

**St. Lawrence University**  
**Thoreau Lives!**  
**Eaton College**  
**FRPG 187f**  
**Fall 2009**

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Class hours	Plenary: T and H, 10:10 to 11:40 Seminar: H, 12:40 to 2:10	Room: RI 304 Room: AT 002 Rosales & 003 Singer
Class folder	ANGEL	

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**Mentor**

Paige, our Eaton College mentor, was a student in this college last year. She is a very skilled writer and scholar. As a mentor, she is trained to assist you in writing, oral communication, and research. Paige can help you brainstorm about ideas for an assignment, rehearse a presentation, narrow your thesis for a paper, strengthen your argument and organization in an essay, or work on stylistic and grammatical problems. Her job is *to help you learn how to do these things yourself*. She is a tutor, not your personal editor! You are free to consult with Paige during her office hours and at her convenience. You must schedule tutorials with Paige in advance: she cannot accommodate last-minute requests before an assignment is due. Every week, we will circulate the appointment sign-up sheet for tutorials. If your seminar leader decides that you would need assistance from Paige, s/he will ask you to schedule a conference with her. It is your responsibility to make the appointment with her and to appear at the time you have reserved. If you miss a scheduled appointment with Paige, this absence carries the same weight as an absence from class.

## **Course Description**

When Henry David Thoreau published his memoir in 1854 about a year spent living alone and close to the land in a cabin in New England, he probably had no inkling that *Walden* would inspire environmental and political movements in the twentieth century. He certainly would not have predicted the back-to-the-land movement of the 1970s, when young people fled the cities and suburbs to take up a lifestyle of subsistence farming and voluntary simplicity in rural regions of America, including Upstate New York, the North Country: a movement which lives on today as ordinary citizens participate in community supported agriculture, “buy local,” and seek home-grown sources of energy. Nor could he have foreseen that his cranky, individualistic essay, “Civil Disobedience” would inspire the action and thoughts of political leaders and activists, authors, and citizens across the globe wishing to resist the forces of global capitalism, consumerism, war, environmental plunder, and the fossil fuel-based economy. In this course we’ll begin with a study of Thoreau and then bring him up to date, studying twentieth and twenty-first environmental writers and note how the seeds of that prickly New Englander’s thought continue to bear fruit and offer hope for the future. We will visit with North Country citizens who have found ways to “live deliberately,” as Thoreau wrote, in a culture that tells us it is our patriotic duty to consume and consume and spend and spend. To finish, we will push Thoreau into the future, to ask ourselves, as individuals, how it is that we wish to live, in what kind of community, and in what kind of world.

## **Required Readings (in order of appearance, in MLA format)**

Rossi, William, ed. Walden, Civil Disobedience and Other Writings, Third Edition, Henry David Thoreau. New York: Norton, 2008.

Note: *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau was published originally in 1854, “Civil Disobedience” in 1849.

United States. Department of State and Agency for International Development. “Strategic Goal 4: Promoting Economic Growth and Prosperity.” Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2007-2012. 7 May 2007: 26-29.

Available at: <http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/dosstrat/2007/html/82954.htm>

Various Authors. “Opinion Special: Beyond Growth.” New Scientist 18 Oct. 2008: 40-54.

Available at the library in hard copy or electronically through the library website.

Daly, Herman E. “Sustainable Growth: An Impossibility Theorem.” Valuing the Earth: Economics, Ecology, and Ethics. Ed. Herman E. Daly and Kenneth N. Townsend. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1993. 267-271.

Available at: <http://dieoff.org/page37.htm>

Daniel, John. Rogue River Journal: A Winter Alone. Washington, D.C.: Shoemaker & Hoard 2005. 59-62.

Kingsolver, Barbara, with Steven L. Hopp and Camille Kingsolver. Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life. New York: Harper Perennial, 2007.

Shiva, Vandana. "The Seed and the Earth: Biotechnology and the Colonisation of Regeneration." Close to Home: Women Reconnect Ecology, Health and Development Worldwide. Ed. Vandana Shiva. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1994. 129-143.

White, Curtis. "The Spirit of Disobedience: An Invitation to Resistance." Harper's April, 2006: 31-40.

King, Martin Luther, Jr. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." Available on ANGEL and at: <http://www.thekingcenter.org/prog/non/Letter.pdf>

Hacker, Diana. A Pocket Style Manual. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2008.

In addition, please buy a *Rite in the Rain* notebook at the bookstore.

