

# SELF AND SOCIETY • FALL 2022

## TOPIC SEMINARS

All incoming first-year students should review the Self and Society courses listed below before they register for classes.

### Water and the Common Good

What is a natural resource? How do we construct the value of those resources, and what is considered a common good? How do we think about water that flows from drinking fountains versus that in a can of soda, or an industrial solvent versus an aquifer? Given the central role of water's many forms across ecological, cultural, and economic landscapes, it's no surprise that questions of water governance span centuries and continents. In this class, we will examine concepts of water in two different societies: the Roman Empire, and the contemporary United States. We will explore water management in ancient and contemporary cities. As a class, we will analyze the various ways in which people value and think about water: drinking water, recreation, sanitation, economic resource, and catastrophic floods or droughts. To what extent do these concepts emerge as a part of our cultural identity? How did the perspective of past peoples differ, and what can we learn from those differences?

TRU 110, Section 1 — MWF 8:30

All majors welcome; recommended for history majors  
Instructor: Stephanie Russell

### Who are “We”? Ideologies and Political, Social, and Economic Communities

The ideologies of nationalism and democracy have greatly shaped modern political life. Ideologies are normative outlooks meant to shape mass behavior. Each ideology that we shall study has moral or ethical obligations associated with their views of justice as well as who is a member of a particular community. So in this class we will ask: Who is a member of our nation or our political community? What obligations do we have to members of the same nations or political community? What is the best form of government? What do we owe, if anything, to fellow human beings outside of our society? We will examine the role of major political, social, and economic ideologies and their implications on national identity, political community, political and economic rights, any obligations we owe to others within our community, as well as on any international obligations emerging from our ideological views of the world. In this course, we see how different ideologies lead us to different answers by examining nationalism, classical liberalism, modern liberalism, socialism, Marxism, anarchism, fascism, feminism, and environmentalism. We will also explore other traditional sources of identity.

TRU 110, Section 2 — MWF 9:30

Fully In Person. All majors welcome; recommended for poli sci majors  
Instructor: John Quinn

### The Intellectual

This section of the Self and Society Seminar asks us to collectively consider what it means to be an intellectual — starting with the word: has it been used, and do we use it, to mean just somebody who's really smart? And is that somebody who is hyper-expert in a specialized area, or a person who is broadly educated across numerous domains? Do we see

them as private people meditating alone and for their own purposes, or do we expect them to be somehow publicly engaged? How did we come by these ideas? How does the culture evaluate/value the intellectual? There are actually empirical procedures for thinking through the history of words like nerd and geek, and we can look at representations in books and film. How does each of us relate to this category? There are large numbers who aspire to it, and also those who resent it or hold it up for mockery. Some who fear it. Some who are afraid of having it applied to them.

The major section-specific outcome is to be prepared to see these categories — the intellectual and anti-intellectualism — as real and present throughout our cultural history, shaping our understanding of the world as we presently experience it, and as we try to figure out our place in it.

TRU 110, Section 3 — MWF 10:30

All majors welcome  
Instructor: Adam Davis

### Self, Story, Society

Story sits on the curb at the intersection of self and society. This S&S section will look at the tool of story, its historical development, and the wide variety of ways we use it (and abuse it) in order to make sense out of the world, both collectively as cultures and individually as we consciously and unconsciously go through identity development.

TRU 110, Section 4 — MWF 12:30

Fully In Person. All majors welcome; recommended for English/  
creative writing majors  
Instructor: David Leaton

### Think, Make, Art

This course will introduce students to the fields of studio art, design, and art history with an emphasis on the big ideas that visual thinkers address in their work. Students will explore the role of individual identity, culture, and society in the pursuit of artistic research and what it means to be a responsible cultural producer. The course includes reading, writing, discussion, and lecture, as well as two studio-based projects. Think, Make, Art is intended for studio art, design, and art history majors as well as anyone interested in visual arts.

TRU 110, Section 6 — TR 1:30

Fully In Person. All majors welcome;  
recommended for studio art, design, and art  
history majors  
Instructor: Priya Kambli

## The Moral Sciences

We investigate the foundations of Self and Society by exploring our world reality as informed by disciplines that evolved from the Scottish enlightenment period, once known as Moral Sciences. We know some of them as Economics, History, Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology, along with a recent blending of Economics and Political Science known as Public Choice. Drawing on literature from such disciplines, including statistics, we examine what we think we know, what actually is, and explore where we should go as we and our society move forward. We provide a framework for addressing both timeless and modern societal concerns as found today in all forms of media, political debates, and conversations among friends.

