



## **LIVING-LEARNING COMMUNITIES**

First year students who choose to live on campus are offered the opportunity to take part in four different living-learning communities. Living and learning communities are unique environments in which groups of students share a common residential experience. Many of the communities also share a common academic experience. Students in each living-learning program are housed together in designated villages and either take pre-determined classes together OR engage in community involvement programming together.

These communities help students create a link between their lives in the residential community and learning experiences in the classroom. An environment is created that is conducive to building a strong, cohesive peer support system that serves the students throughout their academic and professional careers.

## **ACADEMIC THEMED COMMUNITIES**

Three of our living-learning communities connect to specific courses that all students in that community take together. These communities are the Freshman Interest Group (FIG), FreshmanYear Experience (FYE) and MOSAIC (Making Our Space An Inclusive Community).

## **THEMATIC COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAM**

Our fourth living-learning community, Sauvignon CommUNITY Cooperative (Co-op) Program, engages in community involvement programming. Students choosing to live in the Sauvignon CommUNITY are required to participate as a member in one of six Co-op Teams.

## WHAT IS FYE?



How can you be part of a transformative college experience? Join Freshman Year Experience!

Freshman Year Experience (UNIV-150AB) is a yearlong interdisciplinary course that fulfills two of the freshmen General Education requirements: Critical Thinking (Area A3), and Oral & Written Communication (Area A1). The themes of the course are self-identity (Fall) and global identity (Spring).

The course consists of one 50-minute lecture per week—each delivered by an expert in a different field of study, and related to the themes addressed in the assigned readings—plus two 2-hour seminars during which students discuss the issues covered in the lectures, connect them to their own experience and transition to university life, and acquire the required critical thinking and communication (written and oral analysis) skills. Students in all UNIV 150 sections attend the plenary lecture together; while individual seminar sections, led by a faculty instructor, are small (approximately 17 students per section) and foster a sense of community and connection among the participants.

This sense of community is further enhanced by the participation of a Peer Mentor, a Faculty in Residence and the Residential Community staff, who work with the faculty members and students to facilitate students' initiation into the university milieu. The instructors work together to develop the reading list, and agree on two or three common assignments; at the same time, each instructor retains sufficient autonomy to develop his/her own syllabus within this general framework. Students listen to weekly lectures; read essays and literature; and write, discuss, and make oral presentations on critical issues that college freshmen face as they become adults in today's world.

## WHAT IS THE FYE LIVING COMMUNITY?

Join a unique residential community where students who are enrolled in FYE live together in one residence. There are 170 students in the FYE program, so you will be living with freshmen who, like you, have chosen to participate in this exciting living and learning experience. The residential community sponsors a variety of activities which enhance your FYE coursework. Your FYE instructors and Peer Mentors will participate in activities outside the classroom. The bond between your life and your educational interests will grow and strengthen as a result of this experience.

*Small classroom size allows FYE seminars to take the learning outdoors!*



## UNIQUE FEATURES OF FYE

### The Course Structure

The plenary lecture format gives FYE students exposure to both on-campus and visiting experts in a wide range of academic disciplines. The intimate seminar structure provides a supportive academic environment within which students can share and question each other's opinions and values.

The yearlong format provides a rare opportunity for students to be guided through their freshmen year by both faculty and older students. The integration of two basic skill General Education requirements into one course creates a rich interdisciplinary curriculum that focuses on issues of interest and importance to students, while enhancing their writing, reasoning, and communication skills.

Fall semester readings, lecture, and discussions address individual identity and human diversity from the perspective of various disciplines. The course explores different ways in which humans construct their individual and collective identity, and helps students connect these ideas with their own experience as they transition into college life. During the spring semester, lecture topics expand to emphasize human sameness along with human differences and ask the question, What can we do with what we are learning, considering the needs of the entire planet? In the context of these social, political, scientific, and personal issues, students practice essential analysis, research, and communication skills through specific assignments.

### The Faculty in Residence Concept

Unique to the FYE Living/Learning Program is the Faculty in Residence. Living among the FYE students, our Faculty in Residence will have an opportunity to interact daily with the students in FYE. They will play an integral part in extending the classroom into the living room. Available as a faculty academic resource, the FIR will invaluable and educational events, sponsor faculty and guest lectures series, and be available for drop-in academic advising assistance.

