A First-Year Seminar provides the opportunity to take a class with students you live with; it provides the opportunity for faculty and staff to introduce students to Drake resources, policies and curricular goals; it provides the first steps toward at least three AOIs (discussed below); and it provides the opportunity for students to explore a topic without the framework of a specific discipline.

The three AOIs most commonly associated with the FYS program are critical thinking, written communication, and information literacy. I have participated in the pilot projects for writing and information literacy, and I have served on university committees assessing critical thinking and written communication outcomes. During this class, we will use some exercises from those experiences, experiment with rubrics and expectations, and work in depth with ideas about critical thinking and writing. However, this particular class is not a pilot in anything. You will not get the most out of information literacy, I am the first to admit.

**CRITICAL THINKING**
The Drake Curriculum makes an intentional effort to help students acquire the skills for rational analysis and argumentation. Critical Thinking should be purposeful, rigorous, self-reflective, and based on a careful consideration of evidence. Students learn to:

- Clearly define a question or problem.
- Gather information that is relevant to that problem.
- Rigorously identify assumptions and preconceptions, including their own, that influence analysis of that problem.

We will discuss what these terms suggest and we will also look at the Critical Thinking Rubric approved by Drake.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**
Drake Written Communication AOI:
Drake students will learn to read with discrimination and understanding and to write persuasively.

Drake students will learn to shape their writing according to subject, purpose, medium, context and intended audience.
This area of inquiry may be satisfied by a single course, provided that writing is a significant component of the course, significant attention is directed towards the teaching of writing, and a significant portion of the student's grade focuses on the quality of writing, independent of the subject matter.

We will spend some time reflecting on the Written Communication AOI rubric and I will integrate elements of that rubric in the assignments. But we are not limiting ourselves to that rubric or that definition of writing.

INFORMATION LITERACY

Drake students will learn to acquire, analyze, interpret, and integrate information, employing appropriate technology to assist with these processes, and to understand the social and ethical implications of information use and misuse. Drake students will use appropriate sources, including library and internet resources, to process and evaluate information. Students will gain an understanding of the social and ethical issues encountered in a networked world, an ability to assess the quality of information, and learn appropriate ways to reference information sources. Students will be able to:

• Navigate and integrate scholarly resources into their research and reflection.
• Articulate the social and ethical implications of information use and misuse.
• Evaluate information resources and identify quality resources relevant to the problem or issue investigated.
• Select and employ the appropriate method and data for disciplinary research, problem-based learning, experiential-based research, and/or reflective/integrative coursework.

Articulate the basic implications of information use and misuse related to issues of academic honesty and plagiarism and pursue their educational goals with a high level of academic integrity.

We will have a library visit and a library liaison. The final revision will require library and internet research.

This particular FYS will focus on reading two novels by Jane Austen and an early American text by Susannah Rowson. We will focus on issues of “property” – landscape aesthetics of the 18th century, notions of ownership, and ideas of nationhood. We will also think about “propriety” or civility, considering how the landscape in these novels functions to demonstrate moral codes of behavior. There will be frequent short writing and attention to textual details. Since I teach in the English department, this course also can count as a lower level English course for future English or Writing majors and minors.

I will note that we are participating in a pedagogy project called “Just Teach One” (JTO) that connects Early American faculty across different universities. We are given an out-of-print text to teach and share our experiences about teaching it. There might be assignments arising from this project that will connect students across campuses. I might have to adjust paper assignments accordingly – although I will fit anything for JTO into the grading framework below. Our JTO text for this term is *Sincerity*, by Susannah
Rowson, an 1805 text that was published in serial form in a magazine and then republished in 1813 as a novel. It actually is an amazing text to read with Austen, since it was published as a book the same year *Pride and Prejudice* was published. While it is less overtly about “property” than the other novels we are reading, it is completely about propriety – particularly codes of conduct in marriage and codes of conduct toward married women. I am really excited to teach it in this class; likely we will be the only class in the project not focused on American Literature. I am interested in hearing how you respond as a class to a text that is atypical, out of print and not commonly read.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

**GRADING**

Reading Quizzes  
10%

Blackboard short writing assignments and homework  
20%

*Mansfield Park* critical essay  
20%

*Northanger Abbey* critical essay  
20%

*Sincerity* critical essay  
10%

Revision of one paper of your choice  
10%

Group Project  
10%

As instructor, I reserve the right to move a student’s grade up or down a full grade (but no more) based on class participation. I will only move a grade down a full grade for consistently disruptive behavior and/or being unprepared for class on a regular basis. 3-4 absences without making up work can be grounds for adjusting grade down as well. 5 absences drops your grade a full grade – without taking this instructor prerogative into account.

