COMM 193, FYS: Television as Social Change. This course takes television seriously as a primary lens through which we understand American values and the potential for social change. Our primary texts will be the actual content produced for television, which we will view as constitutive of American culture. With a comparative historical perspective, we will learn about critical paradigms from the field of television studies to ground our discussions of representation, narrative, aesthetics, and cultural commentary. Furthermore, we will watch programs from the past that inspired change and look to the present for visions of a better future, while also exploring the potential limits of commercial media to disrupt the status quo. Through our screenings and discussions, we will explore topics including journalism, politics, education, pleasure, identity, technology, and faith. Students will also explore their personal relationship with television, tracing the ways it invited them to envision new ways of thinking and acting. Professor Petruska

ENGL 193, FYS: Fake News/Alternative Facts. In a world of constant media feeds, how can we differentiate fact from rumor? What is real news and what is hype? How can we count on information to be accurate? This course will explore the phenomenon of fake news and alternative facts through the lenses of mass media, popular culture, personal bias, science and fiction. Along with one novel, we will read recent essays and reports from various information sources in order to examine the current social issues and hone our skills in discerning accurate information from alternative facts. Professor Cooley

ENGL 193, FYS: Freaks, Geeks, and Outsiders. We have all met--or perhaps even identified with--people who are seen as different, strange, or on the margins. Drawing from a range of disciplines, this course will provide us with the opportunity to explore and analyze what makes someone “freakish” or aberrant; what it means to be a “geek” (a word whose connotations have shifted dramatically over the past thirty years); and what characteristics historically have positioned people as “outsiders” rather than “insiders." Our exploration will be guided by a central question: what are the dividing lines between "normality" and "abnormality"? Fulfills a Social Justice (SJ) designation* Professor Ciasullo

ENGL 193, FYS: Creativity. This course will engage in questions about creativity, innovation, and what it means to be a creative person. We will look at links between creativity, conformity, mental illness, business, and art. Students will design a creative classroom, engage in creative projects, and come up with their own creativity theories. Professor Ciesla

ENGL 193, FYS: The Time of Your Life. “How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives” –Annie Dillard. Only when we become conscious of the function of time, and deliberately contend with decisions we make (both conscious and unconscious) over its expenditure, can we evaluate our lives’ direction. In endeavoring to become men and women for others, then, it becomes ever more important to use the minutes in our days to deliberate ends. Students in this class will first explore their own relationship to their daily lives, then learn how time functions in other disciplines. Finally, we will investigate global considerations of time in multiple settings. Fulfills both a Social Justice and a Writing Enriched (WE) designation.* Professor Halliday

ENGL 193, FYS: Literature and the Search for Meaning. This FYS is designed to introduce students to learning and knowing as deliberate, creative processes by engaging the question of what makes for a meaningful life. The course will emphasize writing and reading as tools for participation in the creation of meaning. The course will focus on building a personal map of meaning in conjunction with a study of how literary works approach meaning, along with consideration of the approach to meaning by various works from philosophy, psychology, and religious studies. Fulfills a Writing-Enriched (WE) designation* Professor Butterworth
ENVS 193/POLS 193, FYS: Birds. Birds are everywhere among us. Birding (formerly called “bird watching”) is, per the National Audubon Society, the largest non-competitive outdoor activity in the US, with more participants than hunting, fishing, and outdoor motorized sports combined. This seminar examines the diverse things birds can teach us about the world. Beginning with history and culture, we will examine how birds led to the first animal rights movement in Western Civilization and how John James Audubon helped to invent modern naturalism and ecology. Birds also can teach us a lot about the processes or urbanization and suburbanization and the burgeoning field of urban ecology. In fact, it is in cities and suburbs that most “birding” in the US takes place. Birds can also teach us quite a bit about sustainability and climate change. Are birds migrating north earlier in the spring and staying later in the fall (hint: in many cases, “yes”)? Finally, birds can teach us about outdoor recreation, that is, the joy and relaxation involved in the world of birding. Professor Isacoff.

PHIL 193: FYS: Loneliness and Community. It’s hard to imagine any person existing without at least some experience of feeling or being lonely. For many of us, loneliness is situational: it’s what we feel when we first immerse ourselves into a new community or when a relationship ends. For some, loneliness is a feeling they wrestle with more consistently. In this class, we will look at what it is to be and feel lonely. We won’t stop there, though. We’ll study how community and connection to other people (might) help alleviate loneliness. We’ll ask if the experience of loneliness today is unique to our time, or if there is something common to all human experiences of loneliness. We’ll ask how different scholars from diverse fields suggest we “deal” with the problem of loneliness and discover whether there are skills and practices we can adopt to lessen our own and others’ lonely feelings. Professor Howard.

PHIL 193, FYS: Martyrs, Warriors, & Captives. This seminar will explore three basic ways that Christians have responded to persecution. Taking as its point of departure the Christian dictum to “turn the other cheek,” the seminar will consider both early martyrs and twentieth century martyrs, the origins and development of the notion of fighting persecution justly, and the Christian experience with imprisonment in the first centuries as well as in the twentieth century. Professor Kries.

PHIL 193, FYS: Tolkien and the Philosophy of Language. This course will look at different theories about the way language reveals truth, with a particular focus on the creation of stories through the use of metaphor and myth in J.R.R. Tolkien’s Lord of the Rings. We will end with an investigation of the ways language may function to reveal the sacredness of nature, thus opening a dialogue with the theological notion of nature as sacramental. Professor Bradley.