### The Peer Mentor Concept

One of the signature features of the FYE program is the presence of Peer Mentors who play a critical role in connecting the classroom to the living room. Each FYE cohort has a Peer Mentor who is an SSU student who has gone through leadership training and, in most cases, was an FYE student as a freshman. Peer Mentors participate in the classroom seminars, attend the weekly lectures, and teach specific student development topics during the year. In addition, outside of class they meet with students to support the student's transition from high school to college life. When a student encounters academic challenges, the peer mentor works closely with the faculty member to provide encouragement and support for that student.



## WHAT IS FIG?

The Freshman Interest Group (FIG) is a program designed to bring what is learned in the classroom to life. Based on different academic interests, the FIG program intentionally creates a learning environment that recognizes how some of the most powerful learning in college takes place outside the classroom. Seminars and study groups taking place in the residential community, faculty members being present in the village, and specially trained peer advisors help integrate the academic and social experience of our students. By being a member of the FIG, students make a year-long commitment to the academic program and the residential living community.

## WHAT DOES AN IDEAL FIG STUDENT LOOK LIKE?

### *The ideal FIG student...*

- Has a strong academic background and wants to get a jump-start on his/her academics at SSU.
- Is prepared to take responsibility for her/his academic future.
- Has the academic ability, commitment and drive to be a positive, active member of our college community. Academic ability is not enough by itself.
- Will use the tools that we provide to make the most of her/his college experience at SSU.
- Is willing to be a positive, active participant in the residential community.

## UNIQUE FEATURES OF FIGs

### FIGs Link with Core Curriculum

Each FIG has an academic block consisting of 2-3 core classes in which every student is enrolled together. These classes relate to the theme of the FIG and often fulfill requirements of the major within the discipline.

### Strengthening Academic Performance

FIG participants benefit from increased attention to academic skills development as repeatedly shown in GPA and retention rate comparisons with the general freshmen class.

“ I see the power of this living-learning community in the quality of supportive relationships the students have with each other, as well as the quality of their intellectual discourse. The students tend to be more engaged and connected than most first-years. I also love the ongoing personal mentor relationship I have with the students - if the student wants to stay connected, it lasts all four years of their education, evolving into teaching or research assistant positions.”

~DR. LORNA CATFORD,  
PSYCHOLOGY FACULTY

## THEMATIC FIG PROGRAMS

**The Arts FIG** is for those who enjoy performance and visual arts, and design. We will work together as a learning community in core English and arts classes, attend campus performances and galleries together, and find out what's going on in the Arts on campus and in the community.

**Business & Economics FIG** is comprised of students who want to learn more about the business, accounting and economics world and who are looking to gain skills to better prepare them to enter these worlds. The business world is highly competitive, and employers seek applicants with unique educational experiences and skill-base.

**Education, K-12 FIG** is a doorway to teaching K-12 in the twenty-first century. Coursework will be relevant to the advising pathways offered for the multiple subjects integrated bachelors / credential program and the integrated bachelors/single subject credential program now offered at Sonoma State University.

**Engineering, Math and Science FIG** provides freshmen who are majoring in, or are interested in, mathematics, science, and engineering with resources, and programs to enhance their academic and social experiences. The goal is to unite classroom and residential experiences to build a positive foundation for a future career in those three fields.

**Global Issues/Global Careers FIG** explores current international, political and social issues for students interested in world cultures, foreign languages, environmental problems. Particular emphasis will be placed on future options for study abroad and opportunities to serve the global community.

**Hutchins FIG** is an interdisciplinary, seminar-based exploration of society and the human condition for students enrolled in the Hutchins Lower Division. We will explore ourselves and our place in the world through literature, art, the social and natural sciences, creative projects, and field experiences.

**Leadership FIG** is designed to help students gain the necessary skills to be effective leaders in today's world. Through course work & experiential learning, this FIG will provide students the fundamental knowledge required for civic minded leadership and employment in the work world.

**Pre-Health Professions FIG** is a gateway to the field of health care, providing coursework intentionally selected to help students gain entry into doctoral health profession programs as well as exposure to current issues in the field. Unfortunately, this program is not appropriate for students pursuing nursing due to the configuration of major course requirements.

**Pre-Nursing FIG** is designed for those students who have an interest in Nursing. Students explore the relationships between stress and wellness; study health care trends and examine the numerous possibilities of career choices.