### **Grading**

Your grade will be determined by the following assignments and the points you accrue toward 1,000. A description of each is provided below.

1. Attendance, Participation & Professionalism	100
2. Quizzes (10x)	100
3. Essay 1	150
4. Essay 2	150
5. Oral presentation	150
6. Journal	150
7. Take-Home Final	<u>200</u>
	<b>1,000</b>

Grading is based on a straight percentage of the total points possible.

Grade	%	Points	Grade	%	Points
4.0	97-100	970-1,000	2.25	76-78.9	760-789
3.75	94-96.9	940-969	2.0	73-75.9	730-759
3.5	91-93.9	910-939	1.75	70-72.9	700-729
3.25	88-90.9	880-909	1.5	67-69.9	670-699
3.0	85-87.9	850-879	1.25	64-66.9	640-669
2.75	82-84.9	820-849	1.0	61-63.9	610-639
2.5	79-81.9	790-819	0.0	0-60.9	0-609

## Assignments

### **1. Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism (100 points)**

This course is designed to engage you in active, hands-on learning. You will be in the field, walking and taking notes like a naturalist, as Thoreau did. And you will be emulating Thoreau and his fellow writers and philosophers at the Concord Lyceum and in each other's living rooms having active discussions and debates. During each and every class you will be strengthening your skills in critical thinking, close reading, oration, discussion, argumentation, synthesis, role-playing, performance, and more. This is not the place to be a passive learner.

How you conduct yourself as a citizen of this class is extremely important. The success of the class depends on you! Being on time, being prepared, with notes, to rigorously discuss the readings (skimming is never okay), writing thoughtful and thorough remarks on peer's manuscripts when we do peer-review work, being on-point, taking extra care to carry your weight, respecting all deadlines—these are the hallmarks of professionalism.

Two absences will be overlooked, a third if you are seriously ill, but by the fourth absence your final grade will be lowered .25 per class. Also, we will often be handing out materials in class, so if you know you'll be absent, you should ask another student to bring you what you need. You are responsible for every assignment even if you are ill.

After you are late three times, you will be marked absent. Lack of punctuality will also lower your attendance, participation, and professionalism grade.

Deadlines for papers and orals are strict. For each day you miss a deadline, .25 will be deducted from your final grade for that assignment. Don't go there. Remember that you can revise work. Just get it in.

You are also required to attend two or more SLU Writers Series readings this spring, to take notes at the readings, and to submit those notes in your final portfolio. You will also be required to attend public lectures relevant to this course's topic, to be announced. In addition, you are encouraged to attend any public event, such as lectures, theatrical performances, art exhibits, and student organization meetings. Please take notes on these events in your journal and include them in your journal. If you attend many public events and write about each one, it will really help your participation grade.

Participation includes your contribution to small and large group discussion, your helpfulness when working in groups on various projects, your commitment to the individual tasks including the journal and your solo saunters and reflections, your willingness to carry your weight as a member of this classroom community.

In addition, your grade in attendance, participation and professionalism will take into account the vigor and enthusiasm and commitment with which you approach our class field trips.

## Field Trips

Sauntering about in-and-around where he lived was a big part of Thoreau's life and a large source of ideas for his writing. We too will saunter off in this class. Like Thoreau, please dress appropriately with sturdy shoes and be sure to bring a field note pad and writing utensil. Do not listen to music as you walk; instead, take note of the sounds you hear from the outdoors. Please bring your *Rite in the Rain* note pads. Unless we have heavy rain or temperatures below 15 degrees, plan on venturing off on the dates listed below.

## 2. Quizzes (100 points)

To keep us all honest and on task, we will begin at least ten of our plenary sessions with a short quiz based on the reading that was due that day. The questions will not be tremendously difficult but they will help ensure that you don't fall behind and that you are ready to participate fully in that day's discussion. Because we are asking you to take notes on the reading in your journals, you will often have access to your journals when you take your quizzes. Each quiz is worth 10 points.

## 3. Essay 1 (150 points) What Would Henry David Say? Due September 25

In this three- to four-page essay you'll have an opportunity to talk back to Henry David Thoreau as John Daniel does in *Rogue River Journal*. In this assignment you'll do an inventory and playful description of the contents of your dorm room. You can either write directly to Thoreau or to the contemporary reader (us) speculating how Thoreau would react to what you've brought with you and bought to help you begin your college career. This is an exercise in creative nonfiction, so you'll be honing your strengths as a descriptive, engaging, even entertaining writer, but you'll also be directly addressing the issues Thoreau asks us to confront in *Walden*: how to live simply and deliberately, how to reduce our consumption to the bare essentials, and how to free ourselves from oppressive cultural forces in order to express our most authentic selves.

