Course Information:
Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites: First-time, first-year student status
Class Meeting Day(s), Tuesdays and Fridays: 8:00-9:50 AM
Room: to be assigned

Instructor Information:
Instructor's Name, Title: Dr. Leo J. McKenzie, adjunct professor
Office Location & Phone No.: 
Office Hours: 9:50-10:30 AM: Tuesdays and Fridays, or by appointment
E-mail: lmckenz2@ramapo.edu
Mailbox Location: A-217
School Office Location: A-217

Common Course Description:

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:

Many members of the Ramapo Class of 2019 will be planning their retirement from the work force around the dawn of the year 2050. Most them will be close to 55 years of age and will have seen the world change dramatically and drastically from what it is as they begin this course.
“The Universe in 2050” will examine what scholars today are predicting the world will be like in 2050. Students will research scholarly prognostications, evaluate them, and ascertain whether or not these predictions will impact their future careers and professions. Students will examine: how “interconnectivity” will affect the world’s population; how “the Internet,” the world’s largest ungoverned space will develop; how “robots” will continue to erode employment opportunities in developed countries.

Another theory that will be tested is: because of globalization, will the world continue to become flatter thus rendering the United States almost incapable of maintaining its superpower status. Today “virtual nation-states” are forming but will they be able to sustain themselves? Artificial intelligence, it has been predicted, will be in 2050 one billion times more powerful than all human intelligence is today.

In 2050, the United States will have a population 100 million larger than it has today and Caucasians will be a minority in the U.S. population. In 2050, the Earth will have a population of nine billion people, of whom seven billion will be living in cities.

Nanotechnology, now in its infancy, will develop exponentially allowing programmed molecular assembly to produce almost anything out of raw materials. Astrophysicists are reporting that our universe is in a state of constant expansion and that there is not a single universe but there are many universes.

This seminar does not require a scientific background; it does require an open-mind, a mind willing to learn, and an inquisitive mind.

This seminar is essentially exploratory as opposed to dogmatic; it will use the theories of respected modern thinkers and apply them to the world you are living in now and the world your work-life labors will help to create. In this seminar, students will assess the feasibility of scholarly predictions and analyze the impact they may have on the students’ future careers and professions.

Course Goals:

The following skill-development goals will be emphasized during the seminar and are to be acquired and/or improved by each student:

1. To enhance the students’ critical reasoning and reading skills;
2. To develop critical analytical skills;
3. To further develop students’ presentation skills;
4. To learn to participate constructively in group discussions;
5. To master the skills to manage a group discussion;
6. To enhance students’ research skills;
7. To improve the writing skills of each student by emphasizing succinctness, clarity and organization;
8. To expand the intellectual horizons of students regarding our universe in 2050.
Measurable Student Learning Outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students will:</th>
<th>Research Paper</th>
<th>Written Assignments</th>
<th>Class Presentations</th>
<th>Class Participation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>demonstrate proficiency in written communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>demonstrate proficiency in oral communication</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<td>demonstrate information literacy</td>
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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.

Our seminar will have a peer facilitator: a Ramapo College upperclassman or woman will be announced shortly.

First-Year Academic Advising:

Each First-Year Seminar course is assigned a professional Academic Advisor from the Center for Student Success 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. The advisor will also be available to answer any general questions regarding college policies/practices. Students are encouraged to schedule individual appointments with their Student Success advisor for assistance with course selection and the development of a personal academic plan. If you have any questions regarding Academic Advisement please call Student Success at (201) 684-7441 or via email at success@ramapo.edu.
Texts, Readings, Materials:

Course Texts:


Library Reserves:

The books listed below will be available in the library for supplementary reading and for your research:


Course Requirements:

1. **Active seminar participation.** The very nature of a college seminar requires the active participation of all its members. Etymologically the word *seminar* means a nursery, a seedbed, a breeding ground for ideas. Extending the metaphor further, a seminar needs the cross pollination of the insights, observations, and discernments of its member to be maximally successful.
The grade for active participation must be earned. It includes, but it is not limited to, meeting deadline for all assignments, sending all class assignments via the College email system, verbally contributing to class discussions, being prepared for each class topic as noted in the syllabus schedule, following the course cell phone prohibitions, abiding by the attendance and lateness requirements of the course. Being passive and not adding ideas and reactions to class discussions will not earn participation points.

2. **Convincing oral presentations.** One of the two indispensible personal skills every employer is seeking in an employee is the ability to effectively communicate orally his or her ideas to fellow employees. Hence, in this seminar each student will make three presentations to the class: two presentations of five minutes each and one presentation of eight minutes supplemented by PowerPoint or some visualization medium and followed by a question and answer period. The topic for the longer presentation will be assigned.

