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FSSO 110. Conflict and Cooperation. 4 Units.
Why is it that when cooperation seems so likely, conflict breaks out? Or why at other times when conflict looms, cooperation wins out? This course explores the social and political complexities of this basic human condition. Through seminar discussions of classic readings, the course will introduce students to the basic social science concepts and theories used to explain conflict and cooperation. In addition to general knowledge, the course will also allow students hands on experience. Classroom time will be dedicated to simulating the decision making and negotiating dynamics which lead to cooperation or conflict. Studies will include individual, historical, and international cases. Graded projects will include small group negotiation and decision making exercises as well as individual writing tasks.

FSSO 119. Philanthropy in America. 4 Units.
This four-credit course provides an introduction to various dimensions of philanthropy and volunteerism. Using the seminar format and an array of interactive activities, we will conduct a broad but intellectual inquiry into the systems and ethics of giving time and money to charitable causes. In four units of inquiry, we will consider the giving traditions that have influenced American culture and society since its colonial days. We will examine the role that the Third Sector (also known as the Independent or Nonprofit Sector) plays as an agent of social change in a functioning democratic republic. We will explore the nature of donors and volunteers and take a critical look at the missions and goals of a cross section of nonprofit organizations. We will wrestle with ethical issues related to philanthropy and consider the giving patterns of different social, religious, and ethnic groups. We will also turn our collective thinking to how the nonprofit sector might better serve the social needs of the nation and the world. At the end of the semester, we will reflect on how our ideas about philanthropy have changed over the course of fifteen weeks.

FSSO 120. Poverty and Social Policy. 4 Units.
This course has two major foci: poverty and social policies designed to ameliorate poverty. Sociologists in the United States and in other countries have made major contributions to studies of poverty. They have primarily focused on income-based poverty, but more recently, have also studied other forms of poverty. In this class, we will examine different conceptualizations and measures of poverty. We will then examine short-term and long-term poverty experiences and their potential consequences. We will then turn to explanations of poverty: why are some individuals more likely to experience periods of low income than others? While the United States will be the focus of the course, we will contrast the experiences of other countries. The second component will be an analysis of social policies designed to ameliorate poverty. In particular, we will examine the development and retrenchment of welfare states and other social policies, the various goals of social policy, and the different impacts social policies have had on individuals, families, other groups, and the country overall. This discussion will reflect on experiences of other countries.

FSSO 122. China in Modernization. 4 Units.
This four credit-hour course provides an introduction to various dimensions of modernization in contemporary China, especially cultural and social changes such as consumption, education, migration, and tourism as a result of economic reforms, trade expansion, foreign investments and technology transfer, especially the development of information technology. The seminar will also assess the impacts of these changes on various aspects of globalization and vice versa. It will be characterized by intense yet open-ended intellectual inquiry, guided by reading relevant material, and will include practice in written and oral communication in discussion forums and small groups. The goals are to enhance basic intellectual skills of academic inquiry, such as critical reading, thoughtful analysis, and written and oral communication; to introduce basic information on literacy skills; to provide a foundation for ethical decision-making; to encourage a global and multidisciplinary perspective on the learning process; to facilitate faculty-student interactions; and, in the most general sense, to provide a supportive common intellectual experience at CWRU.

FSSO 123. Ten Developments That Are Shaking The World. 4 Units.
This seminar is an introduction to some of the most important global developments of our times. We will examine these events through political, historical, economic, cultural, sociological, scientific and ethical lenses. Readings will come from a wide-range of sources, and assignments will include exercises in written and oral communication. The professor will choose the first three global developments to be investigated as well as the relevant readings. His topics will most likely be the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the rise of China as a great power and the fiftieth anniversary of the European Union. Each of the remaining seven will be chosen by small groups of students, who will assign the readings and run the sessions for their respective topic. Possible topics include the global food crisis, genocide and the failure of the world community to stop it, global warming and the growing gap between the world’s rich and poor.

