FRESHMAN SEMINARS
Fall 2010

A Program of Personalized Study for Freshmen at the University of Southern California
QUESTION:

I've signed up for four units of Spanish, eight units of General Education and four units of my major. What do I do with the other two units?

QUESTION:

I'd like to meet a group of freshman like me, who take their education seriously. And a chance to work with a senior professor during my first semester at USC. Any suggestions?
The University has a program to help entering students understand the bigger picture of academic life at USC. We call them Freshman Seminars--small classes open only to freshmen, led by professors invited to teach subjects they find especially intriguing or provocative.

Each class allows students a glimpse of University life from the perspective of an informed member of the campus community who has planned a special seminar with incoming freshmen in mind. The program began twenty years ago with eight seminars, limited to twelve students apiece. Every term since then participants have recommended that classes be made available to more students.

This Fall, twenty-three seminars will be offered with eighteen freshmen in each. Topics were chosen to reflect student interest and the enthusiasm of the seminar leaders: from earthquakes to existentialism, Chekhov to cartoons, inspiration to emotional intelligence. Participants earn two units on a credit/no credit basis. No prior knowledge of the subject matter is expected. Freshman Seminars are scheduled once a week, usually in the afternoons, Monday through Thursday. Most meet for two hours at a time and run for ten or eleven weeks. Some include visits to laboratories, downtown studios, or professors' homes, but all meet initially on the main campus and end well before final exams.

Freshman Seminars are intended to stimulate thinking and personal relationships rather than competition for grades, so tests and assignments, though required, are not usually emphasized. The life of the mind is explored instead in a variety of ways: examining issues of identity and self-expression, bioterrorism, and the graphic novel. Freshmen will discover many opportunities to connect with teachers and fellow students--which can make a world of difference to a college career.

If you haven't quite decided what interests you, consider signing up for a Freshman Seminar. It's a great way to get an inside look at a subject that intrigues you and academic life in general.
**Mondays**

**The Art of the Comic Book: Graphic Narratives from Maus to Manga**  
Bill Feuer  
Course FSEM 100; class 34605  
Meeting Mondays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Avatars, Immortality, and Information Theory**  
Eric Mankin  
Course FSEM 100; class 34609  
Meeting Mondays, 2 to 3:50 PM.

**Legal Reasoning and Communication**  
James Brecher  
Course FSEM 100; class 34606  
Meeting Mondays, 2 to 3:50 PM.

**What Are Earthquakes All About?**  
Henry M. Koffman  
Course FSEM 100; class 34608  
Meeting Mondays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Tuesdays**

**Sports: Legal and Other Issues**  
Justice Richard M. Mosk  
Course FSEM 100; class 34600  
Meeting Tuesdays, 11 AM to 12:50 PM

**Anne Frank Was Not Alone: Holland and the Holocaust**  
Anthony Anderson  
Course FSEM 100; class 34611  
Meeting Tuesdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Body Size and Shape: Fitness and Nutrition**  
Robert Girandola  
Course FSEM 100; class 34610  
Meeting Tuesdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Puzzles, Patterns, Games and Illusions**  
Solomon Golomb  
Course FSEM 100; class 34613  
Meeting Tuesdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Sports and Artificial Intelligence**  
Rajiv Maheswaran  
Course FSEM 100; class 34614  
Meeting Tuesdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Mind and Body Fitness**  
Margo Apostolos  
Course FSEM 100; class 34628  
Meeting Tuesdays, 3 to 4:50 PM

*Homecoming Float, 1925. USC Archives.*
**Wednesdays**

**Bread and Vodka: Food and Community in Russia**  
Ayse Rorlich  
Course FSEM 100; class 34603R  
Meeting Wednesdays, 12 to 1:50 PM