**Reading Quizzes:**

Frequent – at least for the first several weeks. I cannot tell how to adjust my teaching if people aren’t reading. Most of questions will be fact-based but I will end with an essay that we can use to start discussion.

**Blackboard short writing assignments**

There will be frequent short writing both as homework and in class. Sometimes I will have Blackboard prompts for everyone and sometimes I will ask a few students to write a single page to start us with discussion. Sometimes I will ask students to write their reflections on a class or to respond to peer work. There will be frequent close reading exercises to practice attending to text details. Expect some writing every week. The writing is intended to work on “critical thinking” and “written communication” skills.

Most short writing will be given a numerical grade. While I can’t stand that system myself, I also know that if I want to value frequent short writing, I can’t just have a +/- system or it does not translate well to the final grade component. Most posts will be graded 0-5. 0=not done or late; 1= I have questions if you did the reading; 2= weak, does not achieve goals of prompt, unclear with focus; 3= acceptable but does not engage
details of the text or explain terms; summarizes rather than analyzes; 4= good post that accomplishes goals of assignment, refers to text details and explains term and concepts in the text; 5= attends to literary nuances and clearly deals not only with WHAT the text says but also HOW the text says it. At times I might also grant a “bonus” point for a particularly striking and thoughtful response. I also give half-points, such as a 3.5.

If there is a longer Blackboard assignment, such as a full page position paper or a longer response due to class cancelation, I will use a 0-10 scale, with 6 on the 0-10 scale corresponding to 3 on the 0-5 scale, 8 corresponding to 4, etc.

**Critical Essays and Revision:** There will be one essay on each primary text. There are NO revisions for these assignments BUT I do allow “PREVISIONS.” If you turn in a draft before the draft due date, I will make substantial comments on that draft and give you at least 24 hours to incorporate the revisions suggested. So… plan ahead and you can “revise” – just not after the due date. At the end of the term, you will be able to revise a paper of your choice with additional research (hint: that way we meet some of the information literacy requirements). I will discuss revision goals in individual conferences.

One conference is required before each paper, including the revision. At least one visit to the Writing Workshop is required during the semester.

**Group Project:** There will be a creative group project involving multiple media (ah, information literacy again) and course concepts. More information later.

**CLASS POLICIES**

**Class Expectations:** Come to class on time. Do the reading ahead of time and have at least one passage flagged for discussion. If you miss class, contact a peer so you can be caught up for the next class and receive any handouts you missed. Be respectful of others. Take turns leading group discussions. WRITTEN WORK is due at the start of class or it will be considered late. Bring the reading to class – this means printing out E-Reserves or having notes. To be prepared to find out about missed work, take some time to find a peer NOW. My peer contact for this class is _______________________. His/her e-mail is _______________________. His/her phone # (or other way to contact) is ________________.

**Electronics and Technology:**
Laptops are optional for class. I will put a note on Blackboard if there is a day when I want everyone to have them.

DO use laptops as needed for group work and for uploading responses (if needed) during class.
DO regularly review peer contributions to Blackboard.
DO read all announcements on Blackboard, all emails about Blackboard, all additions to Blackboard.
DO NOT use laptops during full class discussion unless we have discussed it that class period.
DO NOT do work for another class or engage in personal electronic use during the class period.

If you have an electronic version of text, use the technology responsibly. I will take it away otherwise.

If the clock is working in the classroom, we will use that for time. Otherwise, I will use my phone to check time. All short papers and assignments are due at the start of class. If you are absent and want credit, email me the work BEFORE class starts. Otherwise material will be considered late.

