

Fall Semester 2017

The First Year Seminar

Founded at Bard College, 1953



American University of Central Asia



FYS 100 (FYS I)

12 Credits • Gen Ed Required

Instructor: Irina Y. Larionova, Assistant Professor, MA in English

Email: larionova_i@auca.kg¹

Schedule: Section 1

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:00-8:50am & 9:00-9:50 am; Meeting Room 203

Section 14

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00-10:50am & 11:00-11:50am; Meeting Room 203

Office: Room 315

Office Hours: by appointment

¹ My email address is for you to contact me in case of emergency or if you want to make an appointment and have no opportunity to contact me in person. You may also send me your questions by email.

General Course Description

1. *What is FYS?*

The First Year Seminar is a multidisciplinary program that brings students and faculty together in the exploration of specific issues or topics of interest. The exploration is usually centered on a theme: “What is the “self”? “How do we interpret human experience?” “Is wo/man a ‘political animal’?” **The theme for Fall semester 2017 is: *The Examined Life*.**

The program is designed to give students a valuable opportunity to experience the benefits of college-level learning through seminar-style investigation.

FYS is the core of the first-year experience at AUCA. It is designed to encourage students to explore important questions raised by a variety of texts--ranging from novels and poetry, classical texts in philosophical and scientific reasoning, to works of more contemporary significance.

Thus students may find themselves reading an ancient drama, such as the *Antigone*, a dialogue of Plato, a modern discussion of race, gender, or political ideology, or a recent account of the origins of the cosmos. Combined with our emphasis on the written word, the Seminar is also committed to encouraging visual literacy: the analysis of images--art, film and performance-- is an integral part of what the Seminar regards as a defining element of twenty-first century literacy.

2. *What is a seminar?*

A seminar is a question-based class in which the instructor will expect students to participate actively in discussing assigned texts and raising additional questions about their meaning or implications. For that reason, the writings chosen for the seminar are designed to be challenging and thought-provoking. Instructors may pose questions directly to the students or invite students to pose their own questions to the members of the class. A crucial aspect of seminar participation is not only speaking but also listening to what everyone has to say for a true discussion.

A key element in the FYS is “interrogation”: you should learn to read and analyze a text on the basis of asking a range of questions that affect its interpretation or meaning: When was the text written? What does it say about its historical location, its author, ideology, its view of the past or vision of the future?

3. *What skills should I have or acquire in FYS?*

The most important skill is to be able to read closely and proactively. This will often mean not simply reading for the sake of knowing what the writer has said, but in a “dialogic” way that

makes you an attentive listener and respondent to the work at hand. We sometimes say that FYS is “text-based.” This does not mean that we use texts as authorities to settle problems--often quite the reverse. We use texts to raise questions and as the basis for a thorough investigation of the subjects they embody.

In the *fall semester* you will be introduced to the basics of academic research and writing. You will write two basic essays (argumentative and comparative) and a third short research paper aimed at familiarizing you with library resources and the process of reading and writing about secondary sources.

4. *The Writing Component:*

The American University of Central Asia is committed to encouraging clear, concise and sophisticated writing skills in all subject areas and majors. FYS is the foundational course in developing a high level of competence in academic writing. The course devotes a substantial portion of every class session encouraging students to “think on paper,” in exercises designed to stress the relationship between thinking about what you have read and communicating your thoughts in a clear manner. These exercises may range from “free writing” (unstructured periods of random written work) to responsive writing, reflective pieces on assigned topics, and summaries, definitions, and short interpretations.

In the Fall Semester, 2017, you will write:

- [An Argumentative essay](#) of 1250 words.
- [A Comparative essay](#) of 1250 words.
- A Final Research Paper (details to be supplied later) which has to incorporate a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 4 secondary sources.

The due-dates for submission, given on the schedule below, should be regarded as *approximate*. Instructors are free to adjust dates to suit the pace of individual classes.

4.1 *Technical Requirements:*

All students are expected to demonstrate competence in certain technical requirements in conjunction with the writing component of the course. This means that students should be vigilant about the following –

- Spelling
- Syntax: sentence structure, word order, and the arrangement and coordination of elements
- Grammar: the classification, relationship, and functional behavior of the parts of speech—verbs, nouns, and pronouns, adverbs and adjectives, and their derivatives
- Word choice and levels of usage (diction and tone)

- Punctuation

4.2 Essential Online Resources:

Students are expected to use the [Norton Field Guide to Writing](#) as the basic handbook for the course. A handbook explains both the basic structures of English and the problem areas that as writers you are likely to encounter. Another important, user-friendly source of grammar instruction is [The Grammar Handbook](#) from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

If you feel you want more advanced information, the [Modern English Grammar](#) site and [Darling's Guide to Grammar and Writing](#) can be consulted,

The following online dictionary (also available as an app) is recommended: [Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary](#) and the online Thesaurus (synonym or alternate word -hunter): [Wordnik](#).

