in the honors program (although all students in these majors are encouraged to apply), this lab experience combines themes and technology from several specialized biological fields, including microbiology, molecular biology, genomics, and bioinformatics. Application (available on the SJU Biology Department Website: sju.edu/bio) is required and due by June 22nd. Go to the Biology Department website (see Information for incoming students) for more information.
**Chemistry**

**CHM 150 Chemistry Cuisine**  
*FY1 TR 12:30-1:45 Crossan*

The First-Year Seminar (FYS) is designed to introduce students to the adventures of learning in a college context. The challenge and excitement of intellectual exploration of a topic of shared interest is its prime purpose. First-Year Seminars focus in depth on a question or topic of disciplinary or interdisciplinary interest. By means of its specific focus, the seminar will explore the thinking, research, and writing practices in a particular field. Discussions based on careful reading of texts, writing assignments, both reflection and research types, and in-class student presentations will be supplemented, as appropriate, with activities including guest lecturers, museum trips, attendance at local cultural events and/or field excursions. Topics vary according to individual instructors. First year seminar.

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**Communications**

**COM 150 Photos in the Age of Social Media**  
*FY1 MWF 10:10-11:00 Sullivan*

In the age of smartphones and social media, cameras have become ubiquitous. Increasingly, we communicate our experience through the images we capture and share. The screens of our device cameras pop up from crowds at concerts and protests, they are there to document the most mundane details of our lives, and they mediate our major life events: graduations, birthdays, and even funerals. The confluence of social media and photography is creating new formations and cultural phenomena. Yet, many of the practices and technologies that seem “new” have a clear and important historical precedent. Our society is reshaping the meaning of photography in the social media age, but photography’s past is still very much present. Understanding how people used and thought about photographs decades before the internet will help us better understand our contemporary moment. We will use the lens of media history and intersectional feminism to examine current debates and controversies surrounding selfies, citizen journalism, digital art, social media celebrities, identity, and memory.

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**Computer Science**

**CSC 150 The Joy of Computing**  
*FY1 TR 12:30-1:45 Krueger*

This First Year Seminar course for majors and non-majors will introduce the basics of computer programming using Python (Joy of Computing) or Alice (Computational Thinking Through 3D Animation). Through programming practice the students will gain an appreciation of computer programs and algorithm development that can be applied in many fields.

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**Decision & System Sciences**

**DSS 150 Data Visualization**  
*FY1 MWF 11:15-12:05 Guerra | FY2 R 6:30-9:15 Connelly*

The human mind can handle significant amounts of information, but is not able to process the large masses of data required for business decision-making. There is a vast number of data processing and visualization technologies, tools, and techniques available to business users, but it is important to first understand how human consumers of information receive and best interpret it. This class uses an interdisciplinary approach to examining the best methods for presenting data visually for meaningful intake. Students will learn a variety of concepts related to information gathering, processing, and presentation, including data visualization tools.
Course activities draw from various disciplines including information systems, computer science, cognitive psychology, economics, graphic design, and research methods to examine and evaluate information. Students will present and analyze data sets in graphical form and explain their findings via written, oral, and visual presentations.

Economics

**ECN 150 Economics of the 2020 Election**

*FY1 TR 2:00-3:15 Fox*

In 1992, James Carville, then candidate Bill Clinton’s campaign manager, coined the phrase “the economy, stupid.” The implication was that the economy was the number one issue for voters. A November 2019 poll confirms this—..’when asked what issue 'matters the most to you right now,' jobs and the economy is cited by 24% of Americans, No. 1 among all responses…” This course discusses the major economic policy issues of the 2020 presidential election, including health care, immigration, climate change, federal budget and taxation, trade and tariffs, minimum wage, and SNAP. The two major parties’ policy platforms will be the primary texts, which are supplemented by readings from the economics literature, campaign policy briefs and articles from the media. This course will also study some topics in the economics of voting, including ranked choice voting and whether it is rational to vote at all.

Education

**EDU 150 Schools in Society (with weekly required Fieldwork)**

*FY1 MWF 12:20-1:10 Olitsky | FY2 MWF 1:25-2:15 Olitsky | SL1 MWF 10:10-11:00 Johnson*

The course studies American education structurally. The origins, evolution, and realities of contemporary public and private schools are examined through critical readings. Visits to elementary classrooms in multicultural settings provide a strong link to the teacher’s world and the course content. Three-hours of observation in schools is required each week. This FYS is required for Secondary Education, Elementary Education Prek-4, and Middle School Years 4-8 majors. Meets the Diversity GEP Overlay.

