



To: WMU Faculty and Staff Community

From: Dr. Toni Woolfork-Barnes
Director, First-Year Experience Programs

Date: January 26, 2012

Re: First-Year Experience 2100 Seminar
Request for Fall 2012 Instructors

Since the inception of the First-Year Experience Seminar (FYS) in 2005, the campus has been supportive and cooperative in working to collectively meet the needs of many of our first-year students. Supporting and assisting freshman students in their transition and adjustment is the mission of the FYE office and therefore, we continue to be excited by the progress we have made in a short period of time.

As we prepare for the fall 2012 semester, we anticipate offering up to 70 sections of First-Year Seminar (FYE 2100), and we need to have faculty/instructors that have a desire to work with and assist students in learning how to navigate through our University.

Therefore, we invite you to join the FYS team as a faculty facilitator for the fall 2012 semester. The FYS is designed to help new and first-time students transition into the University. Because the first year of college is an exciting time filled with uncertainty, nervousness, and lots of questions, the FYS has been created specifically to address the needs of first-year students.

Most sections of the FYS are limited to twenty (20) students to allow for the formation of a natural support group. This type of dynamic creates strong and meaningful relationships with faculty facilitators, FYS student leaders, and peers who have similar academic goals. In addition, throughout the semester, FYS students are required to participate in activities and programs that reinforce learning outside of the classroom.

The First-Year Experience Seminar is designed to be a collaborative effort across WMU's colleges, departments, programs, and academic disciplines. FYS has the potential to meet the diverse needs of incoming students by providing a seamless transition to WMU, as well as provide a program that will integrate academics and co-curricular programs that engage students in college-level learning.

An aspect of the First-Year Experience Seminar is to foster positive interactions between FYS faculty facilitators and their first-year students. With that said, we would like to invite you to become involved as a faculty facilitator for one of the sections offered for the fall 2012 semester. A FYS facilitator:

- Assists in accomplishing the goals and learning outcomes of FYE 2100
- Assists in the development of the FYS syllabus and course content
- Participates in the First-Year Experience Seminar evaluation process
- Participates and attends First-Year Experience Seminar sponsored functions and meetings

NOTE: Faculty facilitators are compensated \$2500 for teaching the First-Year Seminar (FYE 2100) and \$500 for full participation in the FYS faculty facilitator orientation, training, and follow-up.

We need and want your involvement and participation; I strongly believe that to experience the success that we envision for our students, we will need everyone's contribution and commitment. I am asking that you seriously consider becoming involved with the First-Year Experience Seminar to create a stimulating learning environment that will promote and reinforce student persistence toward graduation.

Once you decide to teach a FYS class, please complete and return the **Request to Teach form (attached)** by **Friday, March 30** via e-mail to fye-info@wmich.edu or campus mail (mail stop FYE 5263).

Requirements/Criteria for Instructors Teaching FYE 2100:

- First and foremost a desire to work with first-year students
- Participation in an orientation session for new faculty instructors
- Completion of the two-day FYE professional development/team building sessions for all instructors
- Signature from Dean/Chair/Director/Supervisor indicating awareness that you are requesting a FYE 2100 teaching assignment
- Include your assigned student instructor in the planning and co-facilitation of the course
- Earned masters level degree or higher

Faculty/Staff who are selected will be expected to do the following:

- Submit a written syllabus for review at least one week prior to the fall semester, so that we may ensure that there is a certain level of continuity across each of the sections and that the programmatic outcomes are addressed.
- Use the assigned textbook for the class to ensure that core subject matter is covered during the course of the semester.
- Strongly encourage and reinforce students' completion of the online Instructor and Course Evaluation System (ICES) and the EBI First-Year Initiative evaluations.

- Provide students the opportunity to demonstrate computer competency through e-mail, social networking, the Internet, E-Learning, iWebfolio, and/or class writing assignments.
- Incorporate substantive reading/writing assignments relevant to the outcomes of the course.
- Have students complete a group/individual research project that requires knowledge of research sources and methodologies. University Libraries staff is available to provide support and assist students in gathering appropriate materials, sources and/or information.
- Incorporate co-curricular programming (health and wellness, diversity, and sustainability) into your syllabus and provide students with assignments as appropriate.
- Maintain challenging and fair academic standards appropriate for FYE 2100 as a letter graded, two-credit hour course.
- Post mid-term grade reports to GoWMU for students enrolled in your section of FYE 2100.

Future hiring decisions for previous FYE 2100 faculty/staff instructors will be contingent upon how well the above requirements are fulfilled during the Fall 2012 academic year.

Compensation for Teaching FYE 2100

Compensation for teaching the two-credit hour FYE 2100 will be \$2500.

Regular WMU staff can be paid to teach courses if they are teaching outside normal university hours of operations (8:00-5:00 p.m.) and/or their standard assigned work hours. If they wish to be paid for teaching during their regularly scheduled work hours, then they must take annual leave from the "regular" job, unless they have made other arrangements with their supervisors that may include flextime.

Additionally, while senior administrative officers are not paid to teach, there have been exceptions to this, which must be approved at the dean and provost level in advance. If this is the case, then the appropriate dean should speak with the provost for advice before proceeding.

Additionally, faculty/staff who **fully** participate in the professional development sessions and team building exercises will be eligible to receive an additional incentive stipend for participation. An additional \$500 stipend will be available for faculty/staff facilitators who **fully** participate in the FYS training and follow-up sessions.

Note: Staff who secure written permission from their supervisors and have agreed to use annual leave time to attend the training sessions will be eligible to receive the additional stipend.

We realize that faculty/staff have extremely busy schedules and, therefore, we want you to be able to add these important dates/times to your calendar now, to ensure you are able

to attend and receive maximum benefit from the training sessions. Please note: the faculty facilitator professional development stipend will be made available only to faculty who are in attendance the entire length of the FYS training session(s).

**Fall 2012 First-Year Seminar
Schedule of Important Dates (*Mark Your Calendars*)**

March -April	NEW Instructor Orientation Sessions (those who have not taught FYS for two or more years) various days, times offered
May 5 (Sat.)	FYS Faculty/Staff and Student Instructor Training, (Session 1)
May-August	Instructors use the summer to develop their fall Seminar section
August 22 (Wed.)	FYS Faculty/Staff and Student Instructor Training, (Session 2)
August 28 (Tues.)	FYS Kick-off Day (during Fall Welcome, meet your students today)
December 2012	ALL FYS Students should be asked to take the online semester evaluation through WMU's Instructor and Course Evaluation System (ICES) found in GoWMU and the EBI First-Year Initiative evaluation distributed by the FYE office.

NOTE: Dates/times subject to change and prior notification will be given

I look forward to working with you to make a difference in the lives of WMU's first-year students. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (269) 387-2301.