There is also an excellent resource you can use if you have to write called OWL (online writing lab). This link will take you to the home page of the resource <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

The Writing and Academic Resources Center (WARC) is available to all students who need additional tutorial assistance in writing essays. Information of the services provided by WARC can be found at https://www.auca.kg/en/writing_and_academic_resource_center/.

5. *Course Protocol and Assessment*

5.1 *Procedure and Conduct*

- Always bring the reader and a notebook or writing paper to class.
- Come to class prepared. You are responsible for reading the pages of the material indicated in the syllabus for each class. I also expect you to be **active readers**. This means you should **annotate** the texts and prepare your own information/discussion questions based on the readings, as well as critical comments demonstrating your intellectual involvement.
- **Active** in-class participation is strongly encouraged. This includes verbal discussion as well as short in-class focused writes and sharing them with the group. The focused writes will be based on the prompts by the professor or students. Please, do not hesitate to ask questions to clarify the issues you find challenging or not clear. **Passive participation** by means of nods and smiles will result in a lower grade. Be respectful to each other during the discussion: listen carefully and take brief notes to ask questions and to make comments when your turn comes. Do not interrupt those students who are speaking. When you are leading the discussion try not to dominate it, keep to the point and give others equal chances to contribute.
- **Turn off and put away** your mobile phone in the classroom. A student using any electronic device that is unrelated to the academic work of the class will be asked to

excuse himself/herself from that day's meeting. The portion of the class missed will be counted as an absence.

- The student is solely responsible for finding out what instructions or assignments have been missed and making up any work due to absence.
- When emailing instructors, write FYS 100 or 101 in the subject (title) line and allow 24 hours for a reply.
- Keep copies of all graded work until the end of term.
- The electronic version of the syllabus, some important announcements, electronic versions of paper assignments, reading assignments for each class and writing guidelines will be posted on e-course. The enrollment key is **fyslarionova**.
- The professor reserves the right to make necessary changes to the syllabus based on the individual pace of each group. The changes will be discussed and announced in class.

5.2 Academic Honesty

AUCA's *Code of Conduct* describes the rights and responsibilities of all students at AUCA. Students in FYS should pay particular attention to the section on plagiarism:

3. Plagiarism

A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, words, or statements of another person without appropriate acknowledgment. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge an indebtedness whenever he or she does any of the following:

3.1. Quotes another person's actual words, either oral or written;

3.2. Paraphrases another person's words, either oral or written;

3.3. Uses another person's idea, opinion, or theory; or

3.4. Borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material from work of another student, unless the information is common knowledge.

If you are found to have plagiarized *any portion* of an assignment, you will **fail** that assignment. Multiple instances of plagiarism may result in the student **failing** the course.

FYS instructors are authorized to use plagiarism-detecting technology to support their findings when plagiarism is suspected.

5.3 Assessment:

Assessment is based on a cumulative average of the following activities:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three required essays: argumentative, comparative and research and related writing process activities (in-class and home free and focused short-writes as well as a minimum of 2 peer-reviewed drafts for each required essay) 	70%
<p>Reading, discussion, text- annotation, and related participatory activities requiring regular student attendance.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: A student who, over a semester, misses the equivalent of a full week of FYS classes without medical or equivalent excuse will suffer a reduction of 10% of his/her FINAL GRADE</p>	30%

Penalties for late submission: An instructor may deduct a letter grade from any assignment submitted, without explicit permission for extension or without valid documented excuse, up to one week late and another letter grade for each subsequent week late.

The following scale is used for determining class grades:

A	94-100%	B-	77-79%	D+	60-63%
A-	90-93%	C+	74-76%	D	54-59%
B+	86-89%	C	68-73%	D-	50-53%
B	80-85%	C-	64-67%	F	< 50%

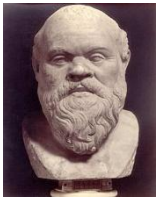



The following descriptors are used for determining class grades:

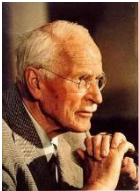
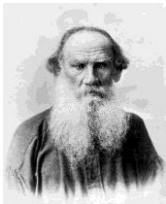


A = performance with distinction
B = good performance
C = satisfactory performance
D = minimally passing performance
F = failure; no credit

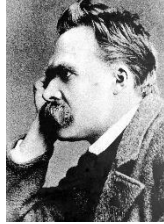
FYS COURSE OUTLINE: *THE EXAMINED LIFE*

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”
— Socrates (*Plato, Apology, 38a*)

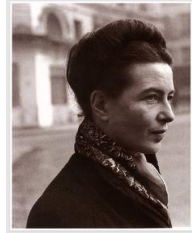
“To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all.”
— Oscar Wilde