**You Can’t Go Home Again: Now What?**  
Eileen Kohan  
Course FSEM 100; class 34604  
Meeting Wednesdays, 12 to 1:50 PM

**Energy Choices and How They Will Make or Break the Future**  
Mark Thompson  
Course FSEM 100; class 34618  
Meeting Wednesdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Musical Subcultures of the Sixties**  
William Biersach  
Course FSEM 100; class 34619  
Meeting Wednesdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Self-Expression and the Arts**  
Eric Trules  
Course FSEM 100; class 34620  
Meeting Wednesdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**I Love College: Popular Culture and the University**  
Lacey Donohue  
Course FSEM 100; class 34629  
Meeting Wednesdays, 3 to 4:50 PM

**Thursdays**

**The Archaeology of Inspiration: a tour of the hood**  
Stacie Chaiken  
Course FSEM 100; class 34624  
Meeting Thursdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Lend Me Your Ears: The Power of Speechmaking and the Art of Speechwriting**  
Holly Bridges  
Course FSEM 100; class 34621  
Meeting Thursdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Medical Controversies and the Law**  
Fred Weissman  
Course FSEM 100; class 34622  
Meeting Thursdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

**Writing to Be Read**  
Richard Fliegel  
Course FSEM 100; class 34625  
Meeting Thursdays, 2 to 3:50 PM

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*Maypole Show, 1917. USC Archives.*
Some comments from earlier years:

I liked the comfortable, informal attitude as well as the small, intimate group. The seminar has made the university seem smaller and more personal.
-English major in "Five Women Writing"

It was a wonderful experience both intellectually and socially. I learned a great deal and also met some really nice people.
-International Relations major in "Eastern Europe in the 20th Century"

You get a chance to take a class on something that personally interests you. Once a week for two credits is definitely worth it.
-Undecided major in "Sigmund Freud: An Introduction to Psychoanalysis."

You will meet people and learn without a lot of pressure.
-Political Science major in "Women in the City: Images, Novels, Films"

Our instructor was great and respectful of our opinions and needs. The course itself was very interesting and I enjoyed it.
-Biomedical and Electrical Engineering major in "Medical Controversies and the Law"

It helps you balance yourself. It's good to read a little Tolstoy when you only have chemistry and biology bouncing around in your head."
-Psychobiology major in "Tolstoy's War and Peace"

This course helped me understand what great resources the faculty are and in general the wide variety of knowledge available at this University.
-Journalism/Political Science major in "Existentialism"

You learn about yourself and the class helped me to put my career into perspective. It made me open my mind to more things I could do.
-Biology major in "Sensual Science"

The best part was when I left the building after class and just went and ate dinner and thought about what was said.
-Undeclared major in "The End of the Cold War"

Great program. Great class. I'm going to take another Freshman Seminar next semester. So will my roommates.
-Business major in "The Renaissance Ideal"
Over the last four decades the comic book has grown up. Once a favorite target of critics, the graphic narrative now garners serious critical attention from literary scholars around the world. They have recognized Alan Moore, Lynda Barry, Marjane Satrapi, Jim Woodring, Art Spiegelman, and Frank Miller as just a few of the new masters of the form.

In this seminar, we will explore the work of these artists as well as several other important contributors. We will trace the evolution of the genre and develop our ability to interpret graphic narratives. Students will produce a critical reading of a comic of their choice. Working in small groups, they will also collaborate on a graphic story.

Bill Feuer received his Ph. D. in American Literature from the University of Southern California. He has been teaching in the Writing Program for two decades and has picked up a couple of teaching awards along the way. He has been reading comic books since he was thirty.

What are we? Some people believe that when a human egg cell is fertilized, a non-physical Supreme Being implants something called a ‘soul’ in it that has the potential to live on after the human body dies. Other people talk about ‘minds’ that inhabit bodies — but what is a ‘mind’ and how does it relate to brains, hearts, lungs and similar apparatus? How might copies exist in an alternative host system, or move from one body to another? The course will explore the history of the idea of ‘mind’ in religion and philosophy, including the vistas opened by the mathematical definition of information and the development of computers and artificial intelligence — and the visions of science fiction writers and filmmakers.

