

# VASSAR COLLEGE

## The 2015/16 Freshman Handbook

A HANDBOOK FOR THE CLASS OF 2019

## To The Class Of 2019

In a few short weeks, you will join a college community of other students, faculty, and administrators who are eager to welcome you to Vassar. Countless alumni and alumnae have called their student experiences at Vassar some of the best years of their lives. We hope that you will be able to say the same in a few short years. Much will depend on the choices you make and how you handle the academic and personal challenges that you will face. Your decisions regarding your approach to both the curriculum and out-of-class engagements will be vitally important—these spheres of activity are inextricably woven into what we consider to be the whole student experience. Certainly you cannot anticipate everything, but you can plan for the expected and talk through the unexpected with any number of people who are here to do exactly that with you.

No doubt you have already begun reflecting on your own intellectual and personal goals. To be prepared to meet them, you will need to think through, plan, and carry out an academic program grounded in the broad tradition of liberal education. Our responsibility is to assist you in these tasks. Thus, the materials in this book are intended to help you make good use of the time between now and when you arrive on campus on August 24, 2015.

Recognizing that it is difficult to plan and prepare for a complex experience, we have worked carefully to assemble information in this book that will help you begin that process thoughtfully, with originality, and with confidence. You will find in these pages general statements and guidelines about the first year at Vassar and very specific statements about the philosophies and policies of the all the academic departments and programs.

You will also find instructions for pre-registering for your fall semester courses. Please read and consider this material carefully. We encourage you to think about it while pre-registering for classes and preparing the Statement of Academic Interests, which the dean of freshmen has requested you send before you arrive on campus. Your understanding of the materials here, the Vassar College catalogue, and your Statement of Academic Interests will provide the basis for the important discussions that you will have with your faculty pre-major advisor, your house fellow, and the dean of freshmen when you arrive on campus in August.

We look forward to welcoming you to campus and to facilitating your smooth and enjoyable transition into the Vassar community. Personally, I look forward to working with you and the entire Vassar College Class of 2019.

Christopher Roellke

*Dean of the College and Professor of Education*

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## THE FRESHMAN YEAR

As you begin your first year of college, please reflect on the values of the community you are about to join, as articulated in the Vassar catalogue:

Vassar College seeks to sustain a community of special character in which people of divergent views and backgrounds come together to study and live in the proud tradition of a residential liberal arts college. Vassar students, working closely with the faculty, enjoy the freedom to explore their intellectual and artistic passions, to develop their powers of reason and imagination through the process of analysis and synthesis, to effectively express their unique points of view, to challenge and rethink their own and others' assumptions, and to struggle with complex questions that sometimes reveal conflicting truths. The lifelong love of learning, increased knowledge of oneself and others, humane concern for society and the world, and commitment to an examined and evolving set of values established at Vassar prepares and compels our graduates to actively participate in the local, national, and global communities with a profound understanding of social and political contexts.

As Vassar seeks to educate the individual imagination to see into the lives of others, its academic mission cannot be separated from its identity as a residential community comprising diverse interests and perspectives. The college expects its students to be mindful of their responsibilities to one another and to engage actively in the creation of a community of intellectual freedom, mutually understood dignity, and civil discourse.

These are lofty goals, indeed. Reading such a statement in light of Vassar's requirements brings home just how much responsibility each student is given in crafting a course of study that addresses these ideals and aspirations. Vassar places considerable faith and control in the hands of its students, who are expected to find their own way of taking the liberal arts education offered at Vassar and making it inimitably their own.

Given Vassar's rich and varied curriculum, your education depends on the care with which you plan your academic program. Your course selections should reflect your interests and abilities, but also acknowledge that freshman year is a time for intellectual adventurousness. I hope that in planning your fall course program, both before you arrive at Vassar and on campus with your faculty advisor, you keep an open mind and design several alternative programs—alternatives that take advantage of the many possibilities Vassar offers you.

### New Student Orientation

Classes begin this year on Monday, August 31. All freshmen are expected to arrive at Vassar on Monday, August 24, the first day of New Student Orientation. A detailed schedule for this year's orientation activities will be given to you when you arrive and may be found online on the dean of freshmen website <http://deanoffreshmen.vassar.edu>.

The activities planned for the days before classes begin serve a variety of needs, social as well as academic. Academic advising and registration for classes take place on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Other activities include general assemblies, residence hall meetings, and other discussion groups designed to ease your transition to college life and to inform you of the rights and responsibilities that come with being a member of the Vassar community.

### How to Use This Handbook

This handbook is designed to help you in your orientation to Vassar. Here you will find the academic information you will need in order to register for classes, including descriptions of Vassar's requirements and statements by the academic departments that will aid you in choosing your classes. You should read through the "Academic Information" and "Departments of Instruction and Multidisciplinary Programs" sections of this handbook in order to familiarize yourself with the great range of choices before you. The section on "Registration for Courses" will give you more specific information about the process by which you will pre-register over the summer. Once you come to campus, you will meet twice with your faculty advisor during orientation, and you will have the opportunity to attend the many advising sessions that are a part of orientation. Final registration will take place on Friday, August 28.

Only one requirement must be met in your first year: every freshman is required to complete at least one Freshman Writing Seminar. Please consult the "Freshman Writing Seminars" section of this handbook for the 2015/16 offerings. The Vassar catalogue, found online, is the primary source for all information on the academic organization of the college, its requirements for graduation, course offerings, and so forth. If questions arise as you read what follows, please also consult the online catalogue. When you arrive on campus in August, you will receive a hard copy of the Vassar course catalogue that I hope you will consult regularly throughout your Vassar career.

The next section of this handbook, "Academic, Residential Life, and Extracurricular Resources," contains a listing of the people and offices you might turn to with any questions you may have. See, too, "A Note about Ask Banner" in the "Registration for Courses" section of this handbook for information about the online system. Additional information about student life at Vassar, including a list of student organizations sponsored by the Vassar Student Association, can be found in *The Student Handbook*. You will receive a hard copy of *The Student Handbook* upon arrival on campus, but you can consult the online version over the summer. You may always call the Office of the Dean of Freshmen at 845-437-5258 with any questions as well.

And do remember to complete your Statement of Academic Interests online by July 24, which I will use to assign you a faculty pre-major advisor.

I look forward to meeting you on August 24.

Susan Zlotnick  
Dean of Freshmen and Professor of English

# ACADEMIC, RESIDENTIAL LIFE, AND EXTRACURRICULAR RESOURCES

“Can I take that wonderful-sounding 200-level course on Asian-American literature?”... “I’m running a fever and can’t get to class. What do I do?”... “My roommate and I don’t seem to have hit it off. Can we switch roommates?” Questions of all kinds arise as we make our way in a new environment. Answers are readily available from a range of resources; the information offered below should help you determine where to turn with a particular question.

## The Dean of Freshmen

The dean of freshmen counsels and advises all first-year students on academic matters and oversees academic regulations as they affect freshmen. The dean of freshmen is a member of the faculty and serves on a number of faculty and administrative committees responsible for the welfare of Vassar students. The dean also assigns faculty pre-major advisors and co-chairs the New Student Orientation Committee.

Should you, as a first-year student, experience any personal, family, or medical difficulties that threaten to impact your academic performance, the dean of freshmen will work closely with you to help you make full use of the college’s resources and support systems and will advise you regarding the various options available to you for some form of academic relief.

Any freshman who needs to be away from campus because of an illness or family emergency or who is considering a leave of absence or withdrawal from Vassar should consult the dean of freshmen.

Susan Zlotnick is the dean of freshmen. Her office, open weekdays from 8:30 am–5:00 pm, is located inside the Office of the Dean of Studies (Main N-128). Appointments may be made by calling 845-437-5258.

## Faculty Advisors

The dean of freshmen assigns you a faculty pre-major advisor based on the interests that you list on the Statement of Academic Interests, which you will complete online. (When you declare a major, most likely in your sophomore year, you will be reassigned to an advisor who teaches in the department or program of your major.) The first meeting for freshmen with their pre-major advisors is from 10:15-11:45 am on Wednesday, August 26. This meeting provides an opportunity for you to become acquainted with your pre-major advisor and his or her other pre-major advisees and to discuss any questions that you might have. On Thursday afternoon, August 27, you will have an individual half-hour appointment with your advisor for final approval of your course selections before registration. Throughout the year you will need to meet in person with your advisor to obtain

approval to add or drop a course, to elect a course under the non-recorded option (NRO), to pre-register for the following semester, or to request any kind of special permission.

At Vassar, there are many people to turn to for academic advice, so you will need to take the initiative in seeking out particular kinds of information. While pre-major advisors can assist you in coordinating your individual program, no one faculty member can be expected to know everything about Vassar’s vast and varied curriculum. If you need specific information about a course or a department, you should speak to the appropriate instructor or department chair. Individual teachers and department or program representatives are available in their offices both during the initial days of the semester and as the term progresses.

After orientation, it is your responsibility to schedule all appointments with your advisor. Learn your advisor’s office hours and arrange to meet with him or her in advance of all pertinent deadlines. Most faculty members can be reached via email. If you are unable to reach your advisor, your instructor, or a department chair, please contact the department assistant to leave a message that you wish to make an appointment.

The dean of freshmen can answer more general questions about college policies and procedures and about your overall curricular planning throughout your years of study.

## Libraries

The libraries’ collections and services have been developed to support teaching and research at the college and evolve with the needs of the faculty and students. The libraries house books and journals, sound recordings and music scores, documentary and feature films, rare books and manuscripts, and digital collections. If you have difficulty finding what you’re looking for (or even knowing where to start), ask for a librarian at the circulation desk or use the “hot line” phone located in the Cornaro Room (the room with the stained glass window). You can also chat with a librarian virtually by clicking on the Ask a Librarian link on the library homepage (<http://library.vassar.edu>).

The library also houses a 24-hour study space, the Digital Media Zone, Matthew’s Bean (a small café), the Writing Center, and the Quantitative Center.

## The Learning, Teaching, and Research Center

The Learning, Teaching, and Research Center (LTRC) is dedicated to addressing the needs of Vassar’s diverse student body. Our goal is to enable students to maximize their unique educational experiences at Vassar College. We therefore provide an extensive range of academic resources that foster the fundamental aim of a liberal arts education: to facilitate the intellectual and professional growth of ethical, informed, and reflective students who can engage creatively with important social issues. The LTRC houses a peer-staffed Writing Center and Quantitative Reasoning Center, including a Supplemental Instruction Program for select quantitative analysis (QA) courses. We also offer

expert learning support with a focus on developing individual academic skills.

For more information, please visit <http://ltrc.vassar.edu>.

## Field Work

Field Work is an academic program that is sponsored by departments for ungraded credit by placing students in a variety of internships in Poughkeepsie, the mid-Hudson region, New York City, and elsewhere. It provides opportunities for observation and for participation that are not ordinarily available in traditional classroom work. Every student electing field work is supervised by a faculty member who helps the student integrate experience with theory. Students may need a pre- or co-requisite course in the sponsoring department. Internships during the summer may also be eligible for academic field work credit.

For more information about the range of field work placements and procedures for seeking credit, please visit the Office of Field Work in Main N-165, phone 845-437-5280, or visit <http://fieldwork.vassar.edu>.

## Career Development

The Career Development Office (CDO), located in Main S-170, provides a variety of resources for locating internships, summer employment, and postgraduate opportunities. First-year students are encouraged to engage with the Career Development Office early in their time at Vassar. Whether you are thinking about a summer internship, deciding on a major, or simply exploring options to gain experience, you can use the CDO's career library, internship databases, and extensive network of alumnae/i career advisors to assist with your plans. Stop by for an appointment or to explore the career resources available.

For more information, please visit <http://careers.vassar.edu> or email [cdo@vassar.edu](mailto:cdo@vassar.edu).

## The Dean of Students

The dean of students has the responsibility for coordinating several aspects of the non-academic lives of Vassar students. Specifically, the dean of students oversees the following student service areas: the Counseling Service, the Health Service, Health Education, Residential Life, and Safety and Security. The dean regularly meets with the directors of the student services that report to him; together they establish the goals and priorities of each office. The dean oversees the student conduct system and, along with the dean of freshmen, co-chairs the New Student Orientation Committee. The dean also serves as an advocate for students and their needs.

In addition, the dean convenes weekly meetings of the Student Support Network (SSN) to coordinate helping resources for students whose behavior indicates they may be in serious trouble. The core SSN consists of the dean of students, the dean of studies, the director of residential life, and the director of counseling; other administrators are invited as appropriate.

SSN members may share information about students who appear to be in trouble (e.g., who appear to be at risk to themselves or others, whose academic situation is dire, who are experiencing significant personal problems, or whose behavior is alarming other members of the college community). The group then determines how best to support the student or students. Please note that confidential information is not shared by the Counseling Service, Health Service, Director of Health Education, or the Accessibility and Educational Opportunity (AEO) office.

D.B. Brown is the dean of students. Please visit his office at Main C-121 or telephone 845-437-5315 with concerns you might have throughout the year.

For more information, visit <http://deanofstudents.vassar.edu>.

## The Office of Residential Life

The Office of Residential Life coordinates all aspects of the residential experience at Vassar. The Residential Life staff is responsible for community development, student leadership, room assignments, residential house furnishings and equipment, health and safety in the halls, and the development and implementation of college policies. The director and associate director can be contacted at the central office in Main C-120 or by telephone at 845-437-5860.

## House Fellows

House fellows are faculty members who live in the residential houses. They function as academic advisors and as members of the residential community who offer perspective and counsel. They also serve to broaden and extend the contact between faculty and students in informal and non-academic areas. House fellow interns, typically sophomores or juniors, are selected to support the programmatic endeavors of the house fellows.

## Student Fellows

In each house, as a part of the overall advising system of the college, student fellows serve as peer counselors to new students. Student fellows, usually second-year students, are assigned 8–12 freshmen who live near them in the residential house. There are also student fellows for new transfer, visiting, and exchange students. Student fellows can assist you with registration procedures and point you towards various campus resources. They are trained to assist you with any personal problems you may encounter during your first year at college. Student fellows are carefully selected for their ability to relate to others, their sense of responsibility, judgment, discretion, and maturity. They are an invaluable campus resource.

You will first meet your student fellow on Monday afternoon, August 24, for a brief orientation to the campus and information about the opening days. Student fellows are expected to be in regular contact with you throughout the year.

## House Advisors

House advisors are full-time student affairs professionals who work and live in the houses. They serve several functions in support of residential life within the residential clusters. Acting as liaisons between the Office of Residential Life and the residential house, house advisors also serve as an ongoing resource to house fellows, house student advisors, student fellows, and house officers. They provide valuable personal support for all residential students.

House advisors also handle a range of administrative duties in the residential house. They monitor house improvement needs and serve as “administrator on call” to respond to emergency situations.

## House Student Advisors

In each house, a house student advisor, usually a member of the junior class, works along with the house advisors. House student advisors are involved in the selection, training, and supervision of the student fellows in their building.

## House Officers

Each residential house is governed by four elected student officers, an elected freshman representative, and appointed sophomore and junior representatives. The house officers work closely with the Residential Life staff to ensure the general welfare of the individual student and to promote a sense of community.

For more information, please visit <http://residentiallife.vassar.edu>.

## Counseling Service

The Counseling Service provides a variety of services to help students and the campus community handle the problems associated with academics, college life, and personal development. Services include short-term individual, couple and group counseling, crisis intervention, educational programs, consultation, assessment, and referral to off-campus services. Services are free for students. The Counseling Service welcomes all students and embraces a philosophy of diversity.

Counselors are trained mental health professionals who work with students to explore personal problems and concerns in a secure and private setting. Students come to the Counseling Service for a variety of reasons, including relationship problems with parents, peers, or partners; depression; anxiety; alcohol and other drug use and abuse; coming out issues; identity concerns; stress; concerns about academic progress or direction; or assistance in planning for the future.

Counselors often refer students to resources outside of the Vassar community depending on the needs of the student and the limitations of the Counseling Service. Students referred for treatment off campus may use their health insurance to defray the cost. Off campus services are the responsibility of the student and/or the student’s family.

The Counseling Service’s consulting psychiatrist is available for limited psychiatric services by referral from a

counselor. If continuing psychiatric services are required, a referral is made to a private psychiatrist.

Confidentiality is a highest priority at the Counseling Service and is strictly maintained within specific legal limits. Counseling records are separate from academic and medical records at the college and are not available to college offices outside of the Counseling Service. Since email is not a secure medium and confidentiality of email cannot be guaranteed, the Counseling Service recommends that you consider this when communicating about matters of a personal or confidential nature.

The Counseling Service, located in Metcalf House, is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 am–5:00 pm during the academic year and closes during breaks and the summer. Stop by Metcalf or call 845-437-5700 to schedule an appointment.

If you are in crisis, during office hours call 845-437-5700 and explain that you need to speak to a counselor urgently. For crisis counseling after hours and on weekends, call the Campus Response Center at 845-437-7333 and request to be connected with the counselor-on-call.

## Office of Health Education

The Office of Health Education plans and conducts activities to help Vassar College students make better choices for healthier living. The staff develops educational programs related to aspects of student health, specifically in the areas of substance abuse prevention, nutrition, and sexual health awareness, and facilitates connections between student health needs and services provided by the college and the local community. The staff also provides support and training to student peer helper groups, including CARES (sexual assault/abuse), CHOICE (sexual health information), and The Listening Center (or TLC, 24/7 peer counseling).

The office, located in the Metcalf solarium, is open during the academic year and can be reached at 845-437-7769. Students should feel free to stop by to get information about health and wellness topics, meet with a wellness peer educator, or schedule a one-on-one consultation with the director of health education.

For more information, please visit <http://healtheducation.vassar.edu>.

## The Sexual Assault Violence Prevention Program/Sexual Assault Response Team

The Sexual Assault Violence Prevention Program (SAVP) is housed within the Office of Health Education. SAVP provides campus programming and education about sexual assault, relationship abuse, and stalking, by working closely with community partners to increase campus awareness and to generate dialogue.

SAVP includes the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). The members of SART are faculty and administrators who provide individual support, advocacy, and information to students who have been victims of sexual assault, relationship abuse, dating/domestic violence, and/

or stalking. All interactions with the SART advocates are confidential and will be conducted with a victim-centered approach: the advocate offers the student options and choices, and the student makes all decisions.

A SART member can be reached any time of day or night by calling the Campus Response Center at 845-437-7333.

The SAVP coordinator's office is in 121 Jewett House. She can be reached at 845-437-7863 or [savp@vassar.edu](mailto:savp@vassar.edu). For more information, please visit <http://savp.vassar.edu>.

## Health Service

The student Health Service, located in Baldwin House, provides medical and nursing care by qualified personnel including physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners and nurses. Health Service hours are 9:00 am–5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, and 12:00 noon–4:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Daily clinics for nursing, medical, and gynecological care are maintained on weekdays from 9:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00–4:00 pm. Appointments can be scheduled during office hours by calling 845-437-5800; for women's health, call 845-437-5818. After clinic hours, a nurse is present on site to see to urgent problems until 5:00 pm on weekdays and from 12:00 noon–4:00 pm on weekends. Emergencies and urgent care walk-ins can be seen immediately when the Health Service is open. When the Health Service is closed, students may access the "Night Nurse Triage" line by calling 845-437-5800. A member of the medical staff is on call outside of clinic hours.

In case of a medical emergency, call the Campus Response Center (CRC) at 845-437-7333 to dispatch either New York State certified EMTs or an ambulance.

In the medical clinics, routine primary care is offered with referral to local specialists or hospitals as needed. Health promotion and disease prevention are emphasized through a variety of programs. Gynecological services, including birth control counseling, are available for an additional fee. Similarly, medical lab testing is provided as are therapeutic medications. Some of these services and prescriptions may be provided to students at a minimal charge.

For more information, please visit <http://healthservice.vassar.edu> or email [health@vassar.edu](mailto:health@vassar.edu).

## Office for Accessibility and Educational Opportunity

Many Vassar students need accommodations or support services because of a learning disability, such as dyslexia, a language-based learning disability, AD/HD, a chronic health impairment, a visual or hearing impairment, a mobility or orthopedic impairment, a psychological disorder, or due to substance abuse/recovery. The Office for Accessibility and Educational Opportunity is committed to helping coordinate and provide those necessary accommodations, auxiliary aids, and services to qualified students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to and opportunity for full participation in the academic and residential life of the college.

Students in need of disability-related accommodations or services should self-identify to the Office for Accessibility and Educational Opportunity as soon as possible to request academic or residential life accommodations (by June 1, 2015, for matriculation in the fall). Students must provide the college with enough time to understand their need for accommodations or services, review disability documentation that supports the request for accommodation, work to put in place approved accommodations, and, if necessary, identify alternatives or make adjustments if the requested accommodation is not appropriate, creates an undue burden, or would result in a substantial modification to an essential requirement of a course, program, or activity. Accommodations cannot be put in place retroactively.

All accommodation and service decisions are based on the nature of the student's disability, supporting documentation, and current needs as they relate to the specific requirements of the course, program, or activity. Commonly offered accommodations and support services include:

- Exam accommodations (extended time on exams, low-distraction test environment, use of a computer for essay exams, etc.)
- Alternative print formats (e.g., audio files, e-text, Braille)
- Note taker service
- Modified course load
- Housing and meal plan accommodations
- Sign language interpreters/remote closed captioning

Please contact the Office for Accessibility and Educational Opportunity to learn more about our services and to inform us about your accommodation needs or concerns. The office is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 am–5:00 pm, during the academic year and by appointment during the summer. For more information, please call 845-437-7584 or visit <http://aeo.vassar.edu>.

## International Services

The Office of International Services offers a full range of resources for our community of international students and scholars. We offer advice and assistance in visa, immigration, tax, employment, cultural, and general matters. And we seek to plan and coordinate a variety of academic, cultural, and social programs that enhance the integration and success of international students and scholars.

Intercultural competence—the ability to communicate and relate effectively and appropriately with members of another cultural background on their terms – is a necessary skill among graduates ready to join a global marketplace. Toward this end, we look both to assist international students in adjusting to and embracing a new culture and also to involve and engage all members of the campus community in events, workshops, and other opportunities to share the wealth of global perspectives and enjoy the full experience of our campus.

The Office of International Services collaborates with the International Studies Program, the Office of International Programs, the Vassar International Student

Association, the Office of Career Development, the Vassar Student Association and a wide variety of academic departments, administrative offices, and student organizations in efforts to provide programming that speaks to the college's mission to promote a global perspective among all our students.

An educational program out of the Office of International Services, the Vassar Haiti Project was founded in 2001 to elevate the discourse about and awareness of Haitian culture and society, to foster sustainable development in a village in Haiti, and to provide students at Vassar with a life changing experiential education in global citizenship. This unique, award-winning initiative engages students in very real ways with important concepts and tough questions relating to nongovernmental activity in the developing world. Students participate in grant-writing, research, presentations at schools and community organization, and fundraising events in the community and at Vassar, and have the opportunity to travel to Haiti to assess the progress of the initiatives they research. For more information, go to <http://thehaitiproject.org>.

Andrew Meade is the director of international services as well as an assistant dean for campus life and diversity. Please contact [anmeade@vassar.edu](mailto:anmeade@vassar.edu) or visit <http://internationalservices.vassar.edu> for more information.

## Campus Life and Diversity Office

The Campus Life and Diversity Office strives to enhance the quality of campus life for all students by advancing Vassar's mission to provide a socially responsible and inclusive education. We promote affirming communities, equity, social justice education, global citizenship, cultural pluralism, and spiritual exploration through a variety of resources: the ALANA Cultural Center to support students of color, International Services, the LGBTQ Center, Religious and Spiritual Life resources, the Women's Center, campus dialogues across difference and community, and First Year student engagement programs.

The Campus Life team works in close collaboration across offices, with faculty and other administrative resources to foster inclusive learning and living environments as valuable components of a liberal arts education for Vassar students.

The office hosts Conversation Dinners, Intergroup and Social Justice Dialogues, and plans the annual All College Day in February, which brings students, faculty, administrators, and staff together for a day of discussions and dialogues. We also assist students, groups, and other offices in creating opportunities for participants from different backgrounds and perspectives to engage in dialogue. In addition, the Campus Life division (located in Main, N-163) oversees the following campus resource offices which focus on particular communities and underrepresented groups while also supporting all students:

**The ALANA Center** provides myriad resources and programs to enhance the campus life and academic

experiences of African-American/Black, Latino/a, Asian/Asian-American, and Native American students. The center provides a comfortable gathering space and offices for student organizations that support students of color and offers opportunities for leadership development, intra-cultural and cross-cultural dialogues, lectures, big sister/big brother and alumnae/i mentoring programs. The center, a free-standing building adjacent to the Powerhouse Theater, also catalogs cultural journals/newsletters, educational videos, career development, scholarship and fellowship information, and computing resources for academics and student organizations use.

**The Office of International Services** offers a full range of resources for international students and scholars, including advice and assistance in visa, immigration, tax, employment, cultural and general matters. The office, located in Main S-185, seeks to support internationals in adjusting to and embracing a new culture and also to involve and engage all members of the campus community in events, workshops, and other opportunities to share the wealth of global perspectives and experiences our campus enjoys.

**The LGBTQ Center**, located in College Center 213, is a place for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and ally students to relax, socialize and learn. The center hosts discussions, lectures, social events; provides meeting space for various student organizations; and has a robust library of LGBTQ-related books.

