Fun subjects disguise the serious academics behind freshman seminars

Freshman year at Emory College just isn’t what it used to be. Since the new General Education Requirements were established in fall 1999, first-year students have been enjoying “freshmen only” seminars with lighthearted titles like “Coffee and Chocolate,” “The Beatles: Form, Style, & Culture,” and “The Science and Myth of Baseball.” “The topics allow faculty to involve students in serious academic subjects while engaging their interests through often whimsical titles and subjects,” explains Joanne Brzinski, associate dean of student academic affairs.

Fall freshman seminars happen during a unique period in a student’s life: their first semester of college. Faculty who teach fall freshman seminars say the enthusiasm of their students makes it a joyful experience. “First-semester freshmen come in here without a lot of formed opinions and that helps very much with their learning,” says Anthony Martin, senior lecturer of environmental studies. “Often by the end of senior year, we’ve put names on a lot of things and have no more curiosity. Working with freshmen, I’m seeing such openness and eagerness to learn—they haven’t put names on everything yet.”

This fall, freshmen are writing gothic tales, discussing the complexities of globalization, and even tracking animals through the woods. As opposed to a lecture format, the idea behind freshman seminars, according to Brzinski, is to promote “active learning,” meaning students participate in the learning process through discussion, writing, hands-on experiences.

Anthony Martin teaching “How to Interpret Behavior You Did Not See” in Lullwater Park
In a 1997 report entitled Internationalizing Emory: A Strategy for Leadership in International Education, the authors claim, “The academic agenda of a research university in the twenty-first century must embrace global perspectives and promote cross-cultural understanding. Indeed, provincialism is the antithesis of education . . . [and] many of the more profound problems confronting the world today can be overcome only with international or global solutions.”

Today, in the aftermath of the September 11 tragedies, these words seem prescient, for it is clear that international education has never been more important. Never again can we see ourselves as separate from the rest of the world; we are global citizens with all of the responsibility that implies. And to carry out our duties as global citizens, we must learn more not only about the Middle East but also about all of the cultures, religions, and peoples who surround us. Now more than ever our country needs citizens educated in international concerns.

Emory College offers a rich variety of international programs. We require our students to study a foreign language during their time at Emory, because we realize that as we learn a language we absorb a culture. We invite students from other countries to join us at Emory, because we know that their presence deepens our understanding of the world. We encourage our faculty to participate in overseas programs, because we believe international experiences strengthen their teaching and research. And perhaps most importantly, we support our students’ involvement in Emory’s study abroad program, because we recognize that through these programs, students become citizens of the world.

Emory’s study abroad program is relatively new, but it is growing rapidly. Since the mid-1990s, the number of students participating in programs offered by the Center for International Programs Abroad (CIPA) has nearly doubled, with almost 600 students studying abroad last year. These students are immersed in another culture, learning about economic matters, political issues, and cultural institutions. They gain new perspectives on world issues, and they can bring those perspectives to bear on the problems the world faces today.

Because we know that study abroad programs are even more important in the wake of September’s tragedies, we at Emory College maintain our commitment to these programs. We are, of course, taking all reasonable precautions to keep our students safe—CIPA staff members continually monitor U.S. government travel warnings, stay in constant contact with on-site staff, and consult with faculty members with expertise on a given culture. And the program has in place contingency plans should students abroad need to be moved or a program need to be cancelled. We are convinced that study abroad remains not only safe but crucial to our students’ education in global concerns.

The complex problems we face today can be solved only through a deep understanding of the world in which we live. Studying abroad as a student is just one of many opportunities Emory College offers to investigate international perspectives. For alumni in the Atlanta area, Emory’s many public lectures, film series, and Evening at Emory classes provide a means to continue exploring our world, and for alumni outside of Atlanta, we hope that our publications and web sites provide a means to connect with the College’s international resources.

Robert A. Paul
Interim Dean of Emory College
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
ence, group projects, and presentations.

Freshman seminars are kept to a small size with most students receiving their first or second choice. “I’m in a lot of introductory classes, and they’re all pretty big,” says freshman Sarah Sartain. “It’s nice to have a class that only has eighteen people and to get to know those people on a first-name basis. All the freshmen are experiencing the same thing at the same time, so it’s easier to be with people who are feeling the same way.”

