

First Year Seminar Course Design Instructions:

Each First Year Seminar (FYS) will be organized around two-thirds shared readings and topics. The instructor will design one-third of the course to include readings and content related to a perennial question that complements their disciplinary expertise. The focus of each course will gradually move from shared materials and consideration of the enduring question, “What is the Good Life?” to a more intensive focus on the instructor’s perennial question. The overall goal will be to provide cohesive and shared experience for the freshmen across the FYS sections while also allowing for instructors’ creativity and flexibility in customizing their course. While designing a FYS course, please keep the following organizing principles in mind:

- Assigned readings should range from 75-125 pages a week, understanding that some genres and texts should be read at a slower pace depending upon the level of technical content. These roughly 100 pages of weekly readings include: required Core Readings, some Suggested Readings chosen by the instructor, and the disciplinary specific readings for the instructor’s choice portion of the course.
- The selections of Suggested Readings from the First Year Seminar Course Outline should not be confined to one discipline, but expose students to a variety of disciplines and perspectives in keeping with the course’s focus on introducing students to the liberal arts and multidisciplinary perspectives. A strong course will include readings or other appropriate content from the arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences.
- Each FYS course will include shared assignments (i.e., a letter to your future self, reading journals, and an essay on the liberal arts), but the instructor may assign additional assignments such as a book review, reading quizzes, or short essay if appropriate. The Curriculum Committee released in Spring 2016 more details about the shared assignments including shared assignment prompts.

SUMMARY Course Outline for First Year Seminar: Enduring Questions		
	Core Themes	Core Readings Required of all FYS courses; study guides and suggested discussion questions are under development.
What is the Good Life?		
Weeks 1-2	*How do we know what the good life is? *Is the good life compatible with suffering? *How do you think your time at Wheaton will contribute to your pursuit of the good life?	Shusaku Endo, <i>Silence</i> , pp. 3-46 N.T. Wright, <i>Simply Christian</i> , pp. 3-103 Psalm 1, 22, 46, 145; Matthew 5-7
How Does My Understanding of Humanness and Identity Shape My Vision of the Good Life?		
Weeks 3-6	*What about my DNA marks me as human? *What is the human condition? *Is my humanness (identity) given, constructed, or both? *Is my sexuality part of the essence of being human? *How is being a social being a part of my humanness and a contributor to the good life? How is the good life fostered by diverse communities?	Shusaku Endo, <i>Silence</i> , pp. 47-201 N.T. Wright, <i>Simply Christianity</i> , pp. 105-140 <i>The Cape Town Commitment</i> , pp. 1-32 Psalm 8, 51, Ephesians, Romans 5-6, 8 MLK Jr., Letter from a Birmingham Jail
Does the Good Life Depend on What Kind of Person You Are?		
Weeks 7-9	*What character traits are necessary for the good life? *What does your behavior reveal about your character? *What spiritual disciplines are necessary for the good life? *How does God aid us in acquiring the traits necessary for the good life? How does God help us to avoid traits destructive of the good life?	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> , pp. 1-169 (Books V-VIII) N.T. Wright, <i>Simply Christian</i> , pp. 143-172 Christian Smith, “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism” Psalm 119, James
How Does My Understanding of the Good Life Contribute To my Sense of Vocation?		
Week 10	*What is a vocation? Am I subject to multiple “callings.” What are they? *If God calls me to a vocation, how does he equip me for that vocation? *What if I don’t know what I want to do or become? (God’s general call on all humans and on Christians) *What the role of vocation in living the good life?	Augustine, <i>The Confessions</i> , pp. 170-196 (Book IX) John 13, 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12
How Does Liberal Arts Education Contribute to Our Pursuit of the Good Life?		
Weeks 11-12	*What are the liberal arts? *How does a liberal arts education differ from other approaches to education?/Why study the liberal arts? *What is distinctive about the Christian Liberal Arts? *What does it mean to think in a distinctively Christian way, and how does it differ from alternative ways of making sense of the world? *What is the vocation of student? How does studying the liberal arts prepare someone for life?	N.T. Wright, <i>Simply Christian</i> , pp. 173-237 Timothy George, “What We Mean When We Say Its True” <i>The Cape Town Commitment</i> , pp. 33-72 Psalm 19, 104, Colossians, 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16
Weeks 13-16	Instructor Selection	

First Year Seminar: Enduring Questions Course Outline
June 1, 2016

Weeks	Core Themes	Core Readings	Suggested Readings
	<p>These course themes are enduring questions to be considered alongside the shared Core Readings and the Suggested Readings selected by the instructor.</p>	<p>Required of all FYS courses; study guides and suggested discussion questions are under development.</p>	<p>Instructors should choose from these readings to supplement the required core readings and their own reading assignments related to their course-specific topic. Although selecting readings outside this “Suggested Readings” list is possible, you should choose readings from this list in the design of your First Year Seminar course.</p> <p>Assigned readings will be roughly 100 pages a week (within a range from 75-125 weekly pages), understanding that some genres and texts read at a slower pace depending upon the level of technical content.</p>

What is the Good Life?