## 4. Essay 2 (150 points) Walden II Due October 22

Can we do what Thoreau did today? Could he build the same cabin today in the North Country?

In this three- to four-page essay, with additional tables and charts, you'll have an opportunity to bring Thoreau's experiment in living simply up to date. Drawing from his chapter "Economy" in *Walden* in which Thoreau meticulously tracks his expenditures as he built his cabin (p. 37) your assignment is to update each expense in 2009 dollars (factoring in inflation using the consumer price index, which we'll provide) and find out where you would obtain the materials locally to build the same type of cabin today. This is an essay in argument and persuasion: why would you choose to live as simply as Thoreau did? You will need to back up all your arguments with evidence: logic, quotes from the reading, and outside data.

## 5. Oral Presentation: Civil Disobedience Case Studies, Post Thoreau (150 points)

“Civil Disobedience” inspired and continues to inspire the actions and thoughts of countless political leaders and activists, authors, and citizens across the globe wishing to resist the forces of global capitalism, consumerism, war, environmental plunder, and the fossil fuel-based economy. Each group will have the opportunity to choose from a list of social movements and/or movers including the Underground Railroad, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Earth First!, the Chipko Movement in India, Julia Butterfly Hill, and many others. You’ll make a presentation in small groups (3-4 people) to link Thoreau to the actions and philosophy of the individual or group you have chosen to research. These presentations will be roughly 10 minutes in length.

## 6. Journal (100 points)

Henry David Thoreau’s journal was the springboard for all his books and essays, and over time it became a work of literature in its own right. His journal consisted of copious notes on the books he read, lectures he attended, personal reflections and random thoughts as he acquired his own philosophy of life, field notes on flora and fauna of Concord and of the many places in New England he traveled to, and a log of his own expenses and household economy. In the Thoreauvian spirit, you will be required to keep your own journals which include the following distinct sections:

**Reading Notes:** Sometimes we will give you discussion questions to answer and those will be your day’s reading notes. The rest of the time, you’ll be required to take notes as you read to prepare yourself for the quizzes and the discussions. Remember that some of our quizzes will be open-journal, but not open-book.

**Public Event Notes:** Take notes at all Writers Series events, public lectures, performances, exhibits, and student meetings you attend.

**Personal Reflection and Random Thoughts:** This course asks you to reflect deeply not only on how Thoreau lived his life in the mid-nineteenth century but on how we live now in 2009. Drawing on the ongoing readings and discussions and projects, and public events you have attended this semester, note how these ideas can impact life today, for you as an individual and for our society. This should be an on-going feature of the journal. See Thoreau’s journal for ideas.

**Field Notes:** When we go into the woods to hike or wander, when we go into the village to saunter, and when you go on your own to do either of the above you will always be required to record your observations and thoughts about the trek. We will do these writings in our *Rite in the Rain* notebooks. Also see Thoreau’s journal for ideas.

These notes you take will give you an opportunity to hone your literary techniques and in particular, to practice descriptive writing. What does the yellow birch tree look like? Describe the interior of a farmer’s home. What do Eric Williams-Bergen and his wife, Jean, have all over their windowsill? Take us to these places and take us closer to these people so that we can see,

smell, touch, and hear everything you experienced. This writing should appeal to the senses and should be so vivid that if you were to reread it in ten years it would bring back the complete experience. Please also include sketches, field samples, and even photographs of the places you go. **We are going to be really mean graders on this. Don't slack here!**

**Consumption:** Drawing on Walden's "Economy" chapter in which he meticulously tracks his household expenditures and consumption, keep a log of your own expenditures. Write down food and beverages you buy on top of what's part of the meal plan, books, DVDs, CDs, games, clothing, incidentals, gas for your vehicle if you have one, credit card expenditures, etc. Add this list to an itemized account of the things already paid for by your parents and financial aid and grants: room and board and energy (you'll get some help with this last one). Add into the mix any money you earn with work study. You will need this detailed consumption log to complete the final take-home essay. This journal will be read only by your instructors.

Use dividers to separate sections of the journal and include a table of contents. Make it easy for us to find each discrete section.

