

## Warren Wilson College First-Year Seminars Fall 2011

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## America's Music: Reflections on the 19th & 20th Centuries

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### FRS 101 F00

#### Warren Gaughan, DMA

The arts reveal much about society and culture. Music written by Americans from 1800 through the 1990's reflects the evolution of the United States from a country with a cultural inferiority complex to a country whose musical influence is now prevalent throughout the world. This course traces the growth of America's music from its imitation of European classics through its significant contributions of blues, jazz, rock, and country music. Special emphasis will be on music of the twentieth century and the individual musicians whose impact has been felt in the U.S. and throughout the world. An appreciation and understanding of the major genres of twentieth-century music will be developed through watching videos, listening to recordings, and attending live performances. No previous formal training in music is necessary for enrollment in the course.

**Warren Gaughan writes:** *My interest in American music began when, as a young pianist, I heard jazz music. It was as appealing to me as rock music. So I decided to learn to improvise; I wanted to study America's 'classical music.' My interest in jazz grew to include jazz history and the roots of jazz in blues and ragtime music. I noticed that the jazz pianists I admired had training in European Classical music, and so I decided to study classical piano too. Learning how to play classical piano expanded my musical world and allowed me to improvise more freely. I completed three degrees in classical music: a B.A., then an M.M. and a D.M.A. in piano performance. While my degrees were in classical music, I continued playing jazz and performing in various jazz groups. I also studied jazz piano with Jack Cocker and Mary Lou Williams. Currently I'm a member of a Jazz Swing Band and a Latin Jazz Band. I enjoy teaching America's Music because it gives me a chance to expose students to some American music and musicians they may not have heard of. I also enjoy learning about the music that interests my students, and the musicians that they want others to appreciate.*

## **Gardens: Ecology, Cultural Identity, and Social Change**

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**FRS 105 F00**

**Amy Boyd, PhD**

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves.” Gardens are human constructs that exist both as ecological communities and as a part of our human communities. In this course, we will explore three aspects of gardens: the ecology and biology involved in a garden community; the ways in which gardens come out of human cultures and help maintain our connections with our cultural identity; and the roles that gardens can play in schools, communities, prisons, and other social institutions. We will examine social, political, economic, and environmental issues, how they affect and are affected by gardening programs. We will take what we’re learning out of the classroom as we explore gardens on campus and participate in service-learning in community and school garden programs off-campus. **Two Saturday service trips are required.**

**Amy Boyd writes:** *I’ve always loved being outside and paying attention to the interactions among living things, which led to my studies in ecology and evolutionary biology. From the time I helped my grandmother in the garden as a child, I have enjoyed digging in the dirt and watching things grow. I have participated in community and home gardening, taught in school garden programs in Arizona, and been enthralled by tropical plants in gardens from Costa Rica to Hawaii. While my own studies have focused on plant ecology and evolution, I get particularly excited about interdisciplinary learning that enables study and celebration of connections among traditionally disparate fields.*

## The Activist Tradition in American History

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### FRS 107 F00

#### Melissa Estes Blair, PhD

This first-year seminar will examine the traditions of activism in our nation's history. Rather than move chronologically through American history, the class will use methods of activism as its organizing principle. Throughout our history, women and men have used an amazing variety of tactics to try & effect change. Sometimes they worked in isolation, sometimes as part of a large movement. Some activists were fully a part of their communities, while others positioned themselves as outsiders. This interplay between activist and community will be one of the central themes of the class. Many students at Wilson are deeply committed to a cause, or many causes. I hope that this class will enable you to ground your own activism in a rich sense of the central role of such work in the history of our nation.

**Melissa Estes Blair writes:** *I have been teaching history at Warren Wilson since 2009. I've been fascinated by history my entire life; the first book I remember from childhood was about a kitten that got lost in Williamsburg during the colonial era. Originally from Lexington, KY, I earned my B.A. in history at the University of Kentucky. I earned my Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, and prior to coming to Wilson, I taught for a year at the University of Georgia. My forthcoming book focuses on women's involvement in local politics in the 1960s and 1970s, specifically their involvement in the women's movement of that era, and how that participation contributed to the major changes in political culture in the 1970s.*

*When I'm not working, Melissa spends time with her husband, Ross, and one-year-old daughter, Maggie. I'm a huge fan of UK basketball, and also enjoy cooking & baking, hiking, and reading fiction*

## Problem Solving

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### FRS 108 F00

#### Gretchen Whipple, PhD

As individuals, as Warren Wilson College community members, and as citizens of the world, we face many challenges. Throughout your lifetime, you will be called upon to attempt to solve many problems and make many decisions.

