

RAMS 101 First-Year Seminars - Offered Fall 2024

RAMS Seminar: The Required Course for Your Successful College Transition

All new first-year students are required to take a RAMS course. The list below includes the options for Fall 2024. Each seminar offers a thought-provoking thematic focus taught by a faculty member with expertise in the subject. RAMS also helps you adjust to college through guidance in topics such as study skills and time management, and through an introduction to the many resources on campus. A student mentor is paired with each course and serves as a resource and guide for the transition to FSU.

In the Honors Program? Choose one of the four HNRS sections listed under "[HNRS 101 First-Year Seminars - Offered Fall 2024 for Honors Program.](#)" Questions? Contact Dr. Greg Halfond at ghalfond@framingham.edu.

First in your family to attend college? Consider one of the four RAMS listed under "[RAMS 101 First-Year Seminars - Offered Fall 2024 for GenOne Next Level.](#)" Through special programming, faculty and peer mentors, you will be connected to other first-generation students through the RAMS seminar. Interested in learning more? Please email generationone@framingham.edu.

90669 RAMS 101AH 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-C.](#)

Course Title: *The Korean Wave: K-Pop, Netflix, and Korean Art*

Course Description: An exploration of K-Pop and K-Drama in relation to traditional Korean art. A wave of Korean popular culture has overtaken the world, including everything from flavorful cuisine to viral phenomena like Squid Game and Kingdom that have become widely accessible through digital streaming services. How do these products of the Korean Wave (Hallyu) reflect contemporary Korea on the global scene? How do K-Pop and K-Drama grow out of traditional Korean arts and culture? In this course, students watch K-Drama shows, listen to K-Pop music, and discuss how these contemporary media are related to traditional Korean arts and culture, debating relevant issues of race, identity, diversity, and societal structure.

Instructor: Yumi Park (Department of Art & Music)

Course Meets: MW 2:30-4:20

90735 RAMS 101AR 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-A.](#)

Course Title: *Real or Digital? Creativity and Artificial Intelligence*

Course Description: An exploration and practical approach to combining pixels & paint in which students get hands-on experience using hybrid techniques of artistic expression. While integrating physical art media with digital tools and artificial intelligence (AI), students make projects merging the two while distinguishing between what is "real" or original and what is not. Relevant articles and examples are discussed along with examining AI-generated content and investigations in the fields of visual arts, design, film, and writing. Ethical and individual issues of AI are also addressed while considering methods of managing usage and expectations. Students regularly share and critique their work to discover different perspectives and ways of collaborating and communicating, and also learn to think critically and problem solve within this fast-moving technological development.

Instructor: Jennifer Dowling (Department of Art & Music)

Course Meets: MW 2:30-5:20

90670 RAMS 101BI 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain II-B.](#)

Course Title: *Cell Lines, Cancer, and Medical Ethics: The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

Course Description: An investigation into socio-economic and racial disparities in the medical field, issues of informed consent and compensation for medical research, as well as the patenting of human cells and genes. This is accomplished through an exploration of the life and legacy of Henrietta Lacks, the cancer that took her life, and the cell line that resulted from it. By reading *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot, as well as engaging in classroom discussions and reflections, we examine the most famous case of cancer ever and the scientific breakthroughs it led to.

Instructor: Chelsea Hudson (Department of Biology)

Course Meets: MW 8:30-10:20

90737 RAMS 101DH 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain II-A.](#)

Course Title: *Digital Justice*

Course Description: An opportunity to jump-start your development of the digital, analytical, and quantitative skills and perspectives that are crucial to your college and career success (whatever your major), while focusing in particular on issues of social justice in the Framingham State University community. We learn some core digital humanities tools and methods—such as digitizing artifacts, analyzing the textual and visual data created, and presenting findings in online exhibits—using as examples of digital projects on such topics as racial and economic justice and trans rights. The course concludes with end-of-semester group projects aimed at promoting digital justice at the University and in the surrounding community.

