

First-Year Program

As part of its general education curriculum, the University of the South encourages first-year students to gain exposure to a wide variety of course offerings, made available to them through an expansive range of academic departments and interdisciplinary programs. Currently only one course, however, an innovative offering titled “Discovering a Sense of Place — Upon and Beyond the Domain,” has thus far been approved for presentation under this discrete rubric of First-Year Program.

Faculty

Professors: Bachman, John Gatta, Malde, McGrath (Chair), Potter, Register

Associate Professors: Sherwood, J. Thompson

Courses

First-Year Program Courses

FYRP 101 First-Year Seminar: Creating Place (4)

This course considers both how natural chemical processes shape our surroundings and how place is created by the intentional manipulation of matter to create objects of everyday use as well as of symbolic, cultural, or artistic importance. While developing an understanding of place-making broadly, the course focuses on both nature's creation of place and the role of art and cultural materials in defining place. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the local and regional context of place formation, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 102 First-Year Seminar: Place, Memory, and Preserving Tradition (4)

This course examines the history of German-speaking communities in the area, including what brought the communities here, what elements of the “home” culture were maintained, and how memories and connections have been preserved across generations. Students engage these communities through historical records and through conversation with community members, while also reflecting on practices of cultural preservation as a form of identity and means of place-making. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 103 First-Year Seminar: Photography of What is Not Seen (4)

This course considers ways in which photography relays experience and shapes our understanding of place. Photography can both enhance and reduce experiences of time, space, and place. The course considers how photography touches on the human condition and how the photographer attends and is sensitive to the subject/object relationship. This course explores what is seen and not seen when making and looking at a photograph. In the process, fundamental relationships are identified between photographic expression and a sense of place. Through a close study of place in its numerous meanings, the course transits from what it means to be a consumer of the lens-image to being a producer of a photograph and how image and place write and rewrite each other. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 104 First-Year Seminar: The Ecology of Place (4)

This course explores how the natural environment has influenced human interactions, past and present, and how these interactions have shaped ecosystems on the Cumberland Plateau as well as the economy, culture, and health of communities in this region. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 105 First-Year Seminar: Mountain Music Up and Down Sewanee Mountain (4)

The music of Sewanee, the surrounding Plateau, and the Southern Appalachians resounds with the interplay of locals and outsiders. In the songs heard here--from bluegrass to traditional ballads, from shape-note hymns to string bands--musicians incorporate far-flung styles while cultivating local traditions. In the words of a well-known video featuring this music, no matter where the musicians get their start, eventually they come “Down from the Mountain.” In this course students listen to, study, and interact with these musicians and their music. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 106 First-Year Seminar: Walking in Place (4)

Class readings, journal work, and discussions are based on the canon of literature on walking and environmental awareness. Authors include John Muir, Wendell Berry, Edward Abbey, Colin Fletcher, and Mary Oliver. Extensive walking and regular visits to a place of contemplation are required. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 107 First-Year Seminar: Founded to Make Men--a History of Sewanee Manhood (4)

An examination of the history of the ideal of the "Sewanee man," which shaped the social, academic, religious, and athletic life of the young men educated here through the University's first century. The course explores how key places, rituals, and institutions molded the ideal's meaning. It emphasizes the importance of persons excluded from the category--women, African Americans, and local mountain population--in maintaining and challenging the "manhood" ideal. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 108 First-Year Seminar: Water is Life (4)

Place is defined in many ways, perhaps most of all by geography. The physical features of a place--its geology, hydrology, and biota--influence the social and cultural activities of human life superimposed on the landscape. This course examines geographical features on Sewanee's Domain and further afield to see what lessons they can teach us about the earth and about ourselves. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of reading a landscape, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Independent projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 109 First-Year Seminar: Land and Life (4)

Place is defined in many ways, perhaps most of all by geography. The physical features of a place--its geology, hydrology, and biota--influence the social and cultural activities of human life superimposed on the landscape. This course examines geographical features on Sewanee's Domain and further afield to see what lessons they can teach us about the earth and about ourselves. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of reading a landscape, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Independent projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 110 First-Year Seminar: Clothing, Textiles, and the Identity of Place (4)

Clothing and textiles are not only a necessary part of everyday life but also physical artifacts that communicate meaning, belonging, and tradition within the cultures that create them. Sewanee and the surrounding area is uniquely suited to explore this aspect of material culture through clothing ranging from present-day vestments, robes, and class dress to the Klan robes, Confederate uniforms, and Cherokee "tear" dresses of the past. The course also examines current usage and manufacture of clothing in the local community as well as the impact of textile waste. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 111 First-Year Seminar: "Your Place or Mine?" The Tension of Place in Narrative and Story-telling (4)

This course examines the many aspects of "place" revealed by the stories told about it. The readings illustrate disparate views of those born and those who choose to move into an environment. Students learn how stories shape and expose the culture of place through images of the land, language, and common legends and analyze the tensions evoked by different cultures living in close proximity. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Journal response and revision lets students integrate their own narratives into the story of this place. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 112 First-Year Seminar: A Landscape for Memory (4)

This course pursues a deeper understanding of the ways human action and the natural environment have shaped and been shaped by one another. Students explore the area's background, current status, and ongoing possibilities, from the deep time of geology to the era of human history and prospects for future development. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 113 First-Year Seminar: Practicing Place (4)

What do rituals do in relation to space and relationships? How do people map out their territory through ritual and what can we understand of those maps? Students examine place-making rituals at nearby Buddhist temples such as alms-rounds and circumambulation and analyze the rituals they experience at Sewanee that sacralize places here--from signing the Honor Code to walking the Perimeter Trail. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 114 First-Year Seminar: The Psychology of People in Places (4)

Places are powerful, not just for where they exist, but for how they impact our mental processes and behavior. This course examines how psychology is embedded in places like Sewanee, at once dynamically interacting with and creating norms, histories, cultures, environments, educational practices, and social groups. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 115 First-Year Seminar: Here and There, Now and Then (4)

This course considers Sewanee in the twenty-first century in light of ancient texts about place and placelessness, especially Virgil's Aeneid. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 116 First-Year Seminar: Making a Place for Literary Imagination (4)

In this course students reflect on forms of literary expression—stories, poems, and nonfictional accounts—that most vividly color and capture humanity's sense of place. How we imagine and write about sites that matter to us not only records them but truly helps to create them—as storied places, not just spaces on the map. Reading will focus on American texts, those evocative of scenes close to home in Sewanee as well as farther away. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 117 First-Year Seminar: Community Narratives of the South Cumberland Plateau (4)

This course introduces students to people, places, and events that helped shape the history, culture, and environment of the South Cumberland Plateau. Students explore multiple cultural, historical, and political narratives that tell the story of the region. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of historical and current land-use in shaping local environmental attitudes and perceptions. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. This course is not repeatable for credit. *Open only to new first-year students.*

FYRP 119 First-Year Seminar: Building Place—The Architecture and Art of Sewanee (4)

The campus of The University of the South has a distinctive style. Its appearance is the result of accident as well as deliberate planning and place-making, and the meaning of that appearance is slippery. This course examines the art and architecture of Sewanee in order to consider how architecture and art objects produced, collected, and displayed on campus have been used to shape understanding of our community and this place. Field trips and plenary lectures allow students to explore the region, engage in the practice of place-making, and synthesize knowledge across disciplines. Capstone projects provide opportunities for in-depth exploration. *Open only to new first-year students.*