Creating a monster

In the Russian and East European studies freshman seminar entitled “Myths and Monsters,” Senior Lecturer Maria Lunk leads discussions on the cultural history of monsters, from their humble origins as the “undead” in centuries-old Russian beliefs and folklore to gothic literature to the glamorous vampires of Hollywood’s silver screen. “The topic itself can careen out of the academic world very easily,” says Lunk with a smile. “The kids will naturally go overboard with it, and I’m always reeling them back in. But we don’t start off with the really sensational stuff. I start off with the origins of just what is gothic literature and Romanticism, what is a monster, what is a myth. Gogol, a wonderful nineteenth century author, helps me set the foundations off of which we build. So by the time they get to Bram Stoker, Anne Rice, and the Western stuff, they’ve got a good grounding in the literary sources and literary treatments as well as in the folklore sources.”

Through literature, writing, research, projects, films, and even food (Lunk’s famous Russian dumplings), the students come to understand some of the ways in which East European culture has influenced the West. “For me, this course is the perfect continuation of my studies,” says freshman Audrey Villinger. “I have been following various literary movements in Europe and have studied the Russian language for a few years. This course offers me a better appreciation of the origins of Russian culture and of the old folktales, superstitions, and beliefs we Westerners usually only get a glimpse of.” For their final paper, Lunk’s students can either write a formal research paper or create their own well-researched gothic tale.

Going global

While Lunk’s students learn about the cultural influence of Eastern Europe, sociology Professor John Boli’s students learn about the cultural influence of globalization. In his freshman seminar entitled “Making Sense of Globalization,” many of Boli’s students were surprised to learn that the term “globalization” does not describe a primarily economic phenomenon. Boli teaches his students a more complete definition of globalization and how many of its cultural and organizational aspects underlie everyday life. “Organizations that are global cover the full spectrum of human activity,” explains Boli. “I want them to understand the organizations which are not visible but are well-established and form a global structure that strongly affect everybody. For example, the International Standardization Sector (ISO) develops standards for everything that gets manufactured. ISO doesn’t get a lot of attention, but it’s very important and strongly reshapes our world. Do you have a credit card? And you know how thick it is, its dimensions, its tensile strength? Those are all things that ISO has decided a credit card is going to be.”

Most of the seminar’s readings come from Boli’s own book, co-edited with Associate Professor Frank Lechner, entitled The Globalization Reader. Freshman Matthew Spritz says the material covered in class is expansive, and his professor even challenges him to change the way he thinks. “For the
Leslie Real models the spread of infectious diseases

Leslie Real, Asa G. Candler Professor of Biology, director of the Center for Disease Ecology, and director of the Graduate Program in Population Biology, Ecology, and Evolution, began his scientific career early. “When I was very young, I would save up my allowance and go down to the hobby shop where you used to be able to buy embalmed frogs injected with colored dyes to show their circulatory system. And I would dissect them on the kitchen table,” Real explains, smiling. “My father was an artist so he would encourage me to do drawings of whatever I was dissecting. My mother was a nurse so she used to get me anatomy books. Their wish was for me to become a physician, but when I was an undergraduate I got involved with basic research and just decided to stay with it.”

Real began his research career in cognitive ecology, the ecology of the brain. However, in the 1990’s, the Ecological Society of America assembled twenty-five prominent ecologists, including Real, to outline the future of ecological research and its relation to national needs. The group decided one important area was the ecology and evolution of infectious diseases. Real authored the disease ecology section of their report entitled the “Sustainable Biosphere Initiative” (which is now an office in Washington, D.C.) and was so persuasive on the importance of this research that he convinced himself to make a mid-career switch.

In 1998, Real came to Emory to help create the Center for Disease Ecology. He describes the Center as an inter-school effort involving the School of Medicine, the School of Public Health, Emory College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and Yerkes Regional Primate Research Center with additional ties to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Carter Center. “We have here at Emory a unique constellation of faculty and resources that can be brought to bear to try to understand the ecology and evolution of infectious diseases,” says Real. “Emory is the place in the world for this.”