Instructor: Bart Brinkman (Department of English)

Course Meets: TF 12:30-2:20

90671 RAMS 101ED 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-C.](#)

Course Title: *Art Enjoyment in the Classroom and Beyond*

Course Description: A vibrant course tailored for art-curious first-year college students, transcending majors to explore the joy of artistic expression. We explore the impact of art-making in early childhood and in the elementary classroom. We delve into the therapeutic power of art, and its role in social justice, and explore its capacity to unite communities. We experiment with various methods of creating art, and enjoy making, analyzing, and interacting with art in our world. We visit the Danforth Museum, and connect the art of our community to threads of global themes, exploring both differences and the commonalities of the human experience. We elevate our museum experience, mastering the art of art appreciation to foster a lifelong journey of enjoying and participating in artistic expression.

Instructor: Megan Jacobs (Department of Education)

Course Meets: TR 2:30-4:20

RAMS 101 First-Year Seminars - Offered Fall 2024 (continued)

90672 RAMS 101EN 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-B.](#)

Course Title: *The City in American Culture*

Course Description: An exploration of how story-tellers portray urban spaces in the United States. How do artists and authors imagine cities in their work? What are the attractions and perils of city life? Why do people feel as if they belong, or do not belong, in the city? The course considers these questions by engaging with a variety of critical and artistic works: journalistic articles on United States housing policy, short fiction by Edgar Allan Poe and Edith Wharton, poetry from the modernist era, films such as Spike Lee's *Do The Right Thing*, and the rise of hip hop from the 1970s to present day.

Instructor: Luke Dietrich (Department of English)

Course Meets: TR 8:30-10:20

90673 RAMS 102EN 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-B.](#)

Course Title: *Imagination and Testimony: Writing against Injustice*

Course Description: An exploration of how testimony and works of creative writing capture, respond to, and resist injustice. Is testimony or creative writing a better tool against injustice? In this course, students pursue the answer to that question through examination of first-person accounts and creative pieces that examine racial injustice in the United States and South Africa. A comparative study of racial segregation in both countries leads students to gain a deeper understanding of the history and legacy of slavery and Apartheid. Ultimately, students have the opportunity to investigate how another instance of injustice is treated through testimony and creative works.

Instructor: Leah Van Vaerenewyck (Department of English)

Course Meets: TR 2:30-4:20

90674 RAMS 103EN 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-A.](#)

Course Title: *You Are Here: Creative Writing about Place, Perspective, and Possibility*

Course Description: An introductory creative writing workshop focused on your experience of self and place. How does where you are, or where you're from, influence who you are? As we read and write both poetry and prose, we explore the self as a function of place, themes such as "home" and "away," and ideas of belonging and non-belonging that engage with current social justice issues. For inspiration, we study examples from diverse voices in contemporary literature, and we share our own writing through workshops and readings. We also explore and write about Framingham State's campus and the surrounding area, as we consider how your college experience connects to your past and informs your potential future. This course includes generating, drafting, and revising your creative work for an audience.

Instructor: Colleen Coyne (Department of English)

Course Meets: MW 12:30-1:20 & R 12:30-2:20

90676 RAMS 103EN 003

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-A.](#)

Course Title: *Our Families, Ourselves*

Course Description: An exploration of the idea of family: where we come from and the stories that have shaped us. We consider diverse notions of what constitutes a "family" as we write and revise our own stories and essays on the theme of family. The course is conducted primarily as a creative writing workshop during which we discuss each other's work in progress. We also take up the issue of craft: what makes a piece of writing effective and how we can apply those tools to our own work. Using published work, photographs, interviews, writing exercises, and our imaginations and memories, we spend the semester researching and writing our own family stories.