In this course we will explore how various areas within the liberal arts confront problems. By playing with logic puzzles and discussing the scientific method we will lay a foundation of a structured problem solving process. By reading and discussing plays, poetry, history, philosophy, and sociology, we will explore the processes employed within disciplines to solve problems.

We may also critique solutions proposed to problems in the world around us, for example witnessed through our service experience or read about in breaking world news. **Two Saturday service trips will be required.**

**Gretchen Whipple writes:** *This course puts a new twist on two themes that fascinate me. The first is problem solving: how is it done? how do we learn to do it? Early in my life, I discovered that employers assumed that a mathematically inclined person is great at solving problems. The second is the value of a liberal arts education: having some knowledge of poetry, plays, music, history, philosophy, etc., enables us to better understand those around us, to recognize the complexity of our world, and to lead us to a fuller life. I am hoping that we will braid these two themes together to learn about the liberal arts, about problem solving, about Warren Wilson College, and a little about ourselves.*

## Self-Fashioning: Life, Autobiography and Self-Portraiture

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### FRS 113 F00

**Julie Caro, PhD**

Is identity something that is fixed and unchanging, or do we transform our identities depending on the situation? How do we create our gender, racial, class, religious, regional and national identities through our self-presentation? In this first-year seminar, we will explore the multiple ways in which we fashion our identity in daily life and the ways in which identities are enacted or performed in works of literature and art. We will consider a series of case studies, paying attention to the methods and motivations underlying personal and artistic acts of self-fashioning. We will also enact multiple identities within our own creative writing and art making projects. In our service-learning project we will create a short art appreciation program on the subject of identity and portraiture and present it to a local school or community group in Asheville.

**Julie Caro writes:** *I'm an art historian and curator, and in addition to the First-Year Seminar, I teach art history courses ranging from ancient to contemporary art. The topic of this seminar draws from my research and current book project on artistic self-fashioning in the paintings and autobiographical writings of the African American artist, Allan Rohan Crite. I am also interested in the ways people construct the physical space around them—from the interior decoration of their living space to the arrangement of their surrounding landscape—as a means of staking claims about their individual and communal identities. I've recently moved to Asheville from New York State via Maine with my husband and five-year-old son. When I'm not teaching or writing, I plan to be hiking in the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains and enjoying the music scene in Asheville.*

## **Thriving: How the Science of Positive Psychology Can Help Us Flourish**

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**FRS 114 F00**

**Bob Swoap, PhD**

What contributes to satisfying, engaging, and meaningful living? What conditions allow people to flourish? We will address these questions by examining and interpreting research in psychology and neuroscience on happiness, character strengths, effective learning, and relationships. We will also engage in service and a project focused on the implementation of positive psychology interventions.

**Bob Swoap writes:** *I am professor and chairperson of the Psychology Department. I teach and conducts research in health and clinical psychology and also work with athletes and teams as a sport psychologist. I love to play anything – sports, piano, chess, whatever – and to be fully engaged in life's activities and with my family.*

## Rootedness and Rootlessness

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### FRS 116 F00

#### Justin Gardiner, MFA

“Rootedness” and “Rootlessness”: both have their inherent virtues, their wise prophets and devoted followers, their broad misconceptions and their great opportunities. Do you relate more to a sense of place or placelessness? To the rituals of home or the appeal of the open road? Do you believe that a strong sense of rootedness is essential to becoming a responsible citizen? If so, do you then feel there is no merit to a life of wandering? This seminar will examine these two seemingly conflicting concepts through a host of different creative and analytical texts. We will study the words—and lives—of explorers, settlers, farmers, and drifters alike. Just as importantly, we will consider these texts against the backdrop of your own lives—your experience with venturing away from home and your hope of becoming rooted here at Warren Wilson. Emphasis will be placed on our relationship to the natural world throughout the course, as well as developing a thread of “homelessness” into our readings and discussions—including community service and research on the state of homelessness in Western North Carolina.