The course will involve readings each week from a wide variety of authors and thinkers, and viewings of films and television episodes that illustrate some of the ideas involved. Visiting USC faculty and staff with special knowledge of religion, computer science, biology, philosophy and other relevant fields will make appearances. The class will try to have each student develop a vision of how they might imagine an extended life, how long they would want to live it, and what kind of society might accommodate changes in longevity.

Eric Mankin did graduate study in philosophy before beginning a career in journalism. He wrote for and edited daily and weekly newspapers and magazines about a wide variety of topics, including film, theater, media and food criticism, politics and science.
Legal Reasoning and Communication
James Brecher

Lawyers think differently from “normal” people; their professional training enables lawyers to see all the diverse elements which compose a problem. This type of advanced thinking is not only important for success in the legal profession but essential to success in a true liberal arts education. This developed skill is the reason so many business and political leaders have legal training even if they never intend to practice law.

This course will look at the way lawyers examine issues and seek results. We will apply these techniques to a range of problems, especially as their solutions relate to undergraduate problems. We will accomplish this examination by looking at legal commentaries, stories and essays, and case law and learning the practical thinking of everyday lawyers and how they communicate with differing audiences.

James Brecher, J.D., Ph.D., is an Associate Teaching Professor in The Writing Program at the University of Southern California and has practiced law, worked in the business world, and taught English and American Studies/Humanities at the University of South Florida. He was awarded the USC College Outstanding Teaching Award in Advanced Writing and was named one of USC’s “best professors” in the September 2007 issue of Saturday Night Magazine.

What are Earthquakes All About?
Henry M. Koffman

The University of Southern California is one of the world's leading earthquake research centers. Virtually every region of the planet experiences earthquakes at one time or another, but California experiences especially frequent events. When earthquakes occur in major metropolitan areas, effects can be dramatic. San Francisco is still recovering from the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989, and Los Angeles will be responding to the effects of the January 17, 1994 Northridge earthquake for years to come.

Our class will trace the history of earthquakes, examine the mechanics of geological faults, and try to understand the emergency and public safety measures taken to cope with earthquakes both before and after the fact. We study the nature of the forces released, how these forces impact the environment, how these forces are measured, and how structural and foundation designs are intended to respond to earthquake forces. We will summarize the current state of earthquake research. The class will take field trips to local facilities and affected sites.

Henry M. Koffman, P.E., is the Director of the Construction Engineering and Management Program in the Viterbi School of Engineering's Civil Engineering Department. He is a real estate land developer, licensed building contractor, and a registered Professional Engineer in the State of California.
**Tuesdays**

**Sports: Legal and Other Issues**
Justice Richard M. Mosk

The general topics of this seminar include a brief history of sports, legal principles, legal and other issues related to sports, the effect of sports on society, and ethical issues arising out of sports. The seminar is not just for those interested in pursuing a law career.

The seminar materials consist of various works, historic cases, and movie clips that depict some of the subjects. The seminar is interactive, with discussions about the issues. Students are encouraged to participate in the discussions. Class attendance and familiarity with the reading material are required.

Justice Richard M. Mosk of the California Court of Appeal is a graduate of Stanford and Harvard Law School. He earned three athletic letters, served on the Stanford Athletic Board, and represented professional sports teams and athletes. He was on the staff of the Warren Commission that investigated the assassination of President Kennedy and on the Christopher Commission that investigated the Los Angeles Police Department. He was a judge on the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal, headed the body that gives parental ratings to motion pictures, and argued cases before the U.S. and California Supreme Courts.

**Anne Frank Was Not Alone:**
**Holland and the Holocaust**
Anthony Anderson

In German occupied western Europe nowhere did the Nazis pursue their genocidal policies against the Jews with more zeal and devastating results than in the Netherlands. By the end of World War II more than 75 percent of the Jews living in Holland had perished in the Holocaust. This, in a nation which has been and is one of the world’s most tolerant and least anti-Semitic societies.

This course will explore this enormous tragedy which befell Dutch Jewry. Particular emphasis will be given to examining the agonizing ethical choices which confronted the Dutch, both Jewish and Gentile, during the German occupation. The class will follow a lecture/discussion format, with readings, film clips, and guest speakers. There will be also involvement with the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation at USC.