Respect: Listen to peers. Try to respond to peer ideas. Disagree politely (if you disagree). Nothing derogatory in terms of race, gender, sexuality, religion, etc. Even a comment that seems funny about the 1800s can deeply hurt a classmate who is identifying with that position. Avoid interrupting or dominating conversation. Let other students be different from who you are.

Attendance: I firmly believe that if you are not in class, you will miss something. (See message above about having a peer contact). And, if you are not in class, you cannot contribute. But it you are sick, you should stay at home. So, here is my compromise. Everyone has 2 absences with no penalty. After that, additional absences will count negatively. IF you miss 3 or 4 classes, you can do “make up” work if you contact me in a timely manner and demonstrate you would have been prepared for class; or, you can reread my statement on instructor right to adjust grades. If you miss 5 classes, your final grade drops a full grade. If you miss 6, you will fail the class. If you miss class, I encourage setting up an office visit to review missed information. I do NOT support your emailing me to ask what you missed; YOU need to take the initiative to make up work and it is not fair to ask me to provide you with material I did not give the rest of the class.

IF you end up with a major health issue or other family issue, please see me ASAP about any variations to this attendance policy. We will work out a system in which you do additional writing to demonstrate you were prepared for class. I have had students have ACL repair surgery, contract mono or face other situations that require adjustments to this policy.

IF class is canceled due to instructor illness, travel or snow day, there will be a Blackboard assignment to complete. That assignment will count toward the short writing component with other Blackboard posts.
How I will Reach You:

By e-mail using your Drake e-mail address.

How You Can Reach Me:

lisa.west@drake.edu – please provide 24 + hours for response, since my daily life is likely on a different time schedule from yours!

REQUIRED TEXTS

*Mansfield Park* by Jane Austen  - *Norton edition only*
*Northanger Abbey* by Jane Austen
*Sincerity* by Susannah Rowson. *This text is NOT available in bookstores or online. I will make the “Just Teach One” electronic edition available to students.*
Various handouts and possibly other electronic texts or E-Reserves
Peer Writing
DRAKE RESOURCES AND POLICIES

WRITING WORKSHOP:
The Writing Workshop, located on the lower level of Cowles Library in Room 47, serves undergraduate, graduate, and law students who are writing papers and need assistance with individual assignments.
The emphasis of the one-on-one tutoring session is not to fix but to devise actions that the individual can take to improve and to start dealing with writing problems or questions individually. This is a free service to all Drake University students.

The Writing Workshop can help you with: evaluating your habits of reading and writing; learning new strategies appropriate for a particular writing or reading task; making sense of assignments and assigned reading material; coming up with ideas; revising sentence style; resolving problems with word choice, grammar, etc.; revising organization, argument, viewpoint or perspective; overcoming writer’s block.
Sign up to meet with a tutor: Drake University Writing Workshop
For questions, call 271-4712 or email jody.swilky@drake.edu.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic Dishonesty: This course will follow the principles of academic dishonesty expressed in the online statement under academics for the college of Arts and Sciences. (I am also attaching the main policy to the syllabus.) The first instance of academic dishonesty will result in an F for the assignment (with no possibility of revision) and the second will result in failing the course and a notice to the Dean’s office. In addition, if I find downloading of material from a website or another form of direct copying, failure of the course and notice to the Dean’s office will occur immediately – no second chances. I want to remind everyone that “intention” is not a core aspect of academic honesty. In other words, explaining that you did not know you were plagiarizing or that you were not dishonest on purpose does not excuse you from a violation of the policy.

