**FYS 118**

**Fear**

# Fall 2017

Tuesday/Thursday 1:15-2:30 pm 117 Hugel

**Instructor:** Elaine Reynolds, Associate Professor of Biology

108 Kunkel Hall

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:30-4 pm in 108 Kunkel

Thursdays 9-11 am in 108 Kunkel

The course writing assistant or WA is Vicki Holcomb ([holcombv@lafayette.edu](mailto:holcombv@lafayette.edu)) and I will give you additional contact info on the first day of class and post it on the website. There are also drop-in hours to get help with your writing. Information is available at https://cwp.lafayette.edu/for-students/drop-in/

I will set up additional office hours as needed. Please let me know if you can’t stop by during office hours and we will set up an appointment. A *Moodle* web page will be used with this course. It contains some general information about the course as well as some readings and forums for comments. The URL for the site is <http://moodle.lafayette.edu>

Moodle privacy statement:

Moodle contains student information that is protected by the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA).  Disclosure to unauthorized parties violates federal privacy laws.  Courses using Moodle will make student information visible to other students in this class.  Please remember that this information is protected by these federal privacy laws and must not be shared with anyone outside the class.  Questions can be referred to the Registrar’s Office.

Compliance statement:

The student work in this course is in full compliance with the federal definition of a four credit hour course. Please see the Registrar’s Office web site (<http://registrar.lafayette.edu/additional-resources/cep-course-proposal/>) for the full policy and practice statement.

**Course Objectives and Outcomes**

This course will take an interdisciplinary approach to an understanding of fear as a primary emotion and as an influence on our behavior. We will start out by defining fear and looking at our own personal fears and phobias. We will try to understand the line between healthy aspects of fear and fear that interferes with normal life function. We will develop a firm understanding of neurological processes to understand the role of emotion such as fear. In the second half of the semester, we will look at several aspects of fear and society. We will use the medium of the horror film to examine how societal fears are reflected in popular culture. We will also discuss how this basic emotion may be manipulated to influence behavior and ideas. The basic goal of these studies will be to learn how to approach a subject from multiple perspectives and to analyze critically the basic ideas associated with the subject. In particular, I hope to encourage students to think about how knowledge may fundamentally alter their view of society. We will discuss books, articles, films, and videos to learn and form opinions about fear. We will express those ideas and opinions through discussion, writing assignments, presentations and art projects.

In all FYS courses students will be able to:

* Demonstrate critical thinking strategies related to interpretation and evaluation of texts (verbal, visual, or performative) in the context of our course topic.
* Identify and consider your assumptions, thereby building informed perspectives.
* Identify and use information relevant to a specific purpose or goal.
* Employ effective search strategies to locate factually correct and useful information.
* Access and use information ethically and legally.

In terms of writing, students will

* Analyze a variety of rhetorical situations.
* Identify and employ a range of strategies for discovering, developing, organizing, revising and editing.

# Texts for the course

The following texts you should obtain from the college bookstore or another source:

The Fear Project: What Our Most Primal Emotion Taught Me About Survival, Success, Surfing . . . and Love by Jaimal Yogis **ISBN**: 9781609611750

The Science of Fear: How the Culture of Fear Manipulates Your Brain by Daniel Gardner

**ISBN**: 9780452295469

Dark Directions: Romero, Craven, Carpenter, and the Modern Horror Film by Kendall Phillips

**ISBN**: 9780809330959

St Martins Handbook by Andrea Lunsford **ISBN** 0-312-41314-9

We will also be reading selections from the following texts:

Life of Pi by Yann Martel 2001

Behave:The Biology of Humans at our Best and Worst by Robert Salposky

Anxious: Using the Brain to treat Fear and Anxiety by Joseph LeDoux

Amnesty International Report 2007 The State of the World’s Human Rights

Creating Fear: News and the Construction of Crisis by David L. Altheide, 2002,

We will also be viewing various films, a subset of the following:

Bowling for Columbine , Night of the Living Dead, Crazies, A Nightmare on Elm Street, People Under the Stairs, Halloween, Escape from New York

# Course Logistics

The class will meet from 1:15-2:30. One time our class will extend into the lunch period in order to view a film (see syllabus), in which case I will provide lunch. Please be on time for each session, as I will make announcements regarding course material changes, etc. at the beginning of class. I will also post those announcements on the Moodle site. Attendance in class is required and I will take attendance every class. Since much of your grade will be based on in-class discussion and assignments, your presence is essential.