Watching rabies evolve

Real’s personal research, supported through a grant from the National Institutes of Health, is a collaborative project with his colleague James Childs, Branch Chief of the Viral and Rickettsial Zoonoses Branch of the CDC. The CDC has been amassing case report data on rabid animals every month since the 1970’s from every county in the U.S. With this unique data set, Real and Childs are building mathematical models using computer simulation techniques to see if they can predict how rabies spreads.

According to Real, a major rabies epidemic in the raccoon population has been spreading along the Eastern seaboard since the late 1970’s when a hunting club transported rabid raccoons from Florida to Virginia. Since then, the rabies epidemic has reached as far north as Ontario and as far west as Ohio. Real speculates that environmental factors may have influenced the primarily northeastern direction of the spread. For example, wide rivers channel movement along rather than across the water, and mountain ranges may have slowed the spread westward.

Rabies, like HIV, is an RNA-based virus as opposed to a DNA-based virus like, for example, polio. What makes RNA-based viruses so difficult to treat is that they have a million-fold greater mutation rate than DNA-based viruses. “With an RNA virus, you have the potential for very rapid evolution,” says Real, “so we’re trying to understand the evolutionary dynamics of the rabies virus during the course of an epidemic. We want to see if the evolutionary history of the virus is being determined by its spatial dynamics and adaptation to changes in geography, time, and transmission. We view rabies as a model system for trying to understand the whole evolutionary and ecological dynamics of disease spread.”

A paper written by Real and his colleagues, presenting a simulation...

The following is an excerpt from the author’s introduction:

“‘Fire’s Goal’ is the name of a poem about the sage Sarabhaṅga, who consumed himself in fire because he could not stand to be in absence of the Lord Rāma, who had ascended to heaven without him. The book, too, is about the consuming fire of longing, in God’s presence and in God’s absence. It is a kind of late 20th century bhakti, or devotional voice, in which the fire of longing consumes and purifies. The poetic idiom is both specific to the contemporary devotee and also accessible to the non-Hindu reader.”

Sacred Thread, or Spider at Sunrise

ten red petals
and a fly
swing in your web
and you hover
over the expanse
of morning silk
caught between
storage and display

will you eat the petals too,
wrapping the fly
like betel nut?
or will you let them swing
and happily drop
as your web dries?

the soul’s work
is to tell the difference
between eating
and contemplation

Fire's Goal
For the Sage Sarabhaṅga

The Rāmāyana reports
your self-combustion
as an act of devotion
since Rāma could not go
to heaven with you
perhaps out of loneliness
you burned yourself
flames came from within
and everyone stared

Eighteenth-century newspapers
told of women who drank
alone in their room
found burned from within
while the furniture
remained untouched
by the flames

longing for god
longing for company
if desire is not met
by substance
it turns back on itself
and the subject burns

breath becomes smoke
flesh becomes flame;
as the body disappears
despair finds relief
in a perfect balance
of its elements

Widow's Bangles on the Gaya River Bed

They glisten by the pyre
as the sun sets
and the smoke rises
a final offering of gray
in the shape of your body

broken in crescents
they shine like doorways
beckoning grief
to pass through
with the wind
or the last light
in pursuit of your soul.

1It is customary for some Hindu widows to break their bangles by the side of their husbands' funeral pyres, as a sign of the dissolution of earthly bonds.
When asked how traveling overseas has enhanced her life, Edna Bay replies, “One of the things that’s really gratifying is getting to know people of other cultures as friends.”

For thirty years now, Bay, an associate professor in the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts who teaches African history, has been traveling abroad for her research, particularly to the West African country of Benin. By returning to the same place over many years, Bay says that she has established long-term contacts and remained a part of people’s lives. “There’s something that happens when you go back to a place repeatedly that cements the relationship in a way that making friends, even if you stay for two or three years, doesn’t happen. There’s a certain continuity in the relationship,” explains Bay. “You sort of grow old with your generation and see people in different ways and have different kinds of doors open to you.”

Studying abroad in Italy as a college junior, Bay first recognized her love of exploring foreign lands. “I discovered I really liked being in different cultures,” says Bay. “I really liked trying to learn and speak different languages. That same year, I worked in London and, again, just found it fascinating to meet new people and to get a sense of how they live and compare how it’s the same or different.”

