

# INQUIRY SEMINARS

## Director of Writing

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At the center of Linfield's general education program stands the Inquiry Seminar, which is taken by all new first- and second-year students. Each Seminar provides an in-depth exploration of a compelling topic chosen because it is of passionate interest to the instructor and prompts significant questions for which there are no clear or absolute answers. Discovering the complexity of such topics is the essential mission of the Inquiry Seminar, which initiates students into the dynamic, collaborative exchange that is university learning at its best.

To help extend the conversation beyond the INQS classroom, students simultaneously enroll in a Writing Lab (INQUIRY SEMINAR (INQS 125)) led by a Writing Fellow. Writing Fellows are peer mentors who meet with INQS students to discuss the writing process, share revision strategies, and help with setting goals. Ultimately, though, INQS students and their Fellows do more than just talk about writing; they participate in a mutually beneficial exchange that allows them to shape their own education.

## Courses

### INQS 125 INQUIRY SEMINAR (4 credits)

At the center of the Linfield Curriculum is the Inquiry Seminar, taken by each first- or second-year student. A collaborative investigation of a compelling subject, the Inquiry Seminar builds upon and deepens the relationship between thinking and communication, both oral and written. It models the goals of the entire Linfield Curriculum by developing the critical thinking skills common to every discipline and vital to becoming an educated person. Inquiry Seminars are taught by faculty from many fields and offer a wide range of topics varying from semester to semester. *Typically offered:* Fall and Spring Semesters, Annually

### INQS 125L WRITING LAB (1 credit)

Discussion of writing process and strategies to support work done in INQS 125 courses. Taken in conjunction with an INQS 125 course. *(EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING)*

### INQS 126 INQUIRY SEMINAR (4 credits)

Satisfies Inquiry Seminar requirement for Online/ Continuing Education students. Not applicable for McMinnville campus students.

## SAMPLE SECTION DESCRIPTIONS

The descriptions below illustrate popular topics; current offerings may be found in the online course schedule.

### Alter Egos, Doppelgängers, and Notions of Identity

As social media makes the distinction between our public and private selves ever more apparent, this course will take a moment to examine the concept of persona across multiple disciplines. We will examine how poets have used persona to write beyond their own experiences, study how musicians from David Bowie and Prince to Lady Gaga and Nicki Minaj have cultivated on-stage personas that help them push artistic boundaries, consider masks and the world of *The Watchmen*, and read a little about what psychoanalysts like Carl Jung had to say about the subject. At some point very broad questions without definite answers will arise—such as "Are all identities curated?" and "Is Mr. Rogers a character

or a real person?" We will navigate these choppy waters together and see what we can learn about our many selves.

### East Asia and America

Competition for wealth and power in the East Asian region intensified in the twentieth century and continues to shape international politics and business today. This course explores the political, economic, and cultural relations between China, Japan, Korea, and the United States through a variety of sources including news media, personal memoirs, and feature films. Topics include Asian immigration to the United States, the Second World War in the Pacific, China's policies to promote economic growth, North Korea's nuclear program, and Japan's cultural exports like *Godzilla* and anime.

### Food Writing and the Western Psyche

Why are we fascinated with other people's experiences with food? From the writing of ancient Greek and Roman historians to today's explosion of food and cooking blogs and Instagram posts, Western cultures have long shown interest in writing and reading about food and eating. Food plays a key role in our cultural and social interactions both private and public, and food writing has become an increasingly popular way of engaging with others around our experiences of food. In this class, we will explore food writing throughout Western history and the personal, social, and cultural significance of sharing our experiences with food.

### In Search of the Good Life

What is the "good life"? This is perhaps the deepest human question. It is not only a question we hope recipients of a liberal arts education will ask, it is also a question that permeates film and literature. Looking at thinkers as ancient as Aristotle and films as contemporary as *Hell or Highwater*, this class will discuss and evaluate different conceptions of a good life and provide a place for students to engage in their own inquiry. In short, we will ask big questions and answer them through thinking, reading, viewing, discussing, and writing.

### Revolution's Discography

Music that reaches the masses has been one of our most powerful vehicles for social change throughout history. Where does the personal meet the political in the music you listen to? What impact has this music had in your life and on pop culture? We will be asking questions like these as we listen for the poetics and narratives of protest in musical lyrics. You will have the opportunity to write analytically and creatively as we explore several popular genres and social movements from the 20th and 21st centuries.

### Rural America: Literature, Film, and Song

In this class we'll peel back the mythologies and stereotypes of the wider culture and come to better know rural America. To do so, we'll turn to contemporary music, film, and literature from and about rural America in the hopes that we might uncover—via close reading, careful discussion, and analytical writing—deeper truths about rural America and those who call it home.

### The Social Life of Algorithms

What are algorithms? How do they impact our lives? How are they shaped by social, cultural, and political life? This course provides a critical introduction to algorithmic systems and how they relate to issues of power and inequalities.