

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

The First-Year Experience includes two distinct courses that support college transition. First-Year Seminar emphasizes reading, critical thinking, conversation, and academic habits for the liberal arts. Writing and Rhetoric introduces and engages students in writing for multiple purposes and audiences related to a particular topic. Students enroll in one of these courses each semester during their first year at St. Olaf.

Students may also fulfill First-Year Seminar and Writing and Rhetoric by successfully completing designated courses in American Conversations or Great Conversation.

The First-Year Experience also includes activities to support college transition. In the fall, all first-year students participate in St. Olaf Orientation to Academics and Resources (SOAR) to support their academic and co-curricular development, and students reflect on their development.

Courses

During their first year at St. Olaf College, students enroll in two courses as part of the First-Year Experience: First-Year Seminar and Writing and Rhetoric. Additionally in the fall, each first-year student will participate in St. Olaf Orientation to Academics and Resources (SOAR).

FYS 120: *First-Year Seminar*

This course emphasizes critical thinking, conversation, collaboration, and academic habits for the liberal arts. Students learn key skills like locating and evaluating academic sources, as well as reading, reflecting, and responding to texts. Students cultivate their own curiosity while also learning how to engage in community, better understanding their responsibilities to each other. This course is open to first-year students and a limited number of sophomores.

Prerequisite: first-year student status.

Writing Intensive First-Year Seminars are available for students who may benefit from extensive writing instruction and practice during Fall semester. Students enroll in these sections through writing placement or permission of the instructor.

WRIT 120: *Writing and Rhetoric*

Writing and Rhetoric courses, taught by faculty across the college, engage students in writing for multiple purposes and audiences. Each course explores a contemporary question of interest to college students. Students write in multiple genres and engage in writing as a systematic process with opportunities to respond to feedback. They learn, evaluate, and use appropriate technologies to explore, discuss, and write about course content.

St. Olaf Orientation to Academics and Resources (SOAR)

SOAR provides an extended orientation for all students in their first year to equip them with the knowledge and tools to be successful at St. Olaf. Students learn key skills such as how to utilize campus resources and implement college level reading and study techniques through small group conversation, reflection, and the practice of successful academic habits. All SOAR sessions are led by trained peer leaders.

Faculty

Director, 2021-2022

Heather Campbell

Associate Professor of Education and Director of First-Year Seminar
ESL; reading; special education; Director of Assessment

Director, 2021-2022

Diane C. LeBlanc

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rhetoric and composition; creative writing; gender studies