FSSO 126. Religion and the Ethics of War. 4 Units.
Although war is a highly rational, organized and purposeful affair, it also is the most destructive and bloody of human activities. For this reason, war and warfare has always been subject to various religious and moral restrictions. As technology has developed, the conduct of war has changed and the definitions of just and unjust war, as well as what it means to fight justly, have undergone profound changes. This course looks at war and warfare from a variety of angles and examines how various religious and moral thinkers have tried to define just war, and create guidelines for fighting a war justly. At the end of the semester, the course looks at the moral challenges presented by new technologies and new concepts of war.
FSSO 128. Movers and Shakers: Leadership. 4 Units.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has" (Margaret Mead, 1901-1978). This seminar is about understanding what enables people to make a generative impact on the world. Students will explore the socio-emotional and motivational characteristics of effective leaders and their ability to create positive change. Students will also be encouraged to develop their own theories of leadership and to explore their personal approaches to making a difference. The seminar will profile leaders from different occupations and walks of life. Seminar sessions will feature assigned readings on leaders and change agents, class discussion on what drives movers and shakers, and individual and group presentations on class members’ emergent leadership perspectives.

A key objective of the seminar is the development of critical thinking skills, writing skills, and verbal skills. Consequently, the weekly class readings, reflection papers on class readings, class discussions, class presentations (individual and group), and final project are vital features of the seminar experience. Students will be expected to leave the seminar with a grounded perspective on leaders and leadership, and the ability to articulate their own personal views on making a difference in the world.

FSSO 136. The Founding Fathers. 4 Units.

Americans often disparage politicians and U.S. political institutions, like Congress and the Presidency. Nonetheless, the same Americans often revere the men and women who founded the country and designed the political system that seems to give us so much trouble. This four credit-hour course explores American political thought from our country’s founding to the present through the prism of the founding fathers. It will be characterized by intense yet open-ended intellectual inquiry into all of the contradictions inherent in the writings and lives of the founding fathers and contemporary American politics, guided by reading from primary as well as secondary sources.

FSSO 140. Working-Class Literature. 4 Units.

In her volume, Silences (1978), writer Tillie Olson refers to the relationship between social class and literature as "the great unexamined." This statement still largely rings true, despite the continued production of novels, films, and poems depicting the working-class, and despite the unprecedented growth in recent years of America’s working class. In this course, we will examine the relationship between social class and literature, reading narratives written by and about laborers in the hopes of understanding the complexities of working-class life in America, including the intricate ways in which economic status mediates one’s sense of identity. Beginning our study with mid-to-late nineteenth-century works, we will consider ideas about economics, race, and gender that have shaped and that continue to influence the depiction of the working-class. Throughout the course, we will pair literary and historical readings with pop-cultural materials, viewing films, listening to music, and analyzing visual arts both in class and on visits to Cleveland cultural institutions such as the Western Reserve Historical Society and the Maltz Museum of Jewish History.

FSSO 143. Living With and Making Decisions Concerning Injustice. 4 Units.

Injustice. What do you think of when you hear that word? There are all types of injustice in this world, and chances are that during our lifetime we will either find ourselves in a position or system of power, perpetrating injustice on others; or in a position or system of supposed impotence, a subject of injustice. What are our choices? How will we respond? In this course we will examine the topic of living with and making decisions concerning injustice using, as an example, the specific injustice of slavery, examining the lives and decisions of both a famous slaveholder and two not-so-famous slaves; and learning from their lives and decisions how we might, ourselves, live with and make decisions concerning injustices we face in our lives.

FSSO 145. Berlin in History, History in Berlin. 4 Units.