Instructor: Patti Horvath (Department of English)

Course Meets: MW 2:30-4:20

90678 RAMS 101ES 002

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain II-B.](#)

Course Title: *10 Ways the Earth Can Kill You*

Course Description: An exploration of natural disasters - floods, volcanoes, earthquakes – that cost thousands of lives and cause tens of billions of dollars of damage every year. This total only increases as the population swells and climate change reaches every corner of the globe. This course examines the causes and effects of the more common natural disasters, discusses their predictability, and examines how societies choose to deal with these catastrophic events. Students explore policy choices that can save - or cost - us billions of dollars and thousands of lives every year.

Instructor: Amy Johnston (Department of Environment, Society, & Sustainability)

Course Meets: MW 2:30-4:20

90789 RAMS 102FN 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain II-B.](#)

Course Title: *Nailed it! Achieving Success in the Kitchen through Science and Creativity*

Course Description: An exploration of cooking and baking basics with the intent to help students nail it in the kitchen! Cooking and baking are part science (chemistry and nutrition) and part art (creativity and fun). Understanding culinary basics is helpful in building important lifelong foundational skills related to planning, managing, selecting, preparing and eating food. In this course students actively navigate the kitchen, mixing together traditional classroom presentations, discussions, activities, and projects with cooking demonstrations and hands-on cooking experiences. Topics may include: How to Read a Recipe, Ramen It Up, Pizza the Perfect Food, Time to Toot about Beans, Eggcellent Eggs, Vegetables A-Z, etc. Students will have the opportunity to earn the ServSafe Food Handler Credential.

Instructor: Cathy Wickham (Department of Nutrition & Health Studies)

Course Meets: MW 2:30-4:20

90788 RAMS 101GS 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-C.](#)

Course Title: *Travel Writing: The Journey is the Destination*

Course Description: An exploration of travel writing and its role in developing a global perspective. Most people think that travel means getting on an airplane or taking a long car trip. In this class we consider how travel can also be about seeing your surroundings and yourself differently. As travel writer Pico Iyer explains "We travel, initially, to lose ourselves; and we travel, next, to find ourselves." Similar to Iyer's idea, your first-semester college experience is one full of discovery and with a traveler's perspective you can reflect on that experience. In this course, you read travel stories that help you see the world differently, write travel narratives to explore your emerging world view, and take short field trips to explore your surroundings. The course culminates with the production of a travel guide for new students at FSU.

Instructor: Sandy Hartwiger (Department of English)

Course Meets: MW 12:30-1:20 & R 12:30-2:20

RAMS 101 First-Year Seminars - Offered Fall 2024 (continued)

90738 RAMS 101HW 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain II-B.](#)

Course Title: Growth through Challenge: Body, Mind, Spirit, and Ultra Running

Course Description: A multidisciplinary examination of the science of ultra running and its relationship to dimensions of human growth. What is ultra running? Anything beyond the marathon distance! How and why do people build the strength, motivation, and desire to complete ultra running events of 30, 50, 100 miles or more? What do people mean when they say ultra running “changed their life?” We investigate those questions and more. Explore physical (body), psychological (mind), and experiential (spirit) factors involved in ultra running. Experiential learning activities include creating a training plan, group and individual running, journaling, and more. Prior running experience and ability are not required, but physical activity is required in this course. In-season athletes should strongly consider how additional running impacts their sport before enrolling in this course. Accommodations and modifications for all physical activities are available.

Instructor: Brian Souza (Department of Nutrition & Health Studies)

Course Meets: MW 12:30-1:20 & R 12:30-2:20

90790 RAMS 101MA 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain II-A.](#)

Course Title: Prisoner's Dilemma: The Case for Cooperation

Course Description: An investigation into cooperation and collective action through the lens of mathematical game theory--specifically a game called the Prisoner's Dilemma. When should a person cooperate, and when should a person be selfish, in an ongoing interaction with another person? What conditions are necessary for cooperation to occur in a world of egoists? Should a friend continue providing favors to a friend who doesn't reciprocate? After studying the structure underlying the Prisoner's Dilemma, students bring real-world scenarios to class, model them with the Prisoner's Dilemma game, and determine how to tweak the model/scenario in order to enhance the chances for cooperation, before ultimately creating and presenting a paper illustrating an application of the Prisoner's Dilemma.

