



SPRING 2025 INCOMING STUDENT FIRST YEAR SEMINAR SELECTION

Please read all of the descriptions before choosing a seminar. **Do not make a decision based on the title or department code** as seminars are not connected to a particular major. Students should fully read the description to understand the course content.

- Many of the common questions about first year seminars are answered on the FYE website: www.salemstate.edu/fys. **Please review all the information before selecting your seminar!**
- If you want to change your seminar after making your selection, you will need to speak with the First Year Experience office by emailing firstyearseminar@salemstate.edu or calling 978.542.2618. Please note that spaces are limited so depending on when you contact the office, changing your section may not be an option.
- The first year seminar is worth 3 credits meaning it is an academic course and will involve reading, writing, and critical analysis like any other college-level course you take. While there are “transition to college” elements woven into the seminar the main focus is on a particular academic topic. For example, if you took a dance or yoga or music class in high school you may have focused your time on actually dancing, doing yoga, or singing. A first year seminar focused on one of those topics might include “doing” but is going to also focus on reading about the history of those topics, perhaps studying cultural impact, writing papers, and engaging in academic discussions about the topic.

To request accommodations, please contact the Center for Accessible Academic Resources at 978.542.6217 or caar@salemstate.edu.

Spring 2025 Options:

1. Playing with Pop Culture
2. Playing with Pop Culture
3. When the Going Gets Tough...Let's Get Going!
4. Pirates: Fact or Fiction?
5. I Want My MTV: Music and Pop Culture in 1980s and Beyond
6. Science, Nonscience, and Nonsense
7. Viewpoints on Social (In)justice
8. Selfies and the Art of Portraiture
9. Imagined Boston
10. Imagined Boston

SPRING 2025 SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS:

1. Playing with Pop Culture

FYEN 100-01 (#1603)

So... how do you chill? Listen to music? Binge watch TV series? Channel celebrities? Compete with strangers on video games? Follow fashionistas on YouTube? Descend down the rabbit hole of social media? We all turn to pop culture when we want to escape, be entertained, and bond with buddies. At a higher level, popular culture can inform (and misinform) us; and, it invites us to get involved with — and maybe even change — the world. We'll use your favorite cultural pursuits to frame spirited discussions about identity — individual, generational, american, and global. *Let's have laughs playing with pop culture, while also appreciating its contemporary relevance.* We will investigate, analyze, and challenge the impact of the dominate culture, pop culture, music, film, art and the historical contribution of politics and cultural events as they contribute to your sense of self-knowing. Some topical ideas? History of Memes — from humor to haters; How The Beatles Changed the World, Why Millennials Love Dystopian Stories; The Downsides of Celebrity Culture; YouTube Video Messaging: propagandists and activists; Social Media Wrecks Relationships, or Misogamy and the Game Boys. **NOTE:** There are two separate “sections” of this course that meet at different times – students will choose one of the sections based on time. Students may NOT alternate between the two times. **Wednesdays and Fridays 9:25am - 10:40am, Sullivan 202, North Campus**

2. Playing with Pop Culture

FYEN 100-03 (#2776)

So... how do you chill? Listen to music? Binge watch TV series? Channel celebrities? Compete with strangers on video games? Follow fashionistas on YouTube? Descend down the rabbit hole of social media? We all turn to pop culture when we want to escape, be entertained, and bond with buddies. At a higher level, popular culture can inform (and misinform) us; and, it invites us to get involved with — and maybe even change — the world. We'll use your favorite cultural pursuits to frame spirited discussions about identity — individual, generational, american, and global. *Let's have laughs playing with pop culture, while also appreciating its contemporary relevance.* We will investigate, analyze, and challenge the impact of the dominate culture, pop culture, music, film, art and the historical contribution of politics and cultural events as they contribute to your sense of self-knowing. Some topical ideas? History of Memes — from humor to haters; How The Beatles Changed the World, Why Millennials Love Dystopian Stories; The Downsides of Celebrity Culture; YouTube Video Messaging: propagandists and activists; Social Media Wrecks Relationships, or Misogamy and the Game Boys. **NOTE:** There are two separate “sections” of this course that meet at different times – students will choose one of the sections based on time. Students may NOT alternate between the two times. **Wednesdays and Fridays 10:50am - 12:05pm, Sullivan 202, North Campus**

3. “When the Going Gets Tough...Let’s Get Going!”

FYEN 100-02 (#1604)

What do you do when the going gets tough? Do you tackle challenges head on, or is it sometimes not as easy as that? In this seminar, we will look at ways we and other people set goals, solve problems, and confront demanding issues. We will question tendencies we have that get in the way of our aspirations such as making excuses and procrastinating and consider how we can be fully engaged in our lives and gain awareness, grit, and resilience. We'll start the class by thinking about what is truly important to each of us and examining fictional works and real-life examples of people accomplishing great things. Over the semester, we'll write short essays, create a zine, and record a group podcast based on what we hope to achieve and the insights we gain from the stories of others. **Wednesdays and Fridays, 1:40pm - 2:55pm, Meier 218, North Campus.**

4. Pirates: Fact or Fiction?

FYHI 100-01 (#2769)