## **7. Take-home Final Essay (200 points)**

This essay will ask you to synthesize the readings, field notes, oral projects, saunters, and your journal.

### **The WORD Studio**

In addition to the help you can receive from me and [mentor's name], the Munn Center for Rhetoric and Communication maintains The WORD Studio in ODY Library—a place to get feedback from peers on assignments in Writing, Oral communication, Research, and Design of visual projects. You can come for a consultation to plan a paper or presentation (you don't need anything but a blank piece of paper!); to find ways to improve the ideas, organization, and style of a draft; to videotape and review a presentation rehearsal; to practice a PowerPoint presentation, and more. Peer tutors are not proofreaders or editors who silently "fix" your work for you; instead, they are trained to have a conversation with you about ways you can fix problem areas yourself and become better overall communicators. You may use The WORD Studio for consultations on assignments for any of your courses, although for FYP assignments you should first seek out Katie during her office hours.

The WORD Studio is open Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; and Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. You may also IM the Studio during regular hours with quick questions about grammar, citation, and style: *SLUword*.

Note: This course outline is likely to change depending on scheduling conflicts and other unforeseen opportunities like guest speakers and local events.

## Course Schedule

Please note: readings and assignments need to be completed before the date they are listed.

	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
8/24	Introductions Syllabus Assignments explained, incl. journal I am From assigned (and free-write) Prep for “Walking,” Quiz 1 (take home), and saunter	
8/27	Class field trip to Harper’s Falls Be sure to have read “Walking” and be sure to bring your <i>Rite in the Rain</i> notebook, and to be dressed for hiking and for rain. We will do a writing exercise.	Thoreau, “Walking,” pp. 260-287
8/27	Saunter continued.	
9/1	“I am From” performed; more about the course The Genesis of a Lunch assigned	
9/3	Mini-lecture, roots of Transcendentalism Natalia (spirituality and literature) Jon (politics and environmentalism) Discussion of “Walking”; Sign-up sheet for Local Foods lunch circulated	Thoreau, “Walking,” pp. 260-287 discussion question answers due
9/3	Class meets in Eben Holden with Harley Lowrey, Associate Director of Dining Services to talk about local lunch; Students will also read aloud from their field notes from the 8/27 excursion	
9/8	Classroom Debate: finite limits to growth? Students will bring a one-page summary of each side of the debate. In class students will go to the podium to argue one side or the other, quoting from the readings whenever possible. Be prepared to change your mind, perhaps many times, and to publicly vote with your feet (and butt in a chair.)	U.S. Department of State and Agency for International Development 2007; <i>New Scientist</i> 2008; Daly 1993.
9/10	Quiz 2 Discussion of <i>Walden</i> Jon, mini-lecture: The Carbon Content of Consumption	Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> , pp. 5-58 Daniel, <i>Rogue River Journal</i> excerpt
9/10	Essay 1 assigned: What would Henry David Say? With excerpt from John Daniel’s <i>Rogue River Journal</i> Bring Hacker to class Visit Farmer’s Market on 9/11	
9/15	Discussion of <i>Walden</i>	Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> , 58-70
9/17	Local foods lunch, Eben Holden	
9/17	Local foods lunch	
9/22	Peer review of Essay 1, What would Henry David say? (polished draft due 9/25)	
9/24	ALL FYP EVENT (to be announced)	
9/24	Quiz 3 Discussion of <i>Walden</i>	Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> , 71-106

9/29	The edges of Canton saunter (solo, rain or shine; meet in Lee Hall lounge) 10/2 drop off journals by noon to instructor offices	
10/1	Conferences with your professor on Essay 1	
10/1	Conferences with your professor on Essay 1	
10/6	Quiz 4 (take home) Jill Breit lecture  Essay 2: Walden II assigned: Can we do what Thoreau did today in the North Country?	Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> , 107-143
10/8	Discussion of <i>Walden</i> Brainstorming on Essay 2	Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> , 107-143 (continued)
10/8	Polished draft of Essay 1, What Would Henry David Say is due 10/9 by noon Discussion of <i>Walden</i> Quiz 5 (take home) assigned	Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> , 143-182
10/13	Final discussion of <i>Walden</i>	Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> , 182-end
10/15	BREAK	
10/20	Quiz 6 Discussion of Kingsolver, 1-69	Kingsolver, 1-69
10/22	Essay 2: Walden 2 due Friday at noon on ANGEL Readings from student journals	Kingsolver, 69-110
10/22	Writing skills workshop. Bring Hacker	
10/27	Quiz 7 Discussion of Kingsolver, 110-172	Kingsolver, 110-172
10/29	Visit local farms Discussion of intentional communities and Community Supported Agriculture	
10/29	Visit local farms Discussion of intentional communities and Community Supported Agriculture	
11/3	Quiz 8 Discussion of Kingsolver, 173-276 Quiz 9 assigned (take home)	Kingsolver, 173-276
11/5	Quiz 9 due Conceptual workshop: debate Green Revolution Discussion of Kingsolver, 277-end Discussion of Shiva, "The Seed and the Earth"	Kingsolver, conclusion Shiva, "The Seed and the Earth: Biotechnology and the Colonisation of Regeneration"
11/5	Excerpt of <i>Berkeley in the Sixties</i> shown in class Oral project assigned Homework for 11/12: each group must go on a crash course of their civil disobedience case studies	
11/10	Quiz 10 Discussion of Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience" Mini-lecture by Jon	Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience," 227-246

