

(updated April 25, 2017)

General Landing Description:

FirstBridge is Discovery

FirstBridge is a dynamic, innovative learning experience that is the hallmark of a student's first-year at AUP. FirstBridge courses create what we call "learning communities" in which you will meet new friends, be taught and mentored by professors who are experts in their field, and get to know the wider AUP community. You may be arriving at AUP with a strong sense of your intellectual interests and desired educational and career path, or you may not. FirstBridge is designed to help you confirm interests and explore new ones, to go outside of your comfort zone and take risks.

Our FirstBridge learning communities have different shapes and sizes. The following descriptions will help to you decide which FirstBridge is right for you. Follow the link that accompanies each type of FirstBridge, read the course descriptions carefully and let them spark your curiosity.

FirstBridges (Model I) 1-9 are smaller learning communities with paired courses taught by two different professors. The two courses each meet twice a week and are carefully designed for you to make connections between two disciplines; a third space, reflective seminar, will help you to discover how one informs the other. This FirstBridge design allows you to engage deeply with the subject matter, your classmates, and professors.

FirstBridge (Model II) 10 is organized around larger 40 student lectures in which every student that chooses these FirstBridges will be enrolled. The lecture group meets twice a week. Each student will also choose a seminar according to their interests that meets twice a week. This FirstBridge is designed to help you engage deeply with two disciplines and meet four AUP faculty members and a larger group of your peers; it combines the advantages of both the seminar experience and time in a smaller learning community.

Once you have read about all the FirstBridges we offer, please review the list below and indicate which two Firstbridge groups most interest you. We do our best to accommodate your choices according to available seating in each course.

FirstBridge 1: LANGUAGE AND POLITICS

Language and politics are intricately related. This FirstBridge will explore the relationships between language, policies about language, historical events and political communication. Both courses will also follow current international events. LI1091 fulfills the general education requirement Mapping the World: Social Experience and Organization. PO1091 fulfills the requirement Comparing Worlds Past and Present: Historical and Cross-Cultural Understandings.

LI1091GE110 Language and Society

Prof. Rebekah Rast

This linguistics course will look at language interaction within and between multilingual communities and individuals, code-switching between languages and dialects, and the development of Pidgins and Creoles. Using case studies, we will examine areas such as bilingual education, resistance to minority languages, and language dominance.

PO1091GE100 The United States and the World

Prof. Steven Ekovich

This course deals with the evolution of the relations between the United States and a changing world. It includes the study of the institutional bases and recent history of American foreign policy the foreign policy decision-making process, and the roles played by different branches of government and broad economic, political and social forces. Since 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the entry of the U.S. into World War I we will focus a bit on this episode.

Note: Two one-day study trips to the Musee de la Grande Guerre in Meaux (WWI Memorial) and la Maison Monnet will be included in this FirstBridge.

FirstBridge 2: READING OURSELVES AND OTHERS

This FirstBridge examines the self through the mediums of writing and art. Students study authors who have used autobiographical narrative to examine the essential question of identity - "*Who am I?*" - from Saint Augustine to the present. Concurrently, they examine a wide range of writings by artists (letters, journals, theoretical texts, interviews) to question the relationship between words and artworks. These forms of inquiry are complemented by activities and exercises at some of Paris's most celebrated museums.

CL1091GE100 Autobiographical Writing

Prof. Daniel Medin

In this class we will study authors who have used autobiographical narrative, essays, diaries, letters and fiction to examine essential questions of identity from antiquity to the present. Our exploration of these modes of inquiry will be complemented by the study of selected masters of self-representation, such as Van Gogh. By learning how others have documented their experience in language and in line, students become better readers of themselves and the world around them, and develop the technical skill to articulate this understanding with greater clarity.

AH1020GE115 Writing About One's Art, Looking at Artists' Writing **Prof. Hervé Vanel**

"It's always hopeless to talk about painting," once said the British painter Francis Bacon, "one never does anything but talk around it." This section of the class will study the relationship between artist's writings (in the broad sense: letters, journal, statement, interview, manifesto) and the process of creation. What is the value of such texts in interpreting works which mode of communication is primarily visual? Examples will include primarily focus on 19th and 20th century artists.

