

RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY
First-Year Seminar
The Color of Silence

Course Information

Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites: First-time, first-year student status

Class Meeting Day(s), Time and Room Location: Mondays and Thursdays, 11:00 – 1:30,
Spiritual Center Meditation Space and Berrie Center Design Studio

Instructor Information

Instructor's Name, Title: Shalom Gorewitz, Professor, Video Art and New Media

Office Location & Phone No.: BC 321 cell: 646 431 3260

Office Hours: by appointment on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays

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School Office Location: Berrie Center

School Office Phone No.: 201 529 7368

Common Course Description *(all FYS courses include this description as written)*

Designed for first-time, full-time, first-year students, First-Year Seminar (FYS) provides a comprehensive introduction to college-level learning. Seminar courses are developed around an academic theme or topic that is based on one of Ramapo College's academic pillars. First-Year students will have the opportunity to select a seminar that best suits their interests while learning about Ramapo's academic foundation. The First-Year Seminar course helps students in their transition from high school to college life both in and out of the classroom. The common learning outcomes of FYS are: critical and creative thinking, college-level writing, oral communication, information literacy, and technological competency. FYS classes are small to emphasize open discussion and experiential learning within the context of the theme of the seminar course. Peer facilitators play an essential role in each FYS class ensuring that first-year students have guidance from a more experienced student. FYS is also the home of the Ramapo Summer Reading Program; all first-year students read the same book and discuss and write about it in their seminars. FYS encourages new students to participate in a community of learners, to strengthen their critical thinking skills, and to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

Course Description of this Section

The Color of Silence is an experiential course designed to assess how art making is effected by meditation. Every class session will begin with meditation in the Spirituality Center. This will consist of 5 minutes of instruction, silence, and then a few minutes for questions concerning meditation. We will walk as a group to the Berrie Center Design Studio where students will work on and talk about a series of projects that attempt to answer the core question: what is the color of silence? Sessions will conclude with informal sharing and critiques. There will be several field trips to visit regional spiritual centers and museums, including the Ruben Museum in Manhattan, which has one of the best collections of Himalayan Art. During the semester several relevant films will be screened during special evening sessions.

Course Goals

The seminar will support meditation practice, visual perception, art making, and understanding of natural phenomena through experiential and philosophical learning activities leading to deeper insights concerning sound, light, color, movement, and form.

Students will learn meditation and art techniques and principles derived from Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Moslem, and Secular traditions. They will gain knowledge and learn skills in the interpretation and use of color for art, advertisements, and fashion.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

	Research Paper	Class discussions and essays	Final Project
Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively.		x	x
Students will demonstrate proficiency in written communication.		x	x
Students will demonstrate proficiency in oral communication.		x	x
Students will demonstrate information literacy and technological competency.		x	x

Peer Facilitators

As an added resource for first-year students, each section of First-Year Seminar (FYS) will have a peer facilitator. These upper-level students will attend FYS classes and assist the instructor with the academic topics covered in this seminar. They will serve as discussion leaders on issues that pertain to your personal and social development and they will facilitate weekly discussions on the class readings. Your peer facilitator will be your mentor and will be available to you to provide guidance on navigating the different personal and social hurdles that you may encounter in your first year at Ramapo.

First-Year Academic Advising

Each First-Year Seminar course is assigned a professional Academic Advisor from the Center for Academic Advising and First-Year Experience (CAAFYE) who serves as your Academic Advisor during your first year. This advisor will attend your First-Year Seminar class for a group advisement session to review general academic advising policies and procedures. They will also be available to answer any general questions regarding college policies/practices. Students are encouraged to schedule individual appointments with their CAAFYE Advisor for assistance with course selection and the development of a personal academic plan. Prior to individual advising sessions, your peer facilitator will instruct you on printing your recommended academic four-year plan, major requirements, and degree evaluation. In October, all first-year students will be required to attend the annual Majors Fair, where representatives are available from each major to assist students in learning more about the academic programs at Ramapo. If you have any questions regarding Academic Advisement please call CAAFYE at (201) 684-7441 or via email at: caafye@ramapo.edu

Texts, Readings, Materials

1. Loewen, James W. *Lies My Teacher: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*. New York: Touchstone, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-7432-9628-1

2. Hacker, Diana, and Barbara Fister. *Rules for Writers with Tabs with 2009 MLA and 2010 APA Updates*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-0-312-66482-4.
3. Looori, John Daido. *Finding the Still Point: A Beginner's Guide to Zen Meditation*. Boston & London: Shambhala, 2007. ISBN-978-1-59030-479-2
4. Misker, Wes "Scoop" Misker. *Crazy Wisdom: A Provocative Romp through the Philosophies of East and West*. Berkeley, California: Ten Speed Press, 1990. ISBN-0-89815-350-6
5. Lama, Dalai. *How to Practice: The Way to a Meaningful Life*. New York: Pocket Books, 2002. ISBN-0-7434-2708-4

Course Requirements

Classroom Participation – If you are uncomfortable with the idea of meditation from traditions other than your own, please reconsider taking this FYS. In contrast to your other classes you will be evaluated on how well you can sit still and remain quiet. Meditation is simultaneously a group and an individual experience. Your participation involves deep self-study and possibly experiences of calmness and energy that will be conveyed through the intentions and merits of your sitting and art making practices.