**The Women's Center**, located in College Center 235, offers a lounge space and programming on various components of gender equity, women's leadership, empowerment, and health. The Women's Center Student Advisory Board—which consists of 8 to 10 female-identified student leaders—acts as a think tank to the center, helping to devise new programs and initiatives.

**The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (RSL)** provides programming and support for 10 different student religious groups at Vassar, supports a wide range of religious and civic communities and initiatives on campus, and plays an important role as a college liaison to the mid-Hudson Valley community. RSL staff members are available for pastoral counseling and spiritual guidance for any concern or question students may have. The RSL staff includes a full-time advisor to Jewish students and part-time affiliate advisors for the Episcopal, Roman Catholic, and InterVarsity communities on campus. RSL is located in the Chapel tower and basement, as well as at the Bayit, Vassar's home of Jewish campus life, at 51 Collegeview Avenue.

**Bias Incident Response Team.** The Campus Life and Diversity Office also coordinates a response team which may be convened in response to bias-related incidents and situations that may impact campus climate. The associate dean of the college for campus life and diversity coordinates the team and, when possible, convenes it within 24 hours to determine initial steps and to identify additional offices or members from the campus community who can assist with the college's response.

For more information about the Office of Campus Life and Diversity, please visit <http://campuslifeanddiversity.vassar.edu>.

## Student Employment

Student Employment, located in Student Financial Services, Main S-199, helps students secure part-time on-campus employment in over 100 offices as well as part-time off-campus community service work study employment. Students who qualify for work study receive first priority consideration for campus jobs. Remaining jobs are available for any student who wishes to work. In general, first-year students work an average of eight hours per week, sophomores nine hours, and juniors and seniors ten hours. Students may choose to work fall semester, spring semester, or the entire academic year. Job registration for the academic year begins in late summer. Registration for break (i.e., winter, spring, summer) positions takes place several times throughout the year. Prior to beginning work at Vassar, students must complete I-9 and W-4 forms.

For more information, please visit JobX at [https://vassar.studentemployment.ngwebsolutions.com/cm\\_x\\_content.aspx?cpid=10](https://vassar.studentemployment.ngwebsolutions.com/cm_x_content.aspx?cpid=10), which will direct you to all Vassar student employment related resources, or email [stuemp@vassar.edu](mailto:stuemp@vassar.edu).

## Athletics and Physical Education

### FACILITIES

**The Athletics and Fitness Center (AFC)** is a 53,000-square-foot facility that houses a 1,200-seat gymnasium that is the home to the men's and women's basketball programs. An elevated running track, a 5,000-square-foot training and cardiovascular facility, a multipurpose room, locker facilities, administrative offices, and a laundry/uniform room are also located in the AFC.

**Walker Field House**, a 42,250-square-foot facility adjacent to the AFC, features a six-lane swimming pool with a separate diving well and a field house boasting an indirectly lit, multipurpose playing surface that can be configured as five indoor tennis courts, basketball or volleyball courts, and a practice and competition site for the fencing programs. The building also has additional locker rooms and a sports medicine facility. Walker Field House is home to the men's and women's swimming and diving teams and the men's and women's fencing teams, serves as a practice site and intramural site, and hosts most physical education classes throughout the year.

**Kenyon Hall** contains six international squash courts, a volleyball facility with a Sport Court™ playing surface, a varsity athlete weight room, a satellite athletic training facility, locker rooms, and coaches' offices. Kenyon Hall is home to the men's and women's squash and men's and women's volleyball teams.

On-campus outdoor facilities include a nine-hole golf course (reduced rates for Vassar students, faculty, and staff), 13 outdoor tennis courts, and numerous playing fields. **The Prentiss Sports Complex** has a quarter-mile, all-weather track that surrounds a turf field for field hockey and women's lacrosse, a competition grass lacrosse/soccer field, and a baseball field as well as three grass practice fields. **The J.L. Weinberg Field Sports Pavilion** includes six locker rooms,

an athletic training facility, and a laundry facility. The Vassar College Farm features a rugby field and practice grids and is home to the men's and women's cross-country running course.

### COMPETITION

**Varsity/NCAA Sanctioned.** The college supports 23 varsity teams. There are sports programs for both men and women in basketball, cross-country, fencing, lacrosse, soccer, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, track and volleyball. The women's program also includes field hockey and golf, and the men's program includes baseball. Students who expect to compete in intercollegiate sports need an on-campus medical examination arranged through the athletic trainers (845-437-7843). Contact the Department of Athletics and Physical Education (845-437-7450) with any questions concerning participation in varsity sports. Practices for some fall sports may begin prior to classes. Please call the office for further information.

**Varsity Club Rugby and Rowing.** Men's and women's rugby and rowing are varsity club sports under the auspices of the director of Athletics and Physical Education. Participation in these programs also requires an on-campus medical examination arranged through the athletic trainers (845-437-7843). Contact the Department of Athletics and Physical Education (845-437-7450) with any questions concerning participation in these programs.

### RECREATION

Our **Intramural Program** offers various leagues and tournaments to the whole Vassar community. The sports that are offered throughout the academic year include indoor soccer, outdoor soccer, flag football, 3 on 3 basketball, 5 on 5 basketball, volleyball, wiffleball, badminton, floor hockey, kan jam, golf, tennis, ultimate frisbee, kickball, softball, table tennis and more. All registrations are done through [IMLeagues.com/Vassar](http://IMLeagues.com/Vassar) and you can follow us on Twitter at [@VassarRec](https://twitter.com/VassarRec) or on Facebook at [facebook.com/vassarrecreation](https://facebook.com/vassarrecreation). Please contact Mike Callahan at 845-437-7471 or at [micallahan@vassar.edu](mailto:micallahan@vassar.edu) for additional information.

Our **Life Fitness Program** offers about 100 hours of noncredit courses in many areas each week, including aerobic kick-boxing, toning and strength training, Pilates, aikido, karate, judo, self-defense, yoga, tai chi, swing dance, and non-contact boxing. About half of these classes are free. The rest require a small fee of \$3 per class. We also offer free stress buster classes at the end of each semester and small-fee classes during the fall, winter, and spring breaks and during the summer. All registrations are done through [IMLeagues.com/Vassar](http://IMLeagues.com/Vassar) and you can follow us on Twitter at [@VassarRec](https://twitter.com/VassarRec) or on Facebook at [facebook.com/vassarrecreation](https://facebook.com/vassarrecreation). Please Contact Mike Callahan at 845-437-7471 or at [micallahan@vassar.edu](mailto:micallahan@vassar.edu) for additional information.

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

This section of the handbook contains information you will need as you decide on the courses you would like to take in your first semester. As you look through these pages of academic information and the descriptions of departments and programs, do remember some of the goals and purposes of your education. To quote the Vassar mission statement, the college aims to provide an education “that inspires each individual to lead a purposeful life. The college makes possible an education that promotes analytical, informed, and independent thinking and sound judgment; encourages articulate expression; and nurtures intellectual curiosity, creativity, respectful debate and engaged citizenship.”

At the end of this section you will find the instructions for registration. Before you go to register, however, please read what follows carefully. You can also consult the Vassar catalogue online at <http://catalogue.vassar.edu> if you have any further questions.

There are four Vassar graduation requirements beyond those in your major:

### Freshman Writing Seminar Requirement

All entering freshmen are required to complete at least one Freshman Writing Seminar during their freshman year. The Freshman Writing Seminars provide entering students the opportunity to develop as critical thinkers in a small class setting along with fellow freshmen who are making the transition to college work. These courses, offered in a variety of disciplines, are limited to freshmen and have a maximum enrollment of 17 students. Particular attention is given to writing as an intellectual process as well as the effective expression of ideas in both written and oral form. Please consult the section on “Freshman Writing Seminars” in this handbook for the 2015/16 offerings.

### Quantitative Course Requirement

Facility in quantitative reasoning is an important component of a liberal education. Quantitative reasoning includes the ability to understand and evaluate arguments framed in quantitative or numerical terms, to analyze subject matter using quantitative techniques, to construct and evaluate quantitative arguments of one’s own, and to make reasoned judgments about the kinds of questions that can be effectively addressed through quantitative methods.

Accordingly, all Vassar students are required before their third year to complete at least one unit of course work that shall develop or extend the student’s facility in quantitative reasoning. Qualifying courses are designated by the faculty and are noted in the schedule of classes. Exemption from this requirement may be granted to students who have completed equivalent coursework as certified by the dean of studies.

Courses that fulfill the quantitative requirement are marked in the schedule of classes with a QA. Select “Quantitative Analysis” from the “Select a Course Type” drop-down menu in the online schedule of classes to list all such courses.

### Foreign Language Proficiency

Recognizing the unique importance in undergraduate education of the study of foreign languages, the Vassar curriculum provides for both study of and concentration in Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Spanish. In addition, students may learn Arabic, Hebrew, Old English, and, through the self-instructional language program, Hindi, Irish, Korean, Portuguese, Swahili, Swedish, Turkish, and Yiddish.

All three- and four-year students whose first language is English are required before graduation to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language. Departmental proficiency examinations will be given in the afternoon on the first day of classes in the fall semester; the exact time and locations will be listed in the orientation schedule. Other methods by which you may meet this requirement are listed in the section on “Registration for Courses.”

### Distribution Requirements

All Vassar students are expected to reflect both depth and breadth in their course selection. Depth is demonstrated by completing a major field of concentration; breadth is demonstrated by taking courses across the four curricular divisions—arts, foreign languages and literatures, social sciences, and natural sciences—and in multidisciplinary programs. In order to graduate, you will be required to elect at least 50% of your work outside of your major, and 25% of your work outside the division in which you major. For example, a history major must complete at least 17 of the 34 units in courses outside of the history department, and 8.5 of the 34 units in courses not in the social sciences. Advanced Placement (AP) credits are not permitted to count toward fulfillment of the distribution requirement. You should also be aware that all candidates for Phi Beta Kappa honors must demonstrate breadth and substance of course work outside the major in addition to overall academic excellence. You should not take two courses in a single department in the same semester in your first year. As you consider your course selections for your first two years, you should be sure to include introductory work in any department or program in which you might major. All students must declare a major by the end of their fourth semester; applicants for Junior Year Abroad must declare by December of their sophomore year.

### Credit for College Work Done Prior to Matriculation at Vassar

Vassar may award a maximum of 4 units of credit towards graduation to incoming freshmen for college-level work done at accredited institutions. Credit is contingent upon a grade of C or above and the approval of the chair

of the appropriate department. To apply for credit you must present:

- A catalogue description of the course(s);
- An official transcript sent from the registrar of the institution to the dean of studies, Vassar College; and
- A request to the Committee on Leaves and Privileges (the form is available in the Office of the Dean of Studies), approved by the appropriate department chair. Although many colleges and secondary schools offer programs in which students may earn credit toward a college degree, not all these programs meet Vassar's criteria for transfer. College courses taken while a student is still attending secondary school must be taught on a college or university campus with other undergraduate students. Credits for these courses cannot be transferred into Vassar if they are used to fulfill any high school graduation requirements. Programs in which college instructors teach the course at the secondary school will not be considered for transfer credit. The department in which the course is classified at Vassar will determine the amount of transfer credit for a qualifying college course.

Any questions about pre-matriculation credit should be directed to the Office of the Dean of Studies (845-437-7553). Entering freshmen who have taken A-level examinations, received the French Baccalaureate, or taken International Baccalaureate examinations should consult the Office of the Dean of Studies in September to discuss the possibility of transfer credit.

## AP Credit

If you have taken CEEB Advanced Placement examinations, you may be eligible for college credit. Your advanced placement score(s) must be sent directly to the Office of the Dean of Freshmen from Advanced Placement Services, Box 6671, Princeton, N.J. 08541-6671 (telephone 609-771-7300). All scores should be sent within the first month of your freshman year.

The general policy: Students will receive 1.0 unit of pre-matriculation transfer credit for every score of 4 or 5 up to a maximum of 4.0 units. Admission into higher level courses on the basis of AP credit is at the discretion of the individual department.

Please refer to the "Departments of Instruction and Multidisciplinary Programs" section of this handbook for department specific AP information.

Note: Scores will not appear on the transcript for Advanced Placement credit, only the department, course title, and units transferred.

The following departments offer exams for credit for those students who do not receive AP credit: Italian, Mathematics, Music, and Russian Studies. Please contact the department for information on the scheduling of their exam.

## International Baccalaureate Program (IB)

The International Baccalaureate Program is described as a "demanding pre-university course of study that leads to examinations; it is designed for highly motivated secondary school students and incorporates the best elements of national systems without being based on any one." Scores achieved for the Higher Level examinations are eligible for pre-matriculation transfer credit. Students who achieve a score of 5, 6, or 7 on an IB exam will receive 1.0 unit of transfer credit. Also, as with AP credits, a maximum of 4 units of any combination of pre-matriculation credit of this type will be awarded.

## Advanced Course Placement

Each department decides how much advanced standing that a student who has taken AP or done other substantial work in that field will receive. Advanced course placement advising will be done as part of the academic advising sessions in the academic departments and programs on Thursday morning, August 27. It is crucial that students attend these advising sessions to receive proper placement in courses.

If you feel that you might be eligible for advanced course placement in a particular department, you can also contact the chair of the department. If you have any questions for specific departments prior to your arrival on campus, we recommend that you contact the appropriate department chairs by email rather than try to call them, as most academic department offices are closed for the summer.

Some departments give examinations for placement or credit or both. All examinations are offered either over the summer or in the first month of the fall term and may be taken in the freshman year only.

## Preparation for Teacher Certification

The teacher preparation programs in the Department of Education reflect the philosophy that schools can be sites of social change where students are given the opportunity to reach their maximum potential as individuals and community members. Vassar students who are preparing to teach work within a strong interdisciplinary framework of professional methods and a balanced course of study in a selected field of concentration leading to the degree of bachelor of arts. In addition to a degree in an academic discipline, they may also earn initial New York State certification at the childhood and adolescent levels. The certification is reciprocal in most other states.

Consistent with New York State requirements, the certification programs are based upon demonstration of competency in both academic and field settings. It is advisable that students planning childhood or adolescent certification consult with the Education Department during the first semester of the freshman year.

For a full statement of the certification requirements and recommended sequences of study, please see the “Department of Education” section of the catalogue and on the web at <http://education.vassar.edu>. Enrollment in the courses listed is not limited to those seeking certification.

Vassar also offers a major and correlate in Educational Studies and several study away opportunities. Please see “Education” in the section on “Departments of Instruction,” later in this handbook, for more information.

## Preparation for Law School

At Vassar, pre-law advising is handled by Jannette Swanson and Stacy Bingham in the Office of Career Development, with faculty support from Professor Jamie Kelly in the Philosophy Department. Students interested in law careers should seek out these advisors to discuss any questions they have with respect to pre-law studies and the law school application process.

Although Vassar has designated advisors for students interested in law school and a legal career, it does not recommend a special pre-law curriculum. Unlike medical school, there are no specific courses required or suggested for entry into law school. Instead, law schools want students with a broad liberal arts education and a demanding major, not those who have taken a particular series of courses. A broad education means selecting courses from a variety of curricular divisions and departments. Just as there is no specific group of courses to take to prepare for law school, there is no single discipline in which students should major.

The Career Development Office has a variety of resources available to help students explore their interest in the study of law, schools they can apply to, and opportunities open to them after law school. Additionally, the office can help students connect with law-related summer opportunities and alumnae/i working in the field of law.

For more information, please stop by the office (located in Main S-170), visit <http://careers.vassar.edu>, or email [cdo@vassar.edu](mailto:cdo@vassar.edu).

## Preparation for Medical School

A student interested in medical school may major in any field. The basic requirements for medical schools and other health professional schools include one year of the following subjects: biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, and physics. Science courses must have a laboratory component. A year of English and a year of mathematics, usually calculus and/or statistics, are also strongly recommended and sometimes required. Courses in psychology and sociology are also strongly recommended. Pre-med students are therefore advised to elect an English course in their first year, as well as a science sequence of some sort. Medical schools require grades in the core courses, so extra caution and careful consultation is needed if a student is considering an NRO election in any of these courses.

Students who are considering a science concentration should consult the individual departments and programs and read “To Prospective Science Majors” in the “Registration for Courses” section. For more specific advice on planning a first-year program, refer also to the “Medicine” section of “Preparation for Graduate Study” in the Vassar catalogue. It is important to know that preparation for many of the health professions does not demand a natural science major. Most often, the best advice we can offer is that students select the major field of study that most interests them because they will be happier and thereby increase the likelihood of a strong academic record.

If you are considering a career in the health professions (medical, dental, veterinary, public health), you should plan to attend the meeting held by the pre-medical advisors on Thursday morning, August 27. Careful planning of the freshman year program is essential. Students should call the Office for Fellowships and Pre-Health Advising to schedule an appointment with a premed advisor, Main N-162 (845-437-5263), if they cannot attend the meeting and feel that they need additional guidance before making a final selection of courses for the freshman year.

For more information, please visit <http://fellowships.vassar.edu/health/>.

## Preparation for Study Abroad

If you are considering spending a term or your entire junior year studying abroad, you should give serious consideration to your course selections starting in your freshman year. If you are considering a non-English-speaking country, foreign language study is of the utmost importance and should be considered early in your academic career. Students must demonstrate on their application to the Committee on Leaves and Privileges that they have acquired sufficient area studies course work to support their academic proposals for foreign study programs.

Vassar College study abroad is based on a home tuition policy. Further information on financing and planning study abroad can be found in the Office of International Programs (OIP), located in Main N-173, or by making an appointment with the director of the Office of International Programs at 845-437-5260.

For more information on approved programs as well as a copy of *Fundamentals of Study Abroad*, please visit the OIP website at <http://jya.vassar.edu>

# REGISTRATION FOR COURSES

To pre-register for your fall 2015 classes, you will complete the electronic pre-registration form, which can be found at [newstudents.vassar.edu](http://newstudents.vassar.edu). In order to complete this form, you will need to consult:

- 2015/16 catalogue found at [catalogue.vassar.edu](http://catalogue.vassar.edu)
- *The Freshman Handbook*
- electronic schedule of classes found at [Newstudents.vassar.edu](http://Newstudents.vassar.edu).

Submit the pre-registration form electronically as soon as possible, and no later than July 24. Please be sure to pay careful attention to the information given on the Schedule of Classes Information Pages, available as a link from the online schedule of classes.

**For the most up-to-date information about changes in courses, sections, topics, and descriptions, please visit the Registration Announcements page at <http://registrar.vassar.edu/registration>.**

The procedures for enrolling in your fall semester classes are as follows:

1. **Summer Pre-registration.** In Part I of the pre-registration form, list your first choice Freshman Writing Seminar, as well as two alternate Freshman Writing Seminars in case your first choice is unavailable. Please choose only courses being offered in the fall. In Part II, list other courses you would like to take, in order of preference. You may list as many courses as you like in this section. The Office of the Registrar will, in random order, attempt to enroll the first-choice course of the entire class before proceeding to choice #2 and so on, up to a maximum of 4.5 units. Since Vassar's curriculum is designed to provide close contact between students and instructors, many classes are limited in size; as a result, demand for a particular course or section may exceed the limit. Your final roster of fall courses may differ from your summer pre-registration list for several reasons: a) the particular sections you have indicated have been filled; b) after consultation with a department or your advisor, you decide to change your course selection; or c) you are interested in taking a course for which you must first obtain permission from the department (i.e., any intermediate level course not included in the online schedule of classes). The list of courses in which you have been pre-registered will be sent to your pre-major advisor for distribution during your initial meeting on Wednesday morning, August 26.
2. **Registration during Orientation.** As indicated on the orientation schedule, there are a number of events planned to help you decide on your courses. On the afternoon of Wednesday, August 26, faculty will give research presentations and departments will hold open houses. On Thursday morning, August 27, you will be

able to consult with any department or program about appropriate course selections including advanced course placement or special permission. There will be special advising sessions devoted to pre-law, pre-health, teacher certification, English, art, and math and sciences. Thursday afternoon has been set aside for you to meet individually with your faculty advisor. After gathering the necessary information and making appropriate revisions to your course selections, all freshmen will officially register for fall courses on Friday, August 28. Freshmen who were pre-registered for few or no courses will be permitted to register first, and so on.

3. **Add Period (through September 14).** Once classes begin, you may continue to add courses, up to a maximum of 5 units, to your schedule until Monday, September 14. Under no circumstances are first-semester freshmen granted permission to exceed 5 units. All students must be registered for the minimum of 3.5 units by September 14. Students may drop courses (but not below 3.5 units) with their advisor's approval until Friday, October 9 (the end of the drop period). Any change in your registration must be approved by your faculty advisor. A copy of your final registration will be available online at Vassar's website via Ask Banner for your viewing after October 9. Be sure to review it carefully and report any errors to the Registrar's Office immediately. You will be held responsible for all courses listed on this schedule and will not receive credit for any course or section in which you are not officially enrolled.

## Guidelines for Course Selection

Freshmen are strongly encouraged to take 4 or 4.5 units in their first semester (full time enrollment is 3.5 to 5.0 units). Vassar offers a limited number of half-credit courses, mostly in the departments of music and physical education. You will need to consult the schedule of classes on the [newstudents.vassar.edu](http://newstudents.vassar.edu) website for a thorough listing of these and the few half-credit academic courses offered this semester. The elementary language courses in Chinese and Japanese grant 1.5 units per semester. If you are unsure exactly which four courses you will end up with, you may wish to start the term with five courses. However, during summer pre-registration, you may attempt to enroll in a maximum of 4.5 units.

In addition, please keep these three specific requirements in mind when selecting your first-year courses:

1. **Freshman Writing Seminar Requirement.** All freshmen must successfully complete a Freshman Writing Seminar during the freshman year; please consult the section on "Freshman Writing Seminars" in this handbook for the 2015/16 offerings. Courses are offered in both fall and spring semesters, with the far greater number in the fall.
2. **Quantitative Analysis Requirement.** All students are required before the beginning of their third year to complete one unit of course work requiring the learning and practice of a significant amount of quantitative analysis through the semester. Exemption from this

requirement is limited to students who have completed equivalent course work at another college or university as certified by the dean of studies. Courses that satisfy this requirement are designated QA in the schedule of classes. Select “Quantitative Analysis” from the “Select a Course Type” drop-down menu in the online schedule of classes to list all such courses. For descriptions of these courses, please consult the relevant section of the catalogue.

**3. Foreign Language Proficiency Requirement.** This requirement applies to all entering freshmen whose first language is English; if your first language is not English, you will need to apply to the Office of the Dean of Studies once you are on campus to confirm your exemption. (Exemptions may be granted to students who have done literature or language study in their first language at the secondary school level.) Many freshmen will have already demonstrated proficiency by reporting a score of 4 or 5 on an AP exam or of 600–800 on an SAT II test in a foreign language. If you have Higher Level or IB credit in a foreign language, please consult with the Dean of Studies Office. For the rest of you: although this is a graduation requirement, we strongly recommend that you complete it early in your Vassar career. “Proficiency” at Vassar is the level achieved at the completion of the elementary course. Consequently, you must successfully complete a full year at the introductory level or a semester at the intermediate level to demonstrate proficiency.

Please note that if you are considering applying to a non-English-speaking country for junior year abroad, you will need to have completed, by the end of your sophomore year, at least a full year at the intermediate level of the appropriate foreign language.

Proficiency can also be demonstrated by passing an exam prepared by Vassar faculty. Proficiency exams in Ancient Greek, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Spanish will be given on Monday, August 31, the first day of classes in the fall semester. Check the orientation schedule for times and locations. Students who are continuing a language studied prior to Vassar are placed at the level appropriate to their previous training. To identify the appropriate level for you, please consult the guidelines given by the various language departments in the section on “Departments of Instruction” in this handbook. Additional placement advising will be given by the foreign language faculty during orientation. Freshmen are not encouraged to take two elementary level foreign languages.

**To summarize: All students whose first language is English are required before graduation to demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language by one of the following six ways:**

- a. one year of foreign language study at Vassar at the introductory level or one semester at the intermediate level or above;
- b. the passing of a proficiency examination administered by one of the foreign language departments, the Self-Instructional Language Program, or, for languages not in the Vassar curriculum, by the Office of the Dean of Studies;
- c. an AP exam score of 4 or 5 in a foreign language;
- d. SAT II achievement test score in a foreign language of at least 600;
- e. equivalent foreign language coursework completed at another institution; such courses may involve languages not taught at Vassar, including American Sign Language; or
- f. completion of Old English and Beowulf (English 235 and 236); both Old English and Beowulf must be completed to satisfy the requirement.

## To Prospective Science Majors

A student who is thinking of a major in one of the natural sciences should consider electing two science courses in the first semester. Several natural science departments require work outside the department in order to complete the major. For example, a major in biology requires Chemistry 108/109 or 125, and 244; a major in chemistry requires Math 121 or 126/127 and Physics 113/114; a major in Earth science recommends Chemistry 108/109 or 125, Physics 113/114, and calculus; some physics courses have math prerequisites. Not all introductory courses in the natural sciences have laboratory components; consult the course descriptions in the catalogue.