   **An outline for each presentation is to be sent to your professor via College email 48 hours before its schedule delivery.**

3. **Effective writing.** A second personal skill every employer seeks in all employees is the ability to communicate their ideas in writing to managers and co-employees. Hence students will have five written assignments during the semester to enhance their writing ability for future college courses and eventually for their careers. A research paper of seven pages or more will be due December 11. It will be written during the semester with opportunities for multiple drafts. The topic for the research paper will be assigned.

   One of the writing assignments will be based on the book *Redeployed* and Phil Klay’s lecture at the College Convocation on September 1.

   There will be two papers based on the ideas of Schmidt, Cohen, Kurzweil, Tyson and Kaku.

   All writing assignments for this seminar will allow multiple drafts if needed. It is hoped that each student’s original written submissions will demonstrate the student’s best possible work and additional submissions will not be needed. If additional submissions are needed they are acceptable and will not penalize the student’s grade. Writing is a learned skill and a student’s writing will improve the more the student writes. The writing-intensive objective for this seminar is to encourage each student to become a better writer throughout the course than the student was at the beginning of the course.

**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.

*The Universe in 2050* is an interdisciplinary studies course. It will explore topics that cross academic discipline lines such as artificial intelligence, an area of study originally found in computer science and now also studied in psychology and sociology. The various topics the seminar will cover will be examined from a multiple-disciplinary viewpoint.

**Writing Intensive (WI) Course:**

Writing will be integrated into the life of this course. You will receive comments, direction, and support as you work on strengthening your writing skills. Your writing will be evaluated and returned in a timely fashion, allowing you to incorporate my comments into your future work. For help outside the classroom, please see me during my office hours and/or work with a writing tutor in the Center for Reading and Writing (CRW), Room: L-211, x7557, crw@ramapo.edu.

### Weekly Class Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Class topics, reading assignments</th>
<th>Exam/assignment/paper due dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 1,</td>
<td>Opening Convocation</td>
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<td>2:00-3:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction to First Year Seminar. Personal introductions. Syllabus explanation.</td>
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<td>9/4 Fri.</td>
<td>Discussion of Critical Thinking and Writing.</td>
<td>Writing Assignment #1</td>
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<td>How a seminar differs from a lecture or lab class.</td>
<td>Due: 9/9 Noon via email</td>
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<td>Discussion of course syllabus.</td>
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<td>Writing Assignment #2.</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Further discussion of <em>Deployed</em> if needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/8-11</td>
<td>Introduction to <em>The New Digital Age</em>.</td>
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<td>Read for Friday: NDA Introduction: pp.3-11. Be prepared to explain its contents to the class.</td>
<td>Writing assignment #1 due: Friday, 9/9 by noon.</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Read for 9/16: read NDA Chapter 1: pp. 13-31. Be prepared to discuss its contents. First presentation assignment will be given.</td>
<td>Presentation #1 due next week. Outlines of your speech are required 48 hours before speech delivery. Order for presentations will be assigned.</td>
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<td>9/16-19</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Presentation #1 this week. 9/22: #1-13; 9/25: # 14-25. Writing assignment #2 will be discussed.</td>
<td>Writing assignment #2 due 9/30 at noon. Read: NDA Chapter 2 for 9/29.</td>
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<td>9/22-25</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Discussion: The Future of Identity, Citizenship and Reporting.</td>
<td>Presentation #2 due next week.</td>
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<td>9/29 – 10/2</td>
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<td>10/6-9</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Presentation #2: #14-25. Peer Facilitator will discuss advisement information.</td>
<td>Our FYS has been selected to participate in a College project titled the Collegiate Learning Assessment. Read: NDA Chapter 4.</td>
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<td>10/13-16</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Discussion: The Future of Revolution. Writing Assignment #3</td>
<td>Writing assignment #3 is due 10/28 by noon. Read: NDA Chapter 5</td>
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<td>10/20-23</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Discussion: The Future of Terrorism Presentation #3 will be assigned. Research paper assignment</td>
<td>Presentation #3 next week. Outlines are due 48 hours before your speech delivery. Draft of research paper will be due 11/18 at noon.</td>
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<td>10/27-30</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Presentation #3: #1-13 on 11/3; #14-25 on 11/6.</td>
<td>Read: NDA Chapter 6</td>
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<td>11/3-6</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Discussion: Conflict</td>
<td>Read: NDA Chapter 7 and Conclusion.</td>
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Week 12
11/10-13 Discussion: Reconstruction

Week 13
11/17-20

Week 14
11/24 Make-up presentations or final drafts of written assignments are due next week

Week 15
12/1-4 Final draft of research paper due: 12/8. All rewrites for assignments are due 12/11. All make-up presentations are due this week.