From its emergence as a fishing village in the sandy marshes of the eastern frontier of Germany, to its 21st-century role as a cosmopolitan metropolis, Berlin has embodied the arc of change over time in human society. This course uses the history of the city of Berlin as the lens through which to contemplate the complexity of human social and cultural arrangements, their expression in economics and politics (including war), and the imbrication of human cultural and social constructions with the "natural" world. We will read books and articles about the history, culture, economy, and politics of Berlin, primarily from its establishment as the capital of new German Empire in 1871 to the present. We will view films that introduce us to the manic energy that Berlin represented in the transition to modernity. We will visit local museums that house examples of the material culture of Berlin, from the Cleveland Museum of Art to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum. We will listen to the music of Berlin, from the baroque of the Brandenburg Concertos to the heavy metal of the Skorpions. And we will learn its history, from fishing village, to court city, to imperial metropolis and industrial engine, to divided symbol of the Cold War, to de-industrialized center of art, government, education, and incubator of high-technology. This First Seminar will prepare students to pursue their undergraduate degrees grounded in thinking about places in time, about change over time, and about human creativity, while preparing them to write and speak about their arguments with clarity and grace.
FSSO 146. The Past and Future of Art, Architecture and Museums in Cleveland. 4 Units.
During the gilded age, Cleveland became one of this country’s most powerful centers of business, industry, and political power. For example, John D. Rockefeller, who started his business career in Cleveland, became the wealthiest individual in human history, and Mark Hanna, the leader of Cleveland’s Republican political machine, selected and engineered the election of eight Ohio-born Presidents of the United States, setting a state record which is still unbroken. As late as the 1930s, Henry Luce located the headquarters of Time, Life and Fortune magazines in Cleveland, and the Terminal Tower, the nexus of the vast, sprawling railroad and real-estate Empire of the Van Sweringen Brothers, was the country’s highest building outside of New York. This class will examine one of the by-products of this accumulation of power and money: the flowering of art and culture in Cleveland during the early 20th century, and the creation of notable cultural institutions, such as one of this country’s finest symphony orchestras, one of its top ten art museums, a major university, and an array of other notable entities, many of them housed in buildings of architectural distinction. The class will also examine the economic, cultural and intellectual decline of Cleveland in the second half of the 20th century, and recent attempts to reverse this trend through intensive efforts to revitalize University Circle. In addition to classroom sessions, the course will include field trips to the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Western Reserve Historical Society, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, and an architectural tour of downtown Cleveland. The class will be centered on three interrelated questions: What makes a great city? How can the artistic and cultural life of a great city be developed and sustained? How can the social and economic collapse of a great city be reversed?

FSSO 147. Critical Attitude. 4 Units.
In his essay, “What is Enlightenment?” Immanuel Kant said enlightenment begins with the courage to use your own understanding - as opposed to following the mindset of your parents, teachers, or ministers. Two hundred years later, the great French social historian Michel Foucault called the Kantian idea of enlightenment, “critique.” For Foucault, the essential is a critical attitude. In this seminar, we pursue the thread of a critical attitude focusing on three areas of your life: culture, work, and school. For reasons we will see, politics will remain in the background, as the un-broached dimension. The month on culture is called “osmosis,” the month on work “treadmill” and the month on school "brainwash." In this dark(ly humorous) course, we join selected readings in the tradition of critical theory with contemporary and classic films. And we visit local cultural institutions, and events - as well as riding through the city with a critical attitude.

FSSO 149. Creativity in the Arts, Sciences, and Engineering. 4 Units.
This seminar will have a focus on creativity in the arts, sciences, and engineering. What are the similarities and differences in the creative process in these three different broad fields? How are the creative products different? What are the creative processes involved in these different domains. Are there differences in personalities between scientists and artists? How can we foster creativity in children and adults in these fields? We all read about and discuss the different dimensions of creativity; what makes something creative; what helps people become creative; the role of cognition and emotion in the creative process in the arts and sciences; and mental illness and creativity.

FSSO 150. Border Crossings: Travel, Culture, and Identity. 4 Units.
This seminar will explore the transformative nature of travel, especially in regard to individual and cultural identity. Through seminar discussions, extensive writing and revision, and formal oral presentations, our class will explore how individuals, including ourselves, define themselves in personal, local, and national contexts and how we redefine ourselves and our world as we cross geographical borders. Course texts will include works of fiction, non-fiction travel narratives, films, and scholarly essays that will compel us to question our everyday world and consider matters of cultural exchange and social belonging.