## Yearlong Courses

Most courses open to freshmen are semester-long classes, with “a” courses offered in the fall, “b” courses in the spring. All elementary foreign language courses, however, are yearlong (for example, French 105-106). As with all “hyphen” courses, you must successfully complete the second semester to receive credit for the first. Other yearlong courses open to freshmen are Art 102-103 and 105-106. Yearlong courses are designated with a YL in the schedule of classes. The following “slash” courses are yearlong sequences; while you must take the first semester to qualify for the second, you do not need to take the second to receive credit for the first: Chemistry 108/109 and Music 105/106. Students who fail the first semester of a “slash” course may not enroll in the second semester without permission from the department chair.

Please note that some yearlong courses are “provisionally graded.” This means that, in the words of the catalogue, “the final grade received at the end of the year automatically becomes the grade that will be recorded on the student’s transcript for both the first and the second semester.” Italian 105-106, for example, is provisionally graded; if a student receives a C in the first semester and an A in the second, two credits of A will appear on that student’s transcript at the end of the first year. Provisionally graded courses are marked in the schedule of classes with a PR.

## About Grades

Final grades are released to students electronically by the Office of the Registrar at the conclusion of each semester. Copies of a student's transcript are made available to the student's faculty advisor (to assist with advising) and the Dean of Studies Office. Any other request to see a student's grades must be accompanied by written permission of the student.

Pre-matriculation work completed at another institution (including AP credit) and accepted for application towards the Vassar degree is recorded only as units of credit; that is, the grades do not transfer for calculation in the Vassar grade point average. All post-matriculation transfer credit will be listed on the Vassar transcript along with the grades earned at the home institution. However, in all cases, only Vassar work will be computed into the Vassar cumulative grade point average.

There are two types of nongraded Vassar work: a) courses which the faculty has designated as ungraded (grades are Satisfactory, Unsatisfactory, or, for independent work, Distinction); and b) courses that are normally graded but which the student elects to take under the nonrecorded option. For an explanation of the non-recorded option (NRO), please see "General Academic Regulations and Information" in the "Degrees and Courses of Study" section of the catalogue. The schedule of classes indicates which courses may be taken NRO. The total number of NRO units may not exceed 4. For transfer students, this limit is reduced by 1 unit for each year of advanced standing awarded to the student. The total number of ungraded units may not exceed 5. For transfer students, this limit is reduced by 1 unit for each year of advanced standing awarded to the student. This ungraded limit does not apply to any units taken in excess of the 34-unit minimum required for graduation.

The non-recorded option has been approved by the faculty to permit students to elect courses that may be outside their primary fields of interest without penalty of a low grade. Since freshmen are in the process of defining their principal fields of interest or expertise, faculty advisors often recommend that students not take courses NRO during their first year. All NRO elections must be approved by the faculty advisor and filed with the registrar by the end of the first six weeks of classes (in the fall, October 9, the same date as the drop deadline).

Although official grade reports are issued only at the completion of each semester, instructors are encouraged to notify the Dean of Studies Office of any students who are performing below satisfactory (C) level at any point during the semester. Class deans and advisors may request a conference with these students to discuss their academic progress.

At the end of each semester, the Committee on Student Records reviews the performance of all students with an unsatisfactory record, including any student with one F, two Ds, or a term or cumulative grade point average below 2.0. (Students cannot graduate with a cumulative or major GPA below 2.0.) These students are placed on academic probation, and the committee may recommend or require a leave of absence or a withdrawal from the college as well. A student remains in good academic standing (and is eligible to

apply for financial aid) as long as he or she is matriculated at Vassar and is considered by the committee to be making satisfactory progress towards the degree.

The principal causes of unsatisfactory performance at Vassar are irregular class attendance and the late submission of written work. Although there is no college-wide attendance policy, individual instructors and departments have instituted attendance policies, and these policies can directly affect a student's grade.

## Now It's Up to You!

You are now ready to begin to complete the summer pre-registration form. The electronic schedule of classes on the [Newstudents.vassar.edu](http://Newstudents.vassar.edu) website lists all the fall semester courses that are open to freshmen without special permission—that is, all 100-level courses plus those 200-level courses in the foreign languages, mathematics, and physical education in which you can place yourself based on your high school background or athletic training in these fields. **These courses are the only ones freshmen can elect during summer pre-registration.** When you get to campus, you can consult a complete online schedule of classes for the fall semester via Ask Banner. The Schedule of Classes Information Pages, available from the electronic schedule of classes, has a link to a Weekly Time Schedule to help you organize your choices according to time slots, so as to prevent time conflicts. If you have any questions about completing the pre-registration form, you may call the Office of the Dean of Freshmen (845-437-5258) weekdays during summer office hours (8:30am– 4:30pm, EST).

## A Note about Ask Banner

Ask Banner is a link on the Vassar homepage under the Academic tab that will give you access to a wide range of important information. The General Information link on the Ask Banner site will allow you to view the online schedule of classes as well as the employee and student directories. The Student and Financial Aid link on the Ask Banner site will allow you to access personal information such as your schedule, transcript, and billing information.

# FRESHMAN WRITING SEMINARS

Every entering freshman is required to elect a Freshman Writing Seminar. These courses have a maximum enrollment of 17 freshmen and are offered by a number of departments. The Freshman Writing Seminar introduces students to critical reading and persuasive writing at Vassar, and helps them make the transition to college-level writing. These courses from across Vassar's curriculum challenge students to enter sophisticated conversations by asserting compelling claims and supporting those claims through an organized presentation of evidence. Each Freshman Writing Seminar is built around a rich topic, giving students a complex set of readings, questions, and debates to consider as they learn to engage with the ideas of others and articulate their positions.

You will note that most of the Freshman Writing Seminars are offered in the fall semester. We strongly recommend that you include a Freshman Writing Seminar among your course selections for the fall term; the online pre-registration form underscores this recommendation. While you may elect more than one Freshman Writing Seminar in your first year, you may not enroll in more than two Freshman Writing Seminars per semester. Students not taking a Freshman Writing Seminar in the fall will be given priority in selecting a Freshman Writing Seminar for the spring semester. AP credit will not exempt you from the requirement. For department policies on AP, see the "Departments of Instruction" section in this handbook.

Specific information about the English 101 sections:

- No freshman should enroll in more than one English course in a single semester.
- English 101 may not be taken more than once.
- Students planning either to major in English or to pursue intermediate work in English are strongly encouraged to take 101 and 170 in sequence.

## Fall Sections

### Africana Studies 101a Martin Luther King, Jr.

*(Same as History 101)*

This course examines the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr. We immediately rethink the image of King whom liberals and conservatives construct as a dreamer of better race relations. We engage the complexities of an individual who articulated a moral compass of the nation to explore racial justice in post-World War II America. This course gives special attention to King's post-1965 radicalism when he called for a reordering of American society, an end to the war in Vietnam, and supported sanitation workers striking for better wages and working conditions. Topics include King's notion of the "beloved community," the Social Gospel, liberalism, "socially conscious democracy,"

militancy, the politics of martyrdom, poverty and racial justice, and compensatory treatment. Primary sources form the core of our readings.

AFRS 101.01 TR 9:00-10:15 am Mr. Mills

(Note: AFRS 101.02 is not a Freshman Writing Seminar.)

### Africana Studies 109a Beyond the Veil and Islamic Terrorism: Modern Arabic Literature

This course introduces students to major themes, authors, and genres in modern Arabic literature from the late 19th century to the present. Readings include autobiography, fiction, drama, and poetry representing the rich Arabic literary heritage of the Middle East and North Africa. We also read various secondary materials and watch several documentary and feature films that will anchor our discussion of the literary texts in their socio-historical and cultural context(s). Some of the major themes (foci) of the course include (1) tradition and change, (2) the colonial and postcolonial encounters with the other, (3) changing gender roles and the politics of (Islamic) feminism, and (4) religion and politics, among others.

AFRS 109.01 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Mhiri

### American Studies 160a Art and Social Change in the United States

*(Same as Art 160)*

In this first-year seminar, we explore relationships between art, visual culture, and social change in the United States. Focusing on 20th- and 21st-century social movements, we study artists and communities who have sought to inspire social change—to cultivate awareness, nurture new ideas, offer new visions, promote dialogue, encourage understanding, build and strengthen community, and inspire civic engagement and direct action—through creative visual expression.

AMST 160.01 TR 10:30–11:45 am Ms. Collins

AMST 160.02 TR 1:30-2:45 pm Ms. Collins

### American Studies 101a Thoreau in His Time and Ours

*(Same as English 101 and Environmental Studies 101)*

Henry David Thoreau's influence on American environmental thought, political ideas, and literary culture is enduring. The course examines some of his own writings, including *Walden*, "Essay on Civil Disobedience," excerpts from his "Indian Notebooks," and from his lifelong *Journal*. We will also read and write about 21st-century works in his tradition, including Cheryl Strayed's book *Wild* (and the recent film made from it), as well as some contemporary journalism. 20th-century writers could include John Muir, John Burroughs (with a field trip to his nearby retreat Slabside), Ernest Hemingway, Annie Dillard, and Gary Snyder. Photography and landscape painting influenced by Thoreau will also be considered. Thoreau himself was a great prose stylist and can provide a model for our own writing, including journal writing.

AMST 101.03 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Mr. Peck

### **Anthropology 170a Topics in Anthropology: Bones, Bodies, and Forensic Cases**

The accidental discovery of an isolated human bone or entire human body occurs more frequently than most people think. How these discoveries are dealt with is often a decision that involves local law enforcement, medical officials, archaeologists, and physical anthropologists. This course examines several such cases, following them from initial discovery to final conclusion. What clues do bones and bodies reveal? What evidence was found on or near these individuals? How do we piece together a narrative? Who decides what happens next? Contrary to what we see on television and in the movies, these cases require patience and cultural awareness and do not always lead to a clear, happy ending.

ANTH 170.01 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Ms. Beisaw

### **Art 160a Art and Social Change in the United States**

*(Same as American Studies 160)*

In this first-year seminar, we explore relationships between art, visual culture, and social change in the United States. Focusing on 20th- and 21st-century social movements, we study artists and communities who have sought to inspire social change—to cultivate awareness, nurture new ideas, offer new visions, promote dialogue, encourage understanding, build and strengthen community, and inspire civic engagement and direct action—through creative visual expression.

ART 160.01 TR 10:30–11:45 am Ms. Collins

ART 160.02 R 1:30-2:45 pm Ms. Collins

### **Astronomy 150a Life in the Universe**

An introduction to the possibility of life beyond Earth is presented from an astronomical point of view. The course reviews stellar and planetary formation and evolution, star properties and planetary atmospheres necessary for a habitable world, possibilities for other life in our solar system, detection of extrasolar planets, the SETI project, and the Drake equation.

ASTR 150.01 MWF 9:30-10:20 am Ms. Elmegreen

### **Biology 105a Climate Change and Other Human Impacts on the Biosphere**

This course considers the fundamental principles of biology, including cellular structure and function, physiology, genetics and inheritance, ecology and evolution, all within the context of environmental changes caused by human activities. How is climate change affecting the biosphere? How are organisms adapting physiologically and behaviorally? How are ecological relationships altered in the face of changing migration patterns, introduced and invasive species? Students will also examine different ways of writing and presenting scientific content to different audiences.

BIOL 105.02 MWF 9:30-10:20 am Ms. Susman

(Note: BIOL 105.01 and 105.03 are not Freshman Writing Seminars.)

### **Cognitive Science 110a The Science and Fiction of Mind**

Our understanding of what minds are and of how they work has exploded dramatically in the last half century. As in other areas of science, the more we know, the harder it becomes to convey the richness and complexity of that knowledge to non-specialists. This Freshman Writing Seminar will explore two different styles of writing for explaining new findings about the nature of mind to a general audience. The most direct of these styles is journalistic and explanatory and is well represented by the work of people like Steven Pinker, Bruce Bower, Stephen J. Gould, and Ray Kurzweil. The second style is fictional. At its best, science fiction not only entertains, it also stretches the reader's mind to a view of implications and possibilities beyond what is currently known. Isaac Asimov, Arthur C. Clarke, Greg Bear, and Richard Powers all provide excellent models of this kind of writing. In this course students practice both ways of writing about technical and scientific discoveries. By working simultaneously in both styles it should become clear that when done well, even a strictly explanatory piece of science writing tells a story. By the same token, even a purely fictional narrative can explain and elucidate how the real world works. The focus of our work is material from the sciences of mind, but topics from other scientific areas may also be explored. This course does not serve as a prerequisite for upper-level courses in cognitive science.

COGS 110.01 TR 7:00-9:00 pm Mr. Livingston

### **College Course 185a The Bible before Print**

*(Same as Religion 185 and College Course 185)*

What is the Bible and how has its physical form changed from antiquity through Gutenberg's first printing around 1455? Although one of the most influential texts in history, we seldom stop to think about its own history, and in particular the variety of textual, illustrative, and physical forms it has taken. Yet there were great differences in what constituted "the Bible" and how it was produced, disseminated, read, and discussed throughout antiquity and the medieval period. This course explores this history by "going to the source" and examining examples in both digital and print facsimile, largely relying on the Bible Collection in the Archives and Special Collections Library. By looking closely at the Bibles, we will examine all aspects of their makeup—scribal tendencies, binding and format, illustrations, marginalia, and other distinctive features. Through a variety of writing assignments we will make arguments about their meaning and what they might say about their producers and readers and the meaning of its physical form.

CLCS 185.01 MW 9:00-10:15 am Ms. Bucher

### **College Course 186a The Western Literary Tradition: From Antiquity to the Middle Ages**

This seminar trains students in intensive English reading and writing skills while providing an introduction to central elements of Western culture. Readings include Genesis, Homer, Plato, Virgil, Plutarch, and St. Augustine as well as relevant critical articles and chapters. Different English

translations from disparate historical times are introduced and compared in order to show historical and stylistic developments and variations of the English language. The course's close attention to the varieties of English one may encounter in a college classroom make it particularly suited to students who are non-native speakers. Students give presentations on their readings and write in various formats such as narrative, essay, and explication of texts based on these readings.

CLCS 186.01 MR 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Liu

### **Earth Science 111a Science and Justice in the Anthropocene**

(Same as *Geography 111a and Science, Technology and Society 111a*) Geoscientists have proposed a new designation in the geologic time scale for our current time period, "the Anthropocene." The designation reflects the fact that human beings are acting as geological agents, transforming the Earth on a global scale. In this freshman seminar, we explore the possibilities of reconfiguring the actions of humans in the Anthropocene so as to lead to a flowering of a new era once called "the Ecozoic" by cultural historian Thomas Berry.

ESCI 111.01 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Ms. Schneiderman

### **Economics 184a Income Inequality in the US**

Students will read a variety of non-technical analyses that attempt to explain the increase in the gap between the highest and lowest income households in the United States, noticeable since the 1980s. The course will examine various aspects of the phenomenon: income differentials based on such factors as education and returns to education, wage differentials between skilled and unskilled workers, assortive mating and its effect on the distribution of household (family) incomes, taking into account the increase in women's labor force participation. The difference in returns to capital assets vs. labor force participation will be addressed. We will also look at effects of public policy, such as changes in the progressivity of the income tax, the minimum wage, and subsidies to low-income households. An additional topic will be: alternative measures of well-being, including access to quality schooling, health care and access to the justice system.

ECON 184.01 MW 10:30-11:45 am Ms. Johnson-Lans

### **Education 162a Education and Opportunity in the United States**

In this course, students identify, explore, and question prevailing assumptions about education in the United States. The objectives of the course are for students to develop both a deeper understanding of the system's historical, structural, and philosophical features and to look at schools with a critical eye. We examine issues of power and control at various levels of the education system. Participants are encouraged to connect class readings and discussions to personal schooling experiences to gain new insights into their own educational foundations. Among the questions that are highlighted are: How should schools be organized and operated? What information and values should be emphasized?

Whose interests do schools serve? The course is open to both students interested in becoming certified to teach and those who are not yet certain about their future plans but are interested in educational issues.

EDUC 162.01 TR 10:30-11:45 am Mr. Bjork

### **English 101a Citizen Girls: Chick Lit and Critical Citizenship**

This course focuses on "chick lit," a literary genre often featuring these common plot elements: a young, unmarried, middle class, white woman in an American city who finds herself isolated, disaffected, overly educated, financially overdrawn, emotionally and physically underfed, and perpetually underemployed. From *Sex in the City* and *The Devil Wears Prada* to *The Nanny Diaries* and *Gossip Girls*, many believe that chick lit represents not only the worst of American consumerism, but also participates in the continued deterioration of progressive feminist politics. Focusing on literature as well as contemporary films, magazines, music, and television shows, we'll examine how the conflict among women's identities, progressive gender politics, and American citizenship gets represented within the framework of the chick lit. Additionally, we'll explore how race, sexuality, class, and geography might intersect to change the narrative concerns of traditional chick lit. In short, this class will have us think critically about contemporary women issues, bodies, and notions of citizenship as they are represented in a variety of women's popular texts.

ENGL 101.01 TR 10:30-11:45 am Ms. Dunbar

### **English 101a Playwork**

Western drama, from Aeschylus through YouTube. Readings may include Sophocles, Medieval mystery plays, William Shakespeare, Eugene O'Neill, Bertolt Brecht, Lillian Hellman, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, Tom Stoppard, Sam Shepard, Christopher Durang, and Sarah Kane. Some performance will be required. Writing will include theater reviews, historical research, literary criticism, and original dramatic scripts.

ENGL 101.02 TR 12:00-1:45 pm Mr. Foster

### **English 101a Thoreau in His Time and Ours**

(Same as *American Studies 101 and Environmental Studies 101*) Henry David Thoreau's influence on American environmental thought, political ideas, and literary culture is enduring. The course examines some of his own writings, including *Walden*, "Essay on Civil Disobedience," excerpts from his "Indian Notebooks," and from his lifelong Journal. We will also read and write about 21st-century works in his tradition, including Cheryl Strayed's book *Wild* (and the recent film made from it), as well as some contemporary journalism. 20th-century writers could include John Muir, John Burroughs (with a field trip to his nearby retreat Slabside), Ernest Hemingway, Annie Dillard, and Gary Snyder. Photography and landscape painting influenced by Thoreau will also be considered. Thoreau himself was a great prose stylist and can provide a model for our own writing, including journal writing.

ENGL 101.03 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Mr. Peck

### English 101a Plesently Healing our Geoglyphy

This course is about healing and writing and the part each plays in the other and takes its name from a line in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* that reads "We may plesently heal Geoglyphy's twentynine ways to say goodbett an wassing seosoon liv." The seminar should be of interest to those who are thinking of studying healing/arts. "Readings" will encompass varied media and may include Julian Schnabel's film *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, Jason Nelson's digital narrative *Dreamaphage*, as well as novels, poems and stories such as Thomas Mann's *Magic Mountain*, Hélène Cixous's *Hyperdream*, Monique Truong's *Bitter in the Mouth*, Rae Armantrout's *Versed*, and William Carlos Williams's *Doctor Stories* as well as illness memoirs by Virginia Woolf and Roz Chast, the latter in the form of a graphic novel.

ENGL 101.04 MR 3:10-4:25 pm Mr. Joyce

### English 101a Reading the Romance

Romance fiction accounts for over a quarter of all books sold annually with an estimated revenue of 1.37 billion dollars. Though immensely popular, this genre is ignored by both academia and mainstream media. All other genre fictions—mystery, westerns, scifi, fantasy—have a place in the *New York Times Book Review* and in the college classroom. Yet, romance remains invisible. This class will consider why and how the genre has become culturally marginalized. What does romance's historical trajectory and contemporary status say about gender, class, race, capitalist culture, and the shape of the literary canon? How did we get from the genre of romance being an important node in English literary production to a popular moneymaker but invisible cultural player? What about the audience? How do these reading communities from the Middle Ages to today impact the genre's shape? We will explore a variety of romance texts in verse, prose, and drama including: *Apollonius of Tyre*, *Lais of Marie de France*, *The Romance of Silence*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *St. Juliana*, the works of Shakespeare, John Donne's poetry, Aphra Behn's *Oronooko*, Jane Austen's *Emma*, E. M. Forster's *A Room with A View*, and popular paperback romances.

ENGL 101.05 MW 12:00-1:15 pm Ms. Kim

### English 101a What's Love Got To Do With It?

This course focuses on representations of love (filial, parental, sexual, etc.) from antiquity to the present. Situating the selected works in their contemporary cultural and historical contexts, the course explores significant differences as well as possible continuities between past and present interpretations and representations of such basic concepts and institutions as gender, family, marriage, filial and marital duties, the private sphere, and sexuality. Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* serves as a chronological center for these investigations, but we will also discuss passages from the Bible and selected texts (representing diverse dramatic, epic, and lyric genres) by Euripides, Aristophanes, Ovid, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Emily Brontë, and others. In addition, we will look at various adaptations

(musical, theatrical, fine arts) of *Romeo and Juliet* as well as film versions.

ENGL 101.06 MR 3:10-4:45 pm Mr. Márkus

### English 101a Nature of Narrative

This course will examine both fiction and non-fiction works, including short stories, novels, memoirs, and autobiographical essays, in terms their narrative choices and strategies. Among the questions that we'll consider are the benefits of drawing on personally revealing, even embarrassing material; the differences between lying and storytelling; and the importance of narrative guise or impersonation. Readings will include *Dubliners* by James Joyce, *The Ghost Writer* by Philip Roth, *This Boy's Life* by Tobias Wolfe, *Annie John* by Jamaica Kincaid, *Lying: A Metaphorical Memoir* by Lauren Slater, *Speak, Memory* by Vladimir Nabokov, and shorter works by Raymond Carver, Yukio Mishima, Grace Paley, Tim O'Brien, and Joan Didion.

ENGL 101.07 TR 10:30-11:45 am Mr. Crawford

### English 101a Deception: Some Truths about Lies

Narratives told by someone who can't be trusted invite readers to explore the ambiguous border between truths and lies. An author's perceptions may differ from those of the first-person narrator—the "I"—who tells the story, and that discrepancy opens up intriguing psychological space. "Good readers read the lines, better readers read the spaces," the novelist John Barth has written. This section of English 101 will analyze both words and spaces—both what is said and what is unspoken or unspeakable. We'll investigate a rogues' gallery of unreliable narrators who bring varying degrees of mendacity, self-aggrandizement, and self-deception to the stories they tell. Then, from both literary and neuroscience perspectives, we'll think about memory, the mind, and the brain. We'll ask: Are memories always fallible? Are they ever-evolving stories we tell ourselves? Is remembering an act of creation rather than straightforward retrieval of the past? Are we all unreliable narrators? Authors may include Alison Bechdel, James Baldwin, Jorge Luis Borges, Julio Cortázar, Lydia Davis, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Ralph Ellison, Kazuo Ishiguro, Jamaica Kincaid, Tim O'Brien, Michael Ondaatje, George Orwell, Oliver Sacks, George Saunders, Charles Simic, Zadie Smith, and Oscar Wilde. Students will write both analytical and imaginative responses to the texts.

ENGL 101.08 WF 12:00-1:15 pm Ms. Mark

### English 101a Into the Apocalyptic Landscape

This course will explore characters caught in the dreamscape of violence and apocalyptic visions that is perhaps unique to the American history and culture, from slavery to skinheads to school shootings. We'll examine the concept—coined by rock critic Greil Marcus—of Old Weird America, a folkloric history that has spawned murder ballads, the music of Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash, and a wide range of literary work, including poetry by Walt Whitman, William Carlos Williams, Lucille Clifton, and Etheridge Knight; stories by Edgar Allan Poe, Joyce Carol Oates, Flannery O'Connor,

Christine Schutt, and Denis Johnson. Longer works may include novels by William Faulkner, Gayle Jones, Robert Stone, William Vollmann, Hunter Thompson, and the graphic artist Lynda Barry.

ENGL 101.09 TR 12:00-1:15 pm Mr. Means

### **ENGL101a Wilde, Yeats, Joyce, Beckett**

Modern and contemporary Irish literature has consistently been distinguished by its movement “beyond the pale.” The Pale was originally the fenced-in territory established around Dublin by the invading English in the medieval period, a border between English civilization and Celtic foreignness. In later usage, the phrase, “beyond the pale” came to have a purely metaphoric meaning; to stand outside the conventional boundaries of law, behavior, or social class. As we examine unconventional works by the four principle figures of Irish literary modernism we will focus not only on the ways that narrative emerges from its immediate colonial contexts, but also the ways in which literary texts look beyond their present moment, revising models inherited from the past and anticipating future forms of literary expression.

Our primary concern is to explore our individual identities as readers, thinkers, and writers in order to deepen our knowledge of how we write—knowledge that will aid us throughout this course, our academic programs, and professional careers. To gain this insight, we work to develop a strong foundation in the elements of rhetoric that govern all communication (e.g., audience, purpose, occasion, community, and context).

ENGL 101.10 TR 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Schultz

### **English 101a The End(s) of Black Autobiography**

Autobiographical writing has been and remains a preeminent mode of African American expression. It was one of the first intellectual gestures that the formerly enslaved made when they gained literacy. It has fed music practices like the blues and hip-hop. It also may have created the circumstances by which the U.S. could elect its first black president. Over the last three centuries, blacks have used this mode to insinuate themselves into literary modernity and register the often unacknowledged dynamism of their emotional and intellectual lives. This course will explore the aesthetics of black autobiographical narrative—its codes, tropes, and investments—from its beginnings in the 18th century to its most present iterations. If black autobiographical writing involves not only telling a story about a black subject, but also proffering a certain version of black life to its reading audiences, it is important to ascertain the nature of the cultural work that these stories (seek to) accomplish. Among the artists featured in this course are Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs, W.E.B. DuBois, Zora Neale Hurston, Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Gloria Naylor, Barack Obama, Jesmyn Ward, Chris Rock, Oprah Winfrey, and MK Asante.