Note: students are advised that during the course of this class they will be subjected to images of the Holocaust, which will be at times graphic and may be distinctly unsettling.

Anthony Anderson is an Arts and Humanities and Social Studies Librarian. He has previously taught two other Freshman Seminars: “Can’t We All Just Get Along?” Ethnic Conflicts in the World Today and the Media” and “He Said, She Said, They Said: Making Sense of the Opinion Makers and Making Up Your Own Mind.”
Body Size and Shape: Fitness and Nutrition
Robert Girandola

This class will look into the continuing national problem of weight control. Obesity is considered the second most prevalent disease, which is controllable. Despite this, it has reached epidemic proportions in the USA as well as many other industrialized nations. We will discuss the complexities of caloric balance and the appropriate methods for weight loss and gain. Specific emphasis will be placed on young adults, such as college students who do not have the luxury of eating at home. Appropriate dietary patterns for weight control as well as health will be analyzed. Finally, appropriate exercise programs for maintaining body weight and shape will be discussed.

Students who enroll in this class should be prepared to become actively involved in class discussions. Many of the myths and fallacies of weight control and nutrition will be revealed, but keep an open mind!! Students should have access to the internet in order to download some of the many materials that are advertised for weight control and obesity.

Robert Girandola received his undergraduate degree in physical education from Hunter College (New York) and his Ed.D. from the University of California at Berkeley in Exercise Physiology in 1970. He has been at USC since 1973. He teaches classes in Nutrition and Weight Control, Exercise Prescription, and Principles of Human Performance. His research has centered on Obesity and Weight Control, Ergogenic Aids and Human Performance, Environmental Effects on Human Performance.

Puzzles, Patterns, Games and Illusions
Solomon Golomb

This Freshman Seminar will deal with intuitive and recreational aspects of geometry, without the complex calculations or intricate proving of theorems from axioms so typical of mathematics courses. The seminar is intended for students interested in shapes, designs, and patterns, and no background in mathematics, science, or engineering is assumed or required. Students who enroll will be expected to attend regularly, and participate in course activities.

Solomon W. Golomb spent six and a half years at the Caltech Jet Propulsion Laboratory, where he conducted and supervised research in Space Communications, before joining the USC faculty full-time in Spring 1963. He is a professor of Electrical Engineering and Mathematics, and holds the title of Distinguished University Professor. He is an elected member of both the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering. At USC he served as President of the Faculty Senate and as Vice Provost for Research.

In addition to some 200 technical journal articles on mathematics, engineering, and related topics, one of his four books currently in print is *Polyominoes*, subtitled, *Puzzles, Patterns, Problems, and Packings*. He has had a lifelong interest in games and puzzles, and has written regular puzzle columns for a number of newspapers and magazines.
Sports and Artificial Intelligence
Rajiv Maheswaran

Baseball and Game Theory. Soccer and Distributed Coordination. Football and Reasoning Under Uncertainty. Basketball and Probability. We will look at popular sports from around the world and the many questions and decisions that fans typically enjoy debating and use that as a vehicle to understand basic concepts in artificial intelligence.

In each lecture, we will take a sports-based question and answer it in the context of an AI-based technique. Who is the best player? Which team will win? What should the coach do? These questions of analysis, prediction and choice lie at the heart of many aspects of artificial intelligence. Students are not expected to be familiar with sports or any advanced mathematics. The goal is to develop a better understanding of the nature of decision-making.

Rajiv Maheswaran is a Research Assistant Professor at the University of Southern California's Computer Science Department and a Research Scientist at the Information Sciences Institute. His research spans various aspects of multi-agent systems and distributed artificial intelligence. He has authored over 50 papers and book chapters in artificial intelligence, decision and control theory and been an active reviewer for major conferences and journals in these fields.

Mind and Body Fitness
Margo Apostolos

The human spirit and body in symmetry will be the theme of this Freshman Seminar. The union of mind and body into a dual component to foster the duality of human thought and action is the goal of this course. Reading assignments will accompany simple exercises to enhance the mind and body to aid in creative development and stress reduction.