FirstBridge 3 CREATE: WAYS OF WORLD MAKING

This era of hyper-connectivity, always-on, connected smart objects, augmented and virtual reality, offers unprecedented opportunities for innovation and creation. In this First Bridge we will introduce students to key digital technologies and art practices and let them explore their creativity

by designing interactive objects: from wearables (responsive jewelry, smart T-shirts displaying tweets, steps counting shoes...) to augmented everyday objects (talking coffee-cups, gesture responsive lighting) to dadaesque Goldberg machines who engage the observer (interactive sculptures and drawings).

In this Reflective Seminar, we'll look into the historical evolution of the concept, contemporary creativity research and into techniques which allow exploring and developing one's creativity.

CS2021GE110 The art and science of creating digital stuff Prof. Georgi Stojanov

In this part of the FB students will acquire skills to create digital objects. We will start by creating simple static objects and movies (from 2D pictures to 3D artifacts) to interactive games and engaging and entertaining ones. Starting with simple programs (like Excel and Word) we'll continue with 3D design software and finally Lego Mindstorms to create physical interactive sculptures, wearables, and various prototypes and conceptual installations. The stress will be on originality and the engagement rather than utility.

AR1010GE115 Studio Class Prof. Jonathan Shimony

The goal of *The Studio Class* is to introduce incoming students to the fundamental concepts of 3-D design. Experimentation and discovery are at the heart of this course, with exercises that stress the creative processes needed for the production of prototypes. The product development process, beginning with brainstorming and sketching, followed by sketch modelling, aesthetic evaluation, final maquettes, and ending with written, visual, and oral communication is used for each assignment. The students will acquire a multitude of design skills by building a variety of models from various materials. The last few projects will be "brought to life" by incorporating the technologies learned in the other half of this FirstBridge. The critical skills needed to assess objects designed by others and an appreciation of the intersection of art and science are further learning outcomes of *The Studio Course*.

FirstBridge 4: REASON AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Whatever you do affects the environment and those living in it. Learn how to be a better informed, critical decision maker. Claudio Piani introduces you to fundamentals of scientific reasoning. Julia Wildberger shows you how to make or critique an ethical argument and to spell out unspoken assumptions in your judgments and values.

SC1091GE110 Environmental Science Prof. Claudio Piani

Be aware. Be competent. Be educated. Whatever environmental choices you make, be sure they are grounded in a solid understanding of the relevant physical processes and up-to-date empirical evidence. Learn to distinguish between legitimate science and media hogwash. Become a vector for social environmental awareness.

PL1091GE100 Environmental Ethics Prof. Julia Wildberger

Virtually all your decisions impact the environment. How you shop, travel, build a house, raise a child affects the wellbeing of others. Your vote or your activism may save -- or kill -- people, animals, whole ecosystems. Learn to account for the right and wrong of your actions in an informed and methodical way.

FirstBridge 5: UNDERSTANDING THE ORIENT: THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

Why are regions as different as the Middle East and India both considered “Oriental”? Do Arabs and Indians consider themselves “Oriental”? By counterpointing western images of these “Oriental” societies in literature, art and political documents with the Orient’s self-images, this course offers indispensable tools to better understand geopolitics and culture in these regions today.

CL1091GE115 The Indian Subcontinent

Prof. Sneharika Roy

The India module looks at British attempts to control India politically and imaginatively as well as Indian resistance to such control. We will trace the contemporary Indian identity to the Bengal Renaissance, a synthesis of western and Indian cultures that proposed fresh, exciting ways of reinterpreting religion, culture, the place of women, and political action.

HI1091GE100 The Middle East

Prof. Ziad Majed

The western media coverage of Middle Eastern conflicts, the rise of Political Islam, the oil boom—these are some of the major regional developments in the Arab world from the twentieth century onwards. How did they arise? The Middle East module looks at historical events and the creative arts for answers...

FirstBridge 6: SELF AND OTHER: THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY AND BOUNDARIES

What makes us distinctly human? How are we to understand the process by which we see ourselves as human and learn to live in the world? At the center of our understanding of our sense of being human lies the dichotomy of “Self” and “Other.” It is the very idea of similarity and difference that is central to the way in which we achieve a sense of identity and social belonging. What sets us apart from the natural world, what differentiates us from each other (gender, race, ethnicity), and how are these boundaries constructed and maintained?