ENGL 101.11 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Simpson

### **Environmental Studies 101a Thoreau in His Time and Ours**

(Same as American Studies 101 and English 101)

Henry David Thoreau’s influence on American environmental thought, political ideas, and literary culture is enduring. The course examines some of his own writings, including *Walden*, “Essay on Civil Disobedience,” excerpts from his “Indian Notebooks,” and from his lifelong Journal. We will also read and write about 21st-century works in his tradition, including Cheryl Strayed’s book *Wild* (and the recent film made from it), as well as some contemporary journalism. 20th-century writers could include John Muir, John Burroughs (with a field trip to his nearby retreat Slabside), Ernest Hemingway, Annie Dillard, and Gary Snyder. Photography and landscape painting influenced by Thoreau will also be considered. Thoreau himself was a great prose stylist and can provide a model for our own writing, including journal writing.

ENST 101.03 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Mr. Peck

### **French and Francophone Studies 186a Meeting Places: Bars, Streets, Cafés**

“Of all the gin joints, in all the towns, in all the world, she walks into mine.” This bitter observation, made by the owner of “Rick’s Café” in the 1942 American-made film *Casablanca*, is often misquoted as, “she had to walk into mine.” Indeed, the unexpected encounter with a past acquaintance or stranger is a necessary catalyst that sets in motion the plot of many a novel or film. This freshman writing seminar looks at literary or cinematic chance meetings that occur in three kinds of locales: the bar, the street, and the café. With each story or film we examine, we’ll learn something about France and its relation to certain regions, while considering “place” itself as a critical concept. After viewing Michael Curtiz’s film *Casablanca*, set in French-occupied Morocco, our explorations take us to 19th-century Paris in works by George Sand and Guy de Maupassant, to French Indochina in Marguerite Duras’ *The Lover*, to 20th century Montreal in works by Liliane Dévieux and Dany Laferrière, to Tahar Ben Jelloun’s present-day Tunisia, then back to Paris with Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s *The Fabulous Destiny of Amélie Poulain*. Finally, we return to the film *Casablanca*, better equipped to understand why, if all roads lead to Casablanca, then all roads in Casablanca “must” lead to Rick’s Café. The course is taught in English. All works are read in translation.

FREN 186.01 MW 1:30–2:45 pm Ms. Hart

### **Geography 111a Science and Justice in the Anthropocene**

(Same as Earth Science 111a and Science, Technology and Society 111a)

Geoscientists have proposed a new designation in the geologic time scale for our current time period, “the Anthropocene.” The designation reflects the fact that human beings are acting as geological agents, transforming the Earth on a global scale. In this freshman seminar,

we explore the possibilities of reconfiguring the actions of humans in the Anthropocene so as to lead to a flowering of a new era once called “the Ecozoic” by cultural historian Thomas Berry.

GEOG 111.01 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Ms. Schneiderman

### **German 101a Sex before, during, and after the Nazis**

This course offers an introduction to Germany’s unique position in the history of sexuality. As early as the late 19th century, Germany and Austria were a hotbed for new thinking about sexuality and sexual freedom, including the founding of psychoanalysis and the world’s first homosexual emancipation movement. National Socialism, however, forever changed the way that Germans and non-Germans viewed every aspect of Germany’s history and culture, including its sexual politics. This course examines some of Germany’s most salient debates about sex from the late 19th century to the Nazi era and beyond, including the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. Materials include autobiographies, fictional works, plays, films, political tracts, and sexual case studies, as well as secondary texts representing a variety of disciplinary approaches.

GERM 101.01 MWF 9:00-10:15 am Mr. Schneider

### **History 101a Martin Luther King, Jr.**

(Same as *Africana Studies 101*)

This course examines the life and work of Martin Luther King, Jr. We immediately rethink the image of King whom liberals and conservatives construct as a dreamer of better race relations. We engage the complexities of an individual who articulated a moral compass of the nation to explore racial justice in post-World War II America. This course gives special attention to King’s post-1965 radicalism when he called for a reordering of American society, an end to the war in Vietnam, and supported sanitation workers striking for better wages and working conditions. Topics include King’s notion of the “beloved community,” the Social Gospel, liberalism, “socially conscious democracy,” militancy, the politics of martyrdom, poverty and racial justice, and compensatory treatment. Primary sources form the core of our readings.

HIST 101.01 TR 9:00-10:15 am Mr. Mills

(Note: HIST 101.02 is not a Freshman Writing Seminar.)

### **History 108a International Human Rights**

(Same as *International Studies 108a*)

Human rights have become the dominant moral language of our time. Rights are used to help build civil society, to establish international law, to give the oppressed hope, and even to justify foreign military intervention. When we speak of rights, then, we speak of a ubiquitous presence in our world. How did this come to be? This course examines the historical development of international human rights from their definition by the United Nations in 1948 to the present day. Our main questions will be how a powerful discourse of human rights has developed, who has spoken on its behalf, and how human rights claims have intersected with existing political, institutional, and legal structures.

HIST 108.01 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Brigham

### **History 143a Russia, Ukraine, and the Steppe**

This course introduces students to the history of the Russians and their neighbors on the Eurasian Steppe, a vast region that stretches from Ukraine to Kazakhstan. Topics include the relations between Russians and Ukrainians and nomadic and semi-nomadic people (Tatars, Kazakhs, Cossacks), the great steppe empires, the imposition of serfdom, the uprisings of the steppe (1660s and 1916), and the complex mix of violence and development that was unleashed in the Soviet period, including famines, forced cultural change, and industrialization. We will also consider the connections between the cultural and political history of this region and current events, such as the creation of a new Eurasian Union. Course materials include history texts, memoirs, fiction, newspapers, Soviet and post-Soviet films, and maps. Course participants practice writing regularly, with an emphasis on discussing and constructing arguments, finding and using evidence, and comparing perspectives and points of view (American, Russian, Ukrainian, Central Asian).

HIST 143.01 TR 12:00-1:15 pm Ms. Pohl

(Note: HIST 143.02 is not a Freshman Writing Seminar.)

### **History 160a American Moments: Rediscovering U.S. History**

This is not your parents’—or your high school teacher’s—American history course. No textbook: instead we read memoirs, novels, newspaper articles, letters, speeches, photographs, and films composed by a colorful, diverse cast of characters—famous and forgotten, slaves and masters, workers and bosses. No survey: instead we pause to look at several illuminating “moments” from the colonial era through the Civil War to civil rights and the Cold War. Traveling from the Great Awakening to the “awakening” that was the 1960s, from an anticolonial rebellion that Americans won (1776) to another that they lost (Vietnam), the course challenges assumptions about America’s past—and perhaps also a few about America’s present and future.

HIST 160.01 TR 9:00–10:15 am Mr. Merrell

(Note: HIST 160.02 is not a Freshman Writing Seminar.)

### **History 174a The Emergence of the Modern Middle East**

An exploration of the Middle East over the past three centuries. Beginning with economic and social transformations in the 18th century, we follow the transformation of various Ottoman provinces such as Egypt, Syria/Lebanon, and Algeria into modern states, paying careful attention to how European colonialism shaped their development. We then look at independence movements and the post-colonial societies that have emerged since the middle of the 20th century, concluding with study of colonialism’s lingering power—and the movements that confront it.

HIST 174.01 10:30-11:45 am Mr. Schreier

### **International Studies 108a International Human Rights**

(Same as *History 108a*)

Human rights have become the dominant moral language of our time. Rights are used to help build civil society, to establish international law, to give the oppressed hope, and even

to justify foreign military intervention. When we speak of rights, then, we speak of a ubiquitous presence in our world. How did this come to be? This course examines the historical development of international human rights from their definition by the United Nations in 1948 to the present day. Our main questions will be how a powerful discourse of human rights has developed, who has spoken on its behalf, and how human rights claims have intersected with existing political, institutional, and legal structures.

INTL 108.01 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Brigham

### Italian 168a Food Culture and Italian Identity

How did spaghetti and meatballs become the symbol of Italian cuisine in the United States? Is it true that pasta was not invented in Italy? How did a cookbook contribute to the creation of national identity? Could abolishing *pastasciutta* make Italians more optimistic? Images of food and dinner tables pervade Italian art and literature, celebrating pleasures or projecting desires, passing on traditions or stirring revolutions. In this course we will examine how eating and cooking habits intersect with material and cultural changes in Italy at various times, ranging from the Middle Ages to the present. We will investigate how issues of personal, regional, and national identity are shaped and expressed by food habits. Fiction and non-fiction writings, recipes, documentary and fiction film, advertising, and television shows will provide the basis for discussion and writing assignments. The course is taught in English. All readings are in translation.

ITAL 168.01 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Ms. Bondavalli

### Jewish Studies 120a God

(Same as Religion 120)

Whether we are furious with it, love it, or think it does not exist, the figure that Western civilization calls “God” is one of our most powerful root metaphors, an intellectual category that requires interrogation and understanding. As a literary figure, God has a personality, a biography, and a history, and like all of us, a great deal to say about how he has been understood and misunderstood. Through analysis of primary materials—Biblical, Ugaritic, Canaanite, and Mesopotamian—we will explore the origin and development of this complicated figure in Biblical literature.

JWST 120.01 TR 4:35–5:50 pm Ms. LiDonnici

### Latin American and Latino/a Studies 106a Dynamic Women: From Bachelet to Ugly Betty

How do issues of inequality, social justice, representation, popular culture, migration, environmental justice and globalization look when women’s voices and gender analysis are at the center? This multidisciplinary course examines writing by and about women in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latino/a USA. We read and write about a range of genres, from testimonio, film, and fiction to social science. The goal is to develop an appreciation and understanding of the varied lives and struggles of Latinas and Caribbean women, the transnational politics of gender, key moments in the history of the hemisphere, and contemporary issues across the Americas.

LALS 106.01 TR 1:30-2:45 pm Ms. Carruyo

### Mathematics 131a Numbers, Shape, Chance and Change

What is the stuff of mathematics? What do mathematicians do? Fundamental concepts from arithmetic, geometry, probability, and the calculus are explored, emphasizing the relations among these diverse areas, their internal logic, their beauty, and how they come together to form a unified discipline. As a counterpoint, we also discuss the “unreasonable effectiveness” of mathematics in describing a stunning range of phenomena from the natural and social worlds.

MATH 131.01 MWF 12:00-12:50 pm Mr. Cameron

### Media Studies 185a The Bible before Print

(Same as Religion 185 and College Course 185)

What is the Bible and how has its physical form changed from antiquity through Gutenberg’s first printing around 1455? Although one of the most influential texts in history, we seldom stop to think about its own history, and in particular the variety of textual, illustrative, and physical forms it has taken. Yet there were great differences in what constituted “the Bible” and how it was produced, disseminated, read, and discussed throughout antiquity and the medieval period. This course explores this history by “going to the source” and examining examples in both digital and print facsimile, largely relying on the Bible Collection in the Archives and Special Collections Library. By looking closely at the Bibles, we will examine all aspects of their makeup—scribal tendencies, binding and format, illustrations, marginalia, and other distinctive features. Through a variety of writing assignments, we will make arguments about their meaning and what they might say about their producers and readers and the meaning of its physical form.

MEDS 185.01 MW 9:00-10:15 am Ms. Bucher

### Philosophy 106a Philosophy and Contemporary Issues: Just War Theory

This course will explore the contemporary philosophical literature on Just War Theory. The past decade has seen an explosion of philosophical work on war, with important consequences for our thinking about both the ethics and law of armed conflict. We will examine classical formulations of the just war doctrine as well as the challenge posed by revisionist just war theorists. Readings will include Michael Walzer’s *Just and Unjust Wars* and Jeff McMahan’s *Killing in War*.

PHIL 106.01 MW 10:30-11:45 am Mr. Kelly

### Psychology 184a Living Rhythms

Human activity is rhythmic. We engage in cycles of eating, loving, working, resting, walking, talking, learning and sleeping. We multitask, nesting and switching cycles within cycles. Our activity entrains to cycles of the sun, moon, weather, natural and cultural seasons, and human-made devices. In this course, students explore and write about the psychology of rhythmic activity by means of participation, observation, interview, and literature review.

PSYC 184.01 TR 9:00-10:15 am Ms. Palmer

### Psychology 184a An Introduction to the Mind: What's Brain Got to Do With It?

This course is an introduction to the science of psychology with an emphasis on the brain's control of behavior. For example, this connection among the brain, body, and mind is particularly evidenced by what we *can't* do following devastating brain injuries such as repeated concussions or stroke. Case studies of phantom limbs, xenomalia, synesthesia, and agnosias have greatly contributed to our understanding of the brain-body connection. Using "popular" science books, magazines, and primary and secondary literature, students explore the brain-mind-body connections within topics such as emotion and reason, learning and memory, perception, representation, neuropsychology, evolution and comparative cognition, language and consciousness.

PSYC 184.02 MW 12:00-1:15 pm Ms. Zupan

### Psychology 184a Movement, Contemplation, and Transformation

Engaging in a variety of active practices, students will explore processes of personal and institutional transformation. We will share activities involving movement, awareness, imagination, contemplative practices, and reflection on experiences. Students will pursue a personal transformation project, such as learning a new skill or deepening an existing practice. We will also consider how these activities can contribute to group or institutional transformation.

PSYC 184.03 TR 10:30-11:45 am Ms. Palmer

### Religion 120a God

(Same as *Jewish Studies 120a*)

Whether we are furious with it, love it, or think it does not exist, the figure that Western civilization calls "God" is one of our most powerful root metaphors, an intellectual category that requires interrogation and understanding. As a literary figure, God has a personality, a biography, and a history, and like all of us, a great deal to say about how he has been understood and misunderstood. Through analysis of primary materials—Biblical, Ugaritic, Canaanite, and Mesopotamian—we will explore the origin and development of this complicated figure in Biblical literature.

RELI 120.01 TR 4:35-5:50 pm Ms. LiDonnici

### Religion 185a The Bible before Print

(Same as *Media Studies 185 and College Course 185*)

What is the Bible and how has its physical form changed from antiquity through Gutenberg's first printing around 1455? Although one of the most influential texts in history, we seldom stop to think about its own history, and in particular the variety of textual, illustrative, and physical forms it has taken. Yet there were great differences in what constituted "the Bible" and how it was produced, disseminated, read, and discussed throughout antiquity and the medieval period. This course explores this history by "going to the source" and examining examples in both digital and print facsimile, largely relying on the Bible Collection in the Archives and Special Collections Library. By looking closely at the Bibles, we will examine all aspects of their makeup—scribal tendencies, binding and format, illustrations, marginalia,

and other distinctive features. Through a variety of writing assignments we will make arguments about their meaning and what they might say about their producers and readers and the meaning of its physical form.

RELI 185.01 MW 9:00-10:15 am Ms. Bucher

### Russian Studies 171a Russia and the Short Story

In this course we read and discuss a number of classic short stories by such Russian masters of the genre as Gogol, Turgenev, Chekhov, Babel, and Olesha.

RUSS 171.01 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Ms. Safariants

### Science, Technology and Society 111a Science and Justice in the Anthropocene

(Same as *Earth Science 111a and Geography 111a*)

Geoscientists have proposed a new designation in the geologic time scale for our current time period, "the Anthropocene." The designation reflects the fact that human beings are acting as geological agents, transforming the Earth on a global scale. In this freshman seminar, we explore the possibilities of reconfiguring the actions of humans in the Anthropocene so as to lead to a flowering of a new era once called "the Ecozoic" by cultural historian Thomas Berry.

STS 111.01 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Ms. Schneiderman

## Spring Sections

### American Studies 170b The Peopling of the Americas

(Same as *Anthropology 170*)

Did people first come to the Americas from Asia or Europe? By foot or by boat or by spaceship? In this course we will investigate when and by whom and by what route North and South America were populated. According to current scientific thought, the Americas are the land mass most recently populated by humans, while many Native American groups firmly believe they have always lived here; Caleb Atwater thought Mississippian sites were founded by one of the 10 Lost Tribes of Israel; others think sailors from across the Pacific brought civilization to the Americas. Such issues have been major foci of Americanist archaeological theory since archaeology began in this country, and we will examine both the theories and what they say about the attitudes of the Americans who promulgated and promulgate them.

AMST 170.51 TR 1:30-2:45 pm Ms. Johnson

### Anthropology 170b The Peopling of the Americas

(Same as *American Studies 170*)

Did people first come to the Americas from Asia or Europe? By foot or by boat or by spaceship? In this course we will investigate when and by whom and by what route North and South America were populated. According to current scientific thought, the Americas are the land mass most recently populated by humans, while many Native American groups firmly believe they have always lived here; Caleb Atwater thought Mississippian sites were founded by one of the 10 Lost Tribes of Israel; others think sailors from across the Pacific brought civilization to the Americas. Such issues

have been major foci of Americanist archaeological theory since archaeology began in this country, and we will examine both the theories and what they say about the attitudes of the Americans who promulgated and promulgate them.  
ANTH 170.51 TR 1:30-2:45 pm Ms. Johnson

### **Education 162b Education and Opportunity in the US**

In this course, students identify, explore, and question prevailing assumptions about education in the United States. The objectives of the course are for students to develop both a deeper understanding of the system's historical, structural, and philosophical features and to look at schools with a critical eye. We examine issues of power and control at various levels of the education system. Participants are encouraged to connect class readings and discussions to personal schooling experiences to gain new insights into their own educational foundations. Among the questions that are highlighted are: How should schools be organized and operated? What information and values should be emphasized? Whose interests do schools serve? The course is open to both students interested in becoming certified to teach and those who are not yet certain about their future plans but are interested in educational issues.

EDUC 162.51 WF 12:00-1:45 pm Ms. Malsbary

### **English 101b The Instruction of Citizenship**

Emma Lazarus's celebrated poem, "The New Colossus," identifies the Statue of Liberty as the "Mother of Exiles" welcoming the world's "wretched" and "tempest-tost." However, the popular definition of the United States as a "nation of immigrants" repeatedly comes into crisis when the state faces the arrival of new groups. This course examines how literature by first- and second-generation Americans brings to light conditions that either bind or divide us as communities. Where does the instruction of citizenship take place and what does it mean to be "naturalized" as an American? What do we gain or lose with assimilation? What exactly is "multiculturalism"? How does immigrant writing respond to or disrupt abstract notions of American citizenship? Authors may include Jamaica Kincaid, Sui Sin Far, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Peter Bacho, Junot Díaz, Fae Myenne Ng, Abraham Cahan, Lonny Kaneko, Piri Thomas, Edvige Giunta, Kym Ragusa and Mary Gordon.

ENGL 101.51 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Perez

### **English 101b School Days**

Various literary and filmic narratives that treat the theme of school. Texts may include: *Virgin Suicides*, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, *Never Let Me Go*, *To Sir, with Love*, *Dead Poets Society*, *Rushmore*, *Election*, *Berkeley in the Sixties*.

ENGL 101.52 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Mr. Chang

### **Environmental Studies 180b Green Fictions**

The course studies modern environmental writing from several European countries, including France, Iceland, and the United Kingdom, and explores the reimagining of vanished landscapes. A selection of narrative tales, accounts, and reflections foregrounding contemporary ecological issues and priorities are considered; they cover a range of styles,

from geopoetics to wild writing. The works draw on different cultural traditions to reflect creatively about questions of global urgency, among them climate change, sustainable development, loss of habitat, and pollution. Critical readings accompany the study of primary texts. Authors may include Kathleen Jamie, Jean Giono, Andri Snaer Magnason, Kenneth White, Michel Rio, Robert Macfarlane.

ENST 180.51 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Andrews

### **Music 180b Hearing Politics: The Sound of the 2016 Campaign**

This course will examine the modern presidential primary and campaign as it unfolds during the 2016 spring semester. By using sound as a tool, we will examine campaign advertising, music, and language, and delve into recent cognitive and neurological research on the brain and politics. While aimed at a deeper understanding of the contemporary, the class will also examine past campaigns to understand larger trends in politics, the impact of media, and the changing demographics that campaigns target. Each week students will be responsible for analysis and commentary on current campaign events as well as readings on historical topics that shed light on the contemporary moment.

MUSI 180.51 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Patch

### **Sociology 184b Racism and Marxist Struggle**

W.E.B. Du Bois pointed out that the expansion of capitalism and the growth of global racism made the color line the problem of the 20th century. Racist ideologies and discriminatory practices perpetuated by capitalist institutional racism and racial inequality combine into all other forms of inequality globally. As racialized spaces globalized through capitalism, so too arose anti-racist struggle against the violence of racism, colonialism and post-colonialist arrangements. Even though the struggle against global racial inequality grew, the color line is now the problem of the 21st century, manifested as vicious inequalities, destruction, war, and genocide. This class examines the writings of Karl Marx, W.E.B. DuBois, Franz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Angela Davis, C.L.R James, Jose Carlos Mariátegui, Stuart Hall and others in order to develop critical and analytical approaches to original works on racism and the Marxist anti-racist debate.

SOCI 184.51 MW 9:00-10:15 am Ms. Batur

# DEPARTMENTS OF INSTRUCTION AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS

## Africana Studies

Founded in 1969 out of student protest and political upheaval, the Africana Studies Program continues its commitment to social change and the examination and creation of new knowledge. The Africana Studies Program brings together scholars and scholarship from many fields of study and draws on a range of theoretical and methodological approaches to explore the cultures, histories, institutions, and societies of African and African-descended people. Program strengths include: education and activism, literature, feminism, political thought, Arabic language and culture, critical race theory, queer studies, prison studies, visual culture, creative writing, social, cultural, and political movements, and popular culture.

In addition to its offerings on the Vassar campus, the program also has opportunities for domestic study at historically black institutions in America and for foreign study in Africa and the Caribbean through the college's study abroad options.

For more information, please visit <http://africana.studies.vassar.edu>.

## American Studies

The American Studies Program began in 1973 as "The Program in the Changing American Culture" and was one of earliest multidisciplinary programs to be established at Vassar. Courses draw on the broad resources of the college to explore the cultural, historical, and political processes that comprise the United States, as these take shape both within and beyond the nation's geographical borders. An individually designed course of study, which is the hallmark of the program, allows students to forge multidisciplinary approaches to the particular issues that interest them. For example, students have come to the American Studies Program in order to combine interests in jazz and U.S. political history; to explore literary and geographic representations of American utopian communities; and to integrate studio art with education certification. The program also offers a correlate sequence in Native American Studies that enables students to examine Indigenous cultures, politics, histories, and literatures in a primarily North American context.

Of particular interest to first-year students is the 100-level course, Introduction to American Studies (American Studies 100). The topic for fall 2015 is *The American Secular: Religion and the Nation-State*. Is there a distinct realm in American politics and culture called the secular, a space or a mode of public discourse that is crucially free of

and from the category of religion? This class considers the sorts of theoretical and historical moments in American life, letters, and practice that have, on the one hand, insisted the importance and necessity of such a realm, and on the other hand, resisted the very notion that religion should be kept out of the American public square. We will ask whether it is possible or even desirable in our politics, in our public institutions, in ourselves, to conceive of the secular and the religious as radically opposed. We will ask if there are better ways to conceive of the secular and the religious in American life, ways that acknowledge their mutual interdependence rather than their exclusivity. Also of interest would be Introduction to American Studies: Listening to America (American Studies 100), offered in spring 2016, Introduction to Native American Studies (American Studies 105), offered in spring 2016, and Art and Social Change in the United States (American Studies 160), a freshman writing course offered in fall 2015.

Beyond the introductory level, the program offers courses on the rise of U.S. consumer culture, on Native American urban experience, on the WPA photography and literature of the 1930s, on the civil rights movement, on the art and thought of the 1980s, and on emerging forms of journalism. Students exploring the major are encouraged to take the required seminar, *America in the World* (American Studies 250) during their sophomore year. Students with questions about the program or its courses should feel free to email the program director, Lisa Brawley, at [lbrawley@vassar.edu](mailto:lbrawley@vassar.edu), or the program's administrative assistant, Darcy Gordineer, at [dagordineer@vassar.edu](mailto:dagordineer@vassar.edu).

For more information, please visit <http://american.studies.vassar.edu>.

## Anthropology

Anthropology is a comprehensive discipline that promotes an understanding of human beings by offering complex accounts of their evolutionary origins, history, linguistic and expressive communication and performance (such as art, music, and ritual practices) and sociocultural diversity. Anthropologists engage in ethnographic, archival, biological, archaeological, and linguistic research that focuses on both individual and collective experiences; they also participate in an open and critical exchange with the humanities and the social, physical, and biological sciences. A central concern of anthropologists is the application of knowledge to the solution of human problems. Historically, anthropologists in the United States have been trained in one of four subdisciplines: sociocultural anthropology, linguistic anthropology, biological/physical anthropology, and archaeology.

Anthropologists often integrate perspectives drawn from these subfields into their research, teaching, and professional lives. Courses available to first-year students include two Freshman Writing Seminars: *Bones, Bodies, and Forensic Cases* (Anthropology 170, Fall 2015) and *The Peopling of the Americas* (Anthropology 170, Spring 2016), plus *Cultural Anthropology* (Anthropology 140), which is required of all majors, *Archaeology* (Anthropology

100), Human Origins (Anthropology 120), and Linguistics and Anthropology (Anthropology 150).