**If you will miss a class because of a reasonable conflict, you must make arrangements in advance with me. I am the sole arbitrator of what is reasonable. If you miss a class because of sickness or emergency, please notify me as soon as possible. A Dean’s excuse will be required if a class is missed without prior arrangement because of sickness or any other conflict. Three of more class absences will result in a lowering of one letter grade for the class discussion grade.**

You will be required to read materials in preparation for each class as defined by the syllabus, on the website, or during class. I will regularly post all changes to the syllabus at the top of the Moodle website. If you don’t prepare for class, it will be difficult for you to participate in discussion. It will also become obvious to me if the reading assignments are not being carried out. I reserve the right to institute an unannounced assessment of your preparedness if the need arises.

The class is scheduled for 3 hrs a week. However, you will be required to participate in activities that will comprise about an additional hour per week. These include viewing films, attending campus events, and taking a field trip. If you have a conflict, we can discuss it in advance and work out a solution or an alternative assignment.

I expect that you will perform honorably in this course. However, to be clear on definitions of honesty and dishonesty, I refer you to the attached departmental statement of academic dishonesty and the Student Handbook statement on academic dishonesty. I will go over this in class and **any questions about this policy should be directed to me at the beginning of the semester.** You will be working with other students in this course and I will make clear in the assignment handouts what should be the extent of collaboration in the assignment. If you have any questions on any individual assignment please ask before the due date of the assignment.

**General Policies**

**Class confidentiality**

In this course, we will discussion fear and often fears that are rather personal. We may also get into some discussions where we disagree, sometimes strongly. In this class, what we discuss in class should be considered confidential. You should not be talking about specifics of discussions that go on in the class with your friends and family. The discussion in the class should not be used in anyway to prank, intimidate or retaliate. Breach of this confidentiality that come to my attention will be referred to the Dean’s office. We will talk about this the first day in more detail.

**Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Statement**

In this class we will respect and appreciate the background and perspective of every student regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, ability, and learning style. I am committed to providing an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity and inclusion, as well as promotes equality by removing educational barriers in our classroom. Please feel free to engage with me on how we might create an inclusive classroom together.

In compliance with Lafayette College policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student. Requests for academic accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students must register with the Office of the Dean of the College for verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

**Cell Phone/Computer policy**

Cell phones and computers should be silenced during class/discussion sessions and put away. Please use a notebook to take notes during class and not a computer.

**Academic Honesty**

I expect that you will perform this work independently and honestly as laid out in the student handbook, and this syllabus.

The handbook states:

“To maintain the scholarly standards of the College and, equally important, the personal ethical standards of our students, it is essential that written assignments be a student’s own work, just as is expected in examinations and class participation. A student who commits academic dishonesty is subject to a range of penalties, including suspension or expulsion. Finally, the underlying principle is one of intellectual honesty. If a person is to have self-respect and the respect of others, all work must be his/her own.”

**Course Assessment**

For all assignments you will receive a handout detailing the assignment and its grading in class. The following is a summary of the assignments for the semester and their relationship to the course goals. Due dates are reflected in the syllabus but are subject to change.

**Personal Fear**

A set of related assignments during the first half of the course will ask you to identify one of your fears and reflect on it. In the first short assignment **My Fear** (1-2 pages), you will identify a fear and reflect on how this fear impacts your life. This piece will be written in the style of a narrative. The second assignment **My Fear II** (5-6 pages) will begin with a rewrite of your narrative of your personal fear and then ask them to extend your ideas to a section where you assess the risk or reality of your own fear. I will ask you to collect references that document the likelihood of your fear event occurring. You will meet with the course WA and our Librarian Terese Hiedenwolfe to work through the writing and rewriting of this assignment.

In addition to these writing assignments, each of you will also create a **Fear Collage** of images garnered from media sources. You will present this collage to the class and discuss the source of the images and why the images are fearful. The collage and writing assignments will also introduce you to ways to critically evaluate an emotional topic through the collection of evidence.

**Fear and your Brain**

To assess your knowledge of the material about the neurological basis of fear we will resort to a standard means of assessment.: The exam. This exam will be take home and consists of questions you will answer in written form.

**Societal Fear**

We will begin to look at the interaction between fear and culture by viewing horror films discussed in Dark Directions: Romero, Craven, Carpenter, and the Modern Horror Film by Kendal Phillips. As we continue to examine aspects of fear in our culture, you and others as a group will lead discussions on theses horror films in reference to your own viewing and the cultural implications discussed in the book. We will also look at fear of gun violence in American society by viewing and discussing the film Bowling for Columbine and discussing and reading materials about events related to this topic. Daniel Gardner’s book will also provide specific examples of how fear is unrelated to risk and how our brain can process fear related information accurately

We also will use writing to address several issues related to fear and terror in our society. You will take a try at using fear to persuade your reader in a **Fear Persuasion** assignment. One project to get you to think about the media is a **Found Poetry** project, where you will be asked to take phrases from a news article to distill the essence of the report into a poetic format. This assignment will introduce you to the idea behind content analysis, a technique that will be used in the final project.

