

## FYS Course Titles and Descriptions: Fall 2025

**CENG 193, FYS: Nature Based Solutions.** As stated by the European Commission, nature-based solutions are: “solutions that are inspired and supported by nature, which are cost-effective, simultaneously provide environmental, social and economic benefits and help build resilience. Such solutions bring more, and more diverse, nature and natural features and processes into cities, landscapes, and seascapes, through locally adapted, resource-efficient and systemic intervention. Nature-based solutions must therefore benefit biodiversity and support the delivery of a range of ecosystem services.” Essentially, Nature Based Solutions are actions that work with and mimic nature to address societal challenges, while providing economic, social, and environmental benefits. Learning about nature-based solutions empowers students to become environmentally conscious individuals, equips them with problem-solving skills, and prepares them for a sustainable future. The goals of this seminar are to foster a sense of responsibility, connection with nature, and the ability to contribute to positive environmental change. This course explores nature-based solutions from an interdisciplinary perspective, focusing on the construction of knowledge across multiple disciplines. Students will examine how personal and cultural perspectives influence knowledge generation and a deeper understanding of nature-based solutions. The course also emphasizes integrating the principles of Gonzaga's mission with academic, personal, and spiritual aspirations as they relate to nature-based solutions. Instructor: Niezgoda

**CENG 193, FYS: Equity & Infrastructure.** Through the exploration of civil engineering's many sub-disciplines, the course emphasizes the societal connections through mix of real-world project examples and activities. At the heart of this work is the recognition that equitable service to society requires that we seek to understand and incorporate the perspectives of those served by our work as well as understanding the past decisions and practices that have led us to where we are today. The course will emphasize the importance of community engagement, ethical considerations, sociology, public health, and sustainability in the design and implementation of engineering infrastructure. *Fulfills a Social Justice (SJ) designation\**. Instructor: Young

**CLAS 193, FYS: Spartacus: Fact & Fiction.** How is the past reconstructed and what do we do with it? This course seeks to answer those questions by looking at one of the most famous figures from the world of ancient Greece and Rome: Spartacus. We'll be looking at what we know about his life, how we know what we know (with particular attention to how different disciplines construct knowledge), and how his legacy has been understood and adapted in various modern media. Instructor: Oosterhuis

**COMM 193, FYS: Conspiracy Theories.** Often overlooked as fringe and irrelevant, conspiracy theories play a pivotal role in our day to day lives. This course makes an argument as to why conspiracy theories should be taken seriously in how we come to understand and act in it. Students will be introduced to, and cultivate and understanding of how, conspiracy theories and media shape our understanding of the world in two ways. First, students will explore the role of language in the construction of our social realities and how conspiracy theories play a pivotal role in making meaning. We take aim at understanding how language shapes who we are, how we see the world around us, and how we come to understand knowledge. Secondly, we look at how conspiracy theories are cultural and how the culture of conspiracy shapes U.S. American politics. This cultural context explores how conspiracy theories often express serious underlying tensions and apprehensions happening in societies around them. In an ever-evolving technological world, communication spreads as rapidly as conspiracy theories thus making them areas of innovation in how to use communication technologies. This intersection provides ample areas of investigation that require reflection and contemplation on our relationship with conspiracy theories and our tools of communication. Instructor: Flores.

**COMM 193, FYS: Relationshiping LLC.** People need each other. Repeated studies show that relationships and feelings of connectedness are the keys to better mental health, improved cognition, and a longer, more joyful existence. So, if relationships can save us, then why is being with other people so... complicated? Drawing on a range of disciplines, this course will explore the ways relationships teach us how to love, how to grieve, how to live more emphatically, and how (and why) to establish boundaries. Most importantly, we will learn how other people not only sustain us but contribute to our growth. Since mediated relationships are part of our socialization, we will see how pop culture and celebrity inform us—teaching us relational norms of both what to do, even more likely, what not to do—when in the company of others. Course for students in first year Living Learning Communities. Instructor: Morehouse.

**CPSC 193, FYS: Behind the Screens.** Every time we use an iPhone, we use the interface that Apple made available to us. Every time we use Windows, we use the interface that Microsoft made available to us. Every time we use Chrome, we use the interface that Google made available to us. As you can imagine, this list goes on and on! Every day we use interfaces to access tech like phone apps, operating systems, and the web, but how does it all work and who makes it possible? From coding to cybersecurity to machine learning/AI, this class peeks “behind the screens” of the apps we use all the time. As we will see, it isn’t magic that makes it all work – it’s decades of algorithms and protocols exposed via clever interfaces designed by Software Engineers, Data Scientists, Security Engineers, UI/UX Designers, and other tech-savvy people. In this First Year Seminar (FYS) course, students will learn, at a high level, how these algorithms and protocols work. Instructor: Sprint