**Psychology FIG** students are people interested in people. They examine what it means to be human in the 21st century, and explore many areas of research and working the field of psychology. This FIG is particularly suitable for students interested in psychology and human services.

## WHAT IS MOSAIC?



**An acronym for  
'making our space an  
inclusive community.'**

MOSAIC intentionally focuses on appreciating the diversity in perspectives and life experiences of its residents. Any new freshman interested in living and learning in a diverse community, this is the choice for you.

Residents enroll in two classes together in the fall and spring semesters that explore the numerous aspects of diversity and social justice including race, and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and abilities. Students also engage in service-learning activities and field trips.

The MOSAIC living/learning community is housed in Chardonay, in the Zinfandel Village. To maintain a small, close-knit community where students have the opportunity to create one-on-one relationships with faculty and staff associated with the program, space is limited to 50 residents.

### MOSAIC S.E.A.L.S

Mosaic is founded on five guiding principles called MOSAIC SEALS:

- S**ervice & Civic Engagement
- E**mbracing Diversity
- A**cademic Excellence
- L**eadership & Personal Development
- S**ocial Responsibility & Social Justice

### **Through active participation in the MOSAIC community, students will:**

- recognize the value of life-long civic engagement and social responsibility through active participation in program objectives such as service learning. (Service & Civic Engagement)
- demonstrate knowledge of cultural sensitivities. (Embracing Diversity)
- recognize the value of life-long learning through continual educational opportunities inside and outside the classroom. (Academic Excellence)
- increase awareness of their own and others' values, and will learn to assess their own identity development in relation to others. (Leadership & Personal Development)
- increase their ability to be effective allies by addressing behavior that detracts from the development of a positive multicultural community. (Social Responsibility & Social Justice)

## BENEFITS OF ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN MOSAIC

- Campus leadership opportunities
- Development of effective relationships with faculty, advanced student leaders, and other professional staff
- Continual engagement in dialogues about what it means to be socially responsible and a citizen of the world
- Exploration of career and learning goals both in the classroom and outside as they relate to issues of human awareness and diversity
- Opportunity to live in a unique community of learners that are dedicated to working towards social justice
- A "Safe Space" where differences can be openly explored and where all are welcome

*"I've taught First Year Experience and Leadership courses at SSU for 4 years, each with an emphasis on social justice education. Working with the MOSAIC students this year has been the first time I've been able to really see the material come to life, and have been honored to see the individual growth and dedication to social justice in each one of these students." ~HEATHER FRENCH*



# FIG, MOSAIC and FYE: How are they similar?



## EACH PROGRAM

- ❖ Increases retention from freshmen to sophomore year
- ❖ Increases student and faculty interaction outside the classroom
- ❖ Situates students within a small academic learning community
- ❖ Assists in creating study groups in the residential community
- ❖ Requires a year-long commitment
- ❖ Has an advanced student leader who assists in connecting the students' classroom and residential experiences
- ❖ Creates opportunities that foster residential, learning-based peer network.
- ❖ Provides assistance for students to take an active role in their successful academic and personal transition to college.
- ❖ Utilizes the Peer Mentor concept



## How are they different?

### FIG

Each FIG cohort takes 9-12 units together, including UNIV 102, during the fall semester and 4-5 units together in the spring, with the same small group of 20 students. The number of units varies among FIG cohorts.

There is a minimum English SAT test score requirement to join all FIG cohorts. All science FIGs also require a minimum math score. FIG cohorts are created based on academic major and/or interest.

FIG students begin career exploration to determine if a major is right for them.

FIG requires students to complete a civic engagement project relevant to their academic field.

FIG satisfies GE and major requirements as well as elective credit requirements.

### FYE - UNIV 150

UNIV 150 consists of two courses, UNIV 150A (5 units, fall) and UNIV 150B (4 units, spring); all 170 students meet once per week to listen to a one-hour lecture by an expert in a particular academic discipline, and plus four hours per week in their small 17-student seminar groups.

There are no test score requirements to participate.

UNIV 150 emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach.

UNIV 150 provides a broad introduction to GE and a variety of academic disciplines.

UNIV 150 requires students to complete a multimedia project related to a social or political issue.

UNIV 150 fulfills GE areas A1 and A3.

### MOSAIC

MOSAIC students take six units together first semester and 4 units together second semester.