Instructor: Rob Page (Department of Mathematics)

Course Meets: MW 2:30-4:20

90681 RAMS 101NE

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain II-B.](#)

Course Title: The Science of Lies and Lie Detection

Course Description: An examination of deception and methods of lie detection. We investigate how scientists study deception and the roles that science and superstition play in lie detection. We also address how racism and bias may impact the accuracy of lie detection tests. In this course students learn to conduct various lie detection tests, read articles about deception and the scientific merit of lie detection, debate the appropriateness of lie detection, and discuss how contemporary media depicts lie detection. Questions of interest include: What do scientists know about deception? What evidence is considered credible by scientists? Have appropriately diverse samples been used when researching deception and testing lie detection methods? Are psychopaths and others with personality disorders able to fool lie detector tests? Should lie detection tests be allowed in the criminal justice system?

Instructor: Robert Donohue (Department of Psychology & Philosophy)

Course Meets: MW 8:30-10:20

90682 RAMS 102PH 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-B.](#)

Course Title: Resilience in Togas

Course Description: An investigation of the life of Socrates through the writings of Plato. The philosopher Socrates was put to death by fellow Athenians for asking questions! Socrates described himself as a person who knew nothing worth knowing. Ever concerned with what it meant to live well, he sought out the greatest minds in Athens and posed questions about the virtues that constitute a worthwhile life...virtues like courage, friendship, love, and justice. His conclusion: these great minds know no more than he does, and true wisdom lies in understanding how little human beings can ever know about those things that are so important to know. And yet, for Socrates, the most important human endeavor is to seek continually the true meaning of these virtues. This course presents Socratic investigation as a key to navigating the inherent difficulties of human existence. Despite ending in execution, Socrates' life is held up as an ideal.

Instructor: Joe D'Andrea (Department of Psychology & Philosophy)

Course Meets: TF 12:30-2:20

90683 RAMS 101PO 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-B.](#)

Course Title: The 9/11 Attacks: Terror and Empire in the New Millennium

Course Description: An exploration of the 9/11 World Trade Center attacks and how they changed American and global politics. Why did al-Qaeda attack the United States? What even is al-Qaeda, and where did they come from? What changed after 9/11? This course traces the long history of 9/11—from the founding of Islam to September 11, 2001 to now. Through the lens of 9/11, students learn about the politics of spies, religious zealots, civil wars, terrorism, mass surveillance, and conspiracy theories, among other things. Through research, analysis, and writing about 9/11 and related issues, students learn to analyze politics, violence, and war in America and the world.

Instructor: Sam Biasi (Department of Political Science, Law, & Global Studies)

Course Meets: TF 12:30-2:20

90684 RAMS 101PS 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-B.](#)

Course Title: The Mental Health and Wellbeing of U.S. College Students

Course Description: An examination of some of the unique challenges and exciting opportunities faced by today's college students. Potential topics include: the transition to college, the experiences of first-generation college students, building a community at college, risky behaviors among college students, and using college to prepare for the future. Through exposure to research and in-class discussion, students explore topics as they relate to mental health, wellbeing, stress, and resilience. The seminar includes self-reflective journal writing about your own experiences as a new college student and a project involving the in-depth examination of a mental health condition, such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders, or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, commonly experienced by college students.

Instructor: Kim Arditte Hall (Department of Psychology & Philosophy)

Course Meets: TR 8:30-10:20

RAMS 101 First-Year Seminars - Offered Fall 2024 (continued)

90685 RAMS 101SO 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-B.](#)

Course Title: Communities and Crime

Course Description: An investigation of why crime is not evenly distributed across communities, but rather clusters within particular settings. Students examine definitions of community and how they vary across formal and informal boundaries through a criminological lens. Students unpack the social and structural forces and characteristics within communities that drive, and conversely, prevent crime and disorder. Through team-based learning and personal reflection, students make connections from the class material to their personal lives, the lives of their friends and family, their own communities, and beyond.