In this seminar we will explore the truth about pirates. Through film and readings we will explore what life was like for some of the most notorious pirates sailing on the high seas. We will look at the similarities and differences of pirates from different cultures. We will also look at the men and some women who sailed as pirates, where they came from, where they lived when not aboard a ship, and what they did with their ill-gotten gains. Did “X” really mark the spot? ***Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:50am –12:05pm, Sullivan 109, North Campus***

5. I Want My MTV: Music and Pop Culture in 1980s and Beyond

FYMU 100 -01 (#2777)

Social media apps like Instagram and TikTok have fundamentally altered how we process the world, and their influence on our everyday life offers much to teach us about who we are. The phenomenal rise of the cable television channel MTV (Music Television) in the early 1980s offers us a similar lens to learn about American society through its music videos and pop culture. Together, we will examine what was forever changed about popular music (and everything else) when video killed the radio star in 1981. When we study the “retro” quality of 80s and 90s media, trends, events, and artifacts like music videos, the moonwalk, fashion styles, compact discs (CDs), parental advisory labels, and Woodstock '99, we will see just how much our current social media obsession was predicted by MTV. By focusing on stories and controversies from MTV era, roughly 1980-2000, we will investigate its influence on and relevance to our contemporary world. ***Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:05pm - 4:20PM, Central Campus 238, Central Campus***

6. Science, Nonscience, and Nonsense

FYBI 100- 01 (#2774)

Every day you are exposed to conflicting statements concerning scientific knowledge. Does eating a high salt diet cause high blood pressure? Are vaccines safe? Is climate change happening? Can acupuncture cure what ails you? Are the answers to these questions a matter of opinion? Through reading and discussion, you will learn what scientists do and how data are analyzed and evaluated. We'll also explore the scientific method, scholarly literature in science, experimental design, and the role of science in society. Through analysis of contemporary scientific reports, you will gain an understanding of forming hypotheses, experimentation, and making conclusions drawn from experimental data. In a final project you will analyze a current scientific controversy. ***Mondays 1:10pm - 3:50pm, Meier 544, North Campus.***

7. Viewpoints on Social (In)Justice

FYID 100 - 01 (#1640)

“How we think about something makes a difference not only at the level of theory, but in terms of practice as well” (Apple, 1992). This seminar will focus on questions of social justice, how it is defined and who controls access. As part of an interdisciplinary examination to questions of justice we will focus on different constructions of justice based on thinkers from Plato to Rawls, Russell to Singer: potential topics will include but not limited to, Climate change, Gun control, Abortion Rights (especially in a post Roe world), Healthcare (after COVID), Voting Rights, and Education, Black Lives Matter, Antifa, White Supremacy and the role of international norms (particularly in light of the war in Ukraine) as a result we will connect with students from Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University in Mykolaiv, Ukraine). The aim of the semester will be on the development of a lexicon and modes of presentation that will progress from an examination of the personal to the construction of what are taken as societal norms. ***Wednesday and Fridays 9:25am - 10:40am, Sullivan 206, North Campus***

8. Selfies and the Art of Portraiture

FYAD 100 – 01 (#2746)

We're in the midst of a self-portrait explosion. Selfies snapped, or staged, by friends, relatives, celebrities, and strangers fly across our social media feeds. How do these ubiquitous photographs relate to earlier portraits on canvas or paper, in stone or metal? Historically who has been represented? And how? What messages were they trying to convey? Together we'll explore the history of portraiture, looking closely at images created over time and across cultures. We'll read and write about portraits, while honing our visual analysis skills. As a society we're inundated with pictures that we often glance at only in passing. We'll use our study of portraits as an opportunity to slow down, look closely, and think carefully about what we see.

Wednesday and Friday, 10:50am – 12:05pm, Sullivan 108, North Campus

9. Imagined Boston

FYHI 100-02 (#2772)

In this course, we will explore the history and culture of Boston, the North Shore's metropolitan center, through the lenses of memory and reputation. Who gets represented in images of Boston? Who gets left out? Boston has a national and international reputation as a tough, working-class, predominately Irish city that is completely at odds with the lived reality of the city. We will explore how Boston earned its reputation by examining film, music, sports, and literature. Through these same avenues and others, we will look at why Boston's reputation has not changed, despite realities at odds with what people think of when they hear "Boston." **NOTE:** There are two separate "sections" of this course that meet at different times – students will choose one of the sections based on time. Students may NOT alternate between the two times and will only attend the time they choose for the entire semester. ***Mondays 1:10pm - 3:50pm, Sullivan 104, North Campus***

10. Imagined Boston

FYHI 100-03 (#2773)

In this course, we will explore the history and culture of Boston, the North Shore's metropolitan center, through the lenses of memory and reputation. Who gets represented in images of Boston? Who gets left out? Boston has a national and international reputation as a tough, working-class, predominately Irish city that is completely at odds with the lived reality of the city. We will explore how Boston earned its reputation by examining film, music, sports, and literature. Through these same avenues and others, we will look at why Boston's reputation has not changed, despite realities at odds with what people think of when they hear "Boston." **NOTE:** There are two separate "sections" of this course that meet at different times – students will choose one of the sections based on time. Students may NOT alternate between the two times.

Mondays 4:30pm - 6:50pm, Sullivan 104, North Campus