First-year students with a strong interest in anthropology or some background in the social sciences might also consider Anthropology of Time (Anthropology 260, Spring 2016) or Anthropological Approaches to Myth, Ritual and Symbol (Anthropology 262, Spring 2016). Please email the instructor directly with any questions or for additional information.

Majors will also need to take a course in anthropological theory, obtain some field experience, and become familiar with at least two of the other subdisciplines and two cultural regions. Beyond this, students follow their own interests and inclinations with the assistance of departmental faculty.

For more information, please visit <http://anthropology.vassar.edu> or email [caswift@vassar.edu](mailto:caswift@vassar.edu).

## Art

Creativity has long been measured by the work of art and architecture. The subject is vast. The Introduction to the History of Art (Art 105-106) provides a yearlong introduction to this history of art and architecture. Presented chronologically, with members of the department lecturing in their fields of expertise, the course begins with the monuments of the ancient world and ends with a global survey of today's video. Students see how the language of form changes over time and how it continually expresses cultural values and addresses individual existential questions. Each week students attend three lectures and a discussion section, which makes extensive use of the Vassar College collection in the Loeb Art Center. The course furnishes many points of entry into the entire spectrum of human accomplishment. Art history is, by its nature, transdisciplinary—drawing on pure history, literature, music, anthropology, religion, linguistics, science, psychology and philosophy. Over the years Vassar students from every major have found it to be vital to them in ways that they could never have predicted. (Note: As a yearlong course, Art 106 must be taken in order to receive credit for Art 105, but a student completing Art 105 may wait until a later year to take Art 106.)

Studio classes in drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, printmaking, color, computer animation and video are available to studio majors, correlates, and nonmajors. The yearlong introductory course, Drawing I (Art 102-103), is open to freshmen. This course, suited to students with a range of drawing experience, from beginners to those with extensive drawing experience, is the pre- or co-requisite for the intermediate studio courses. Color (Art 108) is also open to freshmen. Studio courses meet four hours per week for one unit of credit. As part of their instruction, all students receive individual criticism. Intermediate and advanced architectural drawing and design classes are also offered, with prerequisites that are listed in the catalogue. Note that there is a lab fee for all studio courses; see the catalogue for details. Students enrolled in studio courses who are receiving financial aid may apply to the Office of Financial Aid for a stipend to offset this fee.

For more information, please visit <http://art.vassar.edu>.

## Asian Studies

The Program in Asian Studies introduces you to a multidisciplinary and global approach to studying the peoples and cultures of Asia, examining both traditional Asian societies and their transformations in recent times. The program offers a major and a correlate sequence (minor) in Asian studies and a correlate sequence in Asian American studies. Majors and correlates work closely with advisors to design their program of study. Majors typically choose two disciplines and focus on a particular Asian country or region while also learning about other Asian societies. The program has 23 faculty members who teach a broad range of courses. Of particular interest to freshmen are: Religions of Asia (Religion/Asian Studies 152); Encounters in Modern East Asia (History/Asian Studies 122); Introduction to Chinese and Japanese Literature (Chinese-Japanese 120); Hindus and Muslims in Pre-Colonial India (History/Asian Studies 103); Early Chinese Philosophy (Philosophy 110); and Comparative Politics (Political Science 150, spring semester sections only). Each of these courses can fulfill part of the introductory level requirement for the Asian studies major or correlate. Students interested in the Asian studies major or junior year abroad in an Asian country should begin language study in their freshman year if possible. Vassar offers classroom instruction in Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese, with Hindi, Korean, and Turkish available through the Self-Instructional Language Program. The Asian Studies correlate sequence encourages, but does not require, language study.

For more information, please visit <http://asianstudies.vassar.edu> or email Professor Michael Walsh, director of Asian Studies, at [miwalsh@vassar.edu](mailto:miwalsh@vassar.edu).

## Astronomy (see Physics and Astronomy)

## Biochemistry (also see Biology and Chemistry)

Biochemistry is an interdepartmental program of the Biology and Chemistry Departments. The program provides a broad and deep foundation in biology and chemistry as a basis for studying the molecular aspects of biological phenomena. The program progresses through introductory studies in biology, chemistry, mathematics, and physics to advanced courses in biology and chemistry, integrative courses in biochemistry, and a capstone laboratory research experience in the senior year.

Students should feel free to contact the interim program director Dr. Jenni Kennell ([jjkennell@vassar.edu](mailto:jjkennell@vassar.edu)) or any of the faculty members from the Biology and Chemistry Departments to ask questions about which courses to consider in their first year.

Freshmen considering a biochemistry major are strongly advised to enroll in

- **Introductory Biology 105 and 106** (for information about placing out of BIOL 105 with AP or IB credit, see the section on "Biology" below);
- **General Chemistry 108 and 109 or Chemistry 125** (for information on whether you should take the full

year CHEM 108/109 course or should take the accelerated one semester CHEM 125 course, see the section on “Chemistry” below);

- **Math 121, 126/127 or 220** (for information about which of these courses might be the appropriate entry point for you, see the section on “Mathematics” below).

For more information, please visit the Biochemistry Program’s website (<http://biochemistry.vassar.edu>) or email the interim program director Jenni Kennell ([jekennell@vassar.edu](mailto:jekennell@vassar.edu)).

## Biology

Vassar’s biology curriculum allows students to explore the breadth of the life sciences, to focus on particular subjects in depth, and to gain experience in research. A major in biology prepares students for graduate study in a variety of disciplines, and for a broad array of careers including biological and biomedical research, biotechnology, conservation and environmental work, law, education, medicine, and the related health professions.

First-year students may take biology for a number of reasons, to begin a major in biology or a related field, to broaden a liberal arts education, or to explore scientific, biomedical, or environmental interests. We offer two introductory courses: Biology 105 and Biology 106. Neither is a survey course, and neither is a repetition of high school AP biology. In Biology 105 students explore a specific topic, develop their understanding of the central concepts of biology, and enhance their critical thinking and communication skills. In Biology 106 students conduct laboratory or field investigations, develop their abilities to observe, formulate, and test hypotheses, design experiments, collect and interpret data, and communicate results. Detailed descriptions of the Biology 105 topics can be found below or on the Registration Announcements website.

Students who receive exam scores of 4 or 5 on the AP Biology exam and report the score to Vassar College will receive one unit of 100-level biology credit toward graduation and may opt to place out of Biology 105. Students with International Baccalaureate (IB) Biology HL test scores of 5, 6, or 7 may also place out of Biology 105. Students must confirm their IB credit with the Dean of Studies Office.

Two units of 100-level work in biology (Biol 106 and either Biol 105 or a qualifying AP/IB Biology exam score) are required for election of 200-level biology courses. If you are contemplating a major in biology or a related field, it is strongly advised to take these 100-level courses in the first year. Please note that freshmen must take Biology 105 (or have a qualifying AP/IB Biology exam score) before taking Biology 106. Both are popular courses, so those wishing to take one this fall should rank it high on their pre-registration list.

Students planning to major in biology or biochemistry are also advised to complete Chemistry 108/109 or 125 in the first year. Students considering medical careers should consult the section on “Preparation for Medical School” in this handbook.

For more information, please contact the Biology Department chair, Bill Straus (845-437-7302, [straus@vassar.edu](mailto:straus@vassar.edu)) or visit <http://biology.vassar.edu>.

## The following sections of Biology 105 will be offered in the fall term:

### Biology 105a Brains, Brawn, and Behavior

Brains are not computers. Rather, a brain is more like a conductor, co-operating with its body parts to help mediate physical interactions with the world. This dynamic, behaving system is the focus of our explorations into fundamental issues in biology. How do molecules and membranes work to create electrical cells? How do cells communicate? How do sensory systems convert external energy patterns into information? How do muscles transduce chemical energy into mechanical force? How does an animal turn movement into behavior? How do genes and behavior interact in developmental time? Why is behavior the target of natural selection? How does evolution change the heritability of traits? How does the evolution of a population feedback onto the behavior of its individuals? Class meetings are a mix of discussion, lecture, and work in teams. Assignments include papers, presentations, exams, and quantitative work.

BIOL 105.01 TR 9:00–10:15 am Mr. Long

### Biology 105a Climate Change and Other Human Impacts on the Biosphere

Our activities, providing food, shelter, and enhanced quality of life for over seven billion of us, have forever altered the planet—not only climate change, but changes to land, water, and ecosystems. How are other organisms affected by us? In order to better understand this question, we will consider a number of fundamental biological principles, like genes, genomes and regulation of gene expression, evolution and inheritance, natural selection, organismal physiology and adaptations, and ecology. We will then apply these principles to understand how human activities affect the other organisms with which we share the planet. Biology 105 serves as a great foundation in biology and will prepare you for more advanced work in the field.

BIOL 105.02 MWF 9:30–10:20 am Ms. Susman  
(Biology 105.02 is designated as a Freshman Writing Seminar.)

### Biology 105a The Biology of Salmon: Salt, Sex and Death

Salmon begin life as fertilized eggs, single cells buried in the gravel of a stream. They develop into small freshwater fishes that feed for a few weeks to a year, totally reverse their salt and water balance physiology while passing through estuaries, and swim around the ocean for a period of years, then return to their natal streams to spawn, after which they die within hours. We will use salmon as exemplary organisms with which to study biological processes ranging from cell division to alternative sexual strategies, from ecosystem integration to membrane function, from sensory perception to senescence. We will consider the evolution of salmon

diversity, whether categorized as “species” or as “evolutionary significant units,” study how genetic diversity in populations has been dramatically altered by recent fisheries management approaches, and consider the biological effects of recently developed genetically engineered salmon.

BIOL 105.03 MWF 12:00–12:50 pm Mr. Pregnall

### The following sections of Biology 105 will be offered in the spring term:

#### Biology 105b Climate Change and Other Human Impacts on the Biosphere

(Same as above)

BIOL 105.51 MWF 9:30–10:20 am Ms. Susman  
(Biology 105.51 is not designated as a Freshman Writing Seminar.)

#### Biology 105b Biology in a Changing World

Our world is constantly changing; from the daily cycle of light and dark, to the changing seasons, to the shifts in plate tectonics, change is an ever-present condition on our planet. This change is reflected in the evolutionary history and response of organisms to these varying conditions. More recently, organisms on this planet have been faced with some very abrupt and significant agents of change. Humans are one of the agents responsible for a plethora of these changes, including pollution, habitat loss, invasive species introductions and climate change. This course will focus on the basic principles of biology that allow us to understand how different species respond to change. These principles include genetics, evolution and inheritance and the process of natural selection, physiology and energy dynamics.

BIOL 105.52 MW 10:30–11:45 am Ms. Christenson

BIOL 105.53 MW 12:00–1:15 pm Ms. Christenson

## Chemistry

Chemistry is the study of the composition, structure, properties, and reactions of matter. A major in chemistry at Vassar provides preparation for graduate study in chemistry or related areas, such as medicine, environmental science, materials science, public health, and toxicology, and is also excellent training for future teachers, lawyers, and individuals working in business or an industrial setting.

There are three chemistry courses that can be taken during the freshman year, all of which combine lecture and laboratory work. The course a student elects will depend on his or her background in chemistry. Chemistry 108/109, General Chemistry, is open to all students regardless of their background in chemistry. This course covers the fundamental ideas of chemistry and begins to build an understanding of the physical world from the perspective of atomic theory. Chemistry 125, Chemical Principles, is designed to cover the important aspects of general chemistry in one semester and is appropriate for students who have previously studied chemistry. The material covered in Chemistry 125 includes chemical reactions, stoichiometry, atomic and molecular

structure, and general chemical physics, emphasizing the fundamental aspects of and connections between equilibria, electrochemistry, thermodynamics, and kinetics. The Chemistry Department offers a written examination to incoming freshmen interested in advanced course placement into Organic Chemistry (Chemistry 244/245). This placement is only granted in exceptional circumstances. Please consult the department for further information.

An essential aspect of training in chemistry is the experience of independent laboratory work and research. The Chemistry Department, therefore, provides students the opportunity to use sophisticated instrumentation at all levels of the curriculum and encourages student participation in independent research as early as the freshman year. Freshmen may work on a research project under the direction of a member of the department by electing Independent Research (Chemistry 198) after consultation with a faculty mentor. Students considering majoring in chemistry should elect chemistry and calculus during their freshman year, and elect physics during either the freshman or sophomore year. Students who plan to graduate in less than four years or graduate with a degree certified by the American Chemical Society should consult with a department advisor early in their first semester.

For more information, please visit <http://chemistry.vassar.edu> or email [chemistry@vassar.edu](mailto:chemistry@vassar.edu).

## Chinese and Japanese

The Department of Chinese and Japanese is committed to helping students prepare as early as possible for their post-graduation endeavors ranging from graduate studies to careers in both public and private sectors that require Chinese or Japanese linguistic and/or literary and cultural skills. The department offers two majors: Chinese and Japanese. In addition, it offers a correlate sequence in Chinese and a correlate sequence in Japanese. The department provides five years of language instruction in Chinese and four years in Japanese as well as a wide range of literature and culture courses including poetry, fiction, drama/theater, film, popular culture, linguistics, and literary theory.

Freshmen intending to study Chinese or Japanese with no previous training in Chinese or Japanese are advised to start in their freshmen year and may elect the yearlong Chinese 105-106 or Japanese 105-106, both of which fulfill the foreign language proficiency requirement of the college. Freshmen with some but limited knowledge of Chinese may be placed in Chinese 107-108, the advanced elementary course. Freshmen with even better knowledge of Chinese or Japanese may be placed directly in intermediate or higher courses based upon the results of the placement test. The placement tests are administered in the department during New Student Orientation. The department does not automatically honor the level of students' language proficiencies indicated in the courses or examinations they took in high school or other pre-matriculation programs. Students must take the placement test to be placed in appropriate level of Chinese or Japanese.

Also available to freshmen are courses taught in English: Introduction to Chinese and Japanese Literature (Chinese-Japanese 120), or, with special permission from the instructor, Chinese or Japanese literature or culture courses at the 200 level. Students who are considering a major or double major in Chinese or Japanese are strongly urged to begin their language study in their freshman year, continuing with intermediate or advanced language courses in their sophomore and junior years. Students may accelerate the course of their language study by studying at approved summer language programs. The department also places students in strong junior year abroad study programs. Among the department's on-campus activities are annual events such as Chinese and Japanese Culture Day, Chinese New Year Celebration, and the Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival, each of which enriches the students' language and cultural experiences. Students can also benefit from participation in the weekly Chinese or Japanese language table, during which conversations with native speakers and other Chinese or Japanese cultural activities are held. For more information, please visit <http://chineseandjapanese.vassar.edu>.

## Classics or Classical Studies

(See Greek and Roman Studies)

## Cognitive Science

We human beings take it for granted that we are possessed of minds. You know that you have a mind and you assume that other people do, too. But to what, exactly, are we referring when we talk about the mind? Is a mind just a brain? What endows your mind with the property of being conscious? How does your mind allow you to extract music from sound waves, relish the taste of chocolate, daydream, feel happy and sad, or reach for your cup when you want a sip of coffee? How similar is your mind to the minds of other people? Do you have to be a human being to have a mind? Could other entities have minds so long as they were built the right way? Does your computer have a mind? These are the kinds of questions that cognitive scientists want to address.

Introduction to Cognitive Science (Cognitive Science 100), which is required for the major but open to all students, is the entrance into the department. The course asks what we mean by mind and who or what has a mind. We examine computer models of mind and the relationship between mind and brain. The course also focuses on what enables any agent — from simple animal to human to smart machine — to act intelligently. We especially focus on perception and action, memory, decision making, language, and consciousness. We also explore the degree to which cognition requires and is influenced by having a body situated in a particular context. Multiple sections of the course are offered each year, and freshmen interested in cognitive science are encouraged to consider taking one. This course also serves as the prerequisite for all intermediate-level courses in cognitive science.

Cognitive science is a broadly multidisciplinary field that has emerged at the intersection of a number of older

disciplines, such as philosophy, computer science, psychology, neuroscience, anthropology, linguistics, biology, and mathematics. The department offers a core set of courses that teach students how to think in an integrative fashion, but it also requires that students find applications of these ideas in other areas of the curriculum outside of cognitive science. Courses in many divisions of the curriculum, from the arts to the sciences, may count toward the major if they help to develop the skills needed to complete the required senior thesis. The interested student should consult the department web pages or meet with a member of the faculty to discuss how these courses might be selected.

Vassar offered the first undergraduate major in cognitive science in the world. Distinctive aspects of the program include the number of integrative courses offered in cognitive science itself, especially the intermediate level and laboratory course offerings, and the commitment to balanced coverage of the main topics and perspectives that characterize the current state of this rapidly changing field. Opportunities are available for students to obtain summer positions working on faculty research projects at Vassar and other schools.

For more information about these and about the major, please consult the catalogue or visit <http://cogsci.vassar.edu>.

## College Course

The College Course Program was established to ensure that students can have direct exposure in their years at Vassar to some important expressions of the human spirit in a context that is both multidisciplinary and integrative. The aim of a College Course is to study important cultures, themes, or human activities in a manner that gives the student experience in interpreting evidence from the standpoint of different fields. The courses relate this material and these interpretations to other material and interpretations from other fields in order to unite the results of this study into a coherent overall framework. The interpretations are expected to be both appreciative and critical, and the artifacts will come from different times, places, and cultures.

Freshmen are encouraged to check the catalogue for descriptions of offerings in the College Course Program.

## Computer Science

Vassar's Computer Science Department offers students the opportunity to study the field of computer science in the context of a liberal arts education. The department's program, with its theoretical core, provides excellent preparation for graduate study in computer science as well as a career in the profession.

Computer Science 101, the entry-level course in computer science, introduces computing concepts through structural recursion and functional programming. A student who already has this background may be able to go directly into Computer Science 102 or 145 after consulting with the department. Prospective computer science majors are strongly advised to complete Computer Science 101, 102, and 145 within their first three semesters. After completing

Computer Science 101, a student may take Computer Science 102 and Computer Science 145 in either order or simultaneously. Prospective majors should plan to complete one of the following by the end of sophomore year: Math 221, 241, 242, or 261. Note that these courses may have prerequisites in mathematics.

Students who want to include a foundation in computer science in their undergraduate programs of study are advised to take Computer Science 101 and 102 and/or 145. This foundation is strongly recommended for science majors who may also opt to take Computer Science 250, Modeling and Simulation.

For students who want to complement other majors with substantial work in computer science, the department offers several correlate sequences consisting of 6 or 7 computer science courses with various emphases. Vassar's Computer Science Department offers several courses in areas relevant to the broader liberal arts curriculum, including artificial intelligence, computational linguistics, graphics and animation, and bioinformatics. Cognitive science majors with an interest in artificial intelligence or language may choose one of the tracks within their major that includes a sequence of relevant computer science courses.

The department houses computer laboratories containing workstations running the Linux operating system, available to majors and students taking courses in the department. Ongoing research projects in several areas of the field offer students the opportunity to work with faculty both during the academic year and over the summer.

For more information, please visit <http://computer-science.vassar.edu>.

## Dance

Dance is an elective academic course of study with two full-time faculty, one visiting and two part-time faculty, a resident lighting designer/technical director, and three adjunct artists/accompanists. Located in Kenyon Hall, the Dance Department's facilities include four dance studios and the Frances Daly Fergusson Dance Theater, which seats 242. All the dance floors are designed specifically to serve the needs of the dance program.

Vassar's student dance performance group, Vassar Repertory Dance Theatre (VRDT), holds an annual audition during the first week of classes in the fall. VRDT performs throughout the year and may be taken for academic credit. It is a yearlong commitment. The repertoire includes existing works in the jazz, modern dance, and classical ballet styles as well as new creations by guest choreographers, faculty, and students.

The technique courses offered are beginner through advanced modern dance technique, beginner through four levels of intermediate classical ballet technique including pointe and adagio when suitable, beginner to intermediate jazz, and intermediate Graham technique and repertory. In addition to the technique courses, the department offers courses in Craft of Choreography, Improvisation, and Movement Analysis. These are open to all students. The

Craft of Choreography students and the independent study students often perform in December and April.

Details on all courses may found in the catalogue. For placement or special permission signatures, consult the appropriate individual faculty member. For the VRDT audition date in the fall, performance dates for the year, master class offerings, and other information, call the Dance Office at 845-437-7470 or visit our website at <http://dance.vassar.edu>.

## Drama

Drama majors study all aspects of theater. We strongly believe that theory and practice are inseparable. Complex learning, analytical and critical thinking, and collaborative, embodied practice as they are taught in the classroom are tested in a laboratory production environment. The Drama Department curriculum and its Experimental Theater work in tandem. Opportunities for freshmen include Drama 102 (Introduction to Theater-Making) and Drama 103 (Introduction to Stagecraft), and the possibility of auditioning and/or participating in Drama 200 (Production).

Freshmen planning to continue the study of drama beyond their freshman year should note that Drama 102 (Introduction to Theater-Making) and Drama 103 (Introduction to Stagecraft) are prerequisites for all 200-level work in drama. Productions undertaken by the department are curricular in nature. While students may transfer AP or other advanced credits towards the drama major, these are accepted as elective credits and do not replace the required courses.

The department undertakes both faculty directed projects and a number of senior projects both emphasizing the collaborative nature of theatrical production. Occasionally the department hires guest artists to create specific projects with our students. Our productions are presented in the Vogelstein Center for Drama and Film or in the Hallie Flanagan Powerhouse Theater.

For more information, please visit <http://drama.vassar.edu>.

## Earth Science (Geology)

Catastrophic events such as hurricanes and tsunamis and the specter of global climate change underscore the importance of Earth science in a well-rounded liberal arts education. Earth scientists at Vassar study our planet as a system of interacting spheres—the atmosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere, and rock sphere—that create the environments in which we live, the natural hazards with which societies must contend, and the natural resources upon which we rely. We also work to understand the impacts of human activities on the surface of the planet and provide tools to help remedy environmental problems. Courses emphasize field experiences, both in the Hudson Valley and beyond, and many employ cutting-edge technology and computer software to enhance field and laboratory study. Majoring in Earth science prepares students for a range of careers, including education, government research, environmental

consulting, natural resource management, public health, journalism, sustainable development, and environmental law, among others.

In 2015/16, we offer several courses of particular interest to first-year students. Living in the Anthropocene (Earth Science 111) is a Freshman Writing Seminar, a full description of which can be found in the “Freshman Writing Seminars” section of the handbook. For students seeking an in-depth introduction to major concepts of Earth science, the department recommends Earth, Environment, and Humanity (Earth Science/ Geography 151), which fulfills the college’s quantitative analysis requirement and studies the internal and surface processes that shape the Earth as well as geologic hazards and human impacts on the environment.

Beyond the freshman year, intermediate and upper-level courses in Earth science focus on Earth’s 4.6-billion year history; surface processes that sculpt landforms; formation of minerals, rocks, sediments and soils; water resources; and Earth’s history of climatic change.

Abundant opportunities exist for guided independent as well as collaborative research with faculty. Examples of current research with students include studies of recent climate change using lake sediment cores from New Mexico, impacts of urbanization on water quality of streams and aquatic ecosystem health, atmospheric deposition of metals in high altitude Catskill Mountain bogs, and low-temperature metamorphism of rocks in geothermal wells.

Details regarding courses as well as requirements for majoring or electing a correlate sequence can be found in the catalogue. Interested students are also encouraged to email the chair of the Earth Science Department, Jeff Walker, at [jewalker@vassar.edu](mailto:jewalker@vassar.edu), and to visit <http://earthscienceandgeography.vassar.edu>.

## Earth Science and Society

The Earth science and society major studies the relationships between Earth processes and human societies and is akin to a physical geography major at other colleges and universities. From Earth science, students gain an understanding of natural processes that govern resources such as water, fossil fuels, and soil, and also examine hazards that impact human settlements, such as flooding, landslides, and earthquakes. From geography, students learn about the spatial distribution of physical and human phenomena and how human societies are shaped by, and also change, the natural world.

Students in the Earth science and society major take roughly half their major sequence in Earth science and half in geography, focusing on one of two general themes:

- Physical geography: understanding patterns and processes in the natural environment that shape landscapes, with emphasis on climate, soils, water, landforms, and natural hazards.
- Land and resource analysis: study of the uneven distribution of resources, such as agricultural soils, water, or energy, implications of this unevenness for human societies, and various approaches to achieve sustainable development.

Recent majors in Earth science and society have gone on to careers in renewable energy research, natural hazard risk mitigation, and science writing, among others.

The department encourages field work and collaborative research with Earth science and geography faculty. Recent examples include investigations of long-forgotten burial grounds of freed slaves using geophysical techniques, examinations of climate change and environmental impact in the Hudson Valley, and land-use studies using geographic information systems (GIS).

First-year students interested in exploring the Earth science and society major have several options, including the Freshman Writing Seminar, Living in the Anthropocene (Earth Science/Geography 111). They can also take Earth, Environment and Humanity (Earth Science/Geography 151) and Global Geography: People, Places, and Regions (Geography 102). Details regarding these introductory courses as well as major requirements can be found in the Earth Science and Geography Department descriptions in this handbook as well as in Vassar’s course catalogue. Interested students are also encouraged to email the chair of the Earth Science and Geography Department, Mary Ann Cunningham, at [macunningham@vassar.edu](mailto:macunningham@vassar.edu), and to visit <http://earthscienceandgeography.vassar.edu>.