This seminar is designed to promote the union of the physical and mental capabilities with both readings and the practice of simple movement sequences. The focus of the work is to promote a relaxed and natural state for creative thinking. Various exercises will include imagery, breath control, and relaxed stretching to coincide with appropriate reading assignments.

Margo K. Apostolos is an Associate Professor and Director of Dance in the School of Theatre at USC. She earned her Ph.D. from Stanford University and holds a M.A. in Dance from Northwestern University. Her research includes the exploration of an aesthetic dimension to robotics movement and the use of robots by the severely disabled in rehabilitative settings.
**Wednesdays**

**Bread and Vodka:**
**Food and Community in Russia**
Ayse Rorlich

Food has long played a prominent part in the construction of national identity; what people eat is universally a potent ingredient of national stereotyping. This course aims to provide an introduction to the cultural history of food and diet in Russia. Because culture is learned, shared, and transmitted, this course will focus on the study of the cultural implications of food and diet in Russia, while investigating the evolution as well as transmission of food culture.

We will identify the socio-economic conditions which made possible the emergence of certain staple foods and then move on to discuss the cultural elaboration that took place. For instance, bearing in mind that two of the most important influences on what and how people eat are religion and class, we will attempt to offer explanations for the emergence and changes in food tastes, culinary practices and "fashions." Hence, we will look at the importance of social competition, new raw materials, the relationship between town and country, state and society, as we attempt to identify the forces of differentiation which have shaped the food culture marked so uniquely by the importance of Bread and Vodka.

Azade-Ayse Rorlich is an Associate Professor of Russian History at USC. She received the Social Sciences Division Distinguished Teaching Award in 1983 and the General Education Teaching Award in 2001. She has conducted archival and library research in many cities of the former Soviet Union, has traveled extensively through the Russian republic and Central Asia, and specializes in the study of the Muslims of the Russian empire, the Soviet Union and its successor states. Her research focuses on the study of identity issues with a special emphasis on the place of religion and ethnicity in identity construction.

**You Can't Go Home Again:**
**Now What?**
Eileen Kohan

From Thomas Wolfe to Oprah, people have been trying to answer the question: what should I do with my life? Through examining the lives and writings of the famous and not so famous, students will learn how people make career choices. To be successful in college and in life, you must live your story and learn from the stories of others. This seminar will help you write the first chapter in your story. Drawing from the disciplines of art, literature, music, film, public affairs, journalism, and sports, you will learn how people have defined their lives in their profession. In class discussion you will build linkages from these experiences to your own. At the end of the seminar you will have an appreciation for the complexity of career choice as well as a growing level of confidence in your own career decision.

Readings will include selections from a variety of authors including Thomas Wolfe, Studs Terkel, David Halberstam, Anna Quindlen, George Plimpton, Po Bronson, David Brooks, David Whyte, Michael Lewis and Thomas Friedman.

Eileen Kohan is the Executive Director of the USC Career Planning and Placement Center. Her career has included both corporate and academic experiences, and she has frequently taught MDA 250, Internship for the Liberal Arts. She is an avid reader and is currently writing a book based on her research with student athletes.
Energy Choices and How They Will Make or Break the Future
Mark Thompson

In this seminar we will explore how the choices we make in energy consumption and production impact our environment and society as a whole. At the outset we will discuss the science behind energy and energy choices, and how they impact the environment and climate. A background in the sciences is not expected. We will then move on to consider the various proposals that have been put forth for how to solve our energy problems and hopefully come up with solutions on our own that are better. After that I expect each student to run for Congress, get elected and go to Washington to put our plan into action.

Students will be assigned readings each week, as background for the discussions that we will have during the seminar. The goal is to come to our own conclusions about what matters and how to deal with it.