1-2	<p>A. How do we know what the good life is?</p> <p>B. Is the good life compatible with suffering?</p> <p>C. How do you think your time at Wheaton will contribute to your pursuit of the good life?</p>	<p>Shusaku Endo, <i>Silence</i>, pp. 3-46</p> <p>N.T. Wright, <i>Simply Christian</i>, pp. 3-103</p> <p>Psalm 1, 22, 46, 145</p> <p>Matthew 5-7</p>	<p>Plato’s <i>Apology</i></p> <p>Excerpts from Pascal’s <i>Pensees</i></p> <p>Plato, <i>The Republic</i> (excerpts - Analogy of the Sun, The Dividing Line, The Cave Analogy)</p> <p>Classic responses to WITGL question such as Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (excerpt 1098b22-1099b6), Epicurus, <i>The Sovran Maxims</i>, Epictetus, <i>The Enchiridion</i>, Sextus Empiricus, <i>Outlines of Pyrrhonism</i></p> <p>Tolstoy’s <i>The Death of Ivan Illych</i></p> <p>David Foster Wallace, “This is Water” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8CrOL-ydFMI</p> <p>Karl Marx, <i>Communist Manifesto</i></p> <p>Todd Billings, “Rejoicing in Lament,” <i>First Things</i>. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TFMEJLgpMFw (B)</p> <p>John Berger, <i>The Shape of a Pocket</i> (excerpts)</p> <p>Andy Crouch, <i>Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling</i> (excerpts)</p>
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			<p><i>Babette's Feast</i> (film)</p> <p>Kristine Culp, "Vulnerability in a World Marked by Suffering" in <i>Vulnerability and Glory: A Theological Account</i></p> <p>Christian Wiman, <i>My Bright Abyss: Meditation of a Modern Believer</i> (excerpts - "Mortify Our Wolves" and "A Million Little Oblivions")</p> <p>Seeds of the Desert (documentary) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Itswi5QQ5sw&list=PL93401EB8C0CD2152&index=11</p> <p>David Brooks, <i>The Road to Character</i>, first chapter</p>
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How Does My Understanding of Humanness and Identity Shape My Vision of the Good Life?

3-6	<p>A. What marks me as human? What makes me an individual? Are these given or in some sense constructed or both?</p> <p>B. How do features such as our DNA, biology, sexuality, particular culture and traditions, and our religious faith, beliefs and experiences shape us as persons?</p> <p>C. How is being a social being a part of my humanness and a contributor to the good life? How is the good life fostered by diverse communities?</p>	<p>Shusaku Endo, <i>Silence</i>, pp. 47-201</p> <p>N.T. Wright, <i>Simply Christianity</i>, pp. 105-140</p> <p><i>The Cape Town Commitment</i>, pp. 1-32</p> <p>Psalm 8, 51</p> <p>Ephesians</p> <p>Romans 5-6</p> <p>Romans 8</p> <p>MLK Jr., Letter from a Birmingham Jail</p>	<p>Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> (excerpts)</p> <p>Olaudah Equiano, <i>Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano</i> (excerpt)</p> <p>James Baldwin "My Dungeon Shook: Letter to my Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation"</p> <p><i>Daughters of the Dust</i> (film)</p> <p>Dorothy Sayers, "Are Women Human?"</p> <p>Clifford Geertz, "The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man"</p> <p>Montaigne, "Of Cannibals"</p> <p>Laura Bohannon, "Shakespeare in the Bush"</p> <p>Richard Shweder, "What about Female Genital Mutilation?" in <i>Why do Men Barbecue?</i></p> <p>Christian Smith, <i>Moral, Believing Animals: Human Personhood and Culture</i> (selections)</p> <p>Christian Smith and Michael Emerson, <i>Divided By Faith</i> (Ch 4, "Color Blind").</p> <p>Robert Putnam and David Campbell, <i>American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us</i> (excerpt – Ch. 15)</p> <p>Robert Putnam, <i>Bowling Alone</i> (excerpts – Intro, final chapter)</p> <p>Michael Lindsay, <i>Faith in the Halls of Power</i> (excerpt from the conclusion)</p>
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Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind* (excerpts)

Read Schuchardt, "Social Media and the Loss of Embodied Communication," *Liberal Arts for the Christian Life*

Frontline Documentary - "The Persuaders"

Jacques Ellul, "76 Reasonable Questions to Ask About Any Technology"

Jacques Ellul, "Symbolic Function, Technology, and Society"

Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (article version)

Neil Postman, "The Necessity of Gods," in *The End of Education*

Matthew B. Crawford, *The World Beyond Your Head: On Becoming an Individual in an Age of Distraction* (excerpts - "Introduction: Attention as a Cultural Problem," "The Organ Makers' Shop," and "Epilogue: Reclaiming the Real.")