11/12	Quiz 11 Mini-lecture by Natalia, from Thoreau to King Discussion of “Slavery in Massachusetts” and Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” Homework assignment given: White essay, “The Spirit of Disobedience”: In addition to taking reading notes, please write a Personal Reflection entry in the journal in which you use the White essay as a launching point to talking about how Thoreau lives today, in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century, and how he could live today if we chose to make it so.	Thoreau, “Slavery in Massachusetts,” 247-259; and King, Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail”
11/12	Oral groups share research findings.	
11/17	Students read from journal entries reflecting on Thoreau and White, “The Spirit of Disobedience” Journals due (except for field notes, which you will bring on the trip) Final paper and presentation assigned (brown bag lunch, leave for field trip at 11:40)	Journals due today, including an entry on White and Thoreau today in addition to the usual reading notes
11/19	Oral presentation dress rehearsals (you absolutely have to be in your seats and ready to begin at 10:10!)	
11/19	Oral presentation rehearsals cont.	
11/23-27	<b>--- Thanksgiving break ---</b>	
12/1	Take-home final essay assigned	
12/3	Civil Disobedience presentations	
12/3	Civil Disobedience presentations	
12/8	Evaluations; reflection on Civil Disobedience	
12/10	Snowshoe outing	
12/10	Snowshoe outing	
12/15	<b>Final take-home essay and portfolios due before 4:30 pm</b>	

Note: This course outline is likely to change depending on scheduling and other unforeseen opportunities like guest speakers and local events.

### Academic Integrity

High standards of academic integrity are expected from the professor and university. While not expected, plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Academic Honor Council. It is expected that you know and follow the academic honor policy found on pages 149-54 of the Student Handbook.

Your signed acknowledgment of the Academic Honor Code will be placed in your permanent student file. The Academic Honor Code cited below was designed by students and approved by the elected student government, the Thelomathesian Society, on February 26, 1992.

All students at St. Lawrence University are bound by honor to maintain the highest level of academic integrity. By virtue of membership in the St. Lawrence community, every student accepts the responsibility to know the rules of academic honesty, to abide by them at all times, and to encourage all others to do the same.

Responsibility for avoiding behavior or situations from which academic dishonesty may be inferred rests entirely with the students. Students should be sure to learn from faculty what is expected as their own work and

how the work of other people should be acknowledged.

**Academic Dishonesty, according to the *Student Handbook*:** includes any dishonest conduct in connection with any academic (including research) course, program, or work.

1. It is assumed that all work submitted for credit is done by the student unless the instructor gives specific permission for collaboration.
2. Cheating on examinations and tests consists of knowingly giving or using, or attempting to use unauthorized assistance during examinations or tests.
3. Dishonesty in work outside of examinations and tests consists of handing in for credit as original work that which is **not** original, where originality is required.
4. Falsifying research methods, data, and/or results constitutes academic dishonesty.

**The following constitute examples of academic dishonesty:**

- a) *Plagiarism*: Presenting as one's own work the work of another person—words, ideas, data, evidence, thoughts, information, organizing principles, or style of presentation — without proper attribution. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment by quotation marks, footnotes, endnotes, or other indices of reference (cf. Joseph F. Trimmer, *A Guide to MLA Documentation*).
- b) Handing in false data, reports or results in connection with any research project or experiment.
- c) Handing in a book report on a book one has not read.
- d) Falsification of attendance records of a laboratory or other class meeting.
- e) Supplying information to another student knowing that such information will be used in a dishonest way.
- f) Submission of work (papers, journal abstracts, etc.) which has received credit in a previous course to satisfy the requirement(s) of a second course without the knowledge and permission of the instructor of the second course.
- g) The above list is not exhaustive. In the event there is a question as to whether alleged conduct falls within the scope of the Academic Honor Code, the vice president and dean of academic affairs' determination shall be final.