**Justin Gardiner writes:** *Over the past dozen or so years I have been blessed to call a great number of places home—including a small island in South Korea, an abandoned mining town in an old growth forest of Oregon, and a snowed-in cabin in northern Ontario. Recent travels have also led me to such remote locations as Patagonia and Antarctica, yet I’m happy to share, as well, that this fall will be the start of my fourth year of teaching here at the college, and that, increasingly, I feel myself rooted to this school, to this landscape, and this life. I hold an MFA in Poetry (which I received from Wilson’s own low-residency program back in 2005), and I teach a variety Creative Writing courses, as well as a Composition class I’ve designed on our National Parks and Wilderness Areas.*

## **A History of the Southern Highlands**

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### **FRS 118 F00**

**Tom Showalter, MACT**

This course will focus attention on the history of western North Carolina with sections on the geology, the unique environment, the human history and an entire section on the creation & development of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. There will be two (day) field trips and a weekend camping trip to the Smokies, where students will spend a day doing a service project for the Park. While well developed 'backpacking skills' are not necessary for our weekend camping, participation is required. Students taking this course are encouraged to bring with them some basic camping gear.

**Tom Showalter writes:** *As a member of the History & Political Science Department I teach survey courses in Western Civilization and US History, two sections of Russian-Soviet History and an Environmental History of the US. In the 1970's my wife and I built a home on College land where we have raised three daughters and now have four grandchildren.*

*In my "free time," I tend our large garden, ride my bike – year round – on the nearby Blue Ridge Parkway, and fish the wonderful trout streams in the area. Each summer, I go with my "family" ( grandkids, son-in-laws, etc) to the Colorado Rockies where we rent a cabin for a month and hike & fish on a daily basis.*

## What Work Is: Working Alone, Working Together, Working It Out

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### FRS 121 F00

Gary Hawkins, MFA, PhD

“All work and no play makes Jack a very dull boy.”

–Stephen King & Stanley Kubrik, *The Shining* (1980)

Whether as lawnmower or tutor, waiter or clerk, laborer or thinker, you arrive at Warren Wilson with a resumé of work. And as you embark on a new career as student and worker we’ll use ethnography, philosophy, literature, and social economics to perform some intellectual heavy-lifting and conduct an inquiry into what constitutes work, what qualifies as “good work,” and what the dilemmas of work are for people of differing backgrounds. Along the way, you’ll use your evolving awareness to check in with your progress through your first semester working out your first year of college.

We’ll also use work as a way into the local community, inquiring into local questions of the fate of the “working poor” in the Asheville area. This will take us on a series of service trips to the MANNA food bank, and in November we’ll work with INSULATE! to help a low income resident lower her energy bills. In the end, you’ll come to see your working life—in your new college and your new community—as a rich and varied (and even playful) endeavor.

**Gary Hawkins writes:** *As a poet I have had many jobs—from spaghetti factory worker to desk sitter—some rewarding on their own and others held in support of my work as a writer. That work, more broadly conceived, includes research in Modern and contemporary American poetry, particularly the intricate linguistic constructions of lyric poems (Dickinson, Eliot, and Creeley, for instance), as well as investigation into the construction of complex arguments. More recently and simultaneously, my wife (who is a writer and artist) and I completely remodeled the 1920 bungalow that was our home in Norman, Oklahoma before we moved to Black Mountain four years ago. Now, as a faculty member teaching poetry and as Associate Dean for Teaching & Learning, I rely on both my creative and critical muscles as I work to build a lively and rigorous writing and learning life at the College. Along that pursuit, I’m finding more and more that building paragraphs and stacking wood have a lot in common.*

## **Firsthand Experience**

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### **FRS 126 F00**

#### **Sebastian Matthews, MFA**

In this seminar, we will examine and investigate what it means to experience the world “firsthand.” Using the campus as a laboratory for learning, and by inviting a wide-range of guests into the classroom for discussion, we will create our definitions of direct experience and attempt to place them at the heart of Warren Wilson’s liberal arts Triad education. Course reading will include writings from David Abram, Annie Dillard, Henry David Thoreau, Lewis Hyde and John Dewey.