12/8-11 Final Exam No final examination

### Important Dates

First Day of Classes: September 2.
Last day to withdraw from courses with “W” grade: November 13.
Reading Day (no classes): December 15.
Final Exam Week: December 16 – 22.
Common Finals: December 19.
Last day to request “I” grades: December 22.
Residence Halls close (6pm): December 20th
Final Exam Snow Make-Up Day: December 23.

### Grading Policy:

**Course Grading:**

1. Active Participation: 20%

   Active seminar participation: The very nature of a college seminar requires the active participation of all its members. Etymologically the word *seminar* means a nursery, a breeding ground for ideas. Extending the metaphor further, a seminar needs the cross pollination of the insights, observations, and discernments of its member to be maximally successful. Your active involvement in the seminar is highly encouraged and it is required. Attendance at all classes and sessions held on behalf of FYS students is required.
2. Convincing Oral Presentations: 30%
   a. Two five-minute presentations for ten points each: (Presentations #1 and #2: 10% each): 20%
   b. Eight-minute presentation (Presentation #3): 10%

3. Effective Writing Assignments: 50%
   a. Essay on summer reading using information from Phil Klay’s lecture (Writing Assignment #1: 10%)
   b. Two seminar topic essays: ten points each: (Writing Assignments #2 and #3: 10% each): 20%
   c. Research paper: 20%

Total: 100%

This course will use only letter grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, F.

No incomplete grades will be given except in the most dire circumstances and with the approval of the director of the First Year Seminar program.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance at all classes is required. It is my experience that there is a strong and direct correlation between attendance at class and class grades. Students who do not attend classes do not earn high grades; they tend to apply the same lax standards to the college assignments as they do to attendance.

Missing four classes will lower your earned grade by one letter grade. Missing five classes will lower your earned grade by one and a half letter grades. Missing six classes will be an automatic failure of the course.

Lateness for class will lower your participation grade. I will discuss with students who are chronically late for class whether they should withdraw from the class.
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. My Ramapo College email address is lmckenz2@ramapo.edu.

All written assignment and outlines of presentations are to be sent through Ramapo College’s email system.

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.” Please note: Students must be registered with the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) to receive accommodations. As you develop or revise your course syllabus, consider ways to make your course material accessible to students with disabilities. For additional information, contact the Office of Specialized Services (OSS) at x7514 or email at oss@ramapo.edu. Please do not place a time limit on when students may request accommodation, as they may not be aware of their need until later in the semester.

Academic Integrity Policy:
All members of the 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 has responsibility for the oversight and enforcement of the Academic Integrity Policy and for making the policy an institutional priority. The Office of the Provost 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. They are also urged to report alleged violations of the policy to the Vice Provost.

Students have the responsibility to understand the Academic Integrity Policy and to comply with the policy in their academic work.

Criteria:
There are four (4) 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:

   o copying from another student’s work;
allowing another student to copy his/her work;
o using unauthorized materials such as a textbook, notebook, or electronic devices during an examination;
o using specifically prepared materials, such as notes written on clothing or other unauthorized notes, formula lists, etc., during an examination;
o collaborating with another person during an examination by giving or receiving information without authorization from the instructor;
o 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 or endnote 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 George T. Potter Library Website: [Library Website: Citation Manuals and Style Guides](librarywebsite: 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, transcript, or other academic record, or entering any computer system or College office or building for that purpose;
- stealing, buying, selling, giving way, or otherwise obtaining all or part of any unadministered test or paper or entering any computer system or 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;
o disregarding policies governing the use of human subjects or animals in research;
  o sabotaging another student’s work through actions designed to prevent the student from successfully completing an assignment;
  o 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:

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

**Reporting Violations**

To ensure due process, any member of the Ramapo community who is aware of violations of the College's academic integrity policy is expected to report the incident to the Office of the Provost.

Faculty members who choose to resolve the matter themselves are urged also to report the incident to the Office of the Provost, since the incident may be a repeat offense, or there may be a subsequent grade appeal.

More details on Ramapo College’s academic integrity policy can be found here: [http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_13_14/academic-policies.html](http://www.ramapo.edu/catalog_13_14/academic-policies.html)