FSSO 151. Decision Making in Everyday Life. 4 Units.
Although social cognition allows us to process vast amounts of information quickly, we are not always aware of the subtle forces that guide our decision making. This course will use a seminar approach to explore rational and irrational forces that influence decision making. We will use a multi-disciplinary approach to decision making, including topics such as personality factors, incentive-based decision making, cognitive biases, automatic information processing, and theories of mind. These topics will be explored using class discussion, writings, and student presentations.

FSSO 152. Thinking and Writing in Everyday Life. 4 Units.
In this seminar, we will read a selection of poetry, short stories and books and use them as a framework to explore questions related to understanding tolerance, social justice and diversity. We will begin by establishing a definition of and methodology for addressing these issues in our discussion and writing, and build upon them as the semester progresses. Much of the fiction and nonfiction we will read will be by winners of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards. In addition to our reading, we will also analyze and discuss a selection of films, art works and music related to our theme. Our Fourth Hour experiences will include attending the Awards ceremony in September, visits to cultural institutions within University Circle, lectures and guest speakers. While the primary goal of the class is to help students develop their critical thinking and writing skills, it is also intended to introduce them to a vital, Cleveland-based literary institution. By engaging the themes, texts, and authors of Anisfield-Wolf, students will have a deeper understanding not only of contemporary literature, but the importance of social justice to a liberal arts education.

FSSO 153. Being in Touch: Animal and Human Considerations. 4 Units.
This is a seminar designed to refine skills of critical thinking and reading, listening, learning, writing and verbal presentation while considering the topic of touch. We will consider touch in different situations and for different purposes - touch in child development, touch in socialization, therapeutic animal touch, touch and violence/harassment, touch in the workplace, touch and technology, taste as a function of touch, healing touch comforting and noxious touch, and things we are afraid to touch.
FSSO 158. The Symphony Orchestra-Cultural Treasure or Outmoded Symbol? 4 Units.
In measuring the cultural profile of a metropolitan area, the presence of a successful symphony orchestra is often used as a model to determine culture sophistication and refinement. In recent years, however, the model of the orchestra has encountered significant challenges. Using the world-renowned Cleveland Orchestra as a paradigm, this seminar will examine the role of the orchestra in ascertaining a city's cultural health. Topics of discussion, oral presentations, and writing assignments will address the historical legacy of the classical orchestra; traditional concert-going etiquette and its relevance in 21st-century culture; how orchestras have handled recent financial trials; and defining the importance of the orchestra in today's urban society. Students will have the opportunity to attend orchestral concerts during Fourth Hour, and occasional guests from the Cleveland Orchestra and other University Circle institutions will provide a direct cultural perspective.

FSSO 160. Brazil Inside and Out. 4 Units.
In this seminar we will engage in the exploration of Brazil's history, society, and culture from a multidisciplinary and comparative perspective. Host of the latest Soccer Cup and Summer Olympics, Brazil is one of the largest and most diverse countries in the world, as well as one the largest economies and democracies. Known by its natural beauty and resources, tropical climate, vibrant culture and friendly population, the land of soccer and Carnival is also marked by inequality, poverty, corruption, and violence. Due to this complex, challenging and fascinating profile, Brazil defies easy categorizations and provides a unique context for the development of essential academic skills. Over the course of the semester, you will have the opportunity to read, analyze and discuss relevant academic sources, news articles and audiovisual materials, like music and films; learn and experience first-hand basic aspects of Brazilian language and culture, including food and music; and interact with Brazilian students and faculty on campus.

FSSO 161. The Craft of Cloth: Textile Production Since the Industrial Revolution. 4 Units.
What counts as hand made? Since the Industrial Revolution, modes of production have been increasingly mechanized to ensure efficient production involving fewer skilled workers. Opposition to industrialization has existed since the earliest moments of the Revolution, when skilled stacking knitters destroyed stocking frames, a technology meant to replace them by putting the ability to create stockings in the hands of unskilled laborers. Today, we find ourselves in the midst of a hyper-technological age, but with an increasingly vocal artisanal subculture valorizing the artist or craftsman who creates unique goods by hand. Our class will explore the tensions and sympathies between industry and craft, the machine and the hand, technology and the imagination. We will focus our inquiry on the production of cloth, since it was the need to produce cloth more efficiently that motivated the Industrial Revolution's earliest technological innovations. We will consider the human relationships and institutions that support the production of textiles and cloth (especially silk and cotton) and which, in turn, create global and local economies that influence social organization. This seminar will be discussion based and writing intensive, and will include field trips to a local clothing factory and to the art museum to see and analyze historic fabrics. We will also speak with local fashion and textile designers. Students will experiment with knitting, weaving, or a cloth craft of their choice in order to participate in the technical--and creative--side of cloth production.