Nicholas Carr, "Is Google Making Us Stoopid?," *The Atlantic Monthly*

Walker Percy, *Lost in the Cosmos* (excerpts)

Andrew M. Niccol, *Gattaca* (excerpt from play in *Being Human* reader, ed. Leon Kass)

C.S. Lewis "Membership"

C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*

"Death is Optional," http://edge.org/conversation/yuval_noah_harari-daniel_kahneman-death-is-optional

Hans Jonas, "The Burden and Blessing of Mortality," (*Being Human* reader, ed. Leon Kass)

Bernard Williams, "The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality"

Philip Jenkins, "Believing in the Global South"

Fred Van Dyke, "The Diversity of Life: Its Loss and Conservation," and Daniel I. Block, "To Serve and to Keep: Toward a Biblical Understanding" in *Keeping God's Earth: The Global Environment in Biblical Perspective*

George Saunders, *Fox 8*

Albert Camus, *The Plague*

			Nathaniel Hawthorne, "The Birth-mark" (<i>Being Human</i> Reader, ed. Leon Kass) Richard Selzer, "Imelda" (<i>Being Human</i> reader, ed. Leon Kass)
Does the Good Life Depend on What Kind of Person You Are?			
7-9	<p>A. What character traits are necessary for the good life?</p> <p>B. What does your behavior reveal about your character?</p> <p>C. What spiritual disciplines are necessary for the good life?</p> <p>D. How does God aid us in acquiring the traits necessary for the good life? How does God help us to avoid traits destructive of the good life?</p>	<p>Augustine, <i>Confessions</i>, pp. 3-169 (Books I-VIII)</p> <p>N.T. Wright, <i>Simply Christian</i>, pp. 143-172</p> <p>Christian Smith, "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism"</p> <p>Psalms 119</p> <p>James</p>	<p>Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, <i>Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us</i> (excerpts)</p> <p>Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, <i>Glittering Vices</i>, (Introduction and chapter of student or professor's choice)</p> <p>Richard Foster, <i>Celebration of Discipline</i> (first chapter)</p> <p>James Bryan Smith, <i>The Good and Beautiful Life: Putting on the Character of Christ</i> (excerpts)</p> <p>Thomas Merton, "Things in Their Identity"</p> <p><i>Tree of Life</i> (film)</p>
How Does My Understanding of the Good Life Contribute To my Sense of Vocation?			
10	<p>A. What is a vocation? Am I subject to multiple "callings"? What are they?</p> <p>B. If God calls me to a vocation, how does he equip me for that vocation?</p> <p>C. What if I don't know what I want to do or become? (God's general call on all humans, on Christians, on individuals)</p> <p>D. What is the role of vocation in living the good life?</p>	<p>Augustine, <i>The Confessions</i>, pp. 170-196 (Book IX)</p> <p>John 13</p> <p>1 Corinthians 12</p> <p>Romans 12</p>	<p>Kathryn Leary Alsdorf and Tim Keller, <i>Every Good Endeavor</i> (Intro, Ch. 2, 4, 7, 8)</p> <p>Dorothy Sayers, "Why Work" and Bradley Nassif, "Boring Work: Good for the Soul," and Gilbert Meilander, "Friendship and Vocation"</p> <p>Readings from <i>Leading Lives that Matter</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Charles Taylor, from the Ethics of Authenticity *Lee Hardy, "Making the Match: Career Choice" *Albert Schweitzer, "I Resolve to Become a Jungle Doctor" *Stephen Dunn, "The Last Hours" *Sullivan Ballou, "A Letter to His Wife, 1861" *Martha Nussbaum Interview <p>Kathleen Norris, <i>Quotidian Mysteries: Laundry, Liturgy, and "Women's Work"</i></p> <p>Steven Garber, <i>Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good</i></p> <p>Kaethe Schwehn and DeAne Lagerquist, <i>Claiming Our Callings: Toward a New Understanding of Vocation in the Liberal Arts</i></p> <p>David Zac Niringiya, Wheaton Commencement address</p>

			<p>J.R.R. Tolkien, “Leaf by Niggle” and Balzac, “The Unknown Masterpiece”</p> <p>Flannery O’Connor, <i>Of Mystery and Manners</i></p> <p><i>The Secret of Kells</i> (film)</p> <p>Matthew B. Crawford, <i>Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work</i> (excerpts - “A Brief Case for the Useful Arts” and “Work, Leisure, and Full Engagement”)</p> <p>H. Richard Neibuhr, <i>The Responsible Self</i></p> <p>Paul Marshall, <i>Heaven is Not My Home</i></p> <p>James Cone, “Bearing the Cross and Staring Down the Lynching Tree” in <i>The Cross and the Lynching Tree: Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Struggle to Redeem the Soul of America</i></p> <p>Tim Clydesdale, <i>The Purposeful Graduate: Why Colleges Must Talk to Students about Vocation</i> (excerpts)</p>
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How Does Liberal Arts Education Contribute to Our Pursuit of the Good Life?