**EDSE 193, FYS: Why do I do What I do.** This course introduces students to why we behave the way we behave. The basic principles of behavior analysis will be explored as well as discussions on how behavior is shaped by the environment and the science of learning. Students will examine how these fundamental behavioral principles such as reinforcement, punishment, and motivation apply to everyday life. Throughout the course, students will develop critical writing skills. Students will be asked to evaluate social justice issues through the lens of a behavior analyst and consider contingencies of behavior that maintain social justice issues as well as propose potential solutions to move toward the common good. *Fulfills a Social Justice (SJ) designation and a Writing-Enriched (WE) designation\** Instructor: Basile

**EDTE 193, FYS: Learning Theories/Epistemologies.** This course is designed to introduce the undergraduate student to the epistemology of various disciplines and to make them aware of their own personal epistemology. In addition, the contributions of behaviorism, humanistic psychology, and cognitive psychology will be examined in order to give a basis for critically analyzing how and why human growth and development occur in the teaching and learning act. Based on the dynamics of respect of individual differences within the learning community, prior learning and authentic scholarly exploration of historical and current literature, students will be able to articulate, develop and seek alternatives to their theories-in-use. Instructor: Cox

**ENGL 193, FYS: What is a University?** The primary purpose of this First-Year Seminar is to explore as much as we can about a university. Drawing from a wide range of perspectives will provide us with insight as to how an institution of higher education operates. We will delve into the history of universities, the politics involved in academia, and the practicalities of keeping a university running. We will consider various types of universities while also focusing on Gonzaga and how it is similar to and different from other universities. Course activities will require students to research these issues and others and to share the knowledge that they gain from that research in our seminar meetings. The goal of this sharing is to “cultivate [an] understanding” of what it means to be part of a university community at this point of their education and to take that understanding with them when they leave Gonzaga. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion and fulfills a Writing-Enriched (WE) designation\**. Instructor: Pajer.

**FILM 193, FYS: Spartacus: Fact & Fiction.** See CLAS 193 description above. Instructor: Oosterhuis

**HEAL 193, FYS: Religion and Medicine.** See RELI 193 description below. Instructor: Tran

**HIST 193, FYS: Rwandan Genocide.** This course will focus on the Rwandan Genocide as a means to not only engage with this important event but to also explore the ways that historians, sociologists, and novelists approach understanding it. You will apply newly-gained knowledge about Rwandan history and the genocide as the class plays the Reacting to the Past game about the genocide, *The Needs of Others*. You'll see the reasons for the choices that actors made in response to this human crisis, and then be asked to reflect how your own preferred responses echo principles in Gonzaga's mission. Instructor: Weiskopf.

**MDLA 193, FYS: Travel Writing and Film.** Travel is a key way in which we come to new understandings of the world and ourselves. Traveling also lends itself to different forms of representation in order to create anchors in fleeting experiences, or as Ibn Battuta has said: "Traveling—it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller." This course analyses a variety of travel experiences and the reasons that people have for traveling, whether it be necessity, enjoyment, knowledge, etc., to discover some of the transformative processes that take place through voyages. As an interdisciplinary course, we will learn about historical, fictional, and scientific travels, using a critical lens to examine the underlying assumptions of travelers that form the basis for intercultural interactions. As a seminar-style class, students are expected to contribute their reflections and writings on their travel experiences as well as the course readings in discussions. The course is organized thematically by different reasons for travel. Instructor: Schumacher

**MENG 193, FYS: Tools: from Steam Engines to AI.** This course explores the development of technology and innovation from the industrial revolution to the present day, emphasizing the interdisciplinary nature of modern engineering. Throughout the course, we will explore the evolutionary path of technological advancements and the tools that have facilitated this development. By examining key milestones, from the steam engine and the rise of precision manufacturing, through to the development of AI, we will seek a comprehensive understanding of the interconnectedness between engineering, science, and society. Instructor: Baumgardner

**MENG 193, FYS: Autonomous – From the Horseless Carriage to Driverless Vehicles.** This course will explore the history and development of the global automotive industry. Instructor: Weston

**MUSC 193, FYS: Social Justice and Music.** With music and social movements as our primary source, this First-Year Seminar focuses on how rap and hip-hop have been a means to communicate complex cultural, social, and political issues of Western culture from the 1970s to the present. We will journey through the vast landscape of Black musical traditions that will come to influence the cultural and musical phenomena known as hip-hop. The main questions we will explore include: 1. How has race been constructed in Western music history, in music criticism (of African diasporic music and musicians) 2. How has the commercialization of rap and hip-hop aided in the personification of antebellum stereotypes and imperialistic/capitalistic agendas? 3. How has hip-hop impacted social movements in the Americas and abroad? At the completion of this course, students will be able to (1) articulate how their own personal and cultural views affect their empirical and theoretical knowledge and understanding, (2) appreciate various music genres and how they intersect with current and popular music, with an emphasis on Black music traditions, (3) think about how music has impacted social movements and they can be agents of change with music, (4) understand social factors related to resilience and how to foster resilience, (5) reflect on their role in creating a better world. Finally, (6) integrate the principles of Gonzaga's mission with their academic, personal, and spiritual aspirations. ***Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion and fulfills a Social Justice designation\****. Instructor: Tarver

**NTAS 193, FYS: Sport & Culture.** This course will explore the significance of sports for Native American athletes and Native American communities. The course will begin with explorations of Native peoples in media and social media, in order to understand how perceptions of Native people are formed. We'll consider sports as diverse as basketball, rugby, lacrosse, and surfing. Resources including documentary film, feature film, fiction and non-fiction, and disciplines including history, sociology, and literature, will help us develop more complex narratives about Native peoples. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion and fulfills a Social Justice designation.*\* Instructor: Arnold.

