

FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR (FRSM)

FRSM 0007 Research: From Curiosity to Knowledge

How does one act on curiosity about the physical and living world and the human cultures in it? This seminar will use case-study and brainstorming approaches to explore how people generate and define good questions, pitting curiosity against ignorance, and practice research to answer these questions in a wide range of disciplines, from the humanities and social sciences to natural sciences and engineering. We identify common components (e.g., evidence, method) and how they differ among a broad spectrum of phenomena and human behavior, and how might we observe and trace patterns in them to find new ideas and answers. We will also highlight field-specific approaches for translating evidence into knowledge. The seminar will be structured around readings, discussions, active learning activities and field trips to active research sites on campus (e.g., labs, archives and museums). Our goal is to enable students to participate in and appreciate how research is performed in a range of areas, as a stimulus to using the arts of observation and questioning for whatever might be their own objects of curiosity.

Fall

1 Course Unit