Mark Thompson is Professor of Chemistry and Materials Science. His research interests include a wide range of topics that impact energy utilization and collection. He is a co-director of the Center for Energy Nanoscience Technologies and the Energy Frontier Research Center at USC. Both of these centers are focused on developing the next generation of solid state lighting sources and solar cells.

Musical Subcultures of the Sixties
William Biersach

During the sixties, due to circumstances within the music industry peculiar to the time, various popular musical styles developed which expressed the social, cultural, religious, political and sexual changes in our society. While the music of this period survives today and enjoys considerable popularity, much of the meaning behind it has been lost because the context has largely been forgotten.

In this seminar, students will pair off to do research projects involving various aspects of the sixties and how they found musical expression. Together we will sift through the lyrics, musical styles, facts, tall tales, and contrived myths surrounding various influential people, events, and movements. In so doing we will try to arrive at an understanding of what was really going on in the music business, the drug scene, the pop culture, political and social trends, and the minds of the youth during those turbulent years.

William L. Biersach has been teaching electro-acoustic media and recording technology in the Thornton School of Music since 1975. In 1997 he received the USC Gamma Sigma Alpha Professor of the Year Award. As a studio musician and synthesizer programmer he composed the score for the Japanese cartoon series, Dan Cougar, and the musical theme for the USC Campaign for Leadership into the 21st Century. His courses on the Beatles and Classic Rock have attracted the attention of Rolling Stone Magazine, CNN and Prime Time Live.
Self-Expression and the Arts
Eric Trules

Self-expression is the taking of an internal impulse—a personal vision—and through self-awareness putting it into external form. Writing, acting, painting, dancing, sculpting, filmmaking, singing—these are the wings upon which artists have flown from time immemorial. Self-expression and creativity are universal functions of the human experience. We are all creative, and we all have the need to express ourselves.

This seminar will be an opportunity to start this process. We will look at the wide range of self-expression in the performing, literary, and visual arts by talking in the classroom, and by attending local events, shows, and exhibitions in Los Angeles, as time permits. The seminar will attempt to open up the doors of perception in appreciating the arts—and simultaneously, to ask the student to have first-hand experience with his or her own creativity and self-expression. There will be brief weekly writing assignments on the process of seeing and experiencing art—as well as on the process of expressing oneself—in whatever ways each student finds the courage to discover.

Eric Trules is full time Assistant Professor of Practice at USC’s School of Theater and has been an artist-educator for almost 40 years. He was a modern dancer in Chicago, founder and director of NYC’s resident clown troupe, and he has been a writer-director, poet, screenwriter, documentary filmmaker, arts festival producer, and solo performance artist in Los Angeles for the last 25 years. He is a USC Phi Kappa Phi "Faculty Recognition Award" winner, an Allen Ginsberg Poetry award winner, and is currently a Fulbright Senior Specialist in American Studies (2008-13). For more see: www.erictrules.com

I Love College: Popular Culture and the University
Lacey Donohue

A glance over the bestseller lists in the past five years reveals a lot about the current generation of college students; not only are you labeled Generation Me and Generation Debt, you are also Smashed, Pledged, Unhooked, Hooking Up, Consumed, and Unprotected. Opinion pieces in The New York Times have attributed the lack of college student involvement in political and social causes to time spent on Facebook; other articles circulate about constant texting, partying, and “entitlement.” But in what ways do our individual experiences differ from (or confirm) these arguments - has college really shifted from a space of higher learning to a site of conspicuous consumption and online networking? Is it, as some say, the “new high school”? And really, why are you even going to college in the first place? What is it all for?

In this seminar, we’ll investigate many aspects of college life in America. We will explore popular opinions in films, music, history books, magazines, newspapers, blogs, and physical artifacts on the USC campus and look at how arguments about college are made, the rhetoric in them and surrounding them. We’ll write weekly short reflection papers, give brief presentations, and, collectively, define what it means to be a college student at USC in 2010.