From Drake website – Arts and Sciences Academic Dishonesty Policy
Academic dishonesty is an all-encompassing term involving any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done, or to deliberately damage or destroy the work of others. It includes plagiarism (the misrepresentation, either by intent or negligence, of another’s ideas, phrases, discourse, or works as one’s own), cheating (the act, or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirement, including examinations), fabrication (intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic sense in any academic exercise), and facilitating academic dishonesty (intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty). Examples of such cases include, but are not limited to:
• copying from the Internet or worldwide web and representing it as one’s own thoughts
or work;

• copying from another student’s paper, laboratory report, or other report, or computer files or listing and representing it as one’s own thoughts or work;

• using, during a test or laboratory experiment, material and/or devices not authorized by the instructor in charge;

• without the instructor’s permission, collaborating with another, knowingly assisting another or knowingly receiving the assistance of another in writing an examination or in satisfying any other course requirements;

• incorporating into written assignments materials written by others without giving them credit, or otherwise improperly using information written by others (including that which might be stored on computer disks or other technological devices), or submitting commercially prepared papers as one’s own;

• submission of multiple copies of the same or similar papers without prior approval of the several instructors involved;

• claiming as one's own work that which was done by tutors or others with no mention of credit to or the assistance of those persons;

• deliberately damaging or destroying another's laboratory experiments, computer work or studio work;

• knowingly obtaining access to, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release;

• substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, to take a test or other assignment or to make a presentation;

• intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise;

• forgery, alterations, or misuse of University documents;

• falsifying information submitted or failure to reveal relevant information in any University application form or offering any false information in any University disciplinary proceeding. Each instructor reserves the right to further clarify and define his/her expectations of academic integrity orally or in written form, such as through the course syllabus.

The College of Arts and Sciences has more information about its Academic Dishonesty Policy, including statements about penalties and appeals. I suggest everyone read the entire policy at least once per semester during your time at Drake.

**DISABILITY**

**Disability:** I will make any changes needed to accommodate learning disabilities or any other kinds of disabilities. Please contact me ASAP to make necessary arrangements.

The following information is taken from the Drake website:

Here at Drake we are excited about our diverse student population. We realize that diversity is bigger than race and gender; it also includes differences such as disabilities. Because of this we have a full time Student Disability Services Coordinator to help
coordinate accommodations for our students with disabilities.

**Student Disability Services**  
2507 University Ave.  
107 Old Main  
515-271-1835  
**Michelle Laughlin**  
Student Disability Services Coordinator  
515-271-1835  
Fax: 515-271-2376  
E-mail: michelle.laughlin@drake.edu

**Counseling and Mental Health**

The following information is taken from the Drake website:

The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers to all currently enrolled Drake students a variety of counseling services. Depending on the student's need, individual, couple, family, or group counseling may be provided. The UCC is available for workshops, training, psychological testing, and for referral information. In addition, we offer consultation services to students, staff, and faculty who might have questions about student mental health issues or topics.

Drake University Counseling Center  
3116 Carpenter Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50311  
(515) 271-3864  
**Hours:**  
Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm

**Gender violence and sexual misconduct:**

*Drake University takes acts of gender violence and sexual misconduct seriously and is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment. Below is information related to Drake’s resources in this area.*

*The Coordinator for Sexual Violence Response and Healthy Relationship Promotion’s primary role is to act as a resource for students who have been subjected to interpersonal [gender] violence including sexual assault/harassment, dating/domestic violence, gender-based discrimination, and stalking and will advocate on behalf of the student victim’s requests if services are voluntarily initiated. The coordinator can explain how to initiate a complaint within the university and through criminal/civil processes, assist with referrals to a confidential crisis advocate and/or counselor and appropriate medical or legal professionals. The coordinator must report “known” student campus assaults to the Dean of Students and/or Title IX Coordinator, but the complainant still has rights to*
participate or withdraw from the university process. Other services include providing crisis intervention (safety plan, crisis counseling, rights information), and assistance in academic and housing accommodations as needed. To contact the coordinator, Alysa Mozak, call 515-271-4141 or email alysa.mozak@drake.edu. The Violence Intervention Partner (V.I.P.) program through this office provides peer-based 24/7 confidential advocacy services. To access a V.I.P. advocate call or text 515-512-2972. For more information about these services visit www.drake.edu/sexual-assault/
DRAFT SCHEDULE

Make sure you pay attention to Blackboard Announcements Page, where I upload weekly assignments for reading and writing. This draft schedule WILL change, and I find it easier to keep updated scheduling information on Blackboard rather than keep redistributing new syllabi or asking students to keep track of changes on their own. AND FYS classes always seem to require tinkering here and there – extra peer review time, maybe the addition of certain handouts or changes in writing assignments. I like having my FYS courses develop in part due to student interest – so speak up on what interests you.

