LUX: Latin for “light,” it also stands for Lawrence University Experience, the name given to any distinctive opportunities that are uniquely Lawrentian.
TO PREPARE TO GENERATE
YOUR OWN LIGHT,
FIRST YOU MUST

absorb
light.

Your Lawrence University experience prepares you to bring your specific individual skills, knowledge and expertise—your light—into the world. Our motto, “Light! More Light!” captures the sense of unending discovery, absorption and reflection that you will encounter as a Lawrentian. By the end of your senior year, you will be fully equipped to share your light with the world thanks to your participation in a carefully-crafted Chandler Senior Experience, an opportunity to work closely with faculty and peers on a topic that deeply interests you. But the groundwork for that culminating moment of your time at Lawrence begins with Freshman Studies.

Freshman Studies at Lawrence is like no other first-year college seminar. Challenging, comprehensive, deep: it is all of these things and more. Through close reading, immersive discussions, and participation in community-wide lectures, your own ideas will gradually become brighter. In the pages that follow, you’ll learn more about how Freshman Studies prepares you to generate your own light by carefully absorbing some of the brightest texts and ideas in human history.
“Students in freshman studies are actively engaged.”

Freshman Studies is designed to give you the space and support to be an active, involved and inquiring participant in your own education.

LAUNCHED IN 1945 by former Lawrence University president Nathan Pusey, Freshman Studies seeks to provide students with a communal entry point into the liberal arts at large and the specific intellectual community at Lawrence.

Your entire first-year class, while divided into sections of 15 students taught by professors from different disciplines, will be united by a shared reading list. That creates a powerful intellectual energy that can be felt all over campus, from the first day of the first term to the last day of the second term.

“Students have a chance to not only talk about texts, but to talk about ideas that have a bearing on the way we conduct our lives.”

“IF THERE IS ANYTHING THAT TELLS A YOUNG PERSON THAT FRESHMAN YEAR IS NOT GRADE THIRTEEN, IT’S FRESHMAN STUDIES.”

Richard Warch
Former Lawrence University President
Over the course of your first two terms, you will grapple with a series of seemingly disparate works that are united in their ability to generate great discussions. While most often these will be books, they can run the gamut of everything from ancient plays to modern jazz albums and graphic novels. Regardless of subject matter, the idea is that when you encounter a text you will “ask questions, interrogate it. See that it’s full of problems,” which is what former Lawrence (and later Harvard) president Nathan Pusey had in mind when he created the Freshman Studies program. To him, in each assigned text, “there is something there for you to wrestle with.”

So, what have students “wrestled with” lately?

RECENT FRESHMAN STUDIES WORKS INCLUDE:

- The Character of Physical Law
  - Richard Feynman
- Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic
  - Alison Bechdel
- Kind of Blue
  - Miles Davis
- Republic
  - Plato
- Collected Fictions
  - Jorge Luis Borges
- Arabian Nights
  - Muhsin Mahdi
- Landscape With the Fall of Icarus
  - Pieter Bruegel the Elder

“The beginning is the most important part of the work.”

—Plato
Faculty from every discipline volunteer to lead Freshman Studies classes. In addition to their gifts for guiding great conversations, they bring their deep expertise in their chosen fields to bear on material from completely different arenas. This means a biology professor could be moderating your discussion of a jazz album, or a Spanish professor could guide you through your examination of a philosophical treatise. This is by design. Cross-disciplinary engagement is a key feature of the program, and it not only benefits you as a student, it invigorates our entire campus.

— Professor of Government Ameya Balsekar, who recently won the Freshman Studies Teaching Award, which is given each year to an outstanding faculty member in recognition of teaching excellence in the program.

“Things that I may have thought about for years in one way, I find a student thinking about in a completely different way. I find that really rewarding.”

— Lifongo Vitende, Professor of French
Each work on the Freshman Studies syllabus provides the occasion for a corresponding lecture, given by an expert and engaging presenter, who may even be the work’s creator. These lectures, held in the Lawrence Memorial Chapel, offer deeper insights on, and further context about, the work and the questions it raises. The audience, comprised of the entire first-year class, a few dozen professors, and members of the greater Appleton community, reflects one of the core values of Freshman Studies: that great ideas are meant to be shared. “Many good things can happen in and because of twenty-three discussion sessions and six lectures,” says Professor Emeritus of Philosophy John Dreher, who taught in the Freshman Studies program more than 30 times. “Not the least of which is the occasion for our shared intellectual community to come together, interrogate a common problem, learn from each other and inspire each other in the process.”

“The Muse of History: On Poetry and Social Justice,” presented by Natasha Trethewey, 19th Poet Laureate of the U.S., whose work “Native Guard” has been on the reading list for the past three years.
You will build a solid foundation for future learning, not just here at Lawrence, but throughout your life. By asking questions, discussing different points of view, interrogating facts, and finding your voice through intensive writing assignments and discussions, you will be prepared to thrive in your classes outside of Freshman Studies and out in the world.

Alumni continually cite Freshman Studies as one of the most formative and enduring aspects of their Lawrence education. “It ties together Lawrentians across the generations, and gives us a common language throughout our four years on campus,” explains David Blowers ’82, Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees.

“MY CLASS WAS MORE OF A DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE STUDENTS, SO I REALLY ENJOYED LISTENING TO THE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES OF MY PEERS.”

Megan DeCleen ’17

“IT TIES TOGETHER LAWRENTIANS ACROSS THE GENERATIONS.”

David Blowers ’82
Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees

“Just last week while out to dinner with three other Lawrence graduates, there was a Faulknerian reference—and only one of the group was an English major. I love that we now cap the Lawrence education with the Senior Experience, an ideal bookend to the Freshman Studies foundation.”
The highly interactive courses and engaging lectures of Freshman Studies prepare you to meet the challenges of your future coursework at Lawrence—and your life after Lawrence.

They will spark a lifelong passion for learning, creating, questioning, exploring, reflecting, arguing, synthesizing, and solving...

...for living life as a Lawrentian.

When you are ready to become a Lawrentian, visit GO.LAWRENCE.EDU/YES today to submit your admission deposit and secure your place within our intellectual community.