

**GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE PROPOSAL**  
UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON

Use this form to submit **EXISTING** courses for review. If this course will be submitted for review in more than one category, submit a separate proposal for each category.

<b>COURSE NUMBER:</b>	<b>FIRST YEAR SEMINAR (CURRENTLY FSEM 100 AA)</b>		
<b>COURSE TITLE:</b>	<b>JAMES FARMER, DEBATE AND THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT</b>		
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Timothy M. O'Donnell	<b>DATE:</b>	1-31-07
<i>This course proposal is submitted with the department's approval. (Put a check in the box to the right.)</i>			<b>X</b>
<i>If part of a science sequence involving two departments, both departments approve.</i>			

**THIS COURSE IS PROPOSED FOR (check one).**

<b>First-Year Seminar</b> ( <i>indicate in the rationale if this will also count for major credit</i> )	<b>X</b>
<b>Quantitative Reasoning</b>	
<b>Global Inquiry</b>	
<b>Human Experience and Society</b>	
<b>Experiential Learning</b>	
<b>Arts, Literature, and Performance: Process</b>	<b>or</b>
	<b>Appreciation</b>
<b>Natural Science</b> ( <i>include both parts of the sequence</i> )	

**NOTE:** See the report entitled "General Education Curriculum as Approved by the Faculty Senate," dated November 7, 2007, for details about the general education categories and the criteria that will be used to evaluate courses proposed. The report is available at [www.jtmorello.org/gened](http://www.jtmorello.org/gened).

**RATIONALE:** Using only the space provided in the box below, **briefly** state why this course should be approved as a general education course in the category specified above. *Attach a course syllabus. Submit this form and attached syllabus electronically as one document to John Morello ([jmorello@umw.edu](mailto:jmorello@umw.edu)).* All submissions **must** be in electronic form.

This course will not count in the major. It was taught in Fall 2007.

It should be approved as a general education course in the first year seminar category because it satisfies all of the design elements of the first year seminar while focusing on a topic which is accessible and interesting to many first year students (and is also a topic of some import to the University and its members). While all first year students should have some sense of who James Farmer was, 15 students ought to have the opportunity to study the subject in great depth.

# James Farmer • Fall 2008

FSEM 100AA • Combs 348 • T R 11:00-12:15

Tim O'Donnell

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Office Hours: M 10-11 am, T 10:45-11:45 pm, W 10-12 pm, R 10:45-11:45 pm, and by appointment

## ***Readings:***

Required Text:

James Farmer, Lay Bare the Heart

Additional “readings” will consist of primary sources drawn from a variety of places and in different media including video, audio, and texts of speeches and writings by Farmer and his contemporaries.

## ***Course Objectives:***

First year seminars offer students the best of the higher education academic experience insofar as they represent a genuine opportunity to motivate you to seek and contribute to the meaningful creation of knowledge. Our objective is to cultivate the intellectual skills necessary for liberal learning through the in-depth study of a focused topic. In this case, the topic is James Farmer, the rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement and the antecedents to the major motion picture “The Great Debaters.” The course emphasizes active, discussion based, participatory learning and will be based upon an examination of a wide variety of primary texts from Farmer’s life and work. Along the way, we will examine such topics as how to research (including how to utilize a wide variety of college level research tools and information retrieval technologies) gather and analyze information for the purpose of formulating and defending an opinion and expressing your ideas and views. Our efforts will involve meaningful writing and speaking assignments and you will be offered instruction and guidance on writing and speaking at the college level. We will often begin each class with an examination of particular topics derived from these goals and objectives.

Specifically, the course adopts a historical-critical approach to examining the rhetoric and public discourse of the legendary civil rights leader James Leonard Farmer, Jr., with a special emphasis on his impact on the rhetoric of the civil rights movement as well as the roots and evolution of the major motion picture, “[The Great Debaters](#).” The course begins with a primer on how to perform historically situated rhetorical criticism and a historical overview of intercollegiate debate in the 1930s. Students will then work together to examine a wide variety of primary texts (speeches, debates, and writings) of Farmer. Our primary objective of the course is to listen to, understand, interpret, and amplify the rhetorical legacy of the “forgotten man of the civil rights movement.” And we are particularly interested in understanding and mapping the ways in which a debate education was fundamental to that enterprise.

