Ramapo College of New Jersey, Fall 2014
First Year Seminar:
Jerseyscapes: A Multi-Disciplinary Exploration of a (mostly) Familiar Place

Course ID: INTD 101-43
Class schedule: Tuesdays/Fridays 9:45-11:15 Classroom Laurel Hall 006
Professor: Meredith P. Davis, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Art History
Professor’s Office: Berrie Center, 232. School Office: BC 237 Mailbox: BC 238
Email: mdavis1@ramapo.edu

Professor’s Office Hours: Tues/Friday 1:15 – 2:45 & Weds by appointment.

Common FYS 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.

“Jerseyscapes”: This class will explore the Garden State’s history and culture, its iconic and not-so-iconic places from the popular to the obscure. Drawing on humanistic geography’s idea of a “Sense of place” and on the disciplines of American Studies, Art History, and Cultural Studies, this class will invite students to consider New Jersey as a particular and unique place that has produced some of the nation's finest poets, writers, artists and cultural movers and shakers, while cultivating a "rep" as the home of big hair and thruways. Topics for class study and for student presentations will range from your home town to Bruce Springsteen and Bon Jovi, from the Paterson Strike Pageant to “Jersey Shore,” from the Newark Riots to the rise of suburbia, from the Pine Barrens to the Meadowlands. We’ll read the poetry of Rutherford resident William Carlos Williams; explore earth artist Robert’s Smithson’s “Monuments of the Passaic;” travel through the most toxic corners of the Meadowlands with author Robert Sullivan, and through Jersey’s Hispanic, working-class communities with author and MacArthur "genius" award winner Junot Diaz, perhaps go “down the shore” with Pulitzer Prize winning novelist Richard Ford or look into the vicious world of high school politics with Tom Perrotta. Throughout these explorations, we’ll consider who, what, and how New Jersey is understood through cultural
representations. Campus visits from artists and writers, film screenings and “boots on the ground” explorations will be built into the curriculum.

Course Goals:
- Use a “place-based” approach to practice interdisciplinary inquiry
- Critical examination of local identity and the formation of place-identity through culture, history and narrative.
- Gain experience in written analysis and of works of literature, photography, film, and non-fiction, using critical thinking skills to move beyond basic interpretation.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

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<tr>
<th>Students Will:</th>
<th>Research Paper</th>
<th>Class Discussion</th>
<th>Oral Presentation</th>
<th>Short essays &amp; Quizzes</th>
<th>CEC</th>
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<td>Demonstrate their ability to think critically and creatively</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Demonstrate proficiency in written communication of various types, from the personal response to the academic research paper.</td>
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<td>Demonstrate proficiency in oral communication</td>
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<td>Demonstrate information literacy</td>
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Peer Facilitators
Every FYS class includes 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. Peer facilitator will meet with students exclusively (without the professor) each Tuesday from 10:45 - 11:15.

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. If you have any questions regarding Academic Advisement please call CAAFYE at (201) 684-7441 or via email at: caafye@ramapo.edu
**Required Texts:** Please purchase these books before the first day of class. The common FYS reading this year is Nazario’s *Enrique’s Journey*, which must be read over the summer. Please bring this book to class with you on the first day.

A **note on used books:** most of these books will be available on any good used book website for a fraction of the price for new copies. Ordering used is good for the environment, and good for your wallet. But: if you order online, please do it EARLY. Books can take up to 2 weeks to ship to you.

**My favorite used book site is Abe.com.** At the time of this writing, I found copies of *Oscar Wao* for $1.15, of *Election* for $3.41 and *Enrique’s Journey* for $3.48. ORDER THESE BOOKS NOW. Students easily fall behind due to not having the books ready when they are assigned.

**Books to buy:**

**Additional Required Materials and Resources:** Various movies, TV episodes and other media will be assigned for this class. For example, an episode or two of *The Sopranos* will be assigned – these are available on Google Plus for $1.99 each. You should budget approximately $20 to cover such costs over the course of the semester.

**Course Requirements:** Your grade will be calculated out of a total of 100. See below for letter-number grade equivalents. Every point counts.
- Participation: contributions to class discussions, coming to class with all assignments and assigned texts, general preparedness and responsiveness: 10 points.
- Summer Reading Assignments: initial response and revision: 10 points
- Research Paper – topic development, outline, bibliography, and final draft: 30 points
- Oral Presentation - 10 points
- Participation in CEC activities – 10 points
- Short essays, quizzes and group assignments: 30 points
- Attendance: the following policy is adhered to without ANY exceptions: after the first 2 absences, each absence results in a 2-point deduction of the grade. Anyone missing more than 5 classes will automatically fail the class. Rationale: taxpayer dollars pay for %25 of the cost of your attendance at this college. You have a responsibility, since you are the beneficiary of public funds, to use them to the best of your ability by being the best student you can be.
CEC: “Each course will include a minimum of five (5) hours of unmonitored appropriate experience outside of the classroom.” Faculty should then include a description of how this course satisfies the criteria. For this class a number of activities and events will be scheduled. Students will write short written responses to these events. These will be assessed for writing quality, critical thinking and creativity in thinking.