## Economics

Economic forces shape our global society and profoundly influence our daily lives. The study of economics at Vassar deepens students’ understanding of these forces and helps equip them for positions of leadership in today’s world. Whatever their intended majors, students will find exposure to the topics and methods of economics to be valuable. It will sharpen their reasoning skills, broaden their acquaintance with important economic issues, and deepen their understanding of government policies, business behavior, and personal decision-making. A good background in economics helps open doors to careers in a variety of fields including finance, law, politics, international affairs, and the media. Students should also note that introductory economics is frequently a prerequisite for courses that are an integral part of multidisciplinary programs of study.

Students who are considering economics as a major should take economics in their first year, as an early start eases advancement through the upper level economics requirements. This is especially true for students considering the option of study abroad during their junior year. Potential majors with no AP or IB credit in mathematics should seek to take a calculus course such as Math 121 or 126, 127 early in their academic career to prepare for Econ 201 and 209; see the “Mathematics” section below for placement advice.

The study of economics at Vassar begins with Introduction to Economics (Economics 102). This course introduces students to the national economy and to the function of markets in our economic system. Economics 102 is offered in both fall and spring semesters and is open to all students. It is a prerequisite for further study in economics and satisfies the quantitative analysis requirement. Most students with prior work in economics, such as AP or

IB credit, will find it valuable to enroll in this introductory course. Such students should consult with the department chair about proper placement, including the possibility of enrolling directly in a 200-level core theory course in the spring semester. Note that first-semester freshmen may not enroll in economics courses numbered 200 and above.

For more information, please visit <http://economics.vassar.edu> or contact [econ@vassar.edu](mailto:econ@vassar.edu).

## Education

The major in educational studies challenges students to think deeply and critically about the ways in which schools socialize as well as educate citizens. It provides ongoing opportunities for conceptual integration across disciplines and domains of theory, policy, and practice. This interdisciplinary approach encourages students to study the impact of political, historical, cultural, economic, and social forces on education. Requirements for the major in educational studies press students to develop a solid foundation in learning theory, the social foundations of education, as well as a global perspective on education. Individuals who complete a major in educational studies are prepared to integrate and apply knowledge to guide personal action and development, regardless of their ultimate career trajectory. The major is an excellent option for students who are interested in issues related to education—but who are not planning to earn a teaching credential at Vassar. The department offers a Freshman Writing Seminar “Education and Opportunity in the United States.” In this course, students identify, explore, and question prevailing assumptions about education in the United States. The course is open to both students interested in becoming certified to teach and those who are not yet certain about their future plans but are interested in educational issues.

The teacher preparation programs in the Department of Education reflect the philosophy that a broad liberal arts education is the best foundation for teaching, whether at the elementary or secondary level, and whether in public or private schools. See the section on “Preparation for Teacher Certification” earlier in this handbook for further information.

The educational studies correlate is offered both to students who plan to teach and those who are interested in pursuing other pathways related to education. Under the supervision of a member of the department, students undertaking the correlate will design a sequence of courses that address a central topic or theme related to education. Completing these courses should challenge students to think deeply and critically about the manner in which schools socialize as well as educate citizens, and how the interests of certain stakeholders are privileged or neglected.

The Education Department, in conjunction with University College, Galway, offers a one-semester internship in the primary and secondary schools of Clifden, Ireland. It also sponsors a Junior Year Abroad program at the Cloud Forest School in Costa Rica.

For more information, please visit <http://education.vassar.edu>.

## English

The Art of Reading and Writing (English 101) is open only to first-year students and offers an introduction to the study of English at the college level. In this course we study literature as an art—that is, as the formal and inventive representation of experience in poetry, fiction, and drama—as well as nonfiction writing including essays, journals, and letters. We also attend to the social and historical contexts within which traditional forms arise and change. The focus of English 101 varies, but each section includes substantial reading in more than one genre, regular exercise in writing, and active discussion.

In addition to English 101, the department offers Texts and Contexts (English 170), which is open to first-year students, sophomores, and others by permission. Those who have taken English 101 in the fall semester and who wish to continue in English are advised to elect English 170 in the spring of the first year. Students may not elect both English 101 and English 170 in the same semester, nor take either course twice.

Students who receive a 4 or 5 on the AP examination in English Language and Composition or English Literature and Composition may elect English 101 or English 170 in the fall semester. AP students may also seek placement in a 200-level course in the fall semester. They must choose from a list of approved courses, which will be made available at the English AP meeting during orientation. Freshmen with AP scores of 4 or 5 may also elect, with the permission of the instructor, a 200-level course in the spring. No student scoring lower than 4 will be eligible for placement in English 170, or a 200-level course in their first term at Vassar. First-year students, even with a 4 or 5 on the AP examination, are not allowed to enroll in the department’s 200-level creative writing classes.

For detailed descriptions of the English 101 courses offered this year, please see the section of this handbook on “Freshman Writing Seminars.”

For more information about all the courses offered by the Department of English, please visit <http://english.vassar.edu>.

## Environmental Studies

Vassar’s multidisciplinary Program in Environmental Studies involves the natural sciences and social sciences as well as the arts and humanities. Approximately 40 professors from virtually every department on campus participate in the program. Students choose a disciplinary concentration, which can be in any department (from biology to art), and view environmental issues through the perspective of that discipline. They also take multidisciplinary courses on environmental issues offered by the program itself. These courses, often team-taught by professors from two different disciplines, include the introductory seminar, Environmentalisms in Perspective (Environmental Studies 125), as well as special studies courses that analyze significant environmental problems. The special studies courses for 2015/16 include Animal Metaphors (Environmental

Studies 260) and Literature and the American Environment (Environmental Studies 271). The program's senior seminar includes a practicum involving a group project focused on a local or regional environmental issue. Freshmen considering a major in environmental studies are encouraged to take Essentials of Environmental Sciences (Environmental Studies 124) and/or Environmentalisms in Perspective (Environmental Studies 125). Please look at the program website for a list titled "Courses to Consider" of other environmentally relevant courses.

Vassar's location in the Hudson River Valley, one of the world's great watersheds, and its proximity to New York City position students well for both rural and urban ecology study. The program concerns itself both with traditional "green" issues such as conservation and sustainability and with environmental issues of social justice. Graduates from the Environmental Studies Program go on to pursue graduate education in areas such as urban ecology, environmental policy, public health, environmental law, and environmental management. Others go on to a wide variety of careers in which a multidisciplinary perspective is valuable, including environmental education, environmental consulting, sustainable agriculture, green architecture, marine conservation, and environmental journalism.

For further information, please visit <http://environmentalstudies.vassar.edu>.

## Film

The film major emphasizes the study of narrative and documentary films. The concentration includes a range of courses in international film history and theory, film and video production, and screenwriting. In connection with its courses, the department screens hundreds of films each year, which are open to the entire Vassar community. The Vassar library also houses extensive resources, including a DVD collection of more than 8,000 titles, which are freely available.

Freshmen are encouraged to widen their exposure to film of all countries, styles, and time periods. The department often invites speakers to lecture and show their films; freshmen are encouraged to attend these public events.

Freshmen may enroll in The Art of Film (Film 175), offered every spring semester. However, the major starts sophomore year with World Cinema to 1945 (Film 210) and World Cinema after 1945 (Film 211). An introductory course in filmmaking, From Script to Screen, can be taken alongside of World Cinema. Intensive workshop courses in film and video production are offered to students during their junior and senior years at the college. Note that the Film Department does not accept advanced course placement for high school work.

The Film Department's facilities in the Vogelstein Center for Drama and Film include modern classrooms with smart podia; a screening room with surround sound and 35mm and advanced digital projectors; a soundproof studio equipped with lighting grid and green screen; three editing suites; and a hi-tech multimedia laboratory.

Freshmen who are interested in participating in junior and senior film projects as actors or production assistants

are welcome to send an email of interest to the department administrative assistant at [film@vassar.edu](mailto:film@vassar.edu).

For more information, please visit <http://film.vassar.edu>.

## French and Francophone Studies

The Department of French and Francophone Studies (FFS) offers students a global perspective on the French-speaking world through a combination of language study, critical cultural studies, historical contextualization, and linguistic and cultural immersion. The FFS curriculum is designed to promote understanding and awareness of the language, literatures, and cultures of the French-speaking world. Recent FFS graduates now enjoy careers in wide-ranging fields including teaching, translating, the arts, publishing, law, banking, management, business, government and non-profits, and medicine.

Except for our Freshman Writing Seminar, all courses are conducted in French. Only students who have never studied French are permitted to begin in French with the yearlong 105-106, usually followed by French 205. All other students should take the online placement exam located at <http://french.vassar.edu/placementExam.html> before pre-registering in July. Use the password "chicagohall" to take the test. Students should also consult with FFS faculty at the departmental advising session during orientation. Students who have taken two years of French in high school normally elect French 205. Those who have taken three years of French in high school normally elect French 206. Students who have taken four years of French in high school normally elect French 210 before moving on to French 212 or upper 200-level courses.

However, since high school experiences may vary, taking the online placement exam and conferring with departmental faculty ahead of time is the best way for students to maximize their chances of getting into the course appropriate to their level. There is considerable movement between courses during the add/drop period as instructors continue to advise students who might have registered for a course above or below the level most appropriate for them. Students should not feel alone in this process and are encouraged to consult with department faculty during the add/drop period as needed regarding what course to take.

Students are encouraged to avail themselves of all the opportunities to speak and hear French in informal situations (bi-monthly Café-conversation, French Club, French films, the French book club, conversation with the language fellow and academic interns, watching TV5 in the French lounge or French and Francophone news via the internet). One native speaker of French, the language fellow, will be in residence.

Students interested in pursuing a major or correlate sequence in French and Francophone studies should consult the chair or another member of the department as early as possible. Students who receive a 4 or 5 on the AP examination can count their AP credit as 1 unit toward the major or correlate. Some students elect to take an accredited summer course after their freshman year in order to accelerate their program. It is recommended that qualified students

spend one or two semesters of their junior year in France or another French-speaking country. The department website provides information on study abroad programs, including the Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris. Students can also find information about the Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Paris at <http://en.vwpp.org>.

Some majors combine FFS with a major in an interdepartmental or a multidisciplinary program such as Africana Studies, Environmental Studies, International Studies, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, or Women's Studies. Others combine French with a departmental concentration such as history, art history, economics, political science, or another language. Individually tailored majors involving French and Francophone Studies, such as comparative literature, can be created through the Independent Program.

For more information, please visit <http://french.vassar.edu>.

## Geography

Geography is an open and rewarding social science discipline that focuses on the distributions, divisions, and connections of cultural, social, political-economic, and environmental phenomena across global space. Just as history deals with changes, differences, and patterns over time, geography deals with such matters over space. As such, geography offers ways to understand the spatial relations of society, world regional dynamics, and human-environmental interactions and impacts. These are phenomena that cross multiple spatial scales—from rural or urban communities to cities, regions, nation-states, and the entire planet. Contemporary geographic questions include the causes and consequences of environmental disasters, migration and inter-ethnic relations, and impacts of globalization on localities. We ask why cities and regions develop as they do, how landscapes express cultural practices, and what are the roots and manifestations of violence and terror? Direct field experience and real-world examples are important in geographic research. Interested first-year students should take *Global Geography: Place-Making in the Modern World* (Geography 102). This course examines major contemporary issues such as the impact of environmental changes on local communities, uneven development of the global political-economic system, the implications of nation-states and borders, cultural landscapes, and differentiated urban space. It also examines mapping and cartographic communication.

At the intermediate level, thematic courses in geography engage topics such as urban and economic geography; food and farming; natural resource conservation; human rights; and population and sustainable development. Regional courses focus on social, cultural, political-economic, and environmental change in regions such as China, Brazil, and the U.S.-Mexico borderlands. Courses in cartography, geographic information systems (GIS), and research methods provide practical skills that equip students for a wide variety of careers.

Because geography so easily lends itself to multidisciplinary inquiry, many geography courses at Vassar satisfy requirements in multidisciplinary programs at the college,

including Africana Studies, American Studies, Asian Studies, Environmental Studies, International Studies, Latin American and Latino/a Studies, and Urban Studies. Recent Vassar geography graduates have careers in urban planning, environmental and resource management, social justice organizing, public affairs, transportation analysis, international development, architecture, journalism, law, and teaching—among other fields.

For more information, please visit <http://earth-scienceandgeography.vassar.edu> or email the chair of the Earth Science and Geography Department, Mary Ann Cunningham, at [macunningham@vassar.edu](mailto:macunningham@vassar.edu).

## Geography-Anthropology

This interdepartmental concentration combines the perspectives of geography and anthropology in examining the cultural, ecological, and spatial relations of societies and their environments. Requirements for the concentration include 13 units from geography and anthropology, with no less than 6 units in each field. Freshmen should consider taking Geography 102 as well as an introductory anthropology course such as Anthropology 100, 120, 140, or 150.

For more information, please visit <http://earth-scienceandgeography.vassar.edu> or email the chair of the Earth Science and Geography Department, Mary Ann Cunningham, at [macunningham@vassar.edu](mailto:macunningham@vassar.edu).

## Geology (see Earth Science)

## German Studies

The Department of German Studies offers an integrated and holistic approach to the study of language, literature, and culture. This approach embodies Vassar's liberal arts principle of "going to the source" by engaging with primary documents and by exploring the fundamental debates and processes that have shaped German culture and its relationship to the contemporary world. Germany's location at the intersection between Eastern and Western Europe, as well as the size of its economy, continues to make German an advantageous language in today's global world, while Germany's history and culture continue to pose significant questions for our contemporary society.

The department's faculty has developed an innovative curriculum that redefines what language study means. In particular, the department seeks to provide students with intellectual engagement at all levels of the curriculum. Thus, rather than merely memorizing grammar rules and vocabulary, the department's language courses are organized around a sophisticated study of engaging topics, such as childhood, contemporary identity, and media politics, that facilitate language learning. Because the department's faculty participates actively in many of the college's multidisciplinary programs, German courses feature interdisciplinary methods and topics. Finally, the relatively small size of the program enables an individualized course of study in which students develop close working relationships with faculty members. The German Studies Department also offers study

abroad opportunities for either a semester or a year at universities in Berlin, Heidelberg, Munich and elsewhere.

During freshman orientation, students can consult with faculty about the appropriate courses to take. Freshmen who have never studied German should enroll in the year-long Beginning German (German 105-106) or Intensive Beginning German (German 109), a two-unit, one-semester course. Generally, students with less than two years of German in high school should enroll in German 105 or 109; students with more than two years and less than four should register for German 210; students with more than four years of high school German should enroll in German 230. Students who receive a score of 4 or 5 on the AP examination in German language or German literature should register for either German 210 or German 230 and should consult with the department during orientation.

In addition to these courses in German, the department also offers several courses each year in English translation: a Freshman Writing Seminar (German 101), Introduction to German Cultural Studies (German 235) and German Film (German 265). All these courses are open to freshmen.

In addition to courses, the department offers additional opportunities for practicing German through the activities of the German Club, such as the weekly Kaffeeklatsch, film showings, and get-togethers with our German language fellow.

For more information, please visit <http://german.vassar.edu>.

## Greek (See Greek and Roman Studies)

## Greek and Roman Studies

Students who study in the Greek and Roman Studies Department explore aspects of the ancient Mediterranean world with an emphasis on the cultures of Greece and Rome. At the heart of this exploration are the languages of the Greeks and the Romans as well as their literature, history, art and architecture, philosophy, religion, politics, relations with the other peoples of the Mediterranean, and reception and interpretation by later cultures.

The story of “classical” scholarship goes back to the Library of Alexandria in the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE. The project that the scholars of the library undertook was to collect, copy, and edit as many texts of Greek literature as they could find. The study of the Greeks and Romans still has, at its core, this act of preservation. But, like the Alexandrian scholars and perhaps more self-consciously, we acknowledge that we are also involved in an act of reinterpretation. Our goal is both to preserve the knowledge of ancient cultures but also to interpret that knowledge in the context of contemporary culture.

We bring to this project many different skills and many different methods. Again, at the heart of the enterprise are the philological skills that the Alexandrian scholars developed: the ability to look back at a “dead” language and imagine it in its living form so as to read texts as richly as possible. An ancient historian adds to this skill the ability

to gather disparate kinds of fragmentary evidence, both literary and material, to reconstruct both the major national and international events that shaped these cultures as well as the day-to-day texture of life. In this they rely heavily on archaeologists who uncover the physical traces of the past and attempt to establish a chronology and a function for these remains. Literary scholars not only find evidence in works of literature for the aesthetic principles that govern the creation of literary works of art, but also apply modern theoretical approaches that allow us to see literature as a reflection of social, political, and religious assumptions.

But in the end every student of Greek and Roman studies is using insights about the ancient world to enrich his or her understanding of our modern world. What classicists develop is an intense self-consciousness about the nature of their own assumptions, fashioned by the world in which they live—assumptions that the study of antiquity allows us to question, that we must question, in order to be able to focus our attention on the strange “otherness” of different cultures that have much to teach us.

Students interested in learning Greek or Latin, or who have done so only briefly, should take Elementary Greek (Greek and Roman Studies 125-126) or Elementary Latin (Greek and Roman Studies 145-146); these yearlong courses cover the essentials of grammar and include short readings from ancient texts. Those who have had two or more years in high school should consult with a member of the department, who may direct them to a higher-level course. Courses in English, for those interested in ancient societies, include the introductory course, Then and Now: Reinterpreting Greece and Rome (Greek and Roman Studies 100), Greek Archaeology (Greek and Roman Studies 104), and Crosscurrents: The Ancient Mediterranean (GRST 184).

For more information, please visit <http://greekandromanstudies.vassar.edu>. You are also welcome to contact Bert Lott, chair of the Greek and Roman Studies Department, at [jlott@vassar.edu](mailto:jlott@vassar.edu).

## Hispanic Studies

The curriculum in Hispanic Studies has a twofold purpose: to teach the skills required to understand, speak, read, and write the Spanish language and to guide the student in the search for an understanding of the literatures and cultures of Spain and Latin America. Normally, all courses in the department, from introductory language instruction to advanced seminars, are taught in Spanish.

Students entering Vassar with less than two years of high school Spanish and who wish to begin the study of the Spanish language in the freshman year should enroll in the yearlong Hispanic Studies 105-106. For students with some background in Spanish who wish to continue to study the language, please use the following guidelines when selecting the appropriate level: with two years, Hispanic Studies 109; three years, Hispanic Studies 205; four or more years, Hispanic Studies 206. Successful completion of the introductory sequence, Hispanic Studies 105-106, or of any one semester course at a higher level suffices to meet the college language requirement. Additional guidance about

appropriate placement will be available during New Student Orientation.

In addition to formal course work, the department sponsors a weekly Spanish table in the student dining hall, designed for informal, conversational practice, and a weekly Café Sur in our lounge in Chicago Hall. The department also screens a series of films from Spanish-speaking countries. All activities—open to all students—are directed by the Hispanic Studies language fellow, a recent graduate of a Spanish or Latin American university. The language fellow also assists with the conversation sections of Hispanic Studies 206.

The department sponsors a study abroad program in Spain. The academic year program, located at the Universidad Carlos III in Madrid, Spain, is co-sponsored by Wesleyan University. This program, normally taken during the junior year, may be elected for either the semester or the full year. To qualify, students must have completed Hispanic Studies 206 or its equivalent. Courses in the Vassar-Wesleyan Program in Madrid are listed in the catalogue at the end of the section on Hispanic Studies. Hispanic Studies majors are encouraged to study in a Spanish-speaking country during their Vassar career.

For more information, please visit <http://hispanicstudies.vassar.edu> or email [hispanicstudies@vassar.edu](mailto:hispanicstudies@vassar.edu).

## History

The History Department at Vassar College has a distinguished tradition of helping students “go to the source” as they take up the craft of history. From the beginning, students learn how to examine historical problems using the rich resources of the library and presenting their findings in class discussions, presentations, and papers. All courses stress the examination of both original sources and historical interpretations. The aim throughout is to help students develop skills in independent research, critical analysis, and imaginative synthesis.

We strongly recommend that students begin with a 100-level course. First-year students, whatever their academic background, tend to find our introductory classes quite different from any history course they have taken in the past. These courses include extensive class discussion, deep engagement with original historical documents, and independent research. Different 100-level courses introduce students to such fields as the so-called “Dark Ages,” the histories of Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the U.S., and the modern Middle East.

Incoming Vassar history students frequently ask whether they can “place out” of 100-level courses and begin at the 200-level. Ordinarily, one 100-level history course in any field is the prerequisite for enrolling in a 200-level history class. However, students who receive a score of 4 or 5 on the AP examination in American or European history may wish to consider taking 200-level history courses. If you have such a score, and if you believe your background prepares you to enroll at the 200-level, you should consult the instructor by email or attend the first class session and ask the instructor to consider your request. If you become

a history major and you received a 4 or 5 on an AP history exam (U.S., European, or World), you may count at most one AP credit toward the 11 units required for the major. AP credits cannot be used to fulfill the major’s distribution requirements. Alternately, students who have participated in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and have earned a score of 5, 6, or 7 on the Higher Level Examinations may count that as one of the 11 units required for the major. The department also offers a correlate sequence that permits students to combine a sequence of six history courses with a major in another discipline. More information can be found in our *History Handbook*, available in the front foyer of Swift Hall, just to the left of the stairway. Feel free to stop by and pick up a copy, or explore the History Department website for more information about our faculty, course offerings, Majors Committee, department activities, and the recently established Evalyn Clark Travel Awards for history majors.

History faculty are most willing to advise first-year students, whether or not they are considering a major. Arriving students with questions about the history program—especially prospective majors—are cordially invited to visit the department in Swift Hall and introduce themselves to the department chair, Maria Hoehn. Her office is Swift Hall, Room 103. She is best reached by email ([mahoehn@vassar.edu](mailto:mahoehn@vassar.edu)) for an appointment or consultation.

For more information, please visit <http://history.vassar.edu>.

## Independent Program

The Independent Program exists to allow the study of subjects of interest to a student that can only be approached in a multidisciplinary way and for which Vassar does not already have a formalized interdepartmental or multidisciplinary program. For example, a student wishing to understand the roots of human behavior might propose an Independent major and draw upon courses in sociology, biology, psychology, anthropology, religion, and history, to name a few of the most obvious. Alternatively, the same student might major in a multidisciplinary program such as neuroscience and behavior or women’s studies, or study the roots of human behavior from the point of view of a single discipline.

The Independent Program will accept proposals from students who wish to elect a field of concentration that is not provided by one of the regular departments, interdepartmental concentrations, or multidisciplinary concentrations of the college. Prospective majors must first meet with the director of the Independent Program before beginning the process of making a formal application. The formal application may then be submitted to the director, who will take it to the Independent Program Committee. This should occur no later than the sophomore year. The Independent Program Committee will then evaluate the proposal. A proposal may be accepted, sent back to the student for revisions, or denied. The committee may suggest ways in which a student can explore an area of study through some department or program that already exists at the college. If admitted to the Independent Program, the student follows the agreed

upon course of study, culminating in the senior thesis, under the continuing guidance of two faculty advisors. The variety of major concentrations is made possible both by the breadth of Vassar's curriculum and by access to courses at other institutions through various exchange programs.

For more information, please visit <http://independent-program.vassar.edu>.

## Interdepartmental Courses

Vassar students may train as required for state certification as an emergency medical technician by taking a yearlong EMT Training course (INTD 150-151) for 0.5 units of credit each semester. It is expected that the students who complete the training will serve on the Vassar EMT squad. See the Vassar catalogue for more details.

## International Studies

International Studies (IS) is a multidisciplinary program that allows students (in consultation with the program's director and the panel of advisors) to design a course of study that draws on courses from across the Vassar curriculum. The program's faculty come from various departments and programs, including Anthropology, Asian Studies, Chinese and Japanese, Economics, Education, Environmental Studies, French and Francophones Studies, Geography, German Studies, Hispanic Studies, History, Latin American and Latino Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Sociology, and Urban Studies.

Although the international studies major is flexible, there are specific requirements for majors to follow to ensure a coherent plan of study. Majors must, for example, complete work at the advanced seminar level in two disciplines; complete intermediate level work in three social sciences, and complete a thesis by the end of senior year. In addition, IS majors must demonstrate proficiency in a language corresponding to the geographic area selected by the student as his or her area of focus.

IS majors generally spend all or part of their junior year at academic institutions overseas. In the last several years our students have attended universities in Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Cameroon, China, England, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Morocco, Madagascar, Malaysia, Russia, Taiwan, Uganda, and South Africa.

As part of the program, International Studies sponsors an annual study trip, open to all Vassar students, credited as a semester course. Over the years, students have traveled to Indonesia, Jamaica, Russia, Vietnam, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Cuba, Brazil, China, Morocco, Lesser Antilles, Chile, Mexico, and Spain. Students learn about the culture, economics, history, language, and political situation of the area they will visit.

To ensure the effectiveness of their proposed course work, international studies majors consult regularly with professors. For the senior thesis, majors work with two advisors from different departments.

For more information, please visit <http://international-studies.vassar.edu>, or contact the program director.