## **Grading:**

The final grade will be computed from the course requirements. Those requirements will be assigned the following values:

Oral Presentation 1:	10%
Oral Presentation 2:	20%
Writing Assignment 1:	5%
Writing Assignment 2:	5%
Writing Assignment 3:	5%
Writing Assignment 4:	25%
Class Participation/Discussion:	30%

The grading scale is a 100-point scale. 100-93 is an A, 90-92 is an A-, 89-87 is a B+, 86-83 is a B, 82-80 is a B-, and so on. An "A" is considered "*Excellent.*" A "B" is considered "*Commendable.*" A "C" is considered "*Acceptable.*" A "D" is considered "*Marginal.*" An "F" is considered "*Failure.*"

## **Attendance:**

Attendance is essential for your success in the class and is necessary to provide the audience which is critical on speech days. *Absolutely no unexcused absences will be permitted on speech days.* If you are required to miss class for a College related matter on those days, the instructor should receive a written excuse from the appropriate official. In the case of illness, or other personal or family emergencies, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor immediately. Consistent tardiness is distracting and rude. If you are late on a speech day and someone is in the middle of a speech, please wait outside until they are finished.

## **Oral Presentations**

### ***Oral Presentations:***

Oral presentations must be delivered according to the guidelines discussed in class. You are encouraged to make use of the services of the University's Speaking Center as you prepare for these presentations. The Center is located in Combs Hall and you should make an appointment sooner rather than later to ensure success in scheduling a meeting with a consultant. Over the course of the semester you will present three graded speeches to the class. (Further details for each of these assignments will be provided by the instructor at the appropriate time).

**Oral Presentation #1:** The first oral presentation is an oral interpretation of one of Dr. Farmer's Speeches.

**Oral Presentation #2:** The second oral presentation is a research presentation focused on your work over the course of the semester.

## **Writing Assignments**

Writing assignments will follow the guidelines discussed in class. You are encouraged to make use of the services of the University's Center as you prepare for these assignments. The Center is located in Trinkle Hall and you should make an appointment sooner rather than later to ensure success in scheduling a meeting. Over the course of the semester you will have several different writing assignments. (Further details for each of these assignments will be provided by the instructor at the appropriate time).

**Writing Assignment #1:** 1-2 page reaction paper to an assigned speech by Farmer (students will analyze and react to different texts).

**Writing Assignment #2:** Annotated bibliographic entry (you will research and write a bibliographic entry consisting of five different sources related to Farmer).

**Writing Assignment #3:** 2 page research project proposal (which pitches your research project for the semester).

**Writing Assignment #4:** 10 page final research paper which grows out of your research project for the course.

### ***Class Participation:***

Since this course is a seminar, you are expected to be an active participant in this course. This means: attending class, being an active listener, being prepared for class by doing the reading, and participating in and contributing to class discussions. Your class participation grade will be based on (1) the frequency and quality of your contribution to the class, (2) the degree to which you make use of the readings in sharing your insights with the rest of us (3), the energy, enthusiasm and involvement you bring to our meetings and the material of the course, (4) the degree to which you function as a “civilized” member of our social learning community and (5) your active and thoughtful participation in discussions and agenda setting at the class web space. Further aspects of how to be an effective discussant will be offered in class. Your participation will regularly be evaluated.

### ***Honor System:***

Please write and sign the University of Mary Washington honor pledge on every written assignment. I assume that you are observing the honor code for each of your spoken and written assignments. Appropriate actions in accordance with the College Honor Code will be taken as warranted. In this course, honor system violations include the willful claiming, as one’s own, another’s ideas, words, phrases and the like without appropriate acknowledgement in a public debate.