Welcome, FIG Student!

This fall, you get the fantastic opportunity to get to know the University through the Religious Objects as Icons FIG. My name is Emily Sonnenfeld and I’m super excited to be the FIG Assistant for the same FIG that I was a part of my freshman year at the UO. I’m a sophomore and a Japanese major, and I have a love and interest in anything and everything creative. I love writing fiction in my spare time, as well as doodling out character designs and scenes. I have experience in lifeguarding, and I teach swimming lessons to kids at my local pool back home on Bainbridge Island, WA. I’ve been to different countries with my family, visiting Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand in the past three years alone. I’m excited to get to know you!

The FIG combines REL101 (World Religions – Asian Traditions) and ARH209 (History of Japanese art). Professor Walley teaches ARH209, in addition to being your College Connection instructor. She specializes in the history of Japanese Buddhist art, but is also interested in Japanese woodblock prints and contemporary pop culture.

The FIG is an art and religion based set of classes and because of this, the College Connections class will go over the materials and connections. It will be very discussion based. The weekly College Connection sessions will meet in our University museum (Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art). We will explore the connections between art and religion using actual art objects from the collection! In a small group, you will get to write a short museum label for a specific object that you will choose as a group. Your label will be placed in the gallery for the remainder of the year, so that everyone who visits the museum can learn from you. The class will be a great way to make friends, learn the ropes of being a Duck, and to witness how what you have learned can actually make a difference in the community’s understanding of a foreign culture.

Because we would like you to get to know the museum on your own, for your summer reading assignment, we ask that you explore the museum’s website. We would also like you to visit the museum at least once before our meeting on Week 1. You’ll get to discuss what you discovered not just with your peers but also with Ms. Jill Hartz, the Executive Director of the museum, so make sure to come prepared!

Our first FIG meeting will be held during the Week of Welcome. You are required to attend, so be sure to meet with the entire FIG community at 11:00 am on Friday, September 21, 2012 in Columbia 150. Afterwards, we will split off into separate groups, so make sure you’re there on time!

We will also be attending the University Convocation together on Sunday, September 23, 2012. We will discuss the meeting place and time for this during our Friday meeting. Remember to bring your Student Handbook with you when you return to campus! You will find it very useful.

We look forward to meeting you on the 21st! This will be a wonderful chance to get to know a group of students with similar interests, as well as getting an in-depth view on the college process. College is all about making connections in the community as well as getting a solid education; we hope you use the FIG as a kick-start into this experience!
You can contact us with any questions by our emails [provided below]. Please send me the best email address that we can reach you with as soon as possible. There will be events (academic and non-academic!) and excursions that you don’t want to miss out on, and I’ll be sending information out via email. The earlier I hear from you, the better.

We look forward to the upcoming fall term!

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