**Information for Teaching in FYP**

**Interim Director- Jennifer Matthews jmatthew@sewanee.edu**

**Director 2021-2022- Robert Bachman rbachman@sewanee.edu**

##### **From the website (https://new.sewanee.edu/programs-of-study/finding-your-place/)**

**What is Finding Your Place? (Also referred to a First Year Program)**

Finding Your Place is a program that introduces new students to campus, course work, professors, and classmates. Its place-based approach synthesizes knowledge and experiences across many disciplines and prepares students for an engaged life in and beyond Sewanee.

##### **How is FYP structured?**

The program consists of partially linked courses representing a diversity of academic disciplines that begin in mid-August and end in mid-October. FYP courses are conducted in two parts. A nine-day, pre-semester immersion allows students to explore the concept of place and the surrounding domain and region through plenary lectures, common readings, and field trips. With assistance from trained mentors, each course is led by one professor—a professor who also serves as the students' transitional mentor. Once the semester begins, the course continues with weekly seminars and/or field classes that focus through one disciplinary lens. Students deepen their understanding of the topic through a "capstone" project. What's more, the FYP courses even meet a General Education requirement.

**What do student mentors do?**

Student mentors help with many of the logistics during the immersive period. They pick up and drive vans, pick up lunches and carry first aid supplies. They help make sure that students get where they need to go, and schedule evening activities for the students. They are immensely helpful to the students and professors.

**What is the timeline for a FYP course?**

Ideally, courses are in place by April 1 before the following fall semester.

Student mentors and a student director are selected in the spring.

During the summer, the instructors meet 3-5 days to plan plenaries, guest speakers, go on field trips, etc. In the past few years, 3 days have happened really soon after the semester ends, and then a couple of other days scattered throughout the summer as schedules allow. But this can be somewhat flexible, focused on the schedules of instructors. We could reconsider the planning time to happen between April 1 and the end of the semester

Classes begin roughly 2 weeks before the first day of classes in August. Most days go from either 8-4 or 9-5. Some people do choose to go on longer field trips that might return later, but that is not required. The immersive period continues through the Friday before classes begin. Typically, we have to take the last Thursday (in this case, the 20th) off from FYP to go to the faculty retreat. The Sunday of the immersive period (8-16) does not begin until after lunch, but this could change to an optional day, or a day for conversation.

During the regular semester, the course meets like any regular class- most people do one or two times a week, but it is up to the instructor. The course ends at Mid-semester.

General information about courses-

Courses listed in catalog:

<http://e-catalog.sewanee.edu/arts-sciences-courses/fyrp/>

Faculty teaching in FYP:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1GHH3W8HjQqxvd5yHlQNkmyNdP2Z\_qiGsbES-YzU-csc/edit?usp=sharing

**Why Teach in FYP?**

FYP can be richly rewarding to the students -and you can see some of these responses I gleaned from the students in my last course: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lNn6srptoBGInnOaEQ8wA89eblAVRi3ASCgZNPRocv8/edit?usp=sharing>

FYP is richly rewarding for faculty. The intensive focus and immersive period lead to more holistic interactions with students. You will get to interact with students much more deeply than many classes allow you to do. The classes are capped at 16 students, so you have a closer connection with each one. (Rob’s second rewarding reason is the opportunity to reingage with many other intellectual topics and approaches, in other words to become a bit like a student again).

FYP is be richly rewarding for a department or program- the classes take students 'out of their lanes' and expose students to subject matter they didn't know they could be interested in.

FRP is be richly rewarding for the university. The structure of the program with plenaries and group activities showcase the value of the liberal arts approach to learning, along with the ability to more deeply delve in the subject matter of each course.

**A Few FAQs**

1. I don’t teach about the local area, how can I participate?

 You don’t have to focus solely on local history/geology/etc., but you can use local examples to expand into more global issues. We work with you to help you make those connections.

1. I teach in (X discipline). I don’t think you need people who teach (X)

We have had people in languages, the arts, global studies, psychology, etc. Again, we can help you work out what might work.

1. I’ve heard there is a lot of hiking. I get lost in the woods so I wouldn’t feel comfortable teaching in FYP.

Hiking is not required. You can hike, or not hike. Personally, I mostly ‘stroll’ with my students. It is up to you how much outdoor activities you want to do.

1. I wouldn’t only want to focus on the immediate area. I want to take students to Nashville, or Huntsville or farther.

 That can be arranged. We have had trips that are several hours away.

1. My department can’t spare me- they need me to teach to majors.

This is a problem for many departments. One thing to consider is that these courses do carry a general education distribution attribute. You may find a way to provide service to your department in that way.

1. I’m new. I have been told I shouldn’t teach in FYP.

Although you would need to talk about this with your department, many pre-tenure faculty have taught in FYP with great success.