

FYS Course Titles and Descriptions: Spring 2026

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 (CEL). 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. A Community Engaged Learning course. Instructor: Cox

ENGL 193, FYS: 1960's in 21 Songs. Before there was Black Lives Matter, there were the Black Panthers, Malcolm X, and Martin Luther King. Before Megan Rapinoe, there was Stonewall and Muhammed Ali. Before the War on Terror, there was Vietnam. And before the fracturing of audiences with Netflix, TikTok, and YouTube, 73,000,000 Americans watched four lads from Liverpool start a revolution on their televisions. The 1960s was a decade of mass movements and mass media, one when a “new generation” imagined better worlds... and, by the end, faced deepening nightmares. This class will examine the decade at the intersection of media and society, using the popular music of the day – artists such as Bob Dylan, the Beatles, James Brown, and Aretha Franklin -- to frame interdisciplinary discussions on civil rights, women's and gay liberation, art, religion, war, and what it means to be American. Students will be expected to be active participants, reading and listening carefully, and contributing to class discussion. A number of controversial and difficult topics will be featured, and students are cautioned that the language and topics may be challenging. ***Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Fulfills a Social Justice (SJ) designation****. Instructor: Cooney.

ENGL 193, FYS: Spokane as Text. Spokane as Text uses Spokane as a case study for contemporary urban life in America. Students read widely in Philosophy, Sociology, and History, with some Political Science, Economics, and Civil Engineering. Topics covered in the course range from the impact of the placement of I-90, the balance between economic progress and displacement seen in Kendall Yards and the West Central neighborhood, the historical causes of the current housing crisis, and the history of indigeneity in the Columbia Plateau. Course designed for Honors Students. ***Fulfills a Social Justice (SJ) designation****Instructor: Tredennick

ENSC 193, FYS: Forged by Failure. What if failure isn't the opposite of success, but the engine that drives it? What if the stories we tell about success are missing the most compelling chapters? From engineering collapses to scientific dead ends, from botched experiments to personal missteps, this seminar investigates how failure sparks discovery across disciplines—and how each field draws its own lines between triumph and disaster. Together, we'll challenge cultural myths about success, question our own assumptions, and design projects where risk isn't a flaw, but a feature. Expect to wrestle with uncertainty, and to notice how definitions of failure—and success—shift in the presence of new perspectives. Here, failure is not a verdict, but a question—one that resists easy answers. Instructor: Colburn

HIST 193, FYS: Chernobyl. This course examines the causes and outcomes of the Chernobyl nuclear accident of 1986. Further, it introduces students to the means by which the Chernobyl nuclear accident has been interrogated by scholars in a diverse array of academic disciplines. What has been the impact of Chernobyl on human beings, animals, and the natural environment? How did it impact the economy and politics of the Soviet Union? How did people experience the catastrophe at the time? How have historians tried to make sense of the meaning and impact of Chernobyl? Instructor: O'Connor

MATH 193, FYS: Knitting. In this First Year Seminar, we will explore knitting from many different viewpoints. Our many different cultural backgrounds and areas of study affect how we see the world. We will learn about knitting as it connects to disciplines including history, political science, chemistry, and mathematics. We will also explore how our personal experiences affect the story we see in knitted work. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.* Instructor: Kearney

MDLA 193, FYS: Latin Noir: Crime Stories from Latin America. "How can you write a crime novel in a country where the main criminal is the state?" - Paco Ignacio Taibo II, Mexican author. It is this, among other questions, that this course seeks to answer through a tour of selected Latin American detective and crime fiction from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, and Mexico. We will explore short stories, novels, and films while investigating the socio-political contexts in which they were produced. Through close reading of these texts, we will uncover themes such as justice, memory, democracy, immigration, globalization, and narcoviolence. Instructor: Bishop

MDLA 193, FYS: Exploring Spain. Together, you and the instructor will examine geography, history, art, literature, music, architecture, gastronomy, politics, modern society, and immigration and emigration in order to develop a deeper understanding of Spain's culture. *Fulfills a Global Studies (GS) designation**. Instructor: Birginal

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 (SJ) designation**. Instructor: Tarver

PHIL 193, FYS: Care, Listening, & Health. This course explores the connected practices of listening, care, and healthcare as they relate to healthcare environments and personal vocational discernment. Through philosophical inquiry and practice, students will examine fundamental questions: What does it mean to listen? How do we understand and practice care? What constitutes health and healing? Students will engage with philosophical frameworks of care and health in order to offer substantive answers to these questions. In addition to theoretical analysis, students will gain insight from practicing healthcare professionals who will visit to share their experiences and reflect on listening and care in their work. Students will practice empathetic listening skills and examine how presence contributes to healthcare relationships. Instructor: Kulp.

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: Difference and Dialogue - Bridges to Civic Pluralism. Americans are perhaps more polarized than ever, political, ethnic, and religious others being portrayed as agents of irrationality and evil. Most people are siloed in their echo chambers with news and social media algorithms just repeating back to them what one already believes. Those we disagree with we quickly dismiss by assigning simplistic, disparaging labels. Even if we avoid politics and religion in conversations, previously "safe" topics like the weather or one's health can quickly become an angry monologue to the other about climate change or the merits of vaccines. Yet if we are going to solve real problems, we need to learn to talk to one another, be in authentic relation with each other across seemingly ocean wide chasms of difference in ways that affirm the dignity and infinite value of each other, as we grow friendship and stand for justice for all people, not just our own tribe. In this course we will support each other to practice dialoguing to learn about, from and with each other, and consulting together to better solve important issues. Dialogue topics include majors and careers, religious diversity, partisan politics,

race, social class, gender, sexuality, disabilities, ageism, and the environment. Most classes will require preparation of a personal reflection on one's background with an issue and an individual response to a short reading (2-4). Students are invited to become "bridgebuilders" in which they too become intentional protagonists of building unity in diversity in community. The crowning project is working in a small team to organize, advertise, facilitate, and reflect upon two "bridgebuilding" gatherings related to one of the above topics. Grades are not on a curve; students who conscientiously complete each requirement can expect full credit for the course. 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: Spirituality, Sport, and Sustainability. Ignatian approaches mindful engagement with the whole self, environment, and life-stewardship. This first-year seminar examines the relationships between faith, athletics, and environment through Jesuit models of reflection, discernment, and a commitment to relational Magis (excellence). The course shares a partnership with the StepBack method of the Extra Mile Institute, closely associated with Gonzaga athletics. Students are encouraged to include other aspects of their Integrated Jesuit Education, such as intercollegiate and intramural sports, endurance sports like cycling, running, and hiking, as well as environmental engagements that involve discovery, stewardship, and repair. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.* Instructor: Starbuck

WGST 193, FYS: Gender & Sexuality in Games. This class will explore the impact of gender and sexuality within the history, theory, and design of both tabletop and video games. We will study how these issues arise within representation in games, gaming communities, and the wider industry. Readings will include both academic texts and a variety of different games. In the process, students will not only develop a deeper understanding of the interactive media they frequently consume but also apply this understanding through design. *Engages with issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.* Instructor: Dame-Griff, Avery

* 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.