*Please Note: This the SL1 section of this course with Dr. Virginia Johnson is a Service Learning Course. Students who enroll in this class must also commit to 3 hours of service per week as part of the class.*

English

**ENG 150 Protest, Peace & Civil Rights**

*FY1 TR 2:00-3:15 Green*

“Protest, Peace, and Civil Rights” explores how speeches, poetry, fiction, and memoir from the Civil Rights Movement address injustice. We investigate how strategies of violence and non-violence worked and question how language shapes social change. We also analyze photographs and films.

**ENG 150 Coming of Age in the City**

*FY2 MWF 11:15-12:05 Lockridge*

This course will examine the experience of coming of age in the multicultural city. We will read texts and watch film that attempt to provide a glimpse of the multicultural world beyond the quotidian experience of majority culture. All texts/films will be fictional and will feature young men and women coming to understand their place in multicultural, urban, centers around the
world including: the US, the Caribbean, France, the UK, and Rhodesia. You may find that their unique circumstances mirror your own or even some of the ones you have experienced in texts; you may also find that they do not. This course invites you then to consider literature and film as way to understand yourself, your place in the world, and the people you encounter, but may never know

Finance

FIN 150 Finance through Movies
FY1 TR 5:00-6:15 Baker | FY2 TR 6:30-7:45 Baker
This first year seminar is designed to introduce students to the field of finance through the lens of movies. Students will gain an understanding of a breadth of topics including corporate form of business entity, corporate governance, and role of a corporation in a society. We will also cover stock trading and role of information in stock trading. Finally, we will discuss value creation through mergers and divestitures. Does not satisfy any major or minor Finance requirement. Does not satisfy any free elective credit. Note: We will be watching "R" rated movies in the class. Please understand that these movies may contain uncomfortable and offensive material. Some of the movies may contain violence, profane language, drug use and/or sexual content. Even if one is comfortable with the material in home or theater setting, they still may find uncomfortable in a classroom setting.

Leadership, Ethics & Organizational Sustainability

LEO 150 Serious Comedy & Social Justice
FY1 TR 3:30-4:45 Weidner
Comedy has long been a vehicle by which performers and audiences can engage uncomfortable truths and issues of social injustice. Comedy is increasingly important to individuals’ identity; recent research has shown that comedy is essential to how people view themselves and others. Comedy (including satire and parody) is also a growing business, as evidenced by the popularity of Comedy Central, movies, television programs, YouTube, and other platforms. In this course, we will explore important issues of social justice (e.g., globalization, racism, gender equity, poverty) as presented in comedy across a variety of sources both contemporary (e.g., South Park, The Daily Show, The Colbert Report, The Simpsons) and classic (e.g., All in the Family, The Smothers Brothers, M*A*S*H).

Linguistics

LIN 150 Linguistics and Communication
FY1 TR 6:30-7:45 Uy
This course is a first-year seminar (FYS) of particular interest and benefit to students pursuing various specialties including, but not limited to, Second Language Studies; English; Communication Studies; Speech Therapy; Autism Studies; certain specialties within Education, Sociology and Psychology; and Linguistics. It fulfills the GEP FYS requirement as well as counts toward the Linguistics major/minor. This course is geared toward helping students understand communication from a linguistic perspective. Students will learn to recognize linguistic features of language(s) and will explore current research findings in linguistics. In addition to exploring topics relevant to communication such as accents, bilingualism, dialects, language change, sign language, etc., specific emphasis will be placed on the areas of communication disorders, autism and speech therapy.
Marketing

**MKT 150 First-Year Seminar: Fandom Marketing (Service Learning)**

*SL1 TR 9:30-10:45 Burkhalter*

*Please Note: This is a Service Learning Course. Students who enroll in this class must also commit to 3 hours of service per week as part of the class.*

We will explore fan culture across film, television, music, video games/eSports, hobbies and sports. Students will immerse themselves in online fandoms through social media. And since personal brands are central to professional success, students will learn how to leverage fandom concepts in shaping their own personal brand and online presence.

Modern and Classical Cultures

**MCC 150 Learning Across Cultures**

*FY1 MWF 9:05-9:55 Daniel*

This course is intended for students from cultures outside the United States as well as for U.S. citizens who speak other languages and are interested in studying other cultures or who will study abroad. The course has a double focus. First, we will learn about the process of learning in general. Second, we will study cultural frameworks and intercultural communication and reflect on how culture influences education. The goal is to help students learn more effectively and to have strategies for dealing with difficulties and challenges during their university education, and to give them tools for collaborating effectively with persons from diverse backgrounds. Highly recommended for non-native speakers of English, for bilingual or multilingual students and for anyone studying abroad (or anyone intending to study abroad).