After graduating college, Bay joined the Peace Corps and served in Malawi from 1966 to 1968, a time when career options for women were limited. Encouraged by her experience in Africa, she earned a doctorate in history at Boston University, specializing in West African historical studies.

Bay says the most common misconceptions about American culture that she has heard from other nationalities originate from images in film and television. These images give the impression that America is a place of cowboys, gangsters, crime, and violence. Comparatively, the most common images that Americans see of Africa are game parks and wild animals, which also foster misconceptions of life in Africa.

In a time of international crisis, seeking to build relationships and understanding with people of other cultures has never been more important. Regarding the events of September 11th, Bay says quietly, “I think Americans are starting to realize that we’ve ignored a lot of what’s going on in the world to our peril. It’s a tragic way to have a kind of a wake-up call, and I hope this will be the last time something like this happens. But I also hope that, as a country, we will be more interested in trying to figure out how other people think and why they think the way they do.”
David Lodge delivers 2001 Ellmann Lectures

“Consciousness and the Novel” was the theme of this year’s Richard Ellmann Lectures in Modern Literature, which were delivered in October by English novelist, critic, and playwright David Lodge.

The biennial Ellmann Lectures were endowed in honor of the literary achievements of award-winning biographer Richard Ellmann, the first Robert W. Woodruff Professor. With unusual titles like “James Joyce: Side and Front Views,” “W.B. Yeats’ Second Puberty,” and “Samuel Beckett: Nayman of Noland,” Ellmann’s public lectures were an annual event at Emory from 1976 to 1986.

“Every year that Richard Ellmann came over from Oxford University for the spring term he brought a new lecture that everyone couldn’t wait to hear,” says Ronald Schuchard, chair and director of the Ellmann Lectures and Goodrich C. White Professor of English. “His lectures drew people from all over the University because they were wonderful in their acuity of analysis and insight and a delight because of the beautiful language and manner in which they were delivered. Very few academics have the ability to draw people like that and to give his very best work in a language that is accessible to everyone. And that’s what we’re trying to perpetuate, preserve, and foster [with the Ellmann Lectures]. We don’t have any hesitation about inviting the top people in the world who can talk about literature.”

Encouraged to step outside of their creative or scholarly work, a major writer or critic is invited by a national committee to deliver three original lectures on a topic in modern literature that is of personal importance to them. Creative writers conclude with a reading from their own work, while critics invite a major poet to conclude the series. Before his death, Ellmann chose his friend Seamus Heaney to inaugurate the new lecture series in 1988. Other Ellmann lecturers include Denis Donoghue, Helen Vendler, Henry Louis Gates Jr., and A. S. Byatt.

The 2001 events

David Lodge retired from a 27-year career as professor of modern English literature at the University of Birmingham in 1987 in order to pursue writing full-time. Among his eleven novels are prize-winning classics that express his provocative, often comic, critique of contemporary intellectual, cultural, and spiritual life, including Changing Places (1975), Small World (1984), Nice Work (1988), Therapy (1995), and Thinks… (2001). Lodge is also well regarded for his literary criticism, essays, short stories, theatrical plays, and screenplays.

The theme of Lodge’s Ellmann Lectures, “Consciousness and the Novel,” was inspired by several years of study in cognitive science to prepare for his most recent book, Thinks… Following Lodge’s first lecture on Sunday afternoon entitled “Consciousness and the Two Cultures,” a pig roast kicked off the four-day event. Complete with margarita fountain and blues band, the event was hosted by President Chace and his wife, JoAn, at the Lullwater House with Schuchard himself serving as “Pitmaster.”

On Monday, the Emory Chamber Players performed at a formal dinner hosted by interim Dean of Emory College Robert Paul. A cross-section of University faculty attended the dean’s dinner, which preceded Lodge’s second lecture, “First Person and Third Person.”

The Friends of the Library hosted a dinner before Tuesday’s lecture, “Surface and Depth.” Before Lodge’s reading and book-signing on Wednesday night, the English Department, home of the Ellmann Lectures, sponsored an

“Lodge” continued on page 10
Bioethics has become an increasingly important topic in the media and in people’s lives as ordinary citizens. We find ourselves drawn into debates over bioethical issues such as stem cell research and human cloning. “It’s something the public has demanded to know a lot more about,” says Friedgen. “Science is part of the public. It is part of our daily lives.”

