Thiel College has recently revised its general education requirements for students who are entering this fall. When you come to campus to register, you and your advisor will create your schedule for fall classes. At that time, your faculty advisor will discuss two courses that we are now requiring all freshmen to take sometime during their first year, SEMS 100 and INDS 100.

The **SEMS 100**—Introduction to Seminar Learning course is a one credit hour course. Students may take this course in either the fall or spring semester of their first year. Each course is taught by a full-time faculty member about a topic that relates to their field of expertise. The primary purposes of this course are to ignite your intellectual curiosity, teach you to become actively engaged students, and build your critical thinking skills. Attached you will find descriptions of the courses we’re offering this fall. Please familiarize yourself with this list, as you may want to select one of these courses for fall semester.

The **INDS 100**—Presentational Literacy course is also a one credit hour course. All first year students will take this class in either fall or spring semester. Thiel is committed to providing students with the tools they’ll need to become expert presenters in their chosen field. This course will provide students with the fundamentals for creating and delivering high quality presentations.

**SEMS 100 - 1  Dr. Lippert  Stephen King & the Big Shaggy**

*Tuesday 3:00-3:55*

David Brooks, in his article “History For Dollars” (2010), describes the seemingly irrational and unexplainable actions by otherwise stable and logical people as “the Big Shaggy.” Despite our inability to label or describe them in any systemic way they are responsible for significant breakthroughs and advancements for the human race. He goes on to explain that the liberal arts equip us with the necessary and nebulous connections with which we can begin to describe and understand the effects of “the Big Shaggy.” This seminar will employ various liberal arts readings as well as the writings of Stephen Kin to demonstrate and exemplify the immeasurable and unquantifiable values that are part of a liberal arts education.

**SEMS 100-2  Dr. Hecking  Myths Exposed**

*CLOSED*

*Monday 12:00-12:55*

Prevailing myths in society, concerning science, paranormal phenomena, astrology, political, historical and sociological concepts, statistical correlations, and other odds-and-ends beliefs will be discussed. Also, the scientific method is explained with simple examples and demonstrations.

Students will be introduced to college life with regard to academics, etiquette, looking for resources etc.

**SEMS 100-3  Dr. Sutton  Fairy Tales then & Now**

*Wednesday 9:00-9:55*
Fairy tales are one of the most common forms of creative narrative. While they entertain, they also often teach a moral or practical lesson. The course will compare the early written form(s) of specific fairy tales to the modern (often visual) telling of the tale. Students will explore how the tales have been altered over time and grapple with what those changes mean for a 21st century audience. The course will pay particular attention to the issue of sex/gender while also exploring issues of race and social class.

**SEMS 100-4  Dr. Griffin**  
**Mind & Music: Causally Connectible**  
**Monday 11:00-11:55**

“Songs are built by whimsy, faulty memory, and free association.”  
*Sting*

Music surrounds us, engrosses us in its melodies and rhythms, and gently (or not so gently) produces emotions within us. For centuries humans have been creating and enjoying music, with little attention paid to the complex cognitive processing that allows us to do so. In this course we will introduce students to the psychological science that is devoted to uncovering the ways in which humans produce and respond to musical forms.

**SEMS 100-5  Dr. Buck**  
**Justice in the Pacific War**  
**CLOSED**  
**Tuesday 11:00-11:55**

This course will focus on the Pacific Theater of World War II. It will focus on analyzing the historical context of the war. The emphasis will be on examining the war from the Asian perspective, and will be compared with the United States perspective. As well, this course will examine the concept of “justice” in times of war. Readings (books, articles, essays, and poems), videos, and political cartoons will be employed to convey information and spark discussion.

**SEMS 100-6  Dr. Hunchuk**  
**Monsters in American Culture**  
**CLOSED**  
**Thursday 11:00-11:55**

In this course, we will look at how Hollywood films, television, literary classics, and pulp fiction embodies the violent contradiction of capitalism in the past century. We live in a society where labor is alienated, people are overworked, workers are mutilated in the unrelenting quest for profits in an economic system designed to eat people whole. Such monsters as zombies, mad scientists, serial killers, the undead, cyborgs, radioactive dinosaurs, and those mutilated by the mass culture industry itself will be examined. What does the monster mean in American popular culture? Will our social system turn us into monsters? Is our only hope for survival in a world of instrumental rationality to become monsters? Why do we have such a fascination with monsters? What do monsters reveal about us?

**SEMS 100-7  Dr. Torigoe**  
**How to Solve It**  
**CLOSED**  
**Friday 1:00-1:55**
To be honest, not all problems have clear solutions. Many problems you may face personally, and that we face as a society, can at best only be tackled by decisions between messy and unappealing alternatives. While we may not necessarily “solve” problems in this course, you will learn how to parse and analyze problems so that you can make informed decisions. In this course we will tackle everything from logic puzzles to controversial issues currently facing society (e.g., nuclear power) in our attempt to understand how to solve it.

SEMS 100-8  Dr. Johnson        Contemporary Shakespeares  
*Monday 10:00-10:55*  
In 1964, Polish literary scholar Jan Kott published his influential work of criticism, *Shakespeare, Our Contemporary*. Kott’s book drew parallels between Shakespearean tragedy and 20th century atrocities such as the holocaust and influenced generations of film- and theater directors. If Shakespearean films and dramatic performances captured the nihilistic, existential crises arising from the post-WWII era, then what does Shakespeare mean in the early 21st century? As students and scholars in the 21st century, we might ask, *is Shakespeare our contemporary as well?* This class seeks to investigate 21st century treatments of Shakespeare, which range from film and television adaptations (*She’s the Man*, *The Hollow Crown*, and *House of Cards*) to novels and graphic novels (*Fool*, *William Shakespeare’s Macbeth: The Graphic Novel*) to plays (*William Shakespeare’s Star Wars*). Shakespeare’s relevance is a moot point. The real question is this: *how* is Shakespeare relevant in the 21st century?

SEMS 100-9  Dr. White        Music & Culture: What can one tell us about the other?  
*Thursday 1:30-2:25*  
This seminar will allow students to examine the relationships between various musical forms, styles and lyrics and the culture that surrounds them. Is it valid to draw conclusions about a culture from the music that it produces? Or, draw conclusions about music from the culture that produced it? Students will listen to music, in both pop and art styles, and relate it to the culture of its origin. What does the psychedelic rock of the 60’ say about the youth revolution? How does the record business control the sound of rap and hip hop on urban radio today? Critical thinking can enhance the understanding of, and joy in, this important art form.