Writing Assignments – Your writing will consist of a personal meditation/art diary that reflects your experiences while practicing and how you feel your art-making is changed by meditation. It should also include some notes from the books we read, the meditation teachings, and aspects of the cross spirituality presented in the lectures and films. This will only be shared with the Professor and Peer Facilitator. The diary should be composed on a computer. The diary will be graded for quantity and quality of entries. You will also be asked to write a concise artist statement for your final projects, which will be exhibited in a public place on campus. This will be your opportunity to verbally answer the question that has prompted the work.

To receive a good grade, you should always attend classes, field trips, and special events on campus relating to issues raised by seminar.

You will create several small art works that will be graded based on relevance to specific assignment and the core question of the seminar- what is the color of silence?

Examinations, Laboratory/Studio, Library Research – Many questions will be raised by our meditation and art making experiences that you should actively research in the Library, online, in off campus meditation spaces, and in bookstores. Some of the small art assignments will be created outside class time. You can have access to Ramapo College facilities as they are available, when necessary. You can also work at home.

The projects can be done in any medium, including, but not limited to photography, video, pen and paper, paint, sculpture, ceramics, fashion materials, crafts, pastels, computers, words.

To receive a passing grade, please bring materials to class for studio sessions and work quickly on a series of projects resulting in one final project that provides your answer to the question.

General Education Program Course

This course fulfills the First-Year Seminar category of the general education curriculum at Ramapo College. Common to all First-Year Seminar (FYS) courses, you will develop critical thinking skills that are basic to college level study, regardless of your area of interest. You will be reading, writing, and participating in thoughtful group discussions with the aim of developing the skills of a scholar. You will learn to support your arguments using a foundation of knowledge and facts rather than simply using personal opinions and experiences.

This course fulfills several FYS categories through experiential learning of art and meditation practices; interdisciplinary studies especially Consciousness Studies, Philosophy, and Art; and international education since the meditation techniques will come from Asian, African, European, and American cultures.

Weekly Class Schedule

Date	Theme	Class Project	Reading	Deadlines
9/1	Course Introduction	Color Walk	Loori: 1-6	
9/5	Labor Day No Class		Loori: 7-10	
9/8	Sitting Meditation	Color Studies	Loori: Part 2	
9/12	Sitting Meditation	Wave Studies	Nisker: Part 1	Color Studies
9/15	Walking Meditation	Movement Studies		
9/19	No Class Meeting			
9/21	Convocation*	Required	Nisker: Part 2	
9/22	Dharma Combat 1	Wave Studies		
9/26	Library Orientation	Library		
9/29	Rosh Ha Shana	No Class	Nisker: Part 3	
10/3	Color Visualization	Light Studies		Wave Studies
10/6	Color Visualization	Light Studies		
10/10	Color Healing	Color & Light	Nisker: Part 4	
10/13	Color Healing	Color & Light		
10/17	Advisement Session			
10/20	Hindu Meditation	Super Hero Studies	Dalai Lama: Pt. 1	Color & Light
10/24	Visit to Hindu Temple	Field Visit Studies		
10/27	Buddhist Meditation	Super Hero Studies		
10/31	Indian Lunch	Field Trip Studies	Dalai Lama: Pt. 2	
11/3	Tibetan Buddhism	Super Hero Studies		Super Hero
11/7	Jewish Mysticism	Color Abstraction		Artist Statement
11/10	Jewish Mysticism	Color Abstraction	Dalai Lama: Pt. 3	
11/14	Christian Mysticism	Color Expression		Abstractions
11/17	Christian Mysticism	Color Expression		
11/21	Native American	Natural Materials	Dalai Lama: Pt. 4	Expressionistic
11/24	Thanksgiving			
11/28	Native American	Natural Materials		

12/1	Dharma Combat 3		Dalai Lama: Pt. 5	
12/5	FIELD TRIP	Rubin Museum		Raw materials
12/8				Diaries
12/12	Last Class			Portfolio

*September 21st, 2011 Opening Convocation, Dr. Kames W. Loewen 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Color Studies- Tell a story through color

Wave Studies- Create a variety of moods with waves

Light Studies- Focus on and accentuate details of light

Super Hero- Create a superhero “diety” with a visual narrative

Color Abstractions- Don’t say anything using colors

Color Expression- Create a variety of moods through colors

Natural Materials- Create a totem or visual ritual object using natural materials

Important Dates

First Day of Classes: September 1st

Last day for Schedule Adjustments: September 12th

Last day to withdraw from courses with “W” grade: October 27th

Thanksgiving Recess: Nov 23rd - 26th

Reading Day (no classes): December 14th

Final Exam Week: December 15th – 21st

Common Finals: December 17th

Final Exam Snow Make-Up Day: December 22nd

Grading Policy

Meditation Practice	33
Art Practice	36
Artist Statement	11
Meditation/Art Diary	11
Course Enrichment Component	5
Portfolio	4

Meditation practice will be assessed based teacher’s observation of disciplined approach including straight spine, relaxed neck and shoulders, and silence. Students will be evaluated based on the quality of their questions and responses to various techniques.