POLS 193, FYS: Brewing Justice: The Global Coffee Trade. This course is designed to help students analyze the environmental, social, economic, and political aspects of the coffee trade using tools from a variety of disciplines. We will consider the effects of historical and current aspects of the production, trade, and consumption of coffee on people’s lives both in the United States (US) and around the world, with an emphasis on social justice. Fulfills a Social Justice (SJ) designation* Professor Taninchev.

POLS 193, FYS: Find Your Political Opinion. Every student will decide her or his own political viewpoint about a handful of today’s political issues. The students will pick most of the issues to be covered. The point is to learn how to figure out and support your views as well as talk respectfully with each other about disagreements. Professor Waterman.
RELI 193, FYS: Citizens or Strangers: Early Christianity in the Roman World. The first Christians were sometimes martyrs, sometimes prophets, and sometimes the greatest supporters of the society of which they were a part. Using the origins of Christianity as a case study, this class looks at the nature of religion, its relation to society as a whole, and the conditions of the first Christians. Professor Hauck.

RELI 193, FYS: How Does the Bible Convey Knowledge? The central question we will examine in the course relates to the first year question, “How do we pursue knowledge?” Our specific question for this course is: How do we know the Bible says what we think it says? Using tools from Hebrew language studies, archaeology, cultural anthropology, literature, and history, we will consider how specific biblical passages indicate, mean or imply something about the cultural and religious context of Ancient Israel. (2) As implied by the second part of the question for the first year “how do we cultivate understanding?” the course will include opportunities to consider the effect or effects these academic tools have on our readings of biblical texts. The course will culminate with projects in which students will produce and share their own interpretations of the Psalms using photos, film and music. Professor Goldstein.

RELI 193, FYS: American Monsters. American Monsters examines what we are afraid of and why. By taking monsters as our object of study, we will interrogate questions about fear, outsiders, cultural/social boundaries, ideas and notions of the supernatural. Monsters reveal the limits of our tolerance, our reservations about others, and our fears about ourselves. Professor Clark.

RELI 193, FYS: Violence and the Humanities. How might students and faculty in today’s university grapple with the scourge of global violence? This course studies a range of case studies in group violence and interprets them in a multi-disciplinary framework of learning. Equipped with a humanities perspective, students will explore how we might better understand the causes and conditions of group violence and why such endeavor is important for our academic careers and for citizenship. Fulfills a Global Studies (GS) designation* Professor Sheveland

RELI 193, FYS: The Depths: Psalms and the Human Condition. Being a human being means at least, among many other things, to struggle with relationships; that is to struggle with one’s self as well as to struggle with others and/or the “Other.” The psalms of the Hebrew Bible embrace this most human experience with startling honesty, urgency, humility, and empathy. This multi-disciplinary course allows students to creatively explore and then enter into the worlds of the psalmists while also giving voice to a student’s own developing self and depth in human relationships. Professor Starbuck

RELI 103, FYS: Indigenous Peoples and Global Issues. This course explores contemporary issues of indigenous peoples throughout the world. We begin by examining the concept of a "Fourth World." Who are indigenous peoples and how have they been categorized in relation to "ethnic groups," colonization, and the international system of states? We examine current debates within the United Nations about indigenous peoples and human rights. We take a look at law and economics of colonialism and emerging issues of globalization. Through films, literature and social science readings, this course looks at those issues, and focuses on how indigenous peoples are actively working to oppose their oppression and create sustainable futures. Fulfills a Global Studies (GS) designation* Professor Baraza

RELI 193, FYS: Science Fiction and Personhood. What does it mean to be a “person”? This course will examine how the topics of extraterrestrials, robots and posthumans help us to reflect on personhood. When science fiction writers imagine other planets and future scenarios they present their readers with a chance to contemplate their own identity along with the pressing problems/questions of their own time frame. Professor Schearing
RELI 193, FYS: Jesuit Education: A Fire Kindling Other Fires. This first-year seminar addresses the first-year core question, “How do we pursue knowledge and cultivate understanding?” Through a multidisciplinary approach to Jesuit education by walking the cat back to St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Spiritual Exercises, and the Jesuit plan of learning (Ratio Studiorum), students will apply insights to modern educational and societal situations by placing texts and interpretations in dialogue with contemporary issues of faith, community, spirituality, learning, and social justice.
Professor Kuder

WGST 193: FYS: Making, Remaking, and Unmaking Masculinities. What is masculinity and what does it do? Is that a biological question? A question of gender? A social, cultural, even political question? Does masculinity have something to do with race or ethnicity? Could it be that the answer to such a question offers less insight than analysis of who is asking the question of whom? This class will explore the concept of masculinity in U.S. culture, academic, and politics. We will work from women of color feminist and queer of color perspective as we analyze how masculinity is defined by a number of disciplines and discourses. Students can expect to look at a range of texts including novels, critical and theoretical essays, academic articles, music videos, art, ads, films, and examples of drag as we discuss the relationship masculinity (and its construction) plays in our lives and the lives of others. Professor Baros.

* To fulfill university core requirements, students must complete 2 Writing-Enriched (WE) designated courses (in addition to Writing), 1 Global Studies (GS) designated course (in addition to World/Comparative Religion), and 1 Social Justice (SJ) designated course. Designations double-count. That is, students completing an FYS with a designation, get credit for both the FYS and the designation(s) it carries. Transfer students with 45 or more credits have a reduced designation requirement (1 WE, and 2 total of either 1 WE, 1 GS, and/or 1 SJ) and students with 60 or more credits, including AA/AS-T degree holders, are not required to fulfill the designation requirements.