General Education
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.

Writing Intensive
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. Schedule of classes:

Tuesday, Sept 2: Convocation:
Author

Friday, Sept, 5: Introduction to the class
Due today:
- Bring Enrique’s Journey to class today
- Please bring assigned written work on Enrique’s Journey to class with you today

Tuesday, 9/9: Writing Workshop: Enrique’s Journey
Due today:
- A typed copy of your paper, fully spell-checked and proofread.
- On a separate sheet of paper, please write down 1-2 sentence stating each of the following:
  - The thesis or main argument of the paper
  - The strengths of the paper
  - The areas that you suspect might be in need of improvement.

Friday, 9/12: “No ideas but in things”
Due Today
- Final (2nd) draft of your Essay on Enrique’s Journey
- Read essay on “The Texas Hot Weiner” at the Library of Congress publication on “Occupational life in Patterson” – link provided on our Moodle Page. Come to class prepared to discuss this.
Tuesday 9/16: Tom Perrotta’s *Election*  
**Due today:**  
- Pages 1-75  
- Discussion sections and a writing exercise on assigned reading in class today

**Friday, 9/19: Election, continued**  
**Due today:**  
- pages 75-150  
- reading responses to be written in class today.

Tuesday, 9/23: *Intro to research skills*  
**Due today**  
- Finish *Election*.  
- Submit your choice for your research project from list posted on Moodle.  
- Complete initial Research inquiry statement (posted on Moodle)

Tuesday 9/23 evening, **screening of Election**  
**SNACKS WILL BE SERVED!**

Friday, Sept 26 – **NO CLASS TODAY**

Tuesday Sept. 30: Another New Jersey: *Oscar Wao*  
**Due today:**  
- Initial bibliography for research paper, developed from catalog search of Potter library due today. 1-3 sources. **Graded assignment.**

**Friday, Oct. 3: Research Beyond the bookshelf.**  
**Due today:**  
- Writing assignment #2 due today  
- Meet today at Potter library, main entrance. Be on time!

Tuesday, Oct. 7: **Advisement Day**  
**Due today:**  
- Read *Fourth of July, Asbury Park* pages 1-75  
- Research progress report and revised bibliography due today

**Friday, Oct 10: Asbury Park and the American Dream**  
**Due today:**  
- Read *Fourth of July* pages 75-150  
- Notes on part 1 of playlist  
- View YouTube videos, as linked on Moodle.

**Tuesday Oct 14: Asbury Park and American Rock and Roll**  
**Guest Lecture: Pseu Braun from WFMU on the Cultures of NJ Music**
Due today:
- Finish *Fourth of July*
- Finish listening to playlist

Friday, Oct. 17 – Class trip to Asbury Park?? Or research day.

**Tuesday Oct, 21: Muck: the New Jersey Meadows**  
**Guest lecture, Warner Wada**  
Due today:
- Robert Sullivan, *The Meadowlands: Wilderness Adventures on the edge of the City* selected chapters (approximately 40 pages)  
- Thesis statement for research paper due today. (See assignment on Moodle)

**Friday, Oct. 24: The Jersey Meadows, continued**  
**Due today:**
- Sullivan, *Meadowlands*, selected chapters  
- Joshua Lutz, Meadowlands photo essay, view online  
- Writing assignment #3: on 1 photo in the Lutz work (1pp). See assignment on Moodle.

**Tuesday, Oct. 28: Paterson, The Center of America**  
Due today:
- Read 1 of the essays (as assigned) on the Library of Congress’ site, *Patterson, an Occupational History.*  
- Prepare a short summary of the essay and discussion questions to share in a group.  
- Come to class with a printed copy of the assigned essay.

**Friday, October 31: Patterson, Through the Eyes of a Photographer**  
**Guest: Tema Stauffer will talk about her photographic work in the city of Paterson, NJ**  
Due today
- Outline for research paper due today

**Tuesday, Nov. 4: Workshop for your presentation**  
Practice your presentation with a small group of students. Give and get feedback.  
(or Joseph Mitchell’s essay on Edgewater and Rivermen as different portrait of working)

Friday, Nov. 7 Student Research presentations 1-5  
Tuesday Nov. 11 Student Research presentations 6-10  
Friday, Nov. 14 Student Research presentations 11-15  
Tuesday, Nov. 18 Student Research presentations 16-20  
Friday, Nov 21 Student Research presentations 21-25

Tuesday, Nov. 25 Weird New Jersey or Pine Barrens

Tuesday Dec. 2: Weird New Jersey
Research paper due today

Friday Dec 5 The Sopranos 1

Tuesday Dec. 9 The Sopranos 2

Friday Dec. 12: WHAT DOES SNOOKIE TEACH US?

Final class: continue discussion of Jersey Shore and NJ in media.