Art practice will be evaluated based on student application of color, wave, light, and other elements of art in relationship to the specific assignment and the general question that underlies all of the work: What is the color of silence?

Writing will be assessed for clarity and focus of writing, formal presentation, and content.

The CEC will be evaluated based on descriptions of student experiences.

Attendance Policy

In order to learn the various techniques and participate in the different parts of the seminar, students are encouraged to attend every class on time. There are circumstances that can't be avoided and I will be sympathetic to the realities of your lives.

“College policy states that students must notify faculty within the first three weeks of the semester if they anticipate missing any classes due to religious observance.”

Course Enhancement Component

This course will include a minimum of five (5) hours of unmonitored appropriate experience outside of the classroom.

Students can easily fulfill the CEC by attending two of three gallery receptions/artist talks during the semester; visiting museums, galleries, cultural centers, and places that have spiritual or cultural significance.

You will report on these experiences by writing one paragraph detailing your experience and how it related to the seminar.

Electronic Forms of Communication

In accordance with College policy, I will use your Ramapo College email address (@ramapo.edu) to communicate with you about all course-related matters.

Students with Disabilities

If you need course adaptation or accommodations because of a disability that has been documented with the Office of Specialized Services, please make an appointment with me.

Policy on Academic Integrity

Students are expected to read and understand Ramapo College's academic integrity policy, which can be found in the *Ramapo College Catalog*. Members of the Ramapo College community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Students who violate this policy will be referred to the Office of the Provost. An abbreviated version of this policy is described below.

Policy

All members of the Ramapo community are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. Since violations of academic integrity erode community confidence and undermine the pursuit of truth and knowledge at the College, academic dishonesty must be avoided.

Procedures

The Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs has the responsibility for the oversight and enforcement of the academic integrity policy and for making the policy an institutional priority. The Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs is also responsible for publishing the policy and for educating both faculty and students about the policy.

Faculty members play a crucial role in the academic integrity policy. They are responsible for educating their students about the importance of academic integrity and for communicating to students their expectations with respect to academic integrity in course work.

Students have the responsibility to understand the College academic integrity policy and to comply with the policy in all their academic work.

Criteria

There are four broad forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Cheating

Cheating is an act of deception by which a student misrepresents his or her mastery of material on a test or other academic exercise. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

- copying from another student's work;
- allowing another student to copy his/her work;
- using unauthorized materials such as a textbook, notebook or electronic devices during an examination;
- using specifically prepared materials such as notes written on clothing or other unauthorized notes, formula lists, etc., during an examination;
- collaborating with another person during an examination by giving or receiving information without authority;
- taking a test for another person or asking or allowing another to take the student's own test.

2. Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs when a person represents someone else's words, ideas, phrases, sentences, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work that includes such material, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific footnote references; additionally, verbatim statements must be acknowledged through quotation marks.

To avoid a charge of plagiarism, a student should be sure to include an acknowledgment of indebtedness:

- whenever he or she quotes another person's words directly;
- whenever he or she uses another person's ideas, opinions, or theories, even if they have been completely paraphrased in one's own words;
- whenever he or she allows another individual to contribute to the work in some significant fashion (for instance, through editing, or sharing of ideas);
- whenever he or she uses facts, statistics, or other illustrative material taken from a source, unless the information is common knowledge.

Examples of standard citation formats can be found on the [Library Website: Citation Manuals and Style Guides](#).

3. Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct includes the alteration of grades, involvement in the acquisition or

distribution of unadministered tests, and the unauthorized submission of student work in more than one class. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- changing, altering, falsifying, or being the accessory to the changing, altering, or falsifying of a grade report or form or other academic record, or entering any computer system, College office or building for that purpose;
- stealing, buying, selling, giving way, or otherwise obtaining all or part of any unadministered test or entering any computer system, College office or building, for the purpose of obtaining an unadministered test;
- submitting written work (in whole or in significant part) to fulfill the requirements of more than one course without the explicit permission of both instructors;
- disregarding policies governing the use of human subjects or animals in research;
- sabotaging another student's work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment;
- knowingly facilitating a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy by another person.

4. **Fabrication**

Fabrication refers to the deliberate use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings with the intent to deceive. Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to:

- citation of information not taken from the source indicated;
- listing of sources in a "works cited" that were not used in that project;
- altering, stealing and/or falsifying research data used in research reports, theses, or dissertations;
- submission as one's own of any academic work prepared in whole or in part by others, including the use of another's identity;
- falsifying information or signatures on registration, withdrawal, or other academic forms and records.

More on academic integrity can be found here:

http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_11_12/academic-policies.html?col10=open#CollapsiblePanel10