**Sebastian Matthews writes:** *I am working writer, editor and writing teacher who enjoys collaborating with other writers, artists and letterpress artists on a variety of projects, including chapbooks, broadsides and multi-media events. I love living in the Asheville area for its vibrant arts scene and its unique mountain culture. Of late, I have worked with such organizations as the Media Arts Project, Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center and the Asheville Poetry Review.*

## Archaeology in Action

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### FRS 130 F00

#### David G. Moore, PhD

Mummies, tombs, treasures, and bones ... when confronted by these stereotypical images, archaeologists will patiently explain that archaeology is far more than just digging up burials and discovering treasures in tombs. While mummies and treasures are interesting, what really makes archaeology exciting is trying to solve puzzles about the past using a myriad of methods, techniques, and perspectives drawn from anthropology, history, the natural sciences, and the humanities. In this course students will work on a 16<sup>th</sup> century Native American archaeological site and will learn about Experimental Archaeology through hands-on activities that will include making their own ceramic vessels. While learning how we actually do archaeology, we will study a number of archaeological subjects including the technologies of the Stone and Bronze Ages, the archaeology of death and burial and Megalithic construction in Europe.

*David Moore writes: I first came to Warren Wilson as a grad student in 1978 to lead a summer excavation at the Warren Wilson archaeological site located on campus. I fell in love with the campus and the Triad mission and though it took me more than 20 years, I finally got the chance to be a full-time teacher here in 2000. I teach archaeology classes in the Sociology and Anthropology Department and also supervise the Archaeology Work Crew. I enjoy traveling and have led Warren Wilson students on International courses in China, Peru, and Ireland. In my spare time I like to hike everywhere and garden at my little cottage on North Lane.*

## Coming Home: LiveArt@Wilson

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### FRS 131 F00

#### Graham Paul, MFA

In this class, we'll explore this question, "*How does one come to feel at home in a new place?*" Taking advantage of the fact that each of you is arriving somewhere new, literally and metaphorically, we'll see if an enacted sense of the history of a place can lead to a deeper feeling of that place as "home." We'll look at how the campus has changed over its 118 years of history by conducting various kinds of individual and group research, and we'll use this material to create a number of performance pieces/installations/interventions at specific sites on campus. In the process, we'll learn something about contemporary experimental practices of site-specific "live art" and "performance art" (*very* different from "outdoor drama"). We'll also read and then incorporate writing that deals with the relationship between nature, history, and a sense of place by Wendell Berry and others. We'll find out about one another's homes and one another's sense of "home," and we'll extend our questioning into the larger Asheville community by means of service projects related to ideas of home, place, and history.

This is a class for anyone interested in exploring these ideas in a personal yet public way. I'm looking for people willing to think, feel, move, draw, paint, build, make music, dance, or just play seriously. *No previous artistic, writing, musical, or performance experience is necessary*; just bring your curiosity and a willingness to try new things.

**Graham Paul writes:** *As the son of a couple of actors, I grew up in the theatre in Laguna Beach, California, and then tried to escape my theatrical fate by going to Antioch College in Ohio as an undergraduate. Needless to say, I ended up as an actor. My friends and I formed a theatre company called Otrabanda Company and toured together for ten years, performing original, experimental works in Asia and Europe (as well as the U.S.) and making an annual tour by raft down the Mississippi River, setting up a circus tent in small towns and prisons from St. Louis to New Orleans and performing vaudeville-style entertainments using music, comedy, and some very basic circus skills. Later, I did more conventional work in stage, film, and TV in New Orleans and New York, including a couple of Clint Eastwood movies. I met my wife in New Orleans, where she and her crazy friends were starting Tipitina's, a music club that's still going strong. We decided that we wanted to raise a family (son and daughter, both now in their twenties) and that I should teach, which brought me, after graduate school at Tulane University in New Orleans, to Warren Wilson College many years ago to head the Theatre Department—which I still do. Although we've been away from New Orleans for many years, we're still quite connected there and have watched anxiously as family and friends continue to deal with post-Katrina life. Warren Wilson Theatre directing projects of which I'm particularly proud include two rather experimental productions dealing in part with questions of racial identity, and, more recently, *Women Beware Women* (a particularly strange Jacobean revenge tragedy) as well as a cross-gendered production of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. I enjoy teaching, directing, acting (when I can), reading, sleeping, eating chocolate, working around my North Asheville home, boasting about my kids, getting surprised by amazing pieces of art (performance or otherwise), and watching this college develop and change over the years as a result of the amazing students who come here and wonderful colleagues who teach here.*

## **Energy, Society, and the Environment**

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### **FRS 136 F00**

**Dean Kahl, PhD**

**Stephen Cartier, PhD**

This seminar is designed for students who want to (1) expand their understanding of our environmental dilemma; (2) acquire useful analytical skills to address the environmental dilemma; and (3) to acquire the skills to change attitudes. We will work to develop your skills in mathematics, science, writing, psychology, public speaking and economics. The themes that we plan to address are environmental activism, environmental justice, restoration ecology, recycling, economics, energy, food security and population. Many examples will be based on the successes and failures of environmental initiatives at Warren Wilson College. Issues of work, service, academics and the issues associated with the transition from high school to college will be woven into all aspects of the course. The course will be taught by Dean Kahl and Steve Cartier