FSSO 164. Social Change, Genes, and Environment. 4 Units.
This seminar will focus on the rapidly expanding understanding of the interaction of biological and social forces--including the interaction of genes and environment. We will explore claims that are made in science and popular culture about the role of genes in development. We will focus on the role that social forces play in shaping the effects of genes in development, and health, through epigenetics and related mechanisms. Adopting a sociology-of-science perspective, we will consider the wider and future implications of gene-environment interactions for politics, the economy, and culture.

FSSO 165. Identities and Social Inequality. 4 Units.
In this course, students examine diversity, privilege, and power in US society. Social categories such as gender, heritage, language, race, religion, and sexuality affect the status of both individuals and groups, at times producing unequal distribution of resources and marginalization. No group or individual belongs to one category; therefore, we will also consider how the intersection of these categories produces their own unique effects. Students are expected to analyze and critique social institutions, belief systems, and practices that promote inequality and social justice through data-based dialogue and writing. Modes of inquiry will include quantitative and qualitative research methods and current scholarly literature. This course is conducted in a seminar format that requires students to engage in active, relevant and insightful discussions regarding the course content. Students have the opportunity to hear from guest experts in the field and participate in off-campus learning activities. Reflective and scholarly writing are major components of the course.

FSSO 169. The History of Your Lifetime: Making Sense of the Last Twenty Years. 4 Units.
No matter when you grow up, adults make assumptions about what you know, "You lived through certain events, didn't you? Those events are often very important--the basis of political and policy debates or related to subjects that affect daily life--but it's often difficult to make sense of history you've lived through, but only as children. The usual way we learn about the past--in history classes--isn't very helpful because this is a time period that usually goes beyond what your teachers have been able to cover. Even if you could have covered this recent time period in history class, unfortunately, most recent subjects haven't received much attention from historians; the archives aren't yet available and we lack much critical distance in making judgments about what is significant and what isn't. We aren't yet sure which assumed causes of historical change are plausible and which only seemed so at the time. This time period usually constitutes most of the student's lifetime--your lifetime. This class takes these challenges head-on, examining the last 20 years of history. Aside from covering the "what happened" for several selected topics, we will attempt to go further and explore how historians think about contemporary events, place current events into longer historical contexts, develop skills in media literacy to better evaluate the quality of information we receive, and discuss the uses and misuses of historical analogies in public debate. We will also investigate the importance of structural narrative in making sense of historical events and processes: what questions do we ask of the past and why those questions and not others? Why do our questions about the past change over time? How do present circumstances affect our historical work? When do we draw our chronological boundaries; when do our stories start and when do they end?
FSSO 171. Prediction. 4 Units.
This course is an interdisciplinary examination of predictions about social events, how we make them, why they go wrong, and how we respond. While some things, like election results, are easy to predict, dramatic events like wars, depressions, and stock market crashes are harder to predict. The course will begin with the basic elements of probability theory to lay the groundwork for the class. Then, we will examine the psychological research on the types of errors people are prone to make regarding probability and the consequences of such biases in perception and estimation. The course will then move on to discuss predicting specific social events, such as elections and stock trends, comparing the empirical research to conventional beliefs. Then the course will address the role of scholarly research more generally, and the empirical work discussing how political scientists, economists, and other scholars often fail to predict the most significant and dramatic events because of their cognitive styles, which vary in the degree to which they rely on simplified models. Finally, the course will discuss how people respond when their predictions go wrong, and their basic tendency to rationalize away errors.

