

First-Year Seminar Program

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COLLEGE & CONSERVATORY

The First-Year Seminar Program (FYSP) is a unique opportunity for newly enrolled students to begin their Oberlin educational experience in a small seminar setting. The topics and academic approaches of seminars are very diverse, but they are all designed to help students hone their critical thinking and their discussion and writing skills. The FYSP urges students to question and understand, and engages them in intellectual inquiry, artistic endeavors, and thoughtful exploration.

Students in the First-Year Seminar Program at Oberlin take on such interesting and complex topics as poetry, race, identity, death, and sports. They are invited to think about places in the world such as Africa, India, Russia, and America. Cutting across the disciplines in the college, first-year seminars allow students to explore and learn within a small classroom setting (enrollment is limited to 14 students).

These seminars provide important opportunities for students to reflect upon the personal value and social relevance of a liberal arts education by interacting with fellow students and faculty members. Students get to know a faculty member well; in fact, the seminar professor often serves as academic advisor to four or five students in the seminar.

The Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences strongly urges all College first-year students to enroll in a first-year seminar in their first semester at the College. Students should note that the vast majority of first-year seminars are offered in the fall semester. Participation in the First-Year Seminar Program is not required, though nearly all first-year students in the College and in the Double-Degree Program opt to take one. Students are able to register for a first-year seminar in the summer

before they matriculate at Oberlin. For up-to-date information on the program, as well as expanded descriptions of seminars, please consult the *First-Year Seminar Program Course Catalog* or visit the First-Year Seminar Program's website for students at www.oberlin.edu/fys.

Faculty in the First-Year Seminar Program come from many different departments. Recent offerings in the FYSP include: "Animal Minds and Human Morals: Current Debates in Animal Ethics," "Globalization Politics," "To Hell and Back: Religious Views of the Underworld," "The Literatures of Atlantic Slavery," "Odysseys of Identity," and "Science and the Mind."

First-Year Seminar Program Director

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Associate Professor of Computer Science (1980)

Ph.D., University of Illinois, 1980

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