Monday, August 31: syllabus review

Wednesday, September 2: Country House Reports

HOMEWORK: Select an English country house or a country house of another country before 1830. Write a report on your estate, considering factors such as national and family history, key architectural features, distinctive aspects of the “grounds” and/or location, random items of interest (fun facts) and how the estate is managed today. See the assignment prompt on Blackboard. Include at least one image. Length: 3-5 pages.

Monday, September 7 – no class, Labor Day

Wednesday, September 9: MP

Monday, September 14: MP

Wednesday, September 16: MP

Monday, September 21: MP

Wednesday, September 23: finish MP

Monday, September 28: Peer review of first paper in class

Wednesday, September 30: Paper #1 due. Watch movie

Monday, October 5: Duckworth and Said essays – Norton

Wednesday, October 7: NA

Monday, October 12: NA

Wednesday, October 14: movie

Monday, October 19 – no class, fall break. Keep Reading
Wednesday, Oct 21: *NA*

Monday, Oct. 26: *NA - finish*

Wednesday, October 28: catchup day and work on papers

Monday, November 2: *Paper #2 due – and watch movie in class*

Wednesday, November 4: Auerbach essay on Fanny

Monday, November 9: *Sincerity*

Wednesday, November 11: *Sincerity*

Monday, November 16: *Sincerity*

Wednesday, November 18: *Sincerity and JTO issues*

Monday, November 23: catch up and/or movie. Group projects start

Wednesday, November 25: no class – Thanksgiving Break

Monday, November 30: Peer review

Wednesday, December 2: Paper #3 due and group work

Monday, December 7: Group work, catch up

Wednesday, December 9: Group Presentations and wrap-up

Friday, December 18 at 3 PM – final revisions due by email or hard copy.
DRAFT PAPER ASSIGNMENTS:

Paper #1:
*Mansfield Park* contains many highly differentiated settings, and at times the novel resembles a theatrical production due to its sense of “staging” and dialogue. Select a particular scene or event in the novel and discuss HOW the landscape shapes perception of proper and improper behavior. For this prompt, you will need to define your terms and the scope of your project. What is landscape? Are you using a less traditional understanding of landscape, such as the cityscape of Portsmouth or the stage within *Mansfield Park*? Whose perception are you analyzing: the reader’s? a particular character’s? a combination of characters’? Can you select a verb or series of verbs that are more precise than “shape”? Is the passage juxtaposing two different views? Challenging a prominent view? Are you considering proper and improper behavior from a particular point of view or from a particular class of society? There might be other ways you need to clarify how your project is responding to this prompt.

Remember our short exercises on close reading.
Remember that you are focused here on the close reading of ONE scene. What you find to be valid in this one scene is not necessarily true of the entire novel.
Remember to consider both what is being “said” in the passage and what is not being said. Consider assumptions – whether they are assumptions of the reader, a character, or the narrator.

Paper #2:
We have read several theoretical essays about landscape and ideology. Select a theoretical passage from one of these readings and apply it to *Northanger Abbey* – either the entire novel or one particular part. Your paper should address at least one of the following questions. How does your theoretical selection make you read *Northanger Abbey* differently? How does your project make you think differently about the implications of the theoretical passage? Are there negative or confusing results from linking the two texts? How does your project make you consider the relationship between landscape and “propriety”?

Paper #3:
*Sincerity* is out of print. It is not taught in the college classroom nor is it browsed for fun. For this assignment, I want you to consider the value of this text. You can focus on course topics such as “landscape,” moral codes of behavior, or ideas of nationhood. You can also select your own focus. Marriage and women’s issues come to mind. What is the value of reading this text? How does reading this text add to the course and/or your understanding of Jane Austen? Would it be good if this text were regularly taught?

Paper #4:
Students will revise one of the prior three papers, adding at least one additional 19th century primary document (such as a magazine article, a theory on landscape, or a conduct book) and at least two academic journal articles or book chapters from the last 25 years.