CL1091GE100 Thou art the cause I to myself am strange

Prof. Brenton Hobart

The object of this course is to examine the concept of the *self* and the *other* through works of history, literature, philosophy, as well as self-exploration: how do we describe ourselves? how can we be sure that the individuals we think we are really represent our true selves?

AN1002GE110 Socio-cultural Anthropology: Finding the human in all of us

Prof. Tanya Elder

Social Anthropology is the comparative study of human societies and cultures. It emphasizes first-hand observation, pays attention to the details of everyday life, examines social relations, and asks not only how things work, but also what they mean to the people concerned. It uses ethnography, comparison and a holistic approach to make sense of the strange and unfamiliar amongst other peoples, and to question what seems normal and natural to ourselves. In this course students will be acquainted with a range of theoretical approaches and anthropologists that have contributed to the discipline, they will be introduced to how in different societies identity is constructed both socially and culturally, and finally through their own experience in the field they will gain an understanding of what it entails to conduct ethnographic research.

FirstBridge 7: HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE MIDDLE EAST

History and Culture of the Middle East links two courses on the Middle East, one on the emergence of Islamic civilization and the other on modern debates in the Arab world. Class visits in Paris, to Marseilles, and to Cairo in Egypt are planned in relation to material discussed.

CM2004GE110 Comparative Communications History for First Bridge: Near Eastern Approaches **Prof. Justin McGuinness**

In this class, students explore the history of human communication in the Near East and Mediterranean Africa. They will discover the emergence of early writing systems, the media practices of the region's religions, and its people's adoption and use of printed, electronic and digital media

CL1091GE100 Modern to Contemporary in the Arab World **Prof. David Tresilian**

This course uses literature and film to introduce modern Arab history and the identity and direction of the Arab world. By studying this literature and reflecting on the societies from which it comes, students will reinforce their thinking and understand contemporary lines of thought.

FirstBridge 8 SEX, GENDER, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND CINEMA

How do power structures within society inform and restrict our roles as citizens? How do the images we create in popular culture reinforce and challenge these structures? This First Bridge will investigate power relations as they are circulated through sex and gender in issues of social justice and cinematic representation.

FM1091GE100 Sex, Gender and Cinema **Prof. Marie Regan**

How does cinema shape the power dynamics of our culture and give us models to see ourselves? How do the images and the way those images are constructed around sex and gender limit and challenge how we negotiate who we can become? This First Bridge section will explore sex and gender through cinema and cinema through the prism of sex and gender. You'll emerge with an understanding of how films work and how they the codes of cinema reinforce or open up ideas about sex and gender. This course substitutes for *FM1010* in the Film Major and satisfies the *GE Comparing Worlds* requirement.

GS1091GE110 Sex and Social Justice**Prof. Lissa Lincoln**

How do sex and gender influence our understanding and experience of society? How do they inform questions of social justice? This First Bridge section will examine multiple forms of social oppression and inequality based on sex and gender. From this perspective, students will be introduced to the interdisciplinary analysis of systemic aspects of exploitation, violence and persecution and the ways in which these systems of oppression are reflected on individual, cultural, institutional and/or global levels. We will also consider and compare culturally specific strategies of resistance to systemic sexual and gender based oppression.

FirstBridge 9 MEMORY-MAKING

What makes up our memories? What human capacities, techniques and tools provide historical and lived continuity? How do media, social institutions and designed spaces, such as museums, memorials, and monuments contribute to our lived sense of history and time? From Paleolithic cave paintings to contemporary museums and digital photography, from the earliest vocalizations and songs to Auto-tune and mp3s, from archaic scratches of signs and ancient libraries to modern archives and servers, from co-narratives in childhood to national memories, we will study the co-evolution of media and the possibilities of knowing, understanding, remembering. How are speech, inscription, writing, narrative, and storytelling fundamental to the manifold ways of understanding self, world and time?

CM2004GE100 Comparative Communications History: Media, Memory & Visual Culture**Prof. Charles Talcott**

From communications and cultural studies perspectives, students will undertake an exploration of 'institutions of memory.' We will trace the historical, cultural and technological evolutions of intensely creative 'mediated places' from Paleolithic caves in the South of France to digital archives in the heart of Paris with special focus on museums, monuments and memorials.

