



What's the difference between the first-year WRI course and FYS?

The First Year Seminar (FYS) course is one of the five basic requirements you will need to complete as a WFU student along with first-year writing. FYS is not a “writing course,” but most students complete it during their first year; like the first-year WRI class, it is a small discussion-based course organized around a theme; and you may do a good bit of writing as part of your FYS.

So what's the difference, you might ask. In a first-year WRI course, the main goal is to think about and work on your development as a writer—you will talk explicitly about writing practice, reflect on your writing, read and consider other student's writing. In a writing class, the thematic content is a secondary concern. In an FYS, the learning goals are less about writing specifically, and more about argumentation and ideas, academic discussion, and reading difficult texts. Although you will write in an FYS, you probably won't get much direct instruction in writing.

Another difference between WRI and FYS is that WRI courses are taught by instructors whose training, degrees, and experience are in writing specifically, while FYS courses are taught by instructors from lots of different disciplines and departments across the university. While FYS and WRI are meant to be complementary, and both are important learning experiences WFU wants you to have early in your college career, they have different focuses.

We don't recommend that you take FYS at the same time that you take WRI 111, since both courses will ask you to do a lot of writing and reading. While it is possible to take FYS with either WRI 109 or WRI 110, since they are both just two credit hours, it is recommended that you take FYS at the same time you take WRI 110 to allow yourself time to adjust to college-level course requirements.