TRU 110, Section 7 — TR 10:30  
Fully In Person. All majors welcome  
Instructor: David Gillette

## Emotions and the Body

This course introduces students to the study of emotion regulation, a key component in the development of emotional intelligence. Employing the latest research in the neurophysiology of emotions, the course will carry a three-pronged focus: 1) on the BOS Emotional Effector Patterns as a physical method for emotion regulation, 2) restorative practices that have been proven to reduce stress and restore balance, and 3) the role of emotional intelligence in the discourse of social interactions and responsible citizenship. The course will help students become more self-aware about their emotions. The course will offer students options for regulating and transforming those emotions that are unwanted or not useful. Students will also learn strategies for recognizing and responding to emotional expressions in others, a crucial skill in socialization.

TRU 110, Section 8 — TR 10:30  
All majors welcome  
Instructor: Dana Smith

## Everyone Gets a Trophy

The course will explore the impact of teamwork in self and society. Students will be introduced to topics that influence their experience with teamwork and how that experience might be different based on generation, psycho-social factors, demographics, social norms, physical health, interpersonal skills, personality and environment.

TRU 110, Section 9 — TR 9:00  
Fully In Person. All majors welcome  
Instructor: Jana Arabas

## Sustainability

We explore the intersection of chemistry, biochemistry, and societal issues in the pursuit of sustainability. It is expected that incoming CHEM and BCMB majors will take this course, but it would be interesting and accessible to all students with minimal chemistry background.

**Multiple Sections**  
TRU 110, Section 12 — MWF 1:30  
TRU 110, Section 13 — MWF 3:30  
Fully In Person. All majors welcome; recommended for chemistry and bio-chem majors  
Instructors: Barbara Kramer (12) and Andy Kauffmann (13)

## My Heartland

While the term "heartland" is often used to describe the central geographic area of the United States, especially its more rural regions, in this class the term is used to draw attention to the ways in which the places in which we spend our formative years play a role in shaping our sense of identity. People tend to express affinity for the place that they call home—their "heartland". And that place tends to infuse them with particular worldviews and values that may travel with them even when they leave the place. We will explore how those worldviews tend to differ for places or communities of different sizes spread across the urban-

suburban-rural continuum and how the economic and cultural differences between these places can be either a source of strength or of division in the broader society.

TRU 110, Section 14 — TR 12:00  
Fully In Person. All majors welcome  
Instructor: Michael Seipel

## Music Psychology

In this section students will consider music through the lens of many disciplines, including biology, psychology, philosophy, and sociology. Students will explore the various factors that contribute to music preference, the acoustic and physiological processes of sound, how music is used and celebrated in society, and the use of music for therapeutic purposes. Students do not need to have prior formal music training to enroll in this class.

TRU 110, Section 15 — MWF 1:30  
Blended In Person/Online. All majors welcome; recommended for music majors  
Instructor: Marc Rice

## Is the World Getting Better or Worse?

This particular section "Is the world getting better or worse?" focuses on evidence-based decision making. The conversation includes how we had made decisions about world issues, how one's background affected the perception, what is our role in the society promoting "correct" information, and how to make a good decision which hopefully makes the world better.

TRU 110, Section 16 — MWF 9:30  
Fully In Person. All majors welcome; recommended for statistics majors  
Instructor: Hyun-Joo Kim

## Talkin' About Talking

Think you have an "accent" or a "dialect"? Know someone else who does? Come join us as we explore how the way one talks reflects who they are (their ethnicity, region, gender, sexuality, social class, and personality) as well as who they aspire to be (In short, the Self). We also will explore how the analysis of how you talk can inform the understanding of the society that you live in as well as our understanding of how the human mind works.

TRU 110, Section 17 — MWF 12:30  
Fully In Person. All majors welcome  
Instructor: Mary Shapiro

## Money Matters

An exploration of how macroeconomics, public policy, and societal norms influence the decision-making of the individual with respect to managing their own financial resources and accumulating household wealth.

TRU 110, Section 19 — TR 10:300  
All majors welcome; recommended for business and accounting majors  
Instructor: Chuck Boughton

## Life is Not a Dress Rehearsal

The course will look at why gays have been traditionally attracted to the theater; how homosexuals have been depicted historically in theater; how the LGBT community is depicted in contemporary theater; who the major LGBT playwrights have been (since Oscar Wilde); how spectators perceive LGBT characters and performances; and in what way is all the world a stage, and all its inhabitants, merely players.

TRU 110, Section 20 — TR 1:30  
Fully In Person. All majors welcome  
Instructor: James Hammerstrand

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## DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC SEMINARS

### Classical Foundations of Self & Society

In this course, we will explore the foundations of Self and Society through the literature, culture, art, and society of Greco-Roman antiquity, and evaluate how they influence modern perspectives. In particular, we will focus on socio-political dynamics of power and privilege through analyzing ancient and modern approaches to race, ethnicity, gender, and slavery as we blend reading primary texts from ancient Greece and Rome with modern content: movies, television, newspaper articles, literature, comics and cartoons, podcasts, etc. By re-focalizing modern society through an ancient lens, we will examine the origins of our own political system, society, biases, traditions, education system, and constructions of identity.