This October, Emory University hosted the Fourth National Undergraduate Bioethics Conference. Students traveled from across the country to attend. Previous conferences were held at Princeton, University of Virginia, and Notre Dame. Through the initiative and leadership of College senior Scott Siera and the support of the Emory College Program in Science and Society and the University’s Center for Ethics, everything necessary to produce a national conference was planned and executed over a one-and-a-half-year period by a core group of twenty students.

“Undergraduates made this happen,” says Pat Marsteller, senior lecturer of biology and director of the Hughes Undergraduate Science Initiative. “They did a lot of extra work for no credit because they were interested and excited about the kinds of questions that can be raised. They chose all the topics and invited the main panel organizers. They set up the rooms and the schedule, hosted people, invited the keynote speakers and everything. It’s a great group of people.”

Panel discussion topics ranged from transforming science education to animal research to patient rights. With institutions like Emory, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Morehouse College in Atlanta, the students didn’t need to look far to find experts in a variety of fields, and eighty-five percent of the panelists were drawn from the area. “The resources that we have in the Atlanta community are just phenomenal in terms of health, research, and technology,” says Friedgen.

Not all participants were from the Atlanta area, however. Keynote speakers Glenn McGee, from the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania, discussed issues of stem cell research, and Ursula Goodenough of Washington University, author of The Sacred Depths of Nature, spoke on the spiritual implications of scientific research.

More than a series of lectures, Emory’s bioethics conference sought to understand bioethics in context through a series of field trips to local sites such as the CDC and the American Cancer Society. “A lot of times bioethics is discussed very theoretically using lots of words that end in ‘-ology,’” says Siera. “And we don’t actually see how bioethics is applied in the field, like how doctors, how social workers, how researchers are using ethics in their everyday work.” Since bioethical issues are debated in the study of liberal arts, law, medicine, public health, business, and theology, Friedgen hopes this conference will be a “fomenting catalyst” that draws together students from the University’s different schools. “We’re really trying to be interdisciplinary,” explains Arri Eisen, senior lecturer of biology and director of the Emory College Program in Science and Society. “When you think about it, an issue like stem cells involves everything—economists, pastors, rabbis, basic researchers, medical people. So we tried as best we could to go across the spectrum of disciplines.”

Friedgen says that past speakers have seen a real sustaining force among the undergraduates who attend the national bioethics conferences, and Eisen agrees. “My generation and older either has absolutely no training or no interest in ethics,” says Eisen. “They just got into science because that’s where nerds went, and it was fun, and there were no rules. That’s changing. Now there are rules, and you can make a lot more money. This new generation is going to be the bioethicists of the world.”

For more information, see the website for the Emory College Program in Science and Society: www.emory.edu/COLLEGE/scienceandsociety/.
Candler Library renovation plans

The Candler Library building is slated for a much anticipated renovation beginning January 2002. When completed, Candler Library will house a two-story reading room, restored to its original glory, offices for the dean of the College and the dean of the Graduate School, as well as space for African American studies and several College classrooms.

The project is expected to be completed in fall 2003.

New building to complete Science 2000 complex

In the spring of 2001, Emory College celebrated the opening of Cherry Emerson Hall, the first building in the University's Science 2000 initiative, which is designed to bring the physical sciences together in adjacent facilities at the northeast end of campus. Next summer will witness the opening of Phase II of this initiative, a 140,000 square foot building which will house the environmental studies, physics, and mathematics/computer science departments.

Featuring a 3,000 square foot “virtual science library,” Phase II will also include a 60-seat planetarium, which will function as a general multimedia classroom as well as an astronomy teaching space. Additional classrooms will include seminar rooms, a 40-seat distance learning classroom, and a large 178-seat auditorium.

The building was designed as three different pavilions connected by a transparent glass connector, which helps to break down the scale of this large-footprint facility. It also saves trees around the building and allows natural daylight to penetrate.