FSSO 172. Islam in South Asia. 4 Units.
There are more Muslims in South Asia than in any other region of the world. But within the region, Islam is far from a monolith. What variety of religious practices and traditions of debate have characterized South Asian Muslims? When meshed with different political projects, how do we understand Islam as a deeply contested ideological field? What roles did Muslims play in the history of South Asia? These are some of the questions we will pursue in the seminar. The long history of Muslim presence in the region—which now includes India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan—will offer opportunities for studying them in a wide range of historical contexts: as actors in cosmopolitan, commercial networks of trade; as rulers consolidating states and empires governing large multi-ethnic and multi-religious populations; as “modernizers” and “traditionalists;” as religious minorities and majorities in different nation-states. Additionally, this seminar will explore Islam in an array of modern settings: from a nation-state created as a “Muslim homeland” to a rejection of religion as an adequate basis of national identity; from democracy to military rule; and, from Cold War politics to the “Global War on Terror.”

FSSO 176. SAVOR: The Ethics and Politics of Eating. 4 Units.
Our food choices affect more than our individual health; what we decide to put into our bodies has important consequences for our environment, the livelihood of farmers, and even the general well-being of a society. These choices also reveal moral, cultural, and religious values we deem important. In this seminar, we will examine the environmental and social consequences of our food choices by interrogating both our individual habits as well as current (often controversial) food policy issues. In line with the requirements of a SAGES First Seminar, this course is designed to improve students’ ability to read critically and interpret moral and political arguments. We will analyze a wide range of writings on food-related issues in order to develop sophisticated perspectives on our food choices. Hopefully, this thoughtful consideration will translate to mindful habits when we convene around food with our friends, families, and communities. Class discussions will be accompanied by class visits to urban gardens, restaurants with a sustainability mission, and farmers’ markets. We’ll also meet representatives of community organizations like the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.

FSSO 178. Crafting Your Own Freedom. 4 Units.
An abiding task of ancient philosophy was to style your life with wisdom. The Greek and Roman schools of philosophy so common to cities around the Mediterranean two thousand years ago developed all sorts of techniques for people to become self-styled sages-in-training. The modern variant, as Michael Foucault and his student Jacques Rancière noted, was to transpose wisdom into a critical attitude where the goal of style was not sagacity but liberation. In this course, we work as in a lab -a modern philosophical workplace- to style your lives critically, articulating stratagems and ideals of liberation. In particular, we focus on becoming a multi-dimensional human, on finding time and space in the midst of work for utopian dreams, on loving relationships, and on education as a developmental experience.

FSSO 180. The Tobacco Wars. 4 Units.
If smoking cigarettes is as deadly as the experts say, why does anyone do it? If reducing cigarette consumption is a vital public health goal, does the fact that the rate of smoking by U.S. adults has fallen by two thirds over the past 50 years mean policies have been a great success, or does the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s estimate that about 480,000 Americans suffered premature deaths in 2009 that could be attributed to smoking mean policies have been at best inadequate? Why did the political winds turn against tobacco use and sale in the 1990s? And why do both public health advocates and tobacco companies want to restrict vaping? Those are among the questions we will investigate in this course. It will call on perspectives from, among others, the fields of public health, political science, sociology, and economics. We will begin with readings about the research on tobacco’s physiological effects. Next we will consider tobacco’s attractions—both for individual consumption and as a shared activity. The third section of the course will ask what policies to reduce consumption work, how well, and why. We will then focus on the dramatic political battles of the 1990s. What happened and why? There are many different answers, and that makes the story even more interesting. The final section of the course will focus on current policies and politics, ending with the controversies over e-cigarettes. Why were e-cigarettes included in CWRU’s new anti-smoking policy, and should they have been?
FSSO 181. Bicycles: Technology and Everyday Life. 4 Units.
For most of us, the bicycle seems a simple, everyday object, perhaps associated with children’s toys or recreational sport. But deeper analysis reveals that the technology of the bicycle has developed in distinct social contexts, and that aspects of its development are closely intertwined with community values. In this seminar, we will trace the history of bicycles in these technological and social contexts. We will note, for example, the importance of bicycles for the feminist movement of the 1890s and beyond. We will also consider cycling in our present environment, paying attention to debates about urban infrastructure as it pertains to cars, bicycles, and pedestrians. We will engage with popular and scholarly sources, and we will consider the significance of bicycles even for non-cyclists. Topics may include the physics and engineering of bicycle design, the aesthetic aspects of the cycling experience, the role of bicycles in our transportation infrastructure, and the varying perceptions of cycling in cultures throughout the world. We will critically examine claims that increased bicycle use can lead to better energy efficiency, less traffic, improved health, better quality of life, and more fun. Fourth-hour classes will include connections with community cycling organizations, such as Case Cycling and bike advocacy nonprofits. Students will write formal critical essays, exploring topics from readings and discussion in greater depth. Students need not possess any cycling experience to take this class—only an interest in questions of how technology interacts with social values, and how these values are expressed in our everyday lives. We will use Cleveland and University Circle as a laboratory for understanding the complexity and challenges of managing city infrastructure for different kinds of users. Optional group rides if interest exists.