TRU 111, Section 1 — MW 2:30

Fully In Person. All majors welcome; recommended for classics and history majors interested in the ancient Mediterranean  
Instructor: Alex Tetlak

### On Being a Biologist

The purpose of this course is to cultivate the habits of curiosity, good scholarship, ethical consideration, and community engagement needed for students to grow as liberally educated lifelong learners. Students will explore the notion of the self and how each individual's role is influenced within the broader context of a major or occupation, relevant groups, the local community, and society. The course serves as an introduction to critical, multi-disciplinary, and intercultural thinking. This course will also serve to introduce biology majors to the discipline. Students will explore the role of individual identity, culture, and society in the pursuit of biological research and what it means to be a responsible citizen of the natural world.

#### Multiple Sections

TRU 112, Section 1 — MWF 3:30

TRU 112, Section 2 — MWF 9:30

TRU 112, Section 3 — MWF 2:30

TRU 112, Section 5 — TR 3:00

Fully In Person. Required of biology majors; other majors welcome; Biology majors that are eligible for the transfer section should take TRU310

Instructors: Stephanie Maiden (1), Joey Hubbard (2), Drew Sieg (3) and Chad Montgomery (5)

### The Integrity of Care

This course will examine self and society through the lens of nursing and its past, present, and future. Students will compare and contrast the impact of social structures upon health care of individuals and communities, as well as the health care professionals providing care. Topics for discussion will include the historical evolution of nursing (including education, licensure, scope, image, and uniqueness of the discipline), with a particular emphasis upon the ethics of caring and research in growing a body of disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge.

#### Multiple Sections

TRU 113, Section 1 — MWF 11:30

TRU 113, Section 2 — MWF 12:30

Fully In Person. Restricted to nursing majors

Instructor: Teak Nelson (1 & 2)

### Leadership in Literature

This course is designed with the Harry S. Truman Leadership scholars in mind. This section of the seminar approaches the development of self and identity through the lens of literary study with an emphasis in Leadership. This course offers the groundwork for self and society and leadership through an integrative framework of historical and cultural context, analysis, practice, and reflection. Specifically, this course focuses on ideas pertaining to language, thought, identity, culture, diversity, and the overlap with and impact on society. Additionally, there are opportunities for you to develop best practices for being an ethically engaged citizen and leader at various stages of life. Throughout the course, you will hone your understanding of what it means to hear and interpret narratives of self, how we develop and share an awareness about our own identity and diversity, while recognizing our individual role and responsibility as participants and leaders in our local and global communities.

TRU 114, Section 1 — TR 10:30

Restricted to Harry S. Truman Leadership Scholars

Instructor: Brian Heston

### Artificial Intelligence

This course investigates artificial intelligence's (AI) impact on both the individual and society at large. The past, present, and future of AI will be covered with particular emphasis on effects of robots in our increasingly connected society. This course is designed for Computer Science Majors but is also open to anyone interested in the field.

#### Multiple Sections

TRU 116, Section 1 — MWF 11:30

TRU 116, Section 2 — MWF 1:30

Recommended for computer science majors; other majors welcome

Instructor: Ruthie Halma (1 & 2)

### Game Theory

This seminar section is oriented around the study of self and society from a mathematical perspective using the principles of mathematical game theory as our lens. We will use game theory to look at how as humans we behave in conflict, how we deal with struggles against nature, to plumb questions of human free will, to think about the economy and political environment we operate in, and sometimes even to play games. Much of the homework will be mathematical in nature, solving questions of conflict that are modeled in mathematical language. Expect an emphasis on problem-solving and mathematical writing. There will be regular opportunities for classroom discussion and your participation in discussions is expected and graded. This course is primarily intended for Mathematics Majors but is open for any students interested in Mathematics and game theory.

TRU 117, Section 1 — MWF 9:30

Blended In Person/Online Recommended for math majors; all majors welcome

Instructor: Don Bindner



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## TRANSFER STUDENT SEMINARS

### You've Entered the Twilight Zone

"You're traveling through another dimension—a dimension not only of sight and sound but of mind. A journey into a wondrous land whose boundaries are that of imagination." Although these words are drawn from the iconic "Twilight Zone", they're also a useful way to think about navigating college life at Truman, the liberal arts, and interdisciplinary studies—especially for transfer students acclimating to a new environment. In this class, we will view episodes of both Rod Serling's classic television series and Jordan Peele's more recent reboot as starting points for exploring the course themes of "Self" and "Society," undertaking research, honing communication skills, collaborating on projects, and meeting your transfer peers. So buckle up—you've just entered the Twilight Zone!

#### Multiple Sections

TRU 310, Section 1 — W 1:30

TRU 310, Section 2 — W 1:30

TRU 310, Section 3 — W 1:30

Blended In Person/Online. Restricted to transfer students who have at least one year of college coursework at another university

Instructors: Amy Norgard (1), Kathryn Brammal (2), and Lisa Hooper (3)