## Italian

The Italian Department offers a variety of courses in Italian language, literature, cinema, and general culture. Besides achieving fluency in spoken and written Italian, through our courses students explore the debates that have shaped Italy over the centuries and its important contribution to humanistic culture. All courses in the department, from introductory language instruction to advanced seminars, are typically taught in Italian. Freshmen with no previous experience in Italian should take the yearlong Italian 105-106, which is an introduction to the language and culture of Italy through short stories and plays, opera and popular music, and film and popular culture. Students with some high school knowledge of Italian or of another Romance language can take the two-unit Intensive Elementary Italian (Italian 107), which is offered in both fall and spring terms. All students with previous knowledge of Italian will be placed in the appropriate courses after an interview with the department chair. An oral and written exam may be used for advanced placement or to fulfill the Foreign Language Proficiency requirement.

To coordinate the different language activities, a native Italian language fellow will be in residence. Students are encouraged to attend extracurricular activities organized by the department and by the Italian Majors' Committee, such as opera events at the Metropolitan Opera House, the Italian Cinema Club, and cooking classes. In the summer after their freshman year, students have the opportunity to participate in a program in Siena, Italy.

Italian majors and correlates are encouraged to spend a semester or a year in Italy, usually during their junior year. In conjunction with Wellesley College and Wesleyan University, Vassar offers the Eastern College Consortium Program in Bologna, Italy, where students take courses at the program center and the University of Bologna. To qualify, students must complete four semesters of Italian. Typical correlate combinations include Art History, Studio Art, Drama, Film, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, History, Women's Studies, and International Studies.

For more information, visit <http://italian.vassar.edu> or email the chair, Roberta Antognini, at [roantognini@vassar.edu](mailto:roantognini@vassar.edu).

## Japanese (See Chinese and Japanese)

## Jewish Studies

Jewish Studies is a multidisciplinary approach to the diversity of Jewish experience. This approach involves studying the creation and reproduction of Jewish culture in multiethnic societies in the ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary world as well as such subjects as languages and translations, texts and images, diaspora and Zionism, law and religion, and the cultural construction of Jewish identities. The program is supported by instruction in Hebrew language from elementary through advanced levels, with opportunities to study abroad in Israel and elsewhere during the junior year. Yiddish language at the elementary and intermediate levels is available through the Self-Instructional Language

Program, and special instruction in Aramaic, the language of the Talmud, is available. Because a large and important population of Jews in the pre-1948 era lived in the linguistic and cultural milieu of Arab lands, students may wish to consider taking advantage of the Arabic language curriculum in support of their work in Jewish studies.

Jewish studies draws upon faculty from a wide variety of departments including Anthropology, Greek and Roman Studies, English, Geography, German Studies, Hispanic Studies, History, Political Science, Psychology, and Religion, reflecting the multidisciplinary orientation of the field.

The program strongly recommends that students pursue one of the many options that exist for a junior year abroad experience. Students are encouraged to begin discussions about this with their professors as soon as possible. In addition to the core courses in Jewish studies, the program is supplemented by an ample list of approved courses on topics in Jewish culture offered in the constituent disciplines of the field (consult the catalogue under "Jewish Studies"). These courses, along with approved courses taken in a junior year abroad, may be credited to the major or correlate sequence. Requirements for the major and correlate sequence are detailed in the catalogue; in brief, students chart their own paths through the diversity of disciplinary methodologies and subject areas, establishing their own points of significant intersection, thus contributing to the definition of this field of study. No prior background in the study of Jews or Judaism, whether of a religious or cultural nature, is assumed.

For more information, please visit <http://jewishstudies.vassar.edu>.

**Latin** (See Greek and Roman Studies)

## Latin American and Latino/a Studies

The Latin American and Latino/a Studies Program provides a multidisciplinary approach to the study of Latin America and the Latino/a populations of the Americas. The program emphasizes knowledge of global politics, economies, cultures, and nations as theorized, imagined, and practiced through Latin/Latino/a America. Participating faculty are drawn from the following departments: Anthropology, Economics, Education, Geography, Hispanic Studies, History, Political Science, and Sociology.

A reading knowledge of Spanish or Portuguese is required for majors; deeper knowledge of the relevant language is recommended. An introductory course in Latin American and Latino/a Studies and a senior seminar are required, as is a course in history and in Latino/a Studies. Majors are expected to elect work above the introductory level in at least three departments and are encouraged to pursue a structured academic experience relevant to the student's program beyond Vassar during the junior year, either in Latin America or at an appropriate domestic institution. In the senior year, majors may choose to write a senior thesis

or conduct a senior project under the guidance of two professors from different disciplines.

First-year students interested in the program may take Conceptualizing Latin and Latino/a America (Latin American and Latino/a Studies 105), offered in the fall semester. LALS 105 offers a multidisciplinary exploration of the worlds of Latin and Latino/a America, drawing on the expertise of LALS participating faculty to introduce students to critical themes and issues that shape the realities of Latin American and Latino/a worlds. Topics to be treated may include gender and development, the formation of national identities, urbanization and uneven development, revolution, indigenous rebellions and resistance, the politics of memory, plantation economies and their environmental impact, human rights education and peace building, immigrant children and education, and questions of cultural citizenship. Prospective majors are strongly encouraged to take this course.

For more information, please visit <http://latinamericanstudies.vassar.edu>.

## Mathematics

Mathematics is one of the oldest learned disciplines and is the basis for understanding much of the physical world. It is essential for the study of modern developments in the social sciences. Mathematics graduates are very much in demand in teaching, the business world, and the computing professions. A strong background in mathematics also increases an applicant's chances of admission to law and medical schools and to graduate programs in engineering, economics, and business management. It is essential for graduate programs in statistics, computer science, and the physical sciences.

The department offers a number of course sequences for freshmen. For any questions of placement, please consult the department during the departmental advising sessions.

Freshmen who have taken a year of calculus in high school should enroll in one of the following depending on their particular background: Calculus IIA: Integration Theory (Math 126, a six-week course), Calculus IIB: Sequences and Series (Math 127, a six-week course), or Multivariable Calculus (Math 220). Math 126 together with 127 will satisfy the QA requirement, and these courses may be taken in either order. However, many students will need only Math 127 to progress to the 200-level. These students can fulfill their QA requirement by enrolling in Math 220.

Freshmen who have had little or no calculus in high school should enroll in Single Variable Calculus (Math 121), which begins with first principles. If such a student plans a major in the sciences or plans to take additional courses in mathematics, it is recommended that Math 121 be followed by Math 126 and 127 during their first year.

Here is some general advice for students wishing to pre-register in a math course:

Students who receive a 4 or 5 on the AP Calculus BC examination should elect Math 220. Students who earn a 3 or below on the BC examination will ordinarily take either Math 127 alone, or Math 126 and Math 127 but must discuss their placement with the department.

Students who receive a 4 or 5 on the AP Calculus AB examination are advised to elect Math 127. Students with a 3 or below on the AB examination are advised to enroll in Math 126 and Math 127. But students should confirm these placements by consulting with the department during the departmental advising sessions.

Students with a full year of calculus, through IB or in some other setting, should consult with the department but may sign up for 126/127 or 220 in advance with the anticipation of possibly needing to switch to a different level after consultation on campus.

Any student without AP credit in mathematics can still receive 1 unit of credit by performing well enough on a written Calculus Credit Examination given in early September. The time and place of the Calculus Credit Examination will be posted on the Mathematics bulletin board in Rockefeller Hall and announced in classes. The first part of the examination covers limits, differentiation and its applications, graphs, the definite integral and area, and polar coordinates. The second part covers exponential, logarithmic, and trigonometric functions and their inverses; techniques of integration; volume and arc length; indeterminate forms; and simple differential equations.

Any of the following satisfies the pre-medical calculus requirement: Math 121/126/127, Math 126/127, Math 220. The department also offers Introduction to Statistics (Math 141). The careful analysis of data plays an important role in almost every aspect of modern life and statistics is its science. This course is not open to students who have a 4 or 5 on the AP statistics exam.

It is important that students considering a major in mathematics complete Math 220 and 221 by the end of the sophomore year. Consequently, Math 121/126/127 should be completed by the end of the freshman year. The department encourages its majors to design well-balanced programs with representative courses from the arts, foreign languages, humanities, physical sciences, and social sciences.

For more information, please visit <http://math.vassar.edu>.

## Media Studies Program

The Media Studies Program offers students a multidisciplinary approach to the study of media culture. The program's curriculum provides students with the intellectual and creative tools to become sophisticated analysts of both contemporary and historical media environments, developing theoretical and critical skills that can be used in everyday experiences of media consumption and production. The program's curriculum includes considerations of the form and aesthetics of media objects, the history of old and new media technologies, the economic and organizational structure of media industries, indigenous and oppositional media forms, and the social implications of and ethical issues associated with various media.

The program includes a set of core courses that provides students with a strong base in media theory and analysis, beginning with a thoroughly multidisciplinary introductory-level class, Approaches to Media Studies (Media Studies 160), and culminating in a senior seminar and an individual

senior project for all majors. The specific focus of each student's program is tailored to individual student interests. Media studies majors work with a faculty advisor and the program director to design a plan of study from a set of approved courses from departments such as Anthropology, Art, Computer Science, English, Film, and Sociology, among others. Students are also encouraged to link their theoretical and critical study of media with hands-on, practice-based courses and/or internships in media-related workplaces. Because the media studies concentration incorporates courses originating within the program as well as a wide range of courses from other programs and departments, students wishing to major in media studies should consult with the program director as early as possible to design their course of study.

For more information, visit <http://mediastudies.vassar.edu>.

## Medieval and Renaissance Studies

The Program in Medieval and Renaissance Studies allows students to engage in the study of the art, history, literature, and thought of European culture from the fall of Rome to the 17th century. Students are expected to elect work from three groups of disciplines: art history and music; history, political science, philosophy, and religion; and language and literature. In addition, students are expected to gain a reading knowledge of requisite foreign languages and, in their senior year, write an interdisciplinary essay under the supervision of one or more of the participating faculty.

Freshmen interested in Medieval and Renaissance Studies should consult with the director soon after arriving on campus. Freshmen considering majoring in the program should elect some of the introductory courses in Greek and Roman Studies, Philosophy, Religion, Political Science, and History during their first year at the college. Students should select introductory courses in the two disciplines that they hope to study at the higher level. Art 105-106 provides a grounding for the program, as do the historical sections of English 101. Students should think carefully about the language that they plan to take in the program. The Dark Ages (History 116) is a valuable introduction to medieval history. Latin is highly recommended for students planning to enter graduate school in medieval studies. Since many majors study abroad, it is wise to begin or continue a language appropriate to the country anticipated.

For more information, please visit <http://medievalandrenaissancestudies.vassar.edu>.

## Music

Music is studied at Vassar in each of its distinct but interrelated aspects: theory, history, composition, and performance.

Freshmen may choose from among Fundamentals of Music (Music 101), Harmony (Music 105/106), Introduction to World Music (Music 136), Introduction to Western Art Music (Music 140/141), or Hearing Politics: The Sound of the 2016 Campaign (Music 180), a Freshman Writing Seminar.

For those students planning on majoring in music, Music 105/106 should be taken in the freshman year if possible, as these courses are prerequisites to all subsequent courses in the major. Music 105/106 is a study of tonal harmony in the 18th and 19th centuries and requires familiarity with the rudiments of music. Music 101 (offered both semesters) is a study of musical fundamentals and requires no previous musical training; it cannot be counted toward the major. Music 136 and 140/141 focus on various topics in music of non-Western and Western cultures; neither may be counted toward the major.

An advanced placement test is offered for those students who have had previous work in basic harmony to determine whether they can be excused from Music 105. A student may receive one unit of college credit if appropriate proficiency is demonstrated.

Freshmen may elect private study in the following: piano, jazz piano, organ, harpsichord, voice, violin, viola, cello, double bass, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, saxophone, French horn, trumpet, trombone, tuba, percussion, classical guitar, jazz guitar, and harp.

An audition is required for all voice and some instrumental lessons. Audition sign-up sheets will be posted on the board outside Skinner 105 on Thursday, August 27. Enrollment is limited in each instrument with preference given to music majors and those students electing credited lessons.

The Music Department believes that music performance in a liberal arts environment should be studied in the context of some knowledge of music history and theory. Therefore, students taking lessons for credit are required to take at least one music course no later than the third semester of study and, if continuing with lessons, must complete two courses by their junior year. Freshmen and first semester sophomores are especially encouraged to take at least one of the following: 101, 105, 136, 140, 141, or 180.

Scholarships for students electing credited lessons are available to those on financial aid for lessons in one instrument each semester. Eligible students must apply for the scholarship at the beginning of each semester. Please visit <http://admissions.vassar.edu/financial-aid/>.

For more information, please visit <http://music.vassar.edu>.

## Neuroscience and Behavior

Neuroscience and Behavior is an interdisciplinary program that applies the perspectives and techniques of biology and psychology to the study of the brain and behavior. Neuroscientists are interested in how the interactions of brain, body, and environment contribute to animal (including human) behavior. Neuroscientists study the structure and function of the nervous system, the development and evolution of neural and behavioral systems, and interactions among behavior, environment, physiology, and heredity.

Detailed study of different behavioral systems and different levels of organization raises many intriguing questions. How do the cells of the brain “learn”? How do various drugs alter both brain function and behavior? What kinds of environmental and social events influence how and when an animal will eat or mate? How do different animals

communicate, whether it be humans using language or spiders vibrating a web?

Students interested in majoring in neuroscience and behavior will want to take introductory courses in biology (Biology 105 and 106) and psychology (Psychology 105 or 106) in the freshman year. Please refer to the biology and psychology sections in this handbook for more information about these courses and about placement if you have AP credit. Typically, students begin to take the core courses of the major curriculum in the sophomore year.

For more information about the courses, the faculty, and what to do with a degree in neuroscience and behavior after graduation, please visit our website at <http://neuroscienceandbehavior.vassar.edu>. If you have questions that are not answered when you visit the website, please email [keholloway@vassar.edu](mailto:keholloway@vassar.edu).

## Philosophy

The word “philosophy” comes from the Greek *Φιλοσοφία*, which literally means “love of wisdom.” Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental problems concerning matters such as existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. It is distinguished from other ways of addressing fundamental questions by its critical, generally systematic approach and its reliance on rational argument.

Freshmen have the opportunity to begin the study of philosophy by means of five courses open to them. This selection allows students to prioritize courses and align them with their interests or plans for future study.

Philosophy 101 and 102 both study the history of Western philosophy through the great texts of this tradition. Philosophy 101 covers the ancients: the origin of Western philosophy in pre-Socratic thought and the works of Plato and Aristotle. Philosophy 102 surveys modern philosophy from Descartes to Kant. Both courses constitute an essential background for understanding later philosophical movements and provide conceptual tools to work in a variety of fields. These courses may be taken in any order.

Philosophical Questions (Philosophy 105) and Philosophy and Contemporary Issues (Philosophy 106) are organized around philosophical problems rather than authors or periods. Philosophy 105 explores some traditional questions concerning the relation between the mind and the body, the nature of truth, the scope and limits of human knowledge, and the basis of ethics. Philosophy 106 investigates philosophical issues arising out of contemporary morality and politics. Both courses are concerned with helping students develop their critical powers and philosophical views.

Philosophy 110 is an introduction to ancient Chinese philosophy, roughly from 500 to 221 BC, with a special focus on early Confucianism and Taoism. Topics discussed include human nature, methods of ethical education and self-cultivation, virtues and vices, along with the role of conventions and institutions of human life. This course assumes no background knowledge of philosophy, Chinese culture, or language.

For more information, please visit <http://philosophy.vassar.edu>.

## Physical Education

The instructional program in the Physical Education Department offers 0.5 units of academic credit for courses in the following physical activities: fencing, fundamentals of conditioning, golf, soccer, squash, swimming, tennis, triathlon training, volleyball, and weight training. Two courses, Introduction to Athletic Injury Care (Physical Education 110) and Nutrition and Exercise (Physical Education 210), are offered for one unit of academic credit. Students may also earn 0.5 credits for participation on a varsity athletics team with approval from the coach.

No more than four 0.5 units of physical education credit may count toward the degree. One-unit courses are exempted from this limitation.

Beginning classes assume no prior experience. Those who think they qualify for an intermediate or advanced section should register for it. However, they should be prepared to drop it after the first class if the instructor thinks they are not ready for that level of work.

For more information, please contact the associate director of athletics for Physical Education at 845-437-7450.

## Physics and Astronomy

### ASTRONOMY

The astronomy program accommodates students interested in careers in professional astronomy as well as those who wish to combine a strong background in astronomy with specialization in another field. Except at the introductory level, astronomy courses have small enrollments (3 to 10 is typical) and students have good access to faculty as well as instrumentation. Recent graduates have gone on to graduate astronomy programs at Caltech, UCLA, Penn State, Columbia, Boston University, Hawaii, Indiana, and University of Florida. Other recent astronomy graduates are pursuing careers in such diverse fields as physics, government, secondary education, law, engineering, media consulting, journalism, computing, finance, medicine, music, and drama. Those interested in astronomy should consider enrolling in Astronomy 101, 105, or 150. These introductory courses survey many areas of modern astronomy and presume little mathematical or scientific background. They also satisfy the quantitative analysis requirement. Students with some background in science and calculus may wish to consider Introduction to Observational Astronomy (Astronomy 240), with special permission. First-year students with an interest in majoring in astronomy should consult with the department at their earliest convenience and consider electing physics and calculus in their first semester. Such students may contact Professor Debra Elmegreen over the summer by email to [elmegreen@vassar.edu](mailto:elmegreen@vassar.edu), even prior to course selection.

In May 1997, the college celebrated the opening of a new facility on campus, the Class of 1951 Observatory. The building houses a 32-inch telescope and a 20-inch telescope, each computer-controlled and equipped with an electronic camera. A high-resolution spectrograph and

various small telescopes, including a solar telescope, are also at the site. We support a program of monitoring variable objects (such as quasars and stars with extrasolar planets) by student observers at the observatory. Research is also done during the academic year and during the summer (through the URSI program) using data from the Hubble Space Telescope and other national observatories. Recent student-faculty research projects have included work on the structure of galaxies, including galaxies in the early universe, quasars, supernovae, exoplanet searches, stellar spectroscopy, mass transfer binaries, the twilight sky, and image processing techniques. Much of the analytical work on these projects is done on department computers optimized for image processing.

Because astronomy is a relatively small field, the department at Vassar finds it important to maintain strong ties with other schools and programs. We have a strong tradition of student participation at astronomy meetings off-campus. Vassar students typically attend one or two such meetings each year. Vassar participates in the Keck Northeast Astronomy Consortium of eight liberal arts institutions, a group that exchanges summer research students, supports faculty visits, and collaborates on several research projects.

America's first woman astronomer, Maria Mitchell, was also the first director of the original Vassar College Observatory, now an historical landmark on campus. She believed astronomical education is best accomplished when students do their own research, and that students work best when they are part of a supportive scientific community. The department today works to maintain Maria Mitchell's legacy.

### PHYSICS

The curriculum of the department is designed to satisfy the needs of students with various goals, including both majors and non-majors. A rigorous course selection is available for those interested in physics, astronomy, or engineering (students may apply for a dual degree with the Thayer School of Engineering at Dartmouth) as well as for pre-medical students, other science majors, or students electing a correlate sequence in physics. Courses are also available for those students with an interest in learning about the ideas of physics with a less quantitative approach.

Freshmen who are interested in majoring in physics should elect Physics 113/114 in their first year (or other physics courses, as determined by advanced placement), as well as an appropriate mathematics course. Freshmen who have not taken calculus must enroll in calculus concurrently with physics. Physics 113/114 are appropriate not only for potential physics majors, but also for those planning possible majors in other sciences and for pre-medical students. Although it is possible to complete the requirements for the physics major by starting in the sophomore year, it is extremely difficult if physics and mathematics are not elected in the freshman year. Interested students are strongly encouraged to work closely with a department advisor in planning their program.

Students who receive a score of 4 or 5 on the Physics 1 exam will receive one unit of AP credit. Students taking

the Physics C Mechanics exam or Physics C Electricity and Magnetism exam will receive 0.5 units of credit each for a score of 4 or 5. Students with AP Physics credit, IB Physics, or A-level Physics may still elect to enroll in Physics 113 and/or 114 for credit. Placement into Physics 114 or Physics 200 or other upper-level physics courses will be determined through an online placement exam, available from June 15 through July 15 at <http://physicsandastronomy.vassar.edu/physics/placement.html>. You will hear from a faculty member regarding the results and advice on course selection within three days of taking the test. You are strongly encouraged to take the exam before selecting your courses. Additional placement issues should be addressed by consultation with the department during departmental advising during orientation. Students who have any questions over the summer about placement may contact Brian Daly ([brdaly@vassar.edu](mailto:brdaly@vassar.edu)) or David Bradley ([dabradley@vassar.edu](mailto:dabradley@vassar.edu)) prior to selecting courses.

Special note to pre-medical students: The department recommends that students seeking admission to medical school enroll in Physics 113/114 at Vassar or an equivalent calculus-based physics course at another institution. Students who receive AP physics credit should discuss pre-med fulfillment of the laboratory requirement with the director of fellowships and pre-health advising and the chair of the Physics and Astronomy Department.

The department also offers courses primarily for non-science majors and for which major credit is not given. In 2015/16, we offer *The Sound of Space* (Physics/Music/Art History 125), *A Tour of the Subatomic Zoo* (Physics 168), and *Relatively Uncertain: A History of Physics, Religion, and Pop Culture* (Physics/Religion/ Science, Technology, and Society 160). Other courses that will be offered in future years include *The Limits of the Universe and the Limits of Understanding* (Physics/Philosophy 150), *Lasers, Technology, and Teleportation* (Physics 152), and *20th Century Revolutions in Physics* (Physics/STS 105).

There are opportunities in the department for research collaboration and thesis work with faculty in fields including acoustics, physics education, ultrafast laser physics, atomic, molecular and optical physics, and biophysics. Summer research with faculty is available through Vassar's Undergraduate Research Summer Institute (URSI).

For more information, please visit <http://physicsandastronomy.vassar.edu>.

## Political Science

Politics, the pursuit and exercise of power, exists in many realms of social life—not just in government but in businesses, religious institutions, universities, clubs, the media, and families. The academic discipline of political science focuses mainly on the politics of states (governments), including their political relations with members of society and with one another. It examines the sources, distribution, and exercise of power; the roles of class, race, and gender; the dynamics and impact of social movements; the political attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups; the functioning of domestic and international political institutions;

the relations among states, nations, and other actors in the international system; political beliefs, values, and ideologies; mass media and communications; the place of legal systems in domestic and international politics; major issues of public policy such as affirmative action, reproductive rights, and access to health care; human rights, immigration, welfare reform, and governmental budgets; and major global issues such as war, the economy, and the environment.

Four one-semester courses corresponding to the major fields of political science are offered at the introductory level: American Politics (Political Science 140), Comparative Politics (Political Science 150, political systems outside the U.S.), International Politics (Political Science 160, the relations among nations), and Political Theory (Political Science 170, political philosophy). Freshmen planning to major in political science would normally elect one introductory course. This fulfills the introductory level requirement for concentration in political science. Students are allowed to count up to two units at the 100-level in political science toward the major.

A concentration or major in political science not only serves the purposes of a liberal arts education but is especially relevant to careers in law, business, finance, governmental service at all levels, politics, teaching, and political journalism. Opportunities exist for internships and practical experience outside the college in such settings as the United Nations, Capitol Hill, law offices and courts, and political campaigns, and for study abroad in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, or the Middle East.

For more information, please visit <http://politicalscience.vassar.edu>.

## Psychology

The Psychology Department offers two one-semester introductory courses. *Introduction to Psychology: A Survey* (Psychology 105) is designed to introduce the student to fundamental psychological processes, their nature and development, and contemporary methods for their study through a survey of the major research areas in the field. *Introduction to Psychology: Special Topics* (Psychology 106) is designed to introduce the student to the science of psychology by exploration of a specific research area in depth. Either of these courses can serve as a prerequisite for all other coursework in psychology. Psychology 105 and 106 include a number of readings and assignments introducing basic concepts of research design and data analysis.

Advanced course placement in 200-level courses is available only to students who have completed an introductory course in psychology at a college or university. Such students should submit to the department chair the syllabus and description of the text used in the course, as well as an official transcript for approval. A high school course in psychology does not qualify a student for advanced course placement. An AP examination in psychology similarly does not qualify one for advanced course placement into 200-level courses. In addition, an AP examination in statistics does not meet the requirement for the statistics course in psychology. A college-level course must have been taken,

and the syllabus and description of the course must be submitted to and approved by the chair of the department.

A wide range of intermediate-level course offerings is available covering the major sub-areas of the diverse field of psychology. These include development, learning and behavior, comparative, health, clinical, individual differences, physiological, and social psychology.

Students interested in majoring in psychology or pursuing advanced course work should consult with the department and obtain a copy of the Psychology Major's Handbook.

For more information, please visit <http://psychology.vassar.edu>.

### **The following section of Psychology 106 will be offered in the fall term:**

#### **Psychology 106a Sex on the Brain**

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the science of psychology via an exploration of contemporary research and theory on sex and sexuality. Special attention is devoted to scientific methodology in the study of sex and sexuality in order to give you a solid understanding of how psychologists and other scientists conduct their research and build theories about phenomena associated with sex. Please note: This is not a human sexuality course; it is a psychology course that uses the study of human sexuality to introduce you to psychology. You will leave the course not only with an understanding of the physiological, evolutionary, learning, developmental, personality and social psychological perspectives on human sexual behavior, among other topics, but also with the necessary knowledge and conceptual tools to continue your explorations in psychology and other experimental sciences.