Lacey Donohue is a lecturer in The Writing Program. She received her PhD in English from The University of Texas where she won several teaching awards. Her true loves are teaching, teaching Rhetoric and Composition, teaching Popular Culture, and watching Greek.
Thursdays

The Archaeology of Inspiration:  
a tour of the neighborhood  
Stacie Chaiken

Playwright-performer Stacie Chaiken of the School of Theatre was invited to the Middle East to “write her next play.” She became fascinated with archaeology, went on some digs, sifted through tons of dirt, and found inspiration for a play. More than anything else, she became fascinated with how we get inspired. Do we really need to travel far? Could it be that, with the right eyes and sharp senses, we can find it in our own backyard?

This seminar will offer a series of adventures and explorations: You’ll visit some mummies, maybe, taste some exotic treats, and go on field trips to places you’ve likely never been, looking for inspiration to make something, anything. And whatever we make, we’ll show in an exhibit late in the fall.

Stacie Chaiken is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the USC School of Theatre, where she teaches Acting and Solo Performance. She has performed on and off-Broadway, on television and film, in the US and abroad, and is the writer-performer of the acclaimed solo play Looking for Louie. Chaiken has served as a visiting Fulbright Senior Specialist Scholar on the faculty of the Theatre Department of Tel Aviv University, and has lectured at Bar Ilan and New York Universities.

Lend Me Your Ears: The Power of Speechmaking and the Art of Speechwriting  
Holly Bridges

Ladies and gentlemen, friends, Romans, countrymen, my fellow Americans, citizens of the world: Speakers have the power to stir, catalyze, persuade, comfort, explain, and galvanize. From ancient Athens to YouTube, from rallies to radio, from tributes to diatribes – speeches continue to be one of our species’ most effective means of communication.

In this seminar we will read, listen to, and watch some of the most influential and artful speeches, from Cicero to Bono. We will dissect them to discover why they work and how they work, as well as why some are colossal flops. We will try our hand at writing and delivering our own speeches, discovering what experts have to say about body language, appearance, vocal variety, stage fright, and effective organization of words and thoughts. We’ll also look at visual aids such as PowerPoint and determine what works and what doesn’t.

Having started her career as a newspaper reporter, Holly Bridges has been a speechwriter for twelve years. She now leads a department at USC dedicated to executive communications. The author of three books on spirituality topics, and a published poet, she has been responsible for writing or editing more than a thousand speeches and has spent some time on the local speaking circuit herself.
Medical Controversies and the Law
Fred G. Weissman

If you are opinionated, love to discuss controversial subjects and have strong feelings about such medical issues as abortion, euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, medical experimentation on human subjects, stem cell research, legalization of illegal drugs, the use of chemicals in the environment, organ transplants, methods of carrying out the death penalty, confidentiality of certain medical disorders, along with other medical-legal/ethical subjects -- this Freshman Seminar is probably designed for you.

At each seminar meeting a different topic will be discussed. It is important for participants to be aware that much of the law is still unsettled or evolving in the medical areas of controversy. Each student will be assigned a medical-legal issue to debate with another student in the class.

Fred G. Weissman is an Associate Dean for Academic and Clinical Affairs at the USC School of Pharmacy where he teaches such subjects as malpractice law, law applicable to the practice of pharmacy, FDA law, and health care law. He received his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from USC and his Law degree from Loyola Law School. In addition, Dr. Ketan Patel (a pharmacist-attorney) will assist Dr. Weissman in the teaching of this seminar.

Writing to Be Read
Richard Fliegel

"No one but a blockhead ever wrote except for money," said Samuel Johnson, but that's not the end of the story. There is after all a reader or an audience, expecting something. This is a seminar for writers or for people who are trying to be. We will focus on the question, "How does it change what I write when I'm determined to affect my readers?" Writing to express yourself accurately is hard, but it's like falling off a log compared to writing things that succeed in stirring other people's emotions.

Students will be expected to read other writers' work in several genres and to share with the class what they themselves have written, sometimes on the spot. We promise not to laugh unless it's funny -- and if that isn't scary, the devil knows what is.

Richard Fliegel is the Director of the Freshman Seminar program and Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs in USC College. He has published detective novels and tried his hand at some other forms, from poetry to episodic television.