Instructor: Andrew Franquiz (Department of Sociology & Criminology)

Course Meets: TF 12:30-2:20

90686 RAMS 101SO 002

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-B.](#)

Course Title: Mass Murder - An American Phenomenon

Course Description: An examination of why this crime occurs more frequently in the United State relative to other advanced countries. The course looks at the characteristics and relationships between offenders and victims, in addition to location and type of weapon(s) used during a mass murder. Students learn how the United States is becoming more desensitized to this crime; and how the reaction and proposed solutions to mass murder have been consistent and ineffective over the last decades. By utilizing peer-reviewed and news articles, students learn about the difficulty in studying these crimes, including a lack of a reliable database of mass murders.

Instructor: Trinidad Morales (Department of Sociology & Criminology)

Course Meets: TR 2:30-4:20

RAMS 101 First-Year Seminars - Offered Fall 2024 for GenOne Next Level

90736 RAMS 102ED 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-B.](#)

Course Title: Taking Our Power Back: Immigration and Refugee Stories as Counternarratives in History

Course Description: An exploration of immigrant and refugee experiences, with discussions of the implications of what it means to be an immigrant/refugee in relation to master narratives learned in educational experiences about historical events. Students read picture books, graphic novels, and short stories to contextualize their families' stories and challenge historical narratives taught in previous academic settings. Students also write about their experiences, exploring their families' journeys and their own experiences and those of their family members as students, caregivers, or parents. Students share their stories with a public audience.

Instructor: Chu Ly (Department of Education)

Course Meets: TR 2:30-4:20

Note: This section is open to GenOne Next Level Students only.

90675 RAMS 103EN 002

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-A.](#)

Course Title: I'm a Flame You Can't Put Out: Reading & Writing Memoir

Course Description: An exploration of memoir as the art of shaping one's personal history and experiences into compelling scenes and descriptions that often read like fiction. It isn't merely a recounting of facts; memoir demands deep reflection and speculation about ourselves and the world around us. Throughout the course, we examine published memoirs, critically analyzing the techniques authors employ—voice, structure, pacing, "character" development, and other craft elements. Additionally, we engage in writing our own memoirs, generating material, refining editing skills, honing our command of storytelling, and gaining fresh perspectives on our life experiences.

Instructor: Jennifer De Leon (Department of English)

Course Meets: T 10:30-12:20 & F 8:30-10:20

Note: This section is open to GenOne Next Level Students only.

90677 RAMS 101ES 001

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain II-B.](#)

Course Title: Climate Change and Social Justice in the Arctic and Beyond

Course Description: An investigation of a challenging real-world crisis: climate change, at the intersection of science, society and justice. For the native Iñupiat peoples of the Alaskan North Slope, everything is changing – the extent of the ice, the animals that roam the tundra, and the migration patterns of the bowhead whales the Iñupiat depend upon. Why is the Arctic warming at four times the global rate? What does the ice mean to the people, and to the diversity of life in the far North? How does Arctic sea ice melt affect weather and climate in other parts of the world, including Massachusetts? Students examine these questions through an interdisciplinary exploration of the essential science of climate change and its impacts and implications, with special emphasis on the Iñupiat, the animals on which they depend, and their unique collaboration with scientists.

Instructor: Vandana Singh (Department of Environment, Society, & Sustainability)

Course Meets: M, W, R & F 11:30am-12:20pm

Note: This section is open to GenOne Next Level Students only.

90687 RAMS 101SO 003

[This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-B.](#)

Course Title: Level Up: How Does Your Background Influence Success in College?

Course Description: A deep dive into the many social and cultural factors that influence success in college. In this course, we ask about the relationship between higher education and society, such as: Why do some college students "get further ahead" than others? Why do some students get more involved in co-curricular activities than others? Who attends four-year versus two-year institutions? How do families and peers shape the educational paths students take? How does being first generation affect a student's experiences in and outside the classroom? Coursework includes research-based assignments, reading counterstories, written reflections and class discussions.