11-12	<p>A. What are the liberal arts?</p> <p>B. How does a liberal arts education differ from other approaches to education? Why study the liberal arts?</p> <p>C. What is distinctive about the Christian Liberal Arts?</p> <p>D. What does it mean to think in a distinctively Christian way, and how does it differ from alternative ways of making sense of the world?</p> <p>E. What is the vocation of a student? How does studying the liberal arts prepare someone for life?</p>	<p>N.T. Wright, <i>Simply Christian</i>, pp. 173-237</p> <p>Timothy George, “What We Mean When We Say Its True”</p> <p><i>The Cape Town Commitment</i>, pp. 33-72</p> <p>Psalms 19, 104</p> <p>Colossians</p> <p>1 Corinthians 1:18-2:16</p>	<p>David Dockery, “Integrating Faith and Learning in Higher Education”</p> <p>David Dockery, <i>Faith and Learning: A Handbook for Christian Higher Education</i> (many options including chapters on Christian faith and the disciplines including Sociology, the Arts, and the Sciences)</p> <p>Arthur F. Holmes, <i>Building the Christian Academy</i> (chapters on Augustine, Francis Bacon, or Newman)</p> <p><i>Liberal Arts for the Christian Life</i>, ed. by Jeffrey Davis and Philip Ryken (selections)</p> <p>Mark Noll, “Come and See: A Christological Invitation for Science,” in <i>Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind</i></p> <p>Peter Harrison, “The Development of the Concept of Laws of Nature,” in <i>Creation: Law and Probability</i>, ed. by Fraser Watts</p> <p>Peter Harrison, <i>The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science</i> (chapters “Adam’s Encyclopedia” and “Augustine Revived”)</p> <p>Nancy Frankenberry, ed. <i>The Faith of Scientists in Their Own Words</i> (brief selections from Galileo, Newton, Hawking, Polkinghorne and more)</p>
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			<p>Timothy Larsen, “War is Over, If You Want It’: Beyond the Conflict between Faith and Science,” <i>Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith</i> 60:3 (September 2008), 147-155.</p> <p>Robert C. Bishop, “God and Methodological Naturalism in the Scientific Revolution and Beyond,” <i>Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith</i> 65:1 (March 2013), 10-23.</p> <p>Robert C. Bishop, et al, <i>Contemporary Theories of Origins</i> (IVP, forthcoming) (excerpts – “ A Robust Doctrine of Creation,” and “Knowledge and Faith in Pursuing Origins Questions”)</p> <p>Michael Lind, “Why the Liberal Arts Still Matter”</p> <p>C.S. Lewis “Learning in War Time”</p> <p>Leland Ryken, “The Student’s Calling,” in <i>Liberal Arts for the Christian Life</i></p> <p>“Matrix of Hope” http://civa.org/civablog/brueggemann-sheesley-bruegel-conversation-about-art/</p> <p><i>Cave of Forgotten Dreams</i> (Herzog film)</p> <p>Dorothy Sayers, <i>The Mind of the Maker</i></p> <p>Walker Percy, “The Loss of the Creature”</p> <p>Josef Pieper, <i>Leisure, the Basis of Culture</i></p> <p>Eva Brann, “What is the Good of a Liberal Arts Education?”</p> <p>Eva Brann, “Illiberal Education”</p> <p>Jacob Klein, “The Idea of a Liberal Education,” or “On Liberal Education”</p> <p>Michael S. Roth, “From Taking in the World to Transforming the Self” in <i>Beyond the University: Why Liberal Education Matters</i></p> <p>Guy Davenport, “The Geography of the Imagination,” (essay)</p> <p>Marshall McLuhan and Robert Logan, “Alphabet, Mother of Invention,” <i>Et Cetera</i> (December 1977), 373-383.</p> <p>Neil Postman, “Social Science as Moral Theology,” in <i>Conscientious Objections</i>, 3-19.</p> <p>Neil Postman, “Science and the Story that We Need,” in <i>First Things</i> (January 1997).</p>
13-16	Instructor’s Selections		