Concern for the environment has been a mainstay of this project, and the building is envisioned as a living laboratory whose sustainable design features can be integrated into the science teaching programs. It is hoped that the building will achieve LEED certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. Some of the sustainable design features include:

- Rainwater harvesting and storm water systems to clean the water and use it for irrigation on the site
- Drought resistant landscaping
- Recycled content materials and finishes throughout building
- Use of low/no VOC emitting materials (paints, carpet and composite wood components)
- Reduced energy usage.
exam, [Boli] stressed that we do not just regurgitate the stuff that we've learned, but that we use critical thinking,” says Spritz. “In this class, he throws the material out there, but he goes deeper. He makes you think about it and analyze it from your own point of view. It's making me think differently. It's more difficult than a lot of us are used to, but we're all definitely learning a lot.”

Treasure hunting

Another course challenging how students think is “How to Interpret Behavior You Did Not See” taught by Senior Lecturer Anthony Martin of environmental studies. Martin's students spend most of the class period outdoors learning observation and awareness skills as well as modern tracking techniques.

“A lot of what I teach does not require any sort of technology,” says Martin. “I want the students to realize how much they have available through just their bodies to learn about the world around them. We are hard wired for tracking. This is an ancient skill—we are here now because of this skill of recognizing patterns that we see on the ground or in the weather or anywhere around us and extrapolating that information into a visualization.

Track patterns tell you a ton of information once you get skilled at reading them. And the observation and awareness skills the students learn are universally applicable in their lives.”

By writing careful descriptions of what they observe about animal tracks, students can make interpretations about the behavior of animals they did not see. Students can then compare these interpretations to the geologic record from hundreds of millions of years ago, with its tracks made by dinosaurs and other unseen creatures, and decide how behavior has and has not changed through time.

Martin says that becoming more observant in daily life is one of the fringe benefits of his course, and Sarah Sartain agrees. “I can't walk down the sidewalk without noticing footprints in the sidewalk and trying to figure out what that person was doing and what their motive was,” says Sartain. “The class is making me think outside of the box and be more observant. I'm noticing my surroundings all the time.”

Future plans


April 2003 is the target date for the next Ellmann Lectures, and the identity of the lecturer is still a well-guarded and much anticipated secret. Many audience members travel great distances, sometimes even crossing oceans, to attend this special event.

Schuchard hopes that Emory alumni will attend the Ellmann Lectures as a way of renewing their relationship with the University. “It'll allow alumni to see the whole university gathering to have a common intellectual experience,” says Schuchard. “These lectures are for a general audience as wide as the world. They’re here as an outpost of intellectual excellence and of the spoken word and of the living voice. I think the Ellmann Lectures have world importance, and I want alumni to feel always invited.”
Arts & Sciences Awards of Distinction dinner

Emory College and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences held their annual Awards of Distinction dinner on Friday, September 21, 2001. Alumni honorees this year were Dr. James L. Bolen ’65C, Susan A. Cahoon ’68C, and Elmo I. Ellis ’48G. Professors emeriti honorees were R.A. Day PhD ’36C-’37G, Chemistry, and Carlos Rojas PhD, Spanish.

Each year, recipients are selected on the basis of outstanding contributions to Emory, their community, and the world.

Women’s Council

The Emory Arts & Sciences Alumni Women’s Council is again sponsoring a mentor program connecting Emory College women with Emory alumnae and friends in the Atlanta area. This year there are 38 mentor/student pairs. A mentor lunch was held prior to the kickoff to give new and returning mentors a chance to talk, compare notes and hear from experienced mentors. The program had a kickoff dinner in September and has plans for a number of events throughout the year, including a holiday gathering at Cox Hall in December and a midwinter dinner at the Miller-Ward House in February.

On November 1, the Women’s Council sponsored a Women in the Law panel discussion and pizza dinner for Emory College women. Panelists for the evening were Michelle Badaruddin, Latonya S. Moore ’95C, Patrise Perkins-Hooker ’84L-’84B, and Debbie Austin ’77C-’84L as moderator. The event gave students a chance to hear first-hand from women in the field of law. After the discussion, students and panelists had time to talk informally and network during dinner.

If you are an Atlanta area alumna and are interested in becoming involved with the Women’s Council, please contact Caroline Moise at cmoise@emory.edu or (404) 727-8787. Co-chairs for the Women’s Council are Ginger Kane ’83C and Pamela Pryor ’69C-’70G.
1997 award recipient Harold Johnston '41C and his wife, Mary Ella, enjoy the festivities at this year's Arts & Sciences Awards of Distinction dinner.