

THEME

The University of the West Indies, Mona

First Year Experience

2020/21

The First Year Experience Theme for 2020/21 is **‘I AM’**

Why ‘I Am’?

“An unexamined life is not worth living” (Socrates) and “neither is an un-lived life worth examining” (Andrew Klavan). ‘I AM’ communicates the belief that people can and should define their own selves. It takes experience coupled with reflection to find and define oneself.

A struggle at this stage of human development is clarifying for one’s self what his/her values and beliefs are. In the Caribbean context it also involves removing cultural shackles intended to limit a student’s identity. Many students must rewrite and retell their own narratives to themselves and their families and communities, to create a more favourable picture.

Our own Caribbean students struggle with identity in areas such as race, ethnicity, economic grouping, religion and spirituality, gender and a host of other issues. With the world becoming increasingly connected and with the various identities contending, ‘I AM’ reminds the student to find, honour and hold to his/her identity.

Self-knowledge allows an individual to create more happiness in his/her life. Unless one stays true and honest to who he/she is, one will get lost in a sea of options, unable to figure out what is good for him/her.