MOSAIC focuses on issues of diversity and social justice, not a specific major.

MOSAIC students learn how understanding issues of diversity and social justice are beneficial to their professional pursuits.

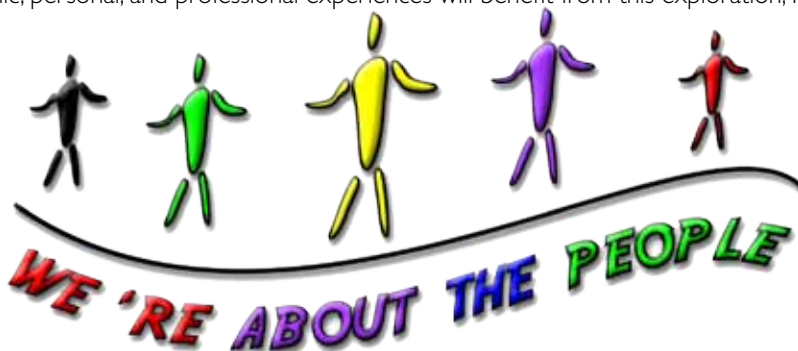
MOSAIC students are required to complete a service project relevant to the theme of the community.

MOSAIC classes satisfy GE and elective credit requirements.

There are no test score requirements to participate.

## How do you decide which program is right for you?

If you want to explore a particular course of study or career field, FIG might be a better choice. If you want to examine broad multidisciplinary issues through a variety of academic disciplines, FYE may be the better choice for you. If you would like to explore issues of diversity and social justice and how your academic, personal, and professional experiences will benefit from this exploration, MOSAIC might be your choice.



are brought to you by SSU Residential Life. "We're About the People."



## WHAT IS THE SAUVIGNON COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE (CO-OP) PROGRAM?

We believe it is a privilege to live in the Sauvignon CommUNITY as a freshman; therefore, it comes with the additional responsibility of participating in its own uniquely designed residential program. Freshmen living in Sauvignon Village are required to participate in either the Sauvignon CommUNITY Cooperative (Co-op) Program or the FYE Program.

The Sauvignon CommUNITY Co-op Program was designed to foster within each resident a sense of pride, investment, and a desire to contribute positively within their living environment. Students choosing to live in the Sauvignon CommUNITY will be required to participate as a member of one of six Co-op Teams (see below.) The residents of the Sauvignon CommUNITY, with the assistance of the Co-op Team Leaders, will help to create, plan, and implement programs for their building community. Sauvignon CommUNITY residents will have the unique opportunity to interact and work closely with Co-op Team Leaders and Community Service Advisors.

### CO-OP TEAMS

**Academic Success and Future Exploration:** Members will provide support and resources to students on academic advising, tutoring, study skills, etc. They will also explore and help community members delve into what their future may hold for them in terms of academic and career exploration.

**Civility, Citizenship, and Community:** Members will learn what it means to live in a community and how to contribute positively to their building community, the Sauvignon community, and the greater community. Members will provide resources for community members to learn how to effectively resolve issues that might arise as a result of living in a community. Finally, members will create opportunities for residents to give back to their community.

**Human Awareness and Diversity:** Members will help to honor the inherent worth and dignity of all Sauvignon residents, while educating each other on the richness of our diverse community. Members will focus on the life experiences of their community members and how we can all learn from one another.

**Life Skills:** Members will learn about life's basic skills. Time-management, balancing finances, and how to cook are just to name a few. Members will then teach these basic life skills to their fellow community members.

**Mind, Body, Spirit:** Members will focus on the different characteristics of a healthy lifestyle, and will learn about the importance of overall health and well-being. Members will provide programs and resources to educate their fellow community members on how to live a holistic lifestyle. Members of this community agree to a community contract that supports an environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco products.

**Sustainability and Community Outreach:** Members will increase awareness and participation in the Sauvignon CommUNITY recycling efforts and smart energy consumption. Members will help to create community service opportunities for Sauvignon residents, and/or will help to create cordial connections and community partnerships between Sauvignon Village and neighboring residential communities.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

- The Co-op program will provide members with opportunities for positive community development.
- Members of the Sauvignon CommUNITY Co-op program will demonstrate pride and investment in their community.
- The Sauvignon CommUNITY Co-op program will increase retention from freshman to sophomore year.