PY1091GE110 Introduction to Memory Studies**Prof. Brian Schiff**

This course will introduce students to the emerging interdisciplinary field of memory studies. Beginning from psychoanalytic and cognitive perspectives on memory and moving onto sociological and cultural perspectives, students will explore the powerful theoretical and applied implications of an approach to memory that breaks down the borders between persons and social groups.

FirstBridge 10 (Model II) DEMOCRACY: ITS PAST, THE PRESENT, OUR FUTURE

Never in world history has democracy been so widespread across the globe. And yet, rarely has democracy seemed so fragile. In this paradox resides one of the most important issues of our day. We approach this fundamental question through the fields of law, political science and communications through our Democracy Firstbridge experience.

Lecture Course: All students in this FirstBridge will be enrolled in this lecture course.

HI1091GE100 Democracy: A History**Prof. Stephen Sawyer**

Today, democracy is at once triumphant and uncertain. Since its Greek origins—*Demos* [δῆμος] (people/the common) and *Kratos* [Κράτος] (strength/power)—the idea that human communities should govern themselves has never been so widespread and yet confusion grows about what such power should mean. This course investigates democracy's past, present and future.

Seminar Courses: Each student will take one of these seminar courses.

LW1091GE115 Introduction to History, Law and Society: Democracy and Activism

Prof. Michelle Kuo

How have people resisted unjust laws? Alternatively, how have advocacy and special interest groups across political lines used the law to harness social change? This course explores the intersection between the legal system and society, focusing on how democratic activism seeks to reform and change law. Topics include civil rights and Black Power movements in the United States, abolitionist movements, and recent populist movements in the US and Europe.

CM1091GE110 Democracy and Media: the 2016 US Presidential Campaign

Prof. Jayson Harsin

This course is a special version of comparative political communication. In the context of political theories of democracy, the course covers prevalent political communication theories and trends, the relationship between political institutions and the press in the U.S., elections, debates, political campaigning and advertising, digital media and citizen participation, political socialization, education, and popular culture.

PO1011GE100 Foundations of Modern Politics

Prof. Peter Hägel

What is politics – the quest for the common good (Plato, 360 BCE) or who gets what, when, and how (Lasswell, 1936)? With a special focus on democracy, this course introduces you to the study of politics through foundational texts of political science and political theory, discussed in relation to current political affairs.

EnglishBridge: What Does It Mean to Be Human?

Since the nineteenth century, the theory of evolution has transformed not only the scientific understanding of human origins, but also the world of politics, law, and literature. How does evolution work? How did humans evolve in the context of their environment over millions of years? Thinking about evolution leads to another set of historical and legal questions. Science, history, and literature culminate in asking what it means to be human, a question implicit in our understandings, uses, misuses and fantasies regarding evolution. Topics addressed include evolutionary theory, eugenics, colonialism, gender, and race.

HI1091GE100 Science, Society and Human Origins

Prof. Linda Martz

Our species, *Homo sapiens*, is pretty incredible: we went from being prey in a few parts of Africa to being top predator all over the planet in an incredibly short time (in geological terms). Firstly, you'll think about how that happened, and you'll leave with an understanding of what science can and cannot say about human origins. You'll be more aware of your own connection to the very distant past, and you'll learn how the more recent past has been impacted by how people have told that story, sometimes making honest mistakes influenced by their own cultural constraints and sometimes to achieve political objectives. Then you'll look at how science has been used to create distinctions and hierarchies among different groups of people, to dehumanize and isolate them, and you'll look into the faces of witnesses to the ultimate dehumanization, genocide.

CL1091GE115 Science Fiction Asks What It Means to Be Human

Prof. Elizabeth Kinne

Science fiction is a speculative genre that allows the reader to imagine alternative human societies and possibilities for existence that expand our known experience. We will be reading short stories that, whether they are escapist paradigms or fear-inducing eventualities, allow for a critical reflection on the desires, aspirations, and fantasies in a given cultural and historical moment. These narratives can convey an investment in the notions of progress and the perfectibility of humankind through the tropes of utopia as much as they can express a pessimistic dystopian approach to the nightmarish consequences that the misuses of evolutionary thinking can entail. This course will explore how authors such as Isaac Asimov, James Tiptree Jr., Octavia Butler, Joanna Russ, Ursula Le Guin, and Marge Piercy rearticulate relationships of sex, class, race, and gender in order to positively influence society.