**Call for Proposals for First-Year Seminars**

First-year seminars are distributed across the disciplines, yet they are structured around a set of common student learning outcomes whose purpose is to introduce first-year students to the pursuit of intellectual inquiry while developing some of the fundamental skills necessary for success in a rigorous academic setting: information literacy and strong written and oral communication skills. Specific topics are determined by the instructor’s background and interests. The objective of the first-year seminar is to cultivate the intellectual skills necessary for liberal learning and facilitate instruction on how to gather and analyze information for the purpose of formulating and defending an argument. Seminars will be deep in terms of the critical approaches employed, but will involve topics that are accessible to first-year students.

All first-year seminars involve meaningful research, writing, and speaking assignments in which students are given instruction and guidance on research, writing, and speaking at the college level. Resources are provided by the Library, the Speaking Center and Writing Center, and instructors are expected to utilize these centers as they develop this portion of their course. Contact the Director of the Writing Center, Gwen Hale ([ghale@umw.edu](mailto:ghale@umw.edu)); the Director of the Speaking Center, Adrienne Brovero ([abrovero@umw.edu](mailto:abrovero@umw.edu)); and Reference Librarian, Peter Catlin ([pcatlin@umw.edu](mailto:pcatlin@umw.edu)) for assistance on how each of these resources can be incorporated into your course. The Director of the First Year Experience, April Wynn ([awynn@umw.edu](mailto:awynn@umw.edu)), is also available to assist with course development.

Another critical component of the First-Year Seminar is student advising. Instructors serve as the academic advisors for the duration of their students’ first year. The role of advisor is critical for students’ transition to college life and this relationship will encompass advising on a variety of topics including: mid-term deficiencies, preparation deficits, course registration, major declaration, and professional/personal struggles during this time of transition. Some of this advising will be accomplished through one-on-one meetings with students outside class and other times through utilizing class time to unpack current events affecting the students. Professional advisors in Academic Services are a resource as are Peer Mentors.

**Every course should have the following basic components and address the FSEM student learning outcomes.**

First-year seminars will be formatted to:

* utilize active, discussion-based, participatory learning;
* be exploratory in nature, rather than just presenting conclusions;
* have students read primary sources, not simply textbooks;
* have students synthesize material from multiple sources to develop their own views on the topic; and
* be capped at 15 students.

Instruction will focus around the FSEM Student Learning Outcomes (must be included on your syllabus!)

Students will:

* utilize a variety of research techniques to retrieve information efficiently, evaluate retrieved information, and synthesize information effectively to support their messages or arguments;
* improve development and organization of written arguments;
* demonstrate the ability to edit and revise in the writing process;
* apply the basic theories and principles of oral communication; and
* communicate effectively in a variety of settings, including public speaking and group discussion.

FSEM courses are seminars, not traditional lecture courses, which demonstrate the sort of intellectual inquiry that higher education can offer. Attached to this document is a proposal checklist and course calendar options that will provide more information of the FSEM Committee’s expectations of the proposal and syllabus. The First Year Seminar website contains a number of resources to help faculty in designing an FSEM to incorporate the student learning outcomes while balancing the content and other skills that are at the heart of the FSEM. In particular, it has a [list of existing FSEMs and model syllabi](https://mailumw-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/awynn_umw_edu/EjvH-8IX9GxAukZQeMBH1LQBSxvmZDFZ9iqhKiBjRgUPEQ?e=JlENov), examples of assignments that have previously been utilized in FSEM courses, and resources for faculty advisors.

There are two types of proposals:

1. Creation of a new FSEM course or the substantial modification of an existing FSEM course.
2. Addition of an instructor to an existing FSEM course.

**Deadline to submit all proposals is Friday, November 13, 2020.**

**First-Year Seminar New Course Proposal**

University of Mary Washington

**USE THIS FORM TO SUBMIT A NEW FSEM 100 COURSE PROPOSAL FOR REVIEW.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **COURSE TITLE:** |  | | | |
| **SUBMITTED BY:** |  | | **DATE:** |  |
| ***This course proposal is approved.*** | | ***Chair or Supervisor’s Signature:*** | | |

**COURSE DESCRIPTION.** Provide a one- to two-sentence description of this course. The description will be entered in Banner and will also be used in other publications about the first-year seminar program. (A more complete description for the FSEM website will be requested upon proposal approval.)

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**RATIONALE.** Include a short statement addressing how this course meets the FSEM’s basic components, explaining *specifically* how it will meet the common FSEM student learning outcomes, and demonstrating why this course should be approved to meet the FSEM General Education requirement. Please point to specific readings, assignments, and exercises and show how they will meet the learning outcomes. Describe your experience as an academic advisor (years of advising and type: general or majors only).

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**SYLLABUS.** *Attach a complete course syllabus and course schedule for the proposed course***.**

**SUBMIT this form and attached syllabus electronically as one document to Jeb Collins (**[**jcollin2@umw.edu**](mailto:jcollin2@umw.edu)**) by 5 pm on Friday, November 13, 2020.** All submissions **must** be electronic.

**First-Year Seminar Additional Instructor Proposal**

University of Mary Washington

**USE THIS FORM TO ADD A NEW INSTRUCTOR TO AN EXISTING FSEM COURSE.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **COURSE NUMBER:** |  | | | | |
| **COURSE TITLE:** |  | | | | |
| **SUBMITTED BY:** |  | | | **DATE:** |  |
| ***The modification of an EXISTING FSEM syllabus was approved by a current/previous instructor.*** | | | ***Current/Previous Instructor’s Signature:*** | | |
| ***This course proposal is approved.*** | | ***Chair or Supervisor’s Signature:*** | | | |

**COURSE DESCRIPTION.** If modifications to the course description are needed please provide a one- to two-sentence update for this course below. The description will be entered in Banner and will also be used in other publications about the first-year seminar program. (A more complete description for the FSEM website will be requested upon proposal approval.)

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**RATIONALE.** Explain any modifications made from the approved FSEM course so the committee can assess the continued inclusion of the FSEM’s basic components and student learning outcomes. Describe your experience as an academic advisor (years of advising and type: general or majors only).

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**SYLLABUS.** *Attach a complete course syllabus and course schedule from which you plan to teach. You can modify the previous instructor’s syllabi with his/her permission, however you cannot just attach an existing syllabus from that other instructor. Your syllabus should include at minimum your contact information, course schedule, and should clearly indicate the major components of the existing FSEM that fulfill the basic FSEM components and student learning outcomes.*

**SUBMIT this form and attached syllabus electronically as one document to Jeb Collins (**[**jcollin2@umw.edu**](mailto:jcollin2@umw.edu)**) by 5 pm on Friday, November 13, 2020.** All submissions **must** be electronic.