**First-Year Seminar Policies**

**USP 2015**

Students will critically examine and evaluate evidence, claims, beliefs, or points of view about meaningful, relevant issues. Students will be introduced to active learning, inquiry of pressing issues, and individual and collaborative processing of ideas through the First-Year Seminar curriculum. These skills will be reinforced throughout the baccalaureate experience.

**Learning Outcomes**

FYS courses must meet **all** six Critical and Creative Thinking student learning outcomes:

 1. Access diverse information through focused research, active discussion, and collaboration with peers;

 2. Separate facts from inferences and relevant from irrelevant information, and explain limitations of information;

 3. Evaluate the credibility, accuracy, and reliability of conclusions drawn from information;

 4. Recognize and synthesize multiple perspectives to develop innovative viewpoints;

 5. Analyze one’s own and others’ assumptions and evaluate contexts when presenting a position; and

 6. Communicate ideas in writing using appropriate documentation.

 Additionally, all courses will culminate with a significant project that helps students showcase what they have learned.

**USP 2015 Policies for FYS**

1. FYS courses are to be taught by highly motivated and experienced academic personnel. Academic personnel may be faculty or staff. **Faculty/staff who teach an FYS course should have experience teaching lower division undergraduate courses and have a minimum of a master’s degree. Departments and colleges are responsible for evaluating the credentials of FYS instructors, although final approval rests with the USP committee.** Concerns about instructors should be forwarded to the FYS Coordinator and Academic Affairs.
2. FYS may not be required for a major or a minor, nor may they be listed on a check list for a major or minor. These seminars are meant to foster intellectual engagement rather than meet foundational disciplinary requirements.
3. FYS instructors should be engaged in FYS professional development.
4. FYS instructors will participate in assessment of student learning as required by the Office of Academic Affairs and the University Assessment Specialist

**FYS Course Policies**

1. First-Year Seminar courses must be 3-credit hours.
2. First-Year Seminar courses will be limited to 24 students.
3. There are specific requirements for FYS syllabi. These requirements can be found on the FYS Application Form. A Course Action Request form (CARF) is not required for the First-Year Seminar. The only required form is the FYS Application Form. The USP Committee will send all approvals directly to the Registrar's Office.
4. Faculty may request a class size exception; there is a place on the FYS Course Approval form for those requests. Research strongly supports small class sizes for seminars. Therefore, requests for *more* than 24 students will be closely scrutinized and are likely to be denied. Instructors requesting a smaller number of students must justify their request to the USP committee. Instructors are asked to consider the impact of the request on their college since each college is responsible for providing seminar seats for a set number of students each year.  Smaller classes may mean a college needs to offer more seminars.
5. A significant paper/project assignment must be included in all FYS courses (e.g., research paper; multi-modal research project; web-design advocacy project; conference poster; case studies/ethnographies with primary research).
6. Class sessions must be devoted to teaching the research process.
7. A grading scale of A/B/C/D/F without +/- is required.
8. Graduate assistants may serve as assistant instructors of FYS courses only under the direction/supervision of the faculty/staff instructor assigned to the course.
9. First-time applications for Spring FYS courses must be submitted to the USP committee by September 1st of the previous year. First-time applications for Fall classes are due by November 1st of the previous year.
10. The USP committee requires that each FYS course be resubmitted once following its original approval. The resubmission process is simpler than the original application. Thereafter, re-approved classes will go onto the three-year rotation that is required for re-approval of all USP classes.
11. If the instructor of the course should change following approval (or re-approval) a new application should be submitted.
12. If a significant change is made to the title or description of the course, a Course Action Request form must be submitted (<http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/faculty_and_staff/course%20committee.html>
13. First-Year Seminars are designed for *true* first-year college students, even those who have earned associate’s degrees or considerable college credit while in high school. Research supports the notion that small, academically engaging seminars focused on high-order critical thinking skills are beneficial for all first year students no matter how academically advanced they may be.
14. Primarily, FYS’s should be offered as follows: (1) the majority of FYS sections should be offered by colleges in the Fall, when most UW students enter, (2) a smaller number should be offered in the spring, (3) specially approved hybrid courses designed for academically at-risk students who have failed previous FYS attempts may be offered on a limited basis in the Summer and J-term; these will be designed in conjunction with Fall Bridge, the USP Committee, and the FYS Coordinator, and approved by Academic Affairs, and (4) in special circumstances, when offered in conjunction with a summer bridge program, FYS may be offered in the Summer through the STEP Center, if approved by Academic Affairs.
15. Students who have earned more than 30 *post-high school* credit hours are exempt from taking a FYS. Exemptions may also be granted by petition for students who have spent a successful year in residence at another college or university even if they have not quite earned 30 credits.

**Student Policies for FYS**

* 1. The First-Year Seminar will be required for all *true* first-year college students who have earned fewer than 30 credit hours post-high school graduation. This includes Honors students, International Baccalaureate graduates, students with AP credit, and those who may have earned an associate’s degree while in high school.
	2. Students must take an FYS course during their first or second semester at UW. The registrar will assist in monitoring FYS completion of all first-year students and work with advisors to notify students. Failure to complete the FYS is not grounds for waiver of the requirement.
	3. Students who do not pass their FYS after one attempt must enroll the following semester in another FYS. Students who do not pass their FYS by the end of their second semester at UW must complete an approved summer hybrid FYS, which will only be accessible via permission of the student’s advisor and the special hybrid FYS instructor.
	4. Continuing UW students who opt into USP 2015 with 30 - 60 earned hours will be exempt from First-Year Seminar.
	5. Community college students who earn an AA, AS, ADN, or AB degree from a regionally accredited institution in the spring of 2015 or after will receive a waiver for all USP 2015 requirements except the U.S./Wyoming Constitution course and Communication 3.
	6. Students must obtain instructor and advisor permission to withdraw from a FYS course.
	7. Students must earn a grade of “C“ or better in the First-Year Seminar Class to receive USP credit.

**Course Numbering for FYS**

1. The Registrar’s Office has created a common course number for FYS: 1101. The university prefix (UWYO), a college, or a department prefix may be used with that number. If a department offers more than one FYS, each seminar will have a different title and a different section number.