FSSO 182. Burning River to City Farms: Transitional Urban Environments. 4 Units.
How does one live sustainably in an urban setting? This emerges as a vital 21st century question, especially since more than 70% of contemporary Americans live in or near densely populated cities. This seminar examines how people in urban geographies forge meaningful relations with the natural world. Cleveland, a city undergoing cultural and economic redefinition, stands as an ideal place to engage the work of contemporary environmental writers, filmmakers, urban planners, and community organizers. While our field experiences will ground us in environmental transitions taking place in Cleveland, we will consider how similar dynamics play out in other Midwestern cities as well as further-flung locales, such as Havana, Toronto, New Orleans, Oakland, Los Angeles, and Boston. This seminar’s driving questions include: How have people in urban setting—across lines of social class and ethnicity—forged meaningful relationships with the natural world? How do global histories, carried through immigration and refugee resettlement, affect the ways that current communities interact with urban nature? How might privilege and power factor into the greening of blighted city spaces, through practices such as urban farming, ecological restoration, and community revitalization? Our exploration of these questions will help you form a better understanding of what it means to live mindfully at the intersection of nature and culture.

FSSO 183. The Phoenix Effect: Fire and Revival - Holocaust and Heroism. 4 Units.
The state of Israel’s official Holocaust commemoration day is named: “Yom HaZiqaron LaShoa V’LaG’vura,” Memorial Day of the Holocaust and Heroism. Why? What characterizes heroic acts? Is it physical resistance? Spiritual or religious strength? How about writing poetry, diaries, letters never to be mailed? Perhaps drawing or painting? Music and theater? Students will define heroism, and through research and analysis examine different types of heroism of the Holocaust. They will study how people living under the Nazi reign used art as a form of resistance, and how spiritual resistance manifested itself in religious practices (perpetuating religious beliefs at any cost). Music, art, clandestine writings, diaries, poetry, and literature will be explored. Students will present their research both orally and in writing.

FSSO 184. Handmaking in the Age of the Machine. 4 Units.
Our seminar will focus on what counts as hand-made in our society, whose hands do the making, and why this making continues to matter. In order to understand that type of making, we’ll investigate the relationship between industry and handicraft, the machine and the human, the mechanically reproduced and the precious original—all expressions of relations among technology, individual bodies, and the imagination. Since the Industrial Revolution, our society has increasingly mechanized its operations to ensure efficient production involving fewer skilled workers. Opposition to industrialization has existed since the earliest moments of the Revolution, expressed both violently by the followers of the mythical Ned Ludd and thoughtfully by people such as Victorian craftsman and philosopher William Morris, who argued for a return to human ingenuity and “handicraft.” Today, craft movements supported by Etsy.com and DIY TV shows like Project Runway continue to inspire ingenuity in both machine and handicraft. To investigate these ideas, we will read texts from philosophers, industrialists, and craftspeople concerned with mass production, experience making things by hand, and travel to local museums and maker-spaces. Among other creative activities, we will use CWRU’s letterpress, make books, learn how to knit, and explore think[box]. Students will pursue a handmade project of their choice.