

First-Year Core Seminars

A common experience of a Dominican, liberal arts education at Ohio Dominican University includes a series of four speaking- and writing-attentive seminars. Undergraduates take one of the seminars each year of a four-year academic career.

First-year Seminar CORE: *What is Human Nature?*

Second-year Seminar CORE: *What is the Common Good?*

Third-year Seminar CORE: *What is Justice?*

Fourth-year Seminar CORE: *What Truths have we Learned?*

Students in all the sections of each seminar study one or more common texts. The first three seminars are interdisciplinary in that they approach the questions from different content areas and are taught by faculty with expertise in different disciplines. The fourth seminar is a capstone course taught by faculty in the student's own area.

The seminars collectively provide students with a distinctively *Dominican* education. The seminars exemplify the university's rich history and mission and were inspired by the four pillars of Dominican life: prayer, community, ministry, and study.

Descriptions of First-Year Seminars:

CORE 179C CORE: Gods, Beasts, or In-Between?

Some thinkers have argued that human beings are midway between gods and beasts. This course examines the contributions of several disciplines by examining literary, philosophical, and theological approaches to the issue of what it means to be human. The course will emphasize a close reading of many established texts from these disciplines that consider the range of options from gods to beasts.

CORE 179F CORE: Know Thyself

Knowing the self requires a personal life-long journey. In this course we will look at how a number of great thinkers, from ancient to modern times, writing in a number of different genres, all with different world views, have come to know themselves. In turn, students will consider how one goes about following the aphorism, —Know thyself,|| inscribed at the Temple of Apollo at Delphi.

CORE 179J CORE: The Great Debate

By studying and discussing some outstanding works of Philosophy, Literature, Theology, and the natural sciences, we will enter the ongoing conversation about what defines our common nature as humans. Questions that we will discuss include: Can we survive after our bodies die? Can we be truly happy without belonging to society? Do we have non-physical souls? What is the relationship between emotions and reason?

CORE 179K CORE: Virtues and Vices

Human beings are social beings who live within cultures. All cultures include values, standards for what is seen as good and what is seen as evil. Are there any values common to all cultures in

all times and all places? Do values vary according to time and place? What is the significance of value differences among subcultures and contracultures? What are the major values taught by the major religious traditions including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam?

CORE 179L CORE: Heroes, Sages, and Madmen

This seminar examines the dimensions of the self by exploring the human desire to be remembered. The course will approach the question of the seminar through a consideration of humanity's literary, artistic and material achievements: from early epic to modern biography, from the building of temples and pyramids to the construction of modern architectural wonders. Attention will also be paid to the writing of history as a reflection of identity.

CORE 179P CORE: Windows and Mirrors

It has been said that —the last frontier of man is to understand himself.|| If this is true, then it is easier for man to travel outward to the moon than inward to the self. In this course, students will study autobiography as a model of exploration into —inner space.|| Examining autobiographies across cultures, disciplines, and times will serve as a window into the humanity of others and a mirror for reflection of the self.

CORE 179T CORE: Our Human Nature in Sport

This seminar considers how our human nature has influenced sport experiences across history and cultures. The psychological, social, spiritual, cultural, and physical aspects of humanity as portrayed in sport will provide the context for analysis of the question —What does it mean to be human?|| Students will be guided through the process of seeking knowledge and acquiring skills needed to succeed while exploring how sport experiences represent our commonality of human mind, body, and spirit.

CORE 179U CORE: Applied Storytelling

The stories we tell—and what we take from them—reflect what is important to us. Story becomes the framework for how we experience and define our world. When a group listens to a story, a common, shared experience transforms listeners into community members building identity and cooperation. Humans are the only species that tells stories. In addressing the question, —What is human nature?|| one place we can turn to answer the question is narrative. We tell stories to question, reflect, compare, and contrast our identity and relationship with others and the world. This seminar examines written and oral stories, old and new, as they serve to help us contemplate our place in the world. Drawing from examples such as parables to nationally-known StoryCorps narratives, we examine how stories are used and how we might apply them to our lives. Students will also create their own stories for performance.

CORE 179W CORE: From Greece to Gotham

This course provides an historical overview of how different cultures have viewed the question what it means to be human and how that concept has evolved. Beginning with the foundations of the Western cultural tradition in Greece, the course will then take students on a journey through time that concludes in the present day. Stops of this journey will include the Roman

Empire, the founding of the Christian faith, Medieval Spain, the Caribbean, Colonial America, and even the city of Gotham.

CORE 179 Y CORE: Humanity of Childhood

Do we as humans value children? The experiences of childhood lie on a continuum between two extremes. On one end of the continuum, children experience days filled with play and new discoveries and have nights that provide rest and security. These children have dedicated, loving caregivers who nurture them and meet their needs. On the other end, children experience the exact opposite. These children have no nurturing adults to guide them or take care of their basic needs. Finally, there are millions of children who fall in between the two extremes of the continuum. All children experience and begin to develop their understandings of what it means to be human. In addressing the question, "What does it mean to be human?" this seminar will examine our own experiences in childhood and look at experiences of children in today's society as well as the historical view of childhood from different theoretical frameworks; frameworks, such as sociology, psychology, theology, philosophy (ethical), history, the law, and others.