Claims of ignorance and academic or personal pressure are unacceptable as excuses for academic dishonesty. Students must learn what constitutes one's own work and how the work of others must be acknowledged." (*St. Lawrence University 2007–2008 Student Handbook*, pp. 149–154.)

All intentional and unintentional acts of academic dishonesty may result in disciplinary action. Recommendations of disciplinary action may include a failing grade on the work in question, a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension from the University, or expulsion from the University.

More information on academic integrity, including the Academic Honor Council's Constitution, can be found at: [www.stlawu.edu/acadaffairs/academicintegrity.htm](http://www.stlawu.edu/acadaffairs/academicintegrity.htm). For information about academic integrity or the Academic Honor Council issues, contact the Dean's Office at x5993.

Some of what we cover in this class challenges prevailing beliefs and the subject matter may be sensitive to some students. Therefore, it is essential that we treat one another with respect as we discuss these issues. Vigorous discussion is encouraged, but personal or group attacks have no place in a collaborative learning environment.

Please turn cell phones off before entering the class.

## First-Year Program Philosophy and Goals

A residentially-based, interdisciplinary first-year program is an ideal environment for beginning the four-year process of developing the complex intellectual and social skills that are at the heart of a liberal education and the habits of considered values and engaged citizenship that such an education should produce. The First-Year Program (FYP) and First-Year Seminar (FYS) are the core of our institutional commitment to improving your ability to engage in critical inquiry and research, to design and deliver written, spoken and/or visual texts that demonstrate rhetorical sensitivity, and to be sophisticated readers, listeners, and viewers of the texts of others. We believe that these same competencies can help develop your ability to communicate across differences (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, class, ethnicity, political views) as you find ways to live and learn together in the residence halls and as engaged and ethically reflective citizens both during and after your college years. These goals should be understood as the first step in our work with you over a four-year process of helping you to meet the University's Aims and Objectives.

We hope to help you see that writing, speaking, research, and interacting with others are rhetorical endeavors. Effective communicators are, by definition, rhetorically sensitive. Rhetorical sensitivity means understanding that all communication, whether formal or informal, involves having to make choices about your messages, whether written, spoken, or visual. To become an effective communicator, you need to recognize that the creation of a meaningful and powerful message involves both a creator and an audience, and that therefore the voice you adopt in your communication, and the audience you imagine yourself communicating to, matter a great deal in creating your message. The choices you make in writing and speaking are central in determining how people read and hear your voice. Becoming conscious and reflective about those choices, and their ethical dimensions, is a central goal of the FYP and FYS.

Working with you so that you become more rhetorically sensitive means that you should be increasingly able to assess the requirements of a particular task and make intentional decisions about which mode or modes of communication and inquiry would be most effective in addressing it. To do so, you must develop specific writing, speaking, research, and technological competencies. To accomplish these goals, the FYP and FYS will present you with assignments that ask you to engage in a process that involves **recognizing** the rhetorical situation, **planning** communication strategies to address the task at hand, **composing and presenting** the message, and then engaging in **critical assessment** of your own work and that of others. The results of that assessment process will allow you to rethink, restructure, and revise your work. We further recognize that this process is not linear and that the effective creation of texts requires that you move back and forth among these four elements of the message creation process. This is why we require that your writing and speaking assignments be "projects" that include preparatory exercises and multiple drafts or rehearsals, all of which ask you to continue to reflect critically on the choices you have made in constructing your message.

This process of increased rhetorical awareness and skill development is at the heart of the philosophical and pedagogical perspectives that inform the work of the FYP and FYS. Because this process both transcends and integrates a variety of specific skills, the program has a philosophical commitment to designing assignments that ask you to integrate various modes of communication in furtherance of the higher-level rhetorical goals in which they are situated.

To ensure that the program is meeting its stated goals, all FYP and FYS syllabi are read by other faculty in the program to determine if they include a variety of assignments that forward the writing, speaking, research, and literacy goals of the program. All FYP and FYS courses have to be approved by faculty in the program before they are offered.