**PHIL 193, FYS: Loneliness & Community, FYS: Loneliness & Community LLC.** 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. *Fulfills a Writing-Enriched (WE) designation*\* Instructor: Howard.

**PHIL 193, FYS: CEL Strangers, FYS: CEL LLC Strangers.** This course will focus on the experiences we have when we encounter strangers: unfamiliar people, concepts, methods, experiences, and environments. We will consider how we confront and respond to strangers, the ways in which diverse disciplines approach that which is strange and attempt to make it familiar, and how our encounters with strangers affect our perceptions of ourselves. The course is also designed as a Service Learning course, so that students are encountering, learning from, and serving persons who are members of marginalized communities in the Spokane area. Instructor: Weidel

**RELI 193, 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 about "ethnic groups," colonization, and the international system of states? We examine current debates within the United Nations about indigenous peoples and human rights. We look at the 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 actively oppose their oppression and create sustainable futures. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion and fulfills a Global Studies (GS) designation*\*. Instructor: Baraza

**RELI 193, FYS: The Problem of God.** The Problem of God explores the various ways in which human beings have asked and attempted to answer questions about the origin of existence, about the meaning and purpose of life, about the experience of suffering and death by appealing to God. Students will examine different methods for answering these questions through texts in theology, philosophy, and the sciences, as well as through the arts, spirituality, and ritual practice. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.* Instructor: Mudd

**RELI 193, FYS: Magic.** This course will explore the perennial human quest to transcend and move beyond our own human limitations via tapping and controlling supernatural and physical forces and resources. Instructor: Pschaida

**RELI 193, FYS: Violence and the Humanities.** What insights and tools do the humanities disciplines offer students who wish to grapple with the problem of violence today? Students In this course explore various academic perspectives from the humanities, enter into discussion about different kinds of education, and apply humanities insights to unresolved conflicts. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion and fulfills a Global Studies (GS) designation\**. Instructor: Sheveland

**RELI 193, FYS: 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 intellectually and emotionally 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 engagement in the human condition. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion and fulfills a Social Justice (SJ) designation \**. Instructor: Starbuck

**RELI 193, FYS: Religion and Medicine.** Are religions and medical science compatible? How do they relate, support, and challenge each other over the history? What are the tensions that can be quite destructive between them at times? What opportunities can they bring to humanity if we can find a good way to utilize both properly? This course will examine questions such as these. The course aims at helping students to go beyond their preconceptions and develop a critical analysis to (1) concretely identify issues that need to be resolved, (2) avoid falling into the trap of exclusivity or extreme, (3) recognize elements that help to enrich rather than impoverish our ability, and (4) view everything through a humanistic and wholistic lens. Instructor: Tran

**THEA 193, FYS: Theatre & Neurodivergence, LLC.** An ensemble-based interdisciplinary service-learning course in which students are trained in the Hunter Heartbeat Method, a series of theatrical games originally designed by Kelly Hunter (formerly of the Royal Shakespeare Company) to remediate common difficulties for children on the autism spectrum. This work has since been developed as essential training and foundational skill-building for all performers, and provides an embodied, physical "vocabulary" that is inclusive of members of neurodiverse communities. While students will be engaged in performance, this is not specifically an acting course, as students will engage with the course material through the lens of their own primary field of study. No prior experience with Shakespeare or theatre is required." *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.* Instructor: Edwards

**WGST 193, FYS: Extraordinary Bodies.** Drawing from several interdisciplinary fields, such as Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, students in this course will examine the ways that the human body has been classified as either "normal" or "deviant" in both historical and contemporary contexts. Students will learn how human dignity has been denied to people whose bodies are marked by science/medicine as "extraordinary" or "deviant" with respect to disability, fatness, sex category, and race, among other embodiments. Through this course of study, students will address the first-year core question "How do we pursue knowledge and cultivate understanding?" Students will develop an understanding of how various academic disciplines in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences study the human body and make sense of bodily difference. Students will also explore both the social consequences and liberatory possibilities of a life lived in a body marked as "extraordinary." Finally, students will choose a local problem that affects a marginalized group and complete an action-learning project to address that problem. Through the readings, written assignments, and class project, students will have the opportunity to integrate the principles of Gonzaga's mission with their academic, personal, and spiritual interests. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.* Instructor: Diaz

\* 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 the FYS and fulfill the designation 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.