FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR: A PROCEDURAL OVERVIEW

FYS is a crucial part of the first-year experience at Albright, serving as one bookend of the General Education curriculum. It may be the most content-rich and rigorous academic experience an incoming student has ever had. While the course provides transition to a college intellectual community, it also offers a transition to the nuts-and-bolts skills and dispositions needed to succeed in a college classroom. It is a teaching opportunity that allows the faculty member considerable freedom and creativity, while giving them the opportunity to shape the educational trajectory that our incoming students will take. The College is always in need of full-time faculty interested in offering an FYS.

The first step for proposing a First-year Seminar is to develop a course proposal based on the FYS guidelines. The guidelines and a sample FYS proposal are linked to this section of the website. Use the guidelines and sample as a framework for thinking about your course goals, expectations, assignments, readings, structures, etc. Once drafted, send your proposal to the FYS Coordinator, who will review it and provide some “first notes” or suggestions. When you feel the proposal is ready to go forward, ask for review and signature by your department chair and library liaison, and then submit the final proposal to the Curriculum Development Committee (CDC), which will put it on the agenda.

To submit the proposal to the CDC, use the generic CDC course application form; a link for this can also be found in the “Course Development” section of the (“Course-Level Curriculum Proposal Guidelines”). You will find it to be a pretty self-explanatory form containing some questions that pertain specifically to FYS proposals (particularly on page 2). Using this form helps the CDC quickly assess that all needed information is being conveyed so it can proceed with review and approval.

Consider the CDC form as a kind of “cover letter” that highlights what you want the reader/assessor to find in your supporting syllabus. The prospectus/description asked for on the form will be used by the Registrar to summarize the course and advertise it to incoming students. Note the submission deadlines on the form itself. Ideally the course will be submitted to CDC in time for approval before departments must send course schedules to the Registrar for the next semester – i.e., February for Fall and October for Spring.