PSYC 106.01 TR 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Cornelius

#### **Psychology 106a The Social Brain and Behavior**

This course introduces the science of psychology through the lens of social psychology. The course focuses on "the power of the situation" to shape and explain behavior. Our discussions of evolution, development, learning, cognition, psychophysiology, individual differences, and psychopathology will highlight situational forces and social neuroscience.

PSYC 106.02 TR 3:10-4:25 pm Ms. Morrow

#### **Psychology 106a Your 21st Century Brain**

This course will introduce concepts in psychology and neuroscience. We will begin with attention to a single neuron and conclude with an investigation of how the billions of neurons that compose the nervous system mediate our interactions with other people. Along the way, we will explore how our brains make us who we are by studying development, learning, cognition, sensation, motivation, and mental health.

PSYC 106.03 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Holloway

### **The following sections of Psychology 106 will be offered in the spring term:**

#### **Psychology 106b Sex on the Brain**

(See above for course description)

PSYC 106.51 MW 1:30-2:45 pm Mr. Cornelius

#### **Psyc 106b The Psychology of Creativity and Performance**

The course provides an introduction to psychology with a view particularly to creativity, learning, and performance in arts, sports, sciences, and topics brought by participants to class. The course format includes shared activities with the class, and writing about personally meaningful examples of invention, practice, and performance (your own, or other people's!).

PSYC 106.52 TR 9:00-10:15 am Ms. Palmer

## **Religion**

The academic study of religion is a creative cross-cultural exploration of a range of historical and contemporary phenomena that we categorize as religious. Many of today's pressing political and social problems can be better understood with more knowledge about the religious practices that undergird them. The study of religion is an interdisciplinary endeavor. Some scholars of religion employ historical methods to understand how religious communities and practices change over time. Others use comparative methods to analyze ritual, popular culture, visual and material culture, and media. Some employ sociological, psychological, and anthropological methods to study how religiosity shapes social and individual life. Still others study texts and the questions those texts raise for theoretical, ethical, and political reflection. At Vassar, religion majors are able to ponder—in rigorous, critical ways—some of the more profound issues that human beings face, such as building community, cosmological quests for meaning, and attempts to comprehend suffering and death. Our classes critically explore the complexities of religion around the globe. One can be a successful undergraduate in our major whether one is religiously observant or not; what is required, above all, is a desire to understand better how religious practices, sensibilities, and commitments function in different cultural settings.

For more information, please visit <http://religion.vassar.edu>.

## **Russian Studies**

In 1907, Vassar College became the first among the original Seven Sisters colleges to offer a course on Russian history. In 1939, again first among its peers, Vassar instituted regular courses in Russian. At present, the Department of Russian Studies offers a well-rounded curriculum that includes three years of language instruction and a wide range of literature and culture courses taught both in Russian and in English.

Every fall the department conducts a semester-long junior year abroad program in St. Petersburg that offers our students unique access to the cultural treasures of Russia's imperial capital.

Freshmen with no previous knowledge of the Russian language may elect Elementary Russian (Russian 105-106) or the one-semester Intensive Russian (Russian 107) that covers the same amount of material in a more concentrated fashion. The department gives an oral and written examination to students with previous knowledge of Russian for the purpose of satisfying the Foreign Language Proficiency requirement, for placement into intermediate or advanced courses, and for a possible 2 units of credit. Please be sure to attend the departmental advising session on Thursday morning, August 27, for more information.

In 2015/16, freshmen may also enroll in one of the courses given entirely in English translation. In the first semester we offer four such courses: The Russian Classics (RUSS 135) focuses on the literary giants of 19th-century Russian literature; WWII in Russian Cinema (RUSS 155) surveys cinematic masterpieces exploring war as an existential experience that probes the limits of humanity; Vampires, Monks, and Holy Fools (RUSS 168) explores spiritual landscapes of Russia and Eastern Europe drawing parallels with British and American cultural phenomena; and Russia and the Short Story (RUSS 171), a Freshman Writing Seminar, examines classic short stories by recognized masters of the genre.

In the second semester we teach five courses in English that are open to freshmen: Russian Modernists (RUSS 152) surveys outstanding works of major 20th century writers, with emphasis on those who broke with the realist tradition of the 19th century; Russian Sci-Fi Cinema (RUSS 155) studies the rich genre of Russian cinematic science fiction, from mainstream entertainment to the philosophical masterpieces of Andrei Tarkovsky; Hipsters, Rebels and Rock Stars (RUSS 167) focuses on the non-conformist streak in Russian literature and culture; Eurasia: Ethnic Cinema of the Soviet Union and Russia (RUSS 172) deals with issues of national identity and national traditions in Soviet and post-Soviet film production; Beyond the Looking Glass: Nonsense and Absurd in Russian and European Literature and Visual Arts (RUSS 173) delves into the most paradoxical aspects of culture.

Students who are considering the option of majoring in Russian are urged to begin the study of the language in their freshman year, continuing with intermediate and advanced language courses in their sophomore and junior years. For those who will be starting their language study here, this sequence is mandatory unless one of these levels is covered in an accredited summer program. However, those who have taken Russian in high school or have a knowledge of the language from home should sign up for a placement test that will indicate the appropriate level at which they should enroll.

Every semester the department offers a specialized course on a literary or cultural topic given entirely in Russian; access to such courses is open to students who have completed Advanced Russian or have the equivalent

language competency. Additionally, most courses taught in English have a supplementary section with readings in Russian.

Students can benefit from participation in the weekly Russian tea, the Russian Club, from conversations with the native speaker who serves as the departmental language fellow, and from many other extracurricular activities.

The department has established the Masha N. Vorobiov Prize, which is awarded each spring to a promising student of Russian who intends to pursue summer study of the language.

For more information, please visit <http://russian.vassar.edu>.

## Science, Technology, and Society

The Science, Technology, and Society (STS) Program is a multidisciplinary program that studies science and technology in a social, cultural, and historical context. Established in 1971, it was one of the first programs of its kind at an undergraduate institution. Today, many graduate and a few undergraduate institutions have programs of a similar nature. As an undergraduate program, however, Vassar's is unusual in the flexibility it gives its majors and in the close relationship it fosters between students and faculty.

By taking a broad range of courses across the curriculum and within the program itself, the STS major learns how the interrelationships among science, technology, and society have developed, and what major figures in the sciences and humanities have thought about it. The STS program is designed to enable students to pursue three objectives: a) to understand the central role of science and technology in contemporary society; b) to examine how science and technology reflect their social, political, philosophical, economic and cultural contexts; and c) to explore the human, ethical, and policy implications of current and emerging technologies.

Faculty who teach in the STS program are drawn from many departments in the college. Presently, there are faculty from Anthropology, Biology, Chemistry, Economics, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology. Adjunct instructors from the fields of the history of science and medical ethics also take part in the program.

STS majors continue on in an extremely broad range of professions. Recent graduates have entered law, medicine, public health, and policy making. Recent senior theses have addressed such topics as: "The Human Genome Patent Debate," "The Controversy over the Use of Transgenic Organisms in Agriculture," "Paradigms in Conflict: Technological Development in Rural India," and "Wireless Communication and the 21st-Century Employee."

First-year students who are interested in STS should consider taking a year of science, including at least one laboratory course, as well as Introductory Sociology (Sociology 151) and/or Introduction to Economics (Economics 102).

For more information, please visit <http://sciencetechnologyandsociety.vassar.edu>, or contact the director, Janet Gray, at [grayj@vassar.edu](mailto:grayj@vassar.edu).

## Self-Instructional Language Program (SILP)

The Self-Instructional Language Program allows well-motivated students to enroll in a program of supervised self-instruction in Hindi, Irish/Gaelic, Korean, Portuguese, Swahili, Swedish, Turkish, and Yiddish.

For more information, visit <http://silp.vassar.edu> or contact the coordinator, Lioba Ungurianu ([liungurianu@vassar.edu](mailto:liungurianu@vassar.edu)).

## Sociology

The Department of Sociology offers a diverse curriculum that deepens and broadens students' understandings of modern society through examination of social issues, social processes, and social justice. Our courses can be understood in terms of six thematic clusters — social justice, inequality and difference, culture, policy, globalization, and theory — and highlight distinct perspectives to focus on individuals as members of collective forms and groups including (but not limited to) families, age, class, gender/sexuality, and race/ethnicity/nation. Students who majored in sociology at Vassar have pursued careers in government, research, business, the media, social work, and a variety of nonprofit organizations. Others have gone on to pursue graduate study in law, health care, and sociology as well as in other academic or professional disciplines.

Our Introductory Sociology (Sociology 151) course explores major concepts and various approaches necessary for cultivating a sociological imagination; the theme of each section varies, although Sociology 151 may not be repeated for credit. Freshmen are also invited to enroll in our Freshman Writing Seminars, which also vary thematically; this course can count toward the major but does not satisfy the Introductory Sociology requirement. A description of this year's Freshman Writing Seminar, Race and Marxist Struggle (Sociology 184b), can be found in the "Freshman Writing Seminars" section of this handbook.

Our 200-level courses in the department deal with an array of contemporary topics as well as with concepts and methods of sociological analysis. 300-level courses provide students with the chance to examine selected sociological topics in seminar settings. In addition, the department offers courses in modern social theory and sociological methods as well as independent study or field work under the sponsorship of individual faculty members. In the senior year, students undertake individual work through a required, yearlong senior thesis, which allows the student to plan and execute an original sociological investigation on a topic of his or her choosing.

For more information, please visit <http://sociology.vassar.edu> or email [lenevare@vassar.edu](mailto:lenevare@vassar.edu)

### The following sections of Introductory Sociology will be offered in the fall term:

#### Sociology 151 Classical Traditions for Contemporary Social Issues

This section explores the significance and relevance of foundational thinkers of sociology to the understanding and analysis of contemporary social issues and problems. Examples include consumerism, teenage suicide, Occupy Wall Street, and race/ethnicity in colleges, housing, education, immigration, and childhood. Lastly, this course also examines the works of marginalized social thinkers within the classical tradition and considers why they have been silenced or erased and how they can help us to better understand many contemporary social issues.

|             |                   |           |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------|
| SOCI 151.01 | TR 9:00-10:15 am  | Mr. Alamo |
| SOCI 151.02 | TR 10:30-11:45 am | Mr. Alamo |
| SOCI 151.03 | TR 1:30-2:45 pm   | Ms. Rueda |
| SOCI 151.04 | TR 3:10-4:25 pm   | Ms. Rueda |
| SOCI 151.05 | MW 9:00-10:15 am  | Ms. Moon  |
| SOCI 151.06 | MW 10:30-11:45 am | Ms. Moon  |

### The following sections of Introductory Sociology will be offered in the spring term:

#### Sociology 151 Classical Traditions for Contemporary Social Issues

This section explores the significance and relevance of foundational thinkers of sociology to the understanding and analysis of contemporary social issues and problems. Examples include consumerism, teenage suicide, Occupy Wall Street, and race/ethnicity in colleges, housing, education, immigration, and childhood. Lastly, this course also examines the works of marginalized social thinkers within the classical tradition and considers why they have been silenced or erased and how they can help us to better understand many contemporary social issues.

|             |                   |               |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------|
| SOCI 151.51 | TR 10:30-11:45 am | Ms. Harriford |
| SOCI 151.52 | TR 3:10-4:25 pm   | Ms. Harriford |

#### Sociology 151 A Social Justice Approach

This course aims to introduce you to a sociological perspective through an exploration of social justice. We will begin with an analysis of what a sociological perspective entails, including an understanding of the structural and cultural forces that shape our lives and those of the people around us and how, in turn, individuals make choices and influence social change. Social justice delineates and describes injustices such as economic inequality, racism, sexism, and homophobia and, by definition, addresses solutions and alternative social systems. Sociology has a long tradition of commitment to social justice issues, and we will consider a wide variety of them including: issues of power, how social advantages and disadvantages are distributed, the relationship between social location and inequality, and the practice of reducing the gap between them at the local, national, and global levels. Social justice is a perspective for understanding and for action.

|             |                   |             |
|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| SOCI 151.53 | TR 10:30-11:45 am | Ms. Leonard |
| SOCI 151.54 | TR 12:00-1:15 pm  | Ms. Leonard |

### Sociology 151 Great Ideas, Discerning Studies

This course centers on an array of enduring ideas associated with the classical tradition in sociology but extended and enlivened in selected essays, empirical studies, and ethnographic accounts. We will examine a variety of concepts including alienation, anomie and the “iron cage” of rationality, exploring their significance for a contemporary, “post modern” world. Specifically, we will read studies of labor and leisure, youth culture, body building, Rastafarianism, and the break up of romantic relationships, seen through the lens of the sociological imagination. This class tacks between the conceptual and the empirical, between social structure (class, inequality) and social construction (identity, self-presentation), with an eye toward sociology’s (not always consistent) intellectual, personal, and political relevance.

SOCI 151.55 MW 9:00–10:15 am Mr. McAulay

### Spanish (see Hispanic Studies)

## Urban Studies

As most of the world’s population now resides in cities, suburbs, and metropolitan areas, virtually nowhere on Earth is immune from urban influences. The Urban Studies Program provides multidisciplinary perspectives on the forms and relationships of cities, global dynamics of urbanization, urban ways of life, urban design and architecture, and urban planning and policy. We encourage students to articulate and pursue their own intellectual goals within the major, or to develop a correlate sequence on urban issues to complement other majors. Our graduates have gone on to careers in urban planning, policy analysis, government service, public administration, urban design and architecture, human services, teaching, business, and many other fields.

First-year students should take Introduction to Urban Studies (Urban Studies 100), which examines different ways of understanding and intervening in urban space. Subsequently, those considering majors should enroll in Urban Theory (Urban Studies 200) to study important theoretical debates and to formulate original questions for investigation. Students may also take such intermediate courses as Making Cities (Urban Studies 230); Community Development (Urban Studies 237); Urban Space, Place,

Environment (Urban Studies 250); Cities of the Global South (Urban Studies 252); Gender and Social Space (Urban Studies 270); Modern Architecture and Beyond (Urban Studies 273); and other URBS courses.

Majors specialize in two disciplinary clusters—such as art, geography, history, political science, and sociology—and go on to take a seminar on Advanced Debates in Urban Studies (Urban Studies 303) as juniors or seniors, which can be repeated for credit if the topic has changed. Previous advanced seminars have focused on such topics as “Greening the City,” “Plotting the Invisible City,” “Memory and the City,” and “Musical Urbanism.” A variety of other seminars are offered to advanced students. In addition, majors gain practical as well as theoretical expertise in urban studies through field work (Urban Studies 290).

Entering students with previous courses in urban studies may confer with the program for advice on advanced placement, although there is no standard AP test.

For more information, please visit <http://urbanstudies.vassar.edu> or email the program director or the administrative assistant, Alison Mateer ([almateer@vassar.edu](mailto:almateer@vassar.edu)).

## Victorian Studies

The Program in Victorian Studies enables students to combine courses offered in several departments with independent work and, through an interdisciplinary approach, to examine the assumptions, ideas, ideals, institutions, society, and culture of 19th-century Britain, a complex society undergoing rapid change at the height of its global power.

Freshmen considering a possible Victorian studies major or correlate sequence are encouraged to consult with the Victorian studies coordinator or any of the advisors. The intellectual foundation for the major is best laid by taking survey courses or 100-level courses in at least three of the departments involved in this interdisciplinary program.

A grounding in English literature and history is expected, and potential majors would do well to take English literature courses as well as British History: James I (1603) to the Great War (History 151).

For more information, please visit <http://victorianstudies.vassar.edu> or email [zlotnick@vassar.edu](mailto:zlotnick@vassar.edu).

## Women’s Studies

The Women’s Studies Program at Vassar brings together faculty who share the conviction that gender and sexuality are fundamental categories of analysis across disciplines. As a multidisciplinary field, women’s studies teaches students to think critically about the multiple, intersecting systems of power through which sexual and gendered identities are constructed, and to engage with real-life political and ethical issues from diverse perspectives. The program offers courses that examine the lives and experiences of women in a variety of historical, cultural, and political contexts, as well as courses that explore the intersections of feminist theory, queer theory, and activism.

First-year students interested in women’s studies are encouraged to take WMST 130, Introduction to Women’s Studies, a team-taught course offered each semester that serves as a foundation for future study. WMST 130 introduces students to multidisciplinary methodologies, feminist history, and theoretical debates, with a particular focus on the intersections of gender, race, class, and sexuality. Beyond the introductory level, regularly offered courses include Gender in American Popular Media (WMST 240), Topics in the Construction of Gender (WMST 241), Making Waves: Topics in Feminist Activism (WMST 245), Gender and Science (WMST 281), Feminist Theory (WMST 250), and Global Feminism (WMST 251). A full list of courses can be found in the catalogue.

For more information, please visit <http://womensstudies.vassar.edu>, or contact the director, Barbara Olsen ([baolsen@vassar.edu](mailto:baolsen@vassar.edu)).

## OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

### The V-Card

Vassar has a One-Card identification card system. The V-CARD lets you into your dorm; serves as your library card; carries your meal plan; and can carry a Dining Bucks account, V-Cash account, and V-Print account.

Freshmen receive their V-CARD during New Student Orientation. It is the key to the residence house. It can be used to charge books and other items in the Vassar College Store to your student account.

The V-CARD carries the meal plan account; a meal plan is needed for every student who lives in a residential house. The meal plan consists of Block meals and Dining Bucks. Block meals can be used at ACDC and Express Lunch. Dining Bucks can be used at all dining locations.

The V-CARD can carry a Dining Bucks account for students who do not live in the residential houses; it can be used in any campus dining location. Dining Bucks transactions are deducted from the pre-paid Dining Bucks account.

The V-CARD carries V-Cash, a prepaid account; this account may be used for the laundry machines in the dorms, the copiers and printers across campus, and for purchases at the Computer Store, Vassar College Store, and 20 participating local off-campus businesses.

The V-CARD carries a V-Print account, credited once per semester with \$32.50 (the equivalent of 650 prints) at no charge to you. If you exceed this limit you may use your V-Cash account for printing.

Funds for V-Cash and Additional Dining Bucks may be purchased online using Visa, Mastercard, or American Express, or charged to your student account by going in person to the Card Office in CIS (adjacent to the Help Desk) during the first month of each semester. Additional Block meals can only be charged to your student account at the Card Office.

For more information or for a list of the participating businesses off-campus, please visit [card.vassar.edu](http://card.vassar.edu).

### Banks

As you plan for your life in Poughkeepsie, you may be interested in a list of local banks. The college is not able to cash checks, but we do have an automated teller in the College Center. Put in place by First Niagara, the machine honors money cards for all NYCE members. Banks within one mile of Vassar are listed below:

Bank of America  
11 Raymond Avenue  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603  
845-452-2041

Key Bank  
55 Burnett Boulevard  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603  
845-471-6010

First Niagara Bank  
1 LaGrange Avenue  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603  
845-454-5512

TD Bank  
703 Main Street  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
845-431-6104

Ulster Savings Bank  
39 Burnett Boulevard  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603  
845-454-7144

NOTE: Vassar College has no prior arrangements with any of the businesses listed above. These resources are listed here as a courtesy to families.

### Transportation and Automobile Regulations

The Vassar College Transportation Department provides shuttle transportation to JFK, LaGuardia, and Stewart airports at various times during the school year. About a month prior to the October, Winter and Spring Breaks, the dates and times of the shuttle schedule are sent out in a campus-wide email to all students; students must make reservations by responding to this email. We also provide shuttle service at the end of the academic year.

Each student is charged a fee of approximately \$40 per trip. We only provide shuttle service from the campus to the airports; we do not provide shuttles from the airports to the campus. Many companies also offer transportation between Vassar and all major airports in this area.

All student vehicles driven or parked on campus must be registered. The Safety and Security Office (located at 2500 New Hackensack Road) is open on weekdays from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm for vehicle registration. There is a \$200 fee (\$100 per semester) for registering a vehicle. The fee will be charged to your Vassar account.

Cars belonging to first-year students are only allowed in the south and New Hackensack lots. They are not permitted anywhere else on campus without an unloading pass.

Vassar students are able to take advantage of Zipcar's car-sharing program at rates as low as \$8.50 per hour. For more details or to sign up, please go to <http://zipcar.com/vassar>.

### Shipping and Receiving

Mail and/or packages are delivered daily by the USPS, FedEx, UPS and DHL. While your carrier may have sent you an email stating your package has been delivered to Vassar, Mail Services and Receiving Department needs time to sort and process those packages for delivery to you. Package processing time may vary depending on incoming volume. However, we make every effort to have all packages processed and available for pick-up within 24 hours of receipt.

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**Please wait until you receive a pick-up confirmation email from Post Office or Receiving before coming to the Mailroom or the Receiving Department.**

When you give out your mailing address, please use the following format:

Vassar College  
124 Raymond Avenue  
Name  
Box Number  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12604

Receiving hours are 8:00 am–12:00 pm, and 12:30–4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. The Receiving Department does not supply transportation from their offices to your dorm, so please plan how much to put in each box. You may begin shipping at the end of July. Please use only the name that will appear on your student ID. Perishable packages will be held for one week before disposal. Packages left at the end of the spring semester will be subject to disposal. Please contact Receiving at 845-437-5693 or email [receiving@vassar.edu](mailto:receiving@vassar.edu) with questions.

## **Mailroom Hours and Services**

Monday through Friday, 9:00 am–4:30 pm . No postal retail sales available. No acceptance of personal outgoing letters or packages without postage affixed.

## **Vassar College Store Hours for Move-in Week, Fall 2015**

The Vassar College Store is open Monday through Saturday. Please check the Vassar College Store website at [collegestore.vassar.edu](http://collegestore.vassar.edu) for specific hours.

## Important Telephone Numbers

### AREA CODE - 845

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| <b>Emergency calls</b> .....                     | <b>437-7333</b> |
| Campus Response Center.....                      | 437-5221        |
| Security.....                                    | 437-5200        |
| Accessibility and Educational Opportunity.....   | 437-7584        |
| Admissions.....                                  | 437-7300        |
| Advisor to International Students.....           | 437-5831        |
| ALANA Center.....                                | 437-5954        |
| All Campus Dining Center.....                    | 437-5830        |
| Campus Activities.....                           | 437-5370        |
| Campus Life and Diversity Office.....            | 437-5426        |
| Career Development.....                          | 437-5285        |
| College Store.....                               | 437-5870        |
| Computer Store.....                              | 37-7250         |
| Counseling Service.....                          | 437-5700        |
| Dean of the College, Christopher Roellke.....    | 437-5600        |
| Dean of Freshmen, Susan Zlotnick.....            | 437-5258        |
| Dean of Students, D.B. Brown.....                | 437-5315        |
| Dean of Studies, Benjamin Lotto.....             | 437-5257        |
| Field Work.....                                  | 437-5280        |
| Financial Aid.....                               | 437-5320        |
| Health Education.....                            | 437-7769        |
| Health Services.....                             | 437-5800        |
| The Learning, Teaching, and Research Center..... | 437-5215        |
| Library.....                                     | 437-5760        |
| Receiving.....                                   | 437-5693        |
| Registrar.....                                   | 437-5270        |
| Religious and Spiritual Life.....                | 437-5550        |
| Residential Life.....                            | 437-5860        |
| Student Accounts.....                            | 437-5245        |
| Student Employment Office.....                   | 437-5286        |
| Vassar Student Association.....                  | 437-5381        |
| V-CARD Office.....                               | 437-3333        |

## Quick Reference Web Addresses

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|---|---|
| Accessibility and Educational Opportunity | <a href="http://aeo.vassar.edu">http://aeo.vassar.edu</a>   |
| Ask Banner                                | <a href="https://secure3.vassar.edu/askbanner/">https://secure3.vassar.edu/askbanner/</a>           |
| Dean of Freshmen                          | <a href="http://deanoffreshmen.vassar.edu">http://deanoffreshmen.vassar.edu</a>                     |
| Dean of Students                          | <a href="http://deanofstudents.vassar.edu">http://deanofstudents.vassar.edu</a>                     |
| Catalogue                                 | <a href="http://catalogue.vassar.edu">http://catalogue.vassar.edu</a>                               |
| Computer Store                            | <a href="http://computing.vassar.edu/store">http://computing.vassar.edu/store</a>                   |
| Computing and Information Services        | <a href="http://computing.vassar.edu">http://computing.vassar.edu</a>                               |
| Counseling Service                        | <a href="http://counselingservice.vassar.edu">http://counselingservice.vassar.edu</a>               |
| Financial Aid                             | <a href="http://admissions.vassar.edu/finaid.html">http://admissions.vassar.edu/finaid.html</a>     |
| Health Services                           | <a href="http://healthservice.vassar.edu">http://healthservice.vassar.edu</a>                       |
| Registrar                                 | <a href="http://registrar.vassar.edu">http://registrar.vassar.edu</a>                               |
| Residential Life                          | <a href="http://residentiallife.vassar.edu">http://residentiallife.vassar.edu</a>                   |
| Residential Operations Center (The ROC)   | <a href="http://residentiallife.vassar.edu/roc.html">http://residentiallife.vassar.edu/roc.html</a> |
| Student Accounts                          | <a href="http://studentaccounts.vassar.edu">http://studentaccounts.vassar.edu</a>                   |