A major research and writing project on **Media Coverage** will be completed near the end of the semester. This research project requires you to look at news coverage of a fear based or emotional topic, to access its biases and to fact-check the news coverage. This assignment has a proposal phase where you will decide on a fear keyword to use to conduct a web-based media search Lexus Nexus. You will present your ideas to the class and receive feedback. At the end of the semester, you will write a paper (10 pages with references) that involves the idea formation, investigation and then reflection. You will submit a draft of the paper, then I and our WA will meet with you to refine the final paper submission.

We will wrap up the semester by looking at the current situation in our society by looking at news article, speeches and recent institutional reports.

# Evaluation

These values reflect the contribution of each of these course components to your grade

Discussion, Group work and Participation 20%

In class writing and Moodle posts 5%

My fear paper 10%

My fears paper II-Analysis of Risk 10%

Fear Collage 5%

Take home exam 15%

Fear persuasion assignment 10%

Found poetry assignment 5%

News analysis proposal 5%

News analysis final paper 15%

Grades will be computed by weighting the points using these percentages. Grades will be assigned as follows: A 92-100, A- 90-91, B+ 88-89, B 82-87, B- 80-81, C+ 78-79, C 72-77, C- 70-71, D+ 68-69, D 62-67, D- 60-61, F <60

# Fall 2007 Syllabus

This is a tentative syllabus and may be changed depending on how our discussions are going.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Topics** | **Reading** | **Assignments** | **Activities** |
| 8/29 | Course Intro | Chapter 56 Life of Pi in class  Hope and other Dangerous Pursuits |  |  |
| 8/31 | Fear, anxiety and Phobia | Selection from Anxious  The PopUp Book of Phobias | My fear paper start |  |
| 9/5 | Fear psychology and biology | Chap 1 & 2 The Fear Project |  |  |
| 9/7 | Fear psychology and biology | Chap 1 &2 The Science of Fear | One of my fears paper due |  |
| 9/12 | Brain basics | Selection from Behave | Fear II paper start | Visit with WA this week |
| 9/14 | Library Day-Sources and Searches |  |  |  |
| 9/19 | Fear and risk assessment | Chap 3 & 4 The Science of Fear |  |  |
| 9/21 | Overcoming fear-why is it so hard-Group discussion | Chap 5, 6, 7, 9, 10  The Science of Fear |  |  |
| 9/26 | Overcoming fear-why is it so hard-Group discussion | Chap 5, 6, 7, 9, 10  The Science of Fear | Fear II paper due | Watch Fear Factor |
| 9/28 | Overcoming Fear | Chap 3 & 4 The Fear Project | Begin work on Fear collage |  |
| 10/3 | Overcoming/Glorifying Fear | Chap 6, 7, 8 The Fear Project |  | Watching Horror Films |
| 10/5 | Fear collage discussion |  |  | Watching Horror Films |

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| 10/10 | **Fall Break** |  |  |  |
| 10/12 | Review |  | Take home exam start | Watching Horror Films |
| 10/17 | Horror films-introduction | Introduction from Dark Directions | Take home exam due | Watching Horror Films |
| 10/19 | Horror films- George Romero | George Romero chapters from Dark Directions | George Romero group |  |
| 10/24 | Horror films-Wes Craven | Wes Craven chapters from Dark Directions | Wes Craven Group | Field trip to Haunted House? |
| 10/26 | Horror films-John Carpenter | John Carpenter chapters from Dark Directions | John Carpenter Group |  |
| 10/31 | Halloween Finish up Horror discussions |  |  |  |
| 11/2 | Bowling for Columbine  Pizza lunch |  | Fear persuasion paper-start | Visit with WA this week |
| 11/7 | Discussion-Bowling for Columbine and school shootings | TBA |  |  |
| 11/9 | Immigration and fear of the other | Selection from Behave,  Freedom from Fear | Fear persuasion paper-due |  |
| 11/14 | **No class** |  | Found Poetry Project |  |
| 11/16 | Fear of the other/Terrorism | Hope and other Dangerous Pursuits Chap 11 The Science of Fear, TBA |  |  |
| 11/19 | Fear and the Media | Chap 5 The Fear project , Chap 8 The Science of Fear, Creating Fear Chap 8 |  | Visit with WA this week |
| 11/21 | Library visit |  | Final paper proposal due |  |
| 11/23 | **Thanksgiving break** |  |  |  |
| 11/28 | Media, current affairs and selected topics | Selected news articles and reports |  | Visit with WA this week |
| 11/30 | Current affairs and selected topics | Selected news articles and reports | News analysis draft due |  |
| 12/5 | Current affairs and selected topics | Selected news articles and reports |  |  |
| 12/7 | Class summary | Chap 12 The Science of Fear |  |  |

Final paper due during finals week