***Dean Kahl writes:** I am fascinated by the environmental movement, and love to investigate the relationships between economics, social issues, science and technology. Teaching is my hobby and my job, so I hope to bring enthusiasm, joy, and hard work to the classroom. I believe that good teachers are like good coaches; they encourage, they provide information, and they help students to do more than students think they can. I am a faculty member of the Department of Chemistry and the Department of Environmental Studies. I am always searching for new ways to incorporate environmental issues in my chemistry classes. Much of my research has an environmental component, and over half of my advisees are Environmental Studies majors.*

***Steve Cartier writes:** I view life as a series of adventures, some good, some not so good, but all of them valuable. Whether it was working as a prison guard, living and working as a Peace Corps volunteer in Africa, living in the shadows of 14'ers in Colorado or moving to Asheville (twice) on a whim, life has been full and rewarding. I am now in my fourth year at Warren Wilson. Whether it is on the trails, at the farm or in the classroom or laboratory, I am continually making connections, learning and exploring new horizons. Also, teaching courses in General Chemistry, Quantum Mechanics and Thermodynamics provides me regular opportunities to explore the fundamental nature of the world we live in. As a result, everyday here is an adventure of mind, body and spirit. I look forward to embarking next on the adventure of first year seminar as we address the connections between and complexities of energy, society and the environment-arguably the defining themes of this adventure we call contemporary life.*

## **Inward Bound: Exploring Alternative Body and Soul Healing**

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**FRS 137 F00**

**Lilian Crutchfield, MFA**

This service-learning course examines a variety of approaches to illness and health considered non-traditional by the American medical establishment. We'll ask, "How do we define the relationship among physical body, psyche, and nature? What causes disease and stress? How does healing happen, and what we can do to create health, both personally and communally?" Our questions will be approached comparatively from a range of cultural and disciplinary perspectives expressed in works such as Deepak Chopra's *Quantum Healing*, John Upledger's *Your Inner Physican and You*, Malidoma Somé's *The Healing Wisdom of Africa*, and Pam Montgomery's *Plant Spirit Healing*—along with short excerpts from books on shamanism, healing-touch, Zen meditation, and hoodoo. Our guest speakers will range from dowzers to cranio-sacral therapists, and we'll be taken on a medicinal plant walk by a local shaman. As our course touchstone, we will partner with one local Western medical agency throughout the fall and write both personal and analytical prose.

**Lilian Crutchfield writes:** *I have been teaching literature and writing since 1996, but this fall is my first chance to share with and learn from students about an abiding passion of mine: alternative healing in its many rich forms. Since my childhood in Appalachia, I've met all kinds of healers—folks who work with local plants, who lead Native ceremony or perform "soul healings" with dowsing, who pray or practice very old Southern traditions of healing such as hoodoo. Sweat lodges, soul journeys, chakra meditation, plant-based prayerwork...I've done these dozens of times and never tire of the basic question they all inspire: how can I be most deeply alive, most healthy?*

## **Experiential Education and the Nature of Understanding**

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### **FRS 147 F00**

**Annie Jonas, Ed.D.**

In this seminar, we will examine the roots of progressive education in the United States with a particular emphasis on the history and philosophy of experiential education. We will explore Warren Wilson's unique triad approach to education as an example of progressive education and also explore, through selected texts, the influence of experiential philosophy on public schools as well as alternative education programs (such as Outward Bound) in the United States. Through course readings as well as experiential learning opportunities, students will examine their own approaches to learning through experience and examine how one reflects and integrates these experiences into growth and new understanding. The course emphasizes personal explorations as well as the development of the class as a learning community through cooperative learning experiences within the classroom and service-learning experiences in the community. The course will be grounded in texts from John Dewey, Paulo Friere and William James.

**Annie Jonas writes:** *As a former Outward Bound wilderness instructor, I understand the powerful growth that is possible through intensive adventure experiences. My teaching career has, in more recent years, moved from the wilderness into the classroom; first in public high schools and over the last six years as a professor in the Education department at Warren Wilson. I am interested in understanding how experiences can inform and transform individuals and groups.*