Week	Readings	Assignments/General Lectures/Films
Weeks 1-2 September 4 - 15	 <p>Plato, <i>Apology</i></p>	<p>Course Requirements and Syllabus</p> <p>Review of basic elements: Sentence coordination, Diction (word choice), Word order (syntax), English sentence structure</p> <p>Rhetorical Square</p>
Week 3 September 18 -22	 <p>Bible, <i>Genesis</i> (selection)</p>	<p>Review of essay components: The thesis sentence, Paragraph coherence, Transitions and organization</p> <p>Review of the Argument-essay format and <i>Argument Essay Assignment (Writing Assignment 1) September 22</i></p>
Week 4 September 25-29	 <p>Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> (Books II and III)</p>	<p>Review of essay components continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Citation method (APA) ○ Avoiding plagiarism <p><i>Draft 1 of Argumentative Essay due Sept. 25 for peer revision in class</i></p>
Weeks 5-6 October 2-13	 <p>Ibn Tufayl, <i>Hayy ibn Yaqzan</i></p>	<p>Review of writing elements: Style, diction and tone</p> <p><i>Draft 2 of Argumentative Essay due Oct. 4 for peer revision in class</i></p> <p>Argumentative Essay due Oct. 9th Comparative Essay format and thesis statement specificities (point-by-point and block methods of comparing/contrasting) <i>Comparative Essay Assignment (Writing Assignment 2) October 11</i></p>

Week 7 October 16-20	 Jung, <i>The Structure of the Psyche</i>	Kurt Vonnegut on writing effectively <i>Draft 1 of Comparative Essay due Oct. 16 for peer revision in class</i>
Weeks 8-9: October 23-Nov. 3	 Tolstoy, <i>The Death of Ivan Ilyich</i>	<i>Draft 2 of Comparative Essay due Oct. 23 for peer revision in class</i> Comparative Essay due Oct. 30th
Week 10: No classes November 6 -10 FALL BREAK <i>I expect you to determine your research paper topic, do preliminary library research and write an informal paper topic proposal over the break.</i>		
Weeks 11-12: November 13-24	 Rousseau, <i>Social Contract</i> (selection)  Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i> (selection)	Research Assignment Period Begins <i>Informal Paper Topic Proposals Due Nov.13</i> Library Research Annotated Bibliography due Nov. 20 Research Paper Prospectus Writing Brown University Prospectus Writing Tips Prospectus
Weeks 13-14: November 27-Dec. 8		Research Paper Prospectus due Nov 27 Research Paper Draft 1 due Dec.1st for in-class peer revision



Nietzsche, *Genealogy of
Morals* (selection)



Simone De Beauvoir, *The
Second Sex* (selection)

***Research Paper Draft 2 due Dec.8 for in-
class peer revision***

Week 15:
December 11-15

***Short Fiction and
Poetry:***



Aitmatov, *The Day Lasts
More than a Hundred
Years* (Ch. 6)



Bradbury, *The Veldt*

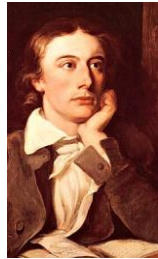


Vonnegut, *Harrison
Bergeron*

Research Paper Due Dec. 15th



Walker, *Everyday Use*



Keats, *On Death*



Lomonosov, *An Evening
Reflection Upon God's
Grandeur*

ANNEX: From the Fall 2016 Syllabus

Learning Outcomes

The Seminar is designed to facilitate the following outcomes:

5.1 Reading, Interpretation, and Discussion

- The ability to read a variety of texts from a range of disciplines and periods with moderate ease, fluency and comprehension.
- The ability to access, evaluate, and interpret information from a variety of sources including textual, visual, and electronically-mediated materials.
- An enhanced ability to discuss and assess complex sources, arguments and ideas in oral discussion
- The ability to read carefully, annotate carefully, summarize accurately, using a variety of methods and tools.

- The development of critical thinking skills, including analysis, explanation, and evaluation.
- Progress in reflective thinking, speaking and listening and the ability to synthesize information and ideas.

5.2 Writing and Reporting

To be familiar with the basic grammatical and syntactical conventions of formal English

To be proficient in the basic elements of essay development: viz.,

- the development of controlling ideas and thesis statements
- sentence structure and coordination
- word usage: variety, precision, level and accuracy (vocabulary)
- paragraph development: coherence, transitions, and subordination of ideas within and between units
- stylistic consistency
- conclusions and summary statements

To produce essays that show structure, purpose, and significant content

To use standard writing processes, genres and modes to generate a final essay

To develop, proofread, revise, and rewrite your own work on the basis of your own critical review and that of peers and instructors

To reflect on the writing process and your own rhetorical effectiveness as a writer, and to integrate comment, correction, and criticism into the revision of essays.

To develop basic skills in the craft of academic research, scholarly reporting, and citation, using a “body of knowledge” and supporting material inside a written work--paraphrase, quotation and description, using the APA style sheet. [Note: unless otherwise indicated, the preference in FYS100/101 is the [APA](#) Style sheet]. The specific dates and exercises will be determined by individual FYS instructors.