### CORE STRUCTURE

Members of this program will be housed in a building that will have its own designated Co-op Team(s). Students who participate in this program will have the unique opportunity to interact and work closely with Co-op Team Leaders and Community Service Advisors (CSA). Co-op Team Leaders and CSAs are student leaders who provide personal support for individual students in their residential community. They also create a sense of belonging for the residents through coordinating and implementing a variety of social and educational programs. Members of this program will be working closely with their Co-op Team Leader to help plan and implement programs that are focused around their specific Co-op Team Area for their building community.



# How to Apply to a Living/Learning Community

## How to Apply to a THEMATIC COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAM: Sauvignon CommUNITY Co-op Program

After submitting your Housing License Agreement and first payment, you will be instructed to make your preference choices online. You will need to indicate "UNITY Co-op" as your preferred living area. Next you will rank your preferred room type: Sauvignon Single or Sauvignon Double. Students who identify themselves as being interested in UNITY Co-op will receive an email with directions on how to select a Co-op team online. (See six team choices on back page.)

### **Requirements**

As a member of the Sauvignon CommUNITY Co-op Program, residents are required to successfully complete the following:

- ✓ Attend all building meetings
- ✓ Participate as a member in your monthly Co-op Team Meetings
- ✓ Help create, plan, and implement an event focused around your Co-op Team Area each semester
- ✓ Attend two Co-op programs within your building community each semester.

## How to Apply to ACADEMIC THEMED COMMUNITIES: FIG, FYE, and MOSAIC

Return your Student Housing License Agreement with deposit to Customer Services indicating your interest in either the Freshman Interest Group Program (FIG), Freshman Year Experience Program (FYE,) or MOSAIC. Complete the supplemental Living-Learning Community application that can be found at [www.sonoma.edu/sas/reslife/fig/application.shtml](http://www.sonoma.edu/sas/reslife/fig/application.shtml). If you are accepted into a program, a representative from that program will make contact with you prior to your attendance at Summer Orientation.

### **Deadlines/Timelines**

- ✓ Acceptance into each program is on a rolling basis. Therefore, it is imperative you familiarize yourself with the application and requirements as soon as possible.
- ✓ Attend summer orientation in June
- ✓ Applications will be accepted until the respective programs are full. Therefore, it is in your best interest to submit an application as soon as possible.

### **Requirements/Qualifications**

- ✓ Must live on campus in the designated living-learning community the entire year
- ✓ Maintain enrollment in all required living-learning courses both fall and spring semesters.

### **FIG Only**

- ✓ Must place in college level English with either a SAT score of 550, ACT score of 24, EPT score of 148 or a completion of STAR testing.
- ✓ Engineering, Math and Science FIG and the Pre-Health FIG also require placement in college level math with either a SAT score of 550, ACT score of 23, ELM score of 50 or completion of STAR testing.

*“Being the Faculty in Residence for the UNIV 150 FYE program has been a personally and professionally rewarding experience for me. I have many opportunities to engage with our students, to deepen our relationship as teacher and student and to learn better how to support closer relationships among the UNIV 150 faculty, peer mentors, and residential staff.”*

~DR. KELLY ESTRADA,  
FYE FACULTY



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COOP



“☆☆☆☆☆”

*“I like being a part of Co-op because of the relationship that I have created with my Co-op Team Leader.”*

*“Through the Co-op program I was able to meet people that I would have never met otherwise.”*

MOSAIC

“Keep an open mind and you will get the most out of the program.”

*“MOSAIC will forever be a lasting memory of my freshman year, it played a vital role in introducing me to various people who ended up being a family away from home.”*

*“MOSAIC is the perfect living and learning community for students who are trying to be open to diversity and expand their knowledge about different groups of people.”*



fig



“Take advantage of your FIG Professors because they will do anything to help you if you ask, and they will be there when you need them”

*“Be happy that you have so many people supporting you -- which makes it feel like home...”*

“FIG gave me the opportunity to meet people with my same interests and made it less scary to walk into a classroom, knowing my new friends would be there with me.”



fye



*“The keys to success your freshman year of college are time-management, good note-taking, and not hesitating to complete work ahead of time and asking your professors for help.”*



*“FYE made the transition into college easy and successful. I would recommend it to any incoming freshman looking to get rid of a few GE requirements in a personal, friendly environment.”*