Pharmaceutical Marketing

**PMK 150 Smart Healthcare Consumer**

*FY1 TR 9:30-10:45 Trombetta*

By virtue of our birth, we are all consumers of healthcare. Becoming a smart healthcare consumer requires us to understand what having healthcare means as a patient as well as how the system of care works (or sometimes fails.) Additionally, it requires insights from the perspectives of various stakeholders, who either provide direct care (doctors, nurses or hospitals), or who indirectly participate by influencing, regulating, and/or paying for healthcare. The course will examine the doctor visit as a transaction and will evaluate the motivation of the various stakeholders. The course will also consider how disruptive technology and medical innovation influence the future of medicine.

Philosophy

**PHL 150 Language, Deafness, and Mind (Service Learning)**

*SL1 TR 9:30-10:45 Keller*

*Please Note: This is a Service Learning Course. Students who enroll in this class must also commit to 3 hours of service per week as part of the class.*

Human children have an amazing ability to learn language. They are able to acquire the correct grammar for the language of their community while being exposed to many errors and having their own mistakes go largely uncorrected. Even more, with barely any environmental input at all, Deaf children born to hearing parents who are not competent with sign language somehow manage to create their own sign languages. Learning about how Deaf children accomplish this impressive feat can teach us about the nature of communication and what it
takes for a form of communication to count as a language. It can also give us insight into the nature of the human mind. This class will begin by examining a historical, philosophical debate about the nature of human thought and learning: is the mind a blank slate at birth that is completely shaped by experience? Or is our experience structured by ideas we are born with? This question was hotly debated by philosophers for centuries, but without empirical evidence. In this class, we will consider such questions from an interdisciplinary perspective, by bringing research from psychology and linguistics to bear on this ancient philosophical puzzle. Attention will also be paid to some of the moral questions that arise in the context of Deaf education.

**PHL 150 Drugs, Freedom and Control (Service Learning)**

*SL2 MWF 12:20-1:10 Boettcher*

*Please Note: This is a Service Learning Course. Students who enroll in this class must also commit to 3 hours of service per week as part of the class.*

This course will examine historical and contemporary philosophical approaches to the classic problem of free will and determinism problem with special attention paid to the free will questions raised by substance use disorder and addiction. Additional topics may include: rival conceptions of political freedom, origins of and reflections on the U.S. opioid crisis, homelessness, drug policy, mass incarceration, or other contemporary issues relevant to the SJU service-learning program and its partner institutions and placement sites in and around Philadelphia. Both classroom meetings and course requirements will provide opportunities for academic study to inform – and to be informed by – sustained and meaningful personal reflection on service experiences.

**Political Science**

**POL 150 Diversity & Inequality in U.S.**

*FY1 MWF 10:10-11:00 Scola*

*Please Note: This is a Service Learning Course. Students who enroll in this class must also commit to 3 hours of service per week as part of the class.*

Depending on the instructor, the First-Year Seminar courses focus on particular topics of interest in Political Science and Politics (e.g., Diversity and Inequality; Gender and Global Politics; Student Liberties and the Supreme Court). Does not count for major credit.

**POL 150 Bringing Ethics Back In**

*FY2 TR 5:00-6:15 Fukuoka*

Depending on the instructor, the First-Year Seminar courses focus on particular topics of interest in Political Science and Politics (e.g., Diversity and Inequality; Gender and Global Politics; Student Liberties and the Supreme Court). Does not count for major credit.

**Risk Management & Insurance**

**RMI 150 Natural Disasters and Community Recovery**

*FY1 TR 8:00-9:15 Boyle*

The goal of this course is to empower students to use primary and secondary sources to investigate community recovery from natural disasters. The research will highlight the economics and social impact of insurance. Specifically, students will compare and contrast community recovery from different types of natural disasters while evaluating the successes
and/or struggle of insurance products in aiding community recovery from natural disasters.
*May only fulfill the GEP First-Year Seminar requirement. Does not satisfy any major or minor
Risk Management & Insurance requirement. Does not satisfy any free elective credit.

Sociology

**SOC 150 Social Problems & Change**
*FY1 TR 9:30-10:45 Bergen*

*Please Note: This is a Service Learning Course. Students who enroll in this class must also commit to 3 hours of service per week as part of the class.*

This freshman seminar course examines the most significant contemporary social problems in our culture. Issues are examined from a sociological perspective that is enhanced by students' work at service sites. This is the second part of a two-semester course sequence for first year students.

Theology

**THE 150 Religious Vision Fiction & Film (Honors)**
*HN1 TR 9:30-10:45 Aspan*

*This course is restricted to students who are enrolled in the Honors Program.*

This course introduces fiction and films that are driven by religious sensibilities and theological insights. Issues rising throughout the course include deity, sin, forgiveness, grace, redemption, virtue, and community. Student expectations entail critical analysis and theological reflection, as well as a very basic grasp of the phenomenon of human religiosity. Seminar subjects vary.