Instructor: Patricia Sanchez-Connally (Department of Sociology & Criminology)

Course Meets: TF 12:30-2:20

Note: This section is open to GenOne Next Level Students only.

HNRS 101 First-Year Seminars - Offered Fall 2024 for Honors Program

90765 HNRS 101AR 081

[*This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-A.*](#)

Course Title: *My Graphic Me: Exploring Identity through the Creation of Graphic Novels*

Course Description: An introduction to the art of graphic novel production in which students develop illustrated stories that explore self-identity. How does the sequential visual voice allow us to talk about ourselves as individuals—love, memory, family, ancestry, race, gender, aspirations, experiences? Through a series of hands-on exercises, this course exposes students to a range of artmaking possibilities including pen/brush with ink, collage, digital lettering, and digital coloring. The course introduces students to the work of noted graphic novelists who have used the medium autobiographically, including Joe Sacco, Gene Luen Yang, and Art Spiegelman. Using oral and written histories, students conduct research pertinent to their personal narratives. The course culminates in the collaborative design and printing of graphic novel shorts in a bound volume.

Instructor: Marc Cote (Department of Art & Music)

Course Meets: TR 8:30-11:20

Note: This section is open to Honors Program Students only.

90733 HNRS 101GY 081

[*This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-B.*](#)

Course Title: *The future of water: An essential but uncertain resource*

Course Description: An exploration of our relationships with and to water. Although many of us take clean, unlimited water for granted in the United States, access to water is increasingly threatened across the globe. In many places, “too much” water in intense storms floods communities and takes lives and property. In other places, “too little” water pits people against each other in fierce competition for this precious resource. Still elsewhere, water that people thought was safe has been exposed as a shocking danger to human health. Using readings from diverse sources, we address access to reliable, safe water using geographical, political, and ethical perspectives, and set the concepts of place, social justice, and sustainability at the center of our inquiries.

Instructor: Judith Otto (Department of Environment, Society, & Sustainability)

Course Meets: MW 12:30-1:20 & R 12:30-2:20

Note: This section is open to Honors Program Students only.

90734 HNRS 101HI 081

[*This course satisfies GenEd Domain III-A.*](#)

Course Title: *Beyond GI Joes and Easy Bake Ovens: Gender and Childhood in American History*

Course Description: An exploration of the ways boys and girls have been treated and depicted in American history. In colonial America boys and girls both regularly wore dresses before the age of 7 and in the nineteenth century pink was often considered a “boy color.” In the 1960s girls were being given Easy Bake Ovens while boys were handed GI Joes. From clothes, chores, toys, and haircuts to expectations for behavior and opportunities for education, many elements of children’s experiences have been determined by society’s often-rigid gendered expectations. In this course we explore the gendered norms in time periods across American history and how children’s experiences were shaped by them, with attention to variation among class, racial, ethnic, and religious groups within American society.

Instructor: Sarah Mulhall Adelman (Department of History)

Course Meets: TF 12:30-2:20

Note: This section is open to Honors Program Students only.

90663 HNRS 103EN 08

[*This course satisfies GenEd Domain I-B.*](#)

Course Title: *Fantasy and Science Fiction*

Course Description: An examination of a variety of speculative fiction — science fiction, fantasy, fairy tales, and other fantastic literature — to answer a question Salman Rushdie raises, “What’s the use of stories that aren’t even true?” Speculative fiction can project a possible future, revise our understanding of the past, or reveal truths about the present. It gives us insight into how people very different from us see the world, and shows us unexpected things we have in common. And it is a spur to critical thinking, debate, and further explorations. This course hones your reading, critical and creative writing, and research skills while we explore a wide and fantastic variety of stories.

Instructor: Rachel Trousdale (Department of English)

Course Meets: MW 12:30-1:20 & R 12:30-2:20

Note: This section is open to Honors Program Students only.
