First-Year Writing Program
Fall 2011
Course Descriptions

General Description of 76-100, Reading and Writing in an Academic Context 9 units
76-100 is an academic reading and writing course for multilingual students, especially those who are not native speakers of English or who consider English to be their weaker language. The course, designed as a prerequisite for 76-101 and for college writing in general, emphasizes reading comprehension strategies for reading a variety of text types in English (e.g., journalism, textbook selections, popular press arguments, and academic journal articles). Throughout the semester, students use these sources to write summaries and short position papers. The course introduces students to readers' expectations for North American rhetorical style at the sentence, paragraph, and whole text or genre levels. Within the course, we discuss explicit genre and linguistic norms for writing in academic English so that writers can connect with their readers, and we help students develop mastery over their literate processes for effective, advanced reading and writing in English. Students who take this course qualify through an online placement test that is administered through the university prior to the fall semester. (All sections are offered MWF.)

Each 76-100 course is structured by the reading and writing objectives of the course as well as a vocabulary for writing in English, but some courses present different themes (or content) in their readings. These themes and their related questions are posted below so that students can select a topic that interests them.

Section A
D. Walter
10:30-11:20 AM
Digital Selves in a Real World
In this section of 76-100, we will read a variety of different texts that discuss to what extent technology and social media shape the lifestyle and identity of its users, particularly those users considered by some to be the “net generation.” Students will use these readings to build reader-centered, advanced academic English literacy practices for drawing on sources for writing academic papers. Throughout the semester, students will summarize and compare authors and finally write their own positions about so-called “digital identities.” By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work, including their authored texts about the course theme and their texts about their writing processes and error patterns.

Section B
J. Carlock
11:30AM-12:20 PM
Digital Selves in a Real World
In this section of 76-100, we will read a variety of different texts that discuss to what extent technology and social media shape the lifestyle and identity of its users, particularly those users considered by some to be the “net generation.” Students will use these readings to build reader-centered, advanced academic English literacy practices for drawing on sources for writing
academic papers. Throughout the semester, students will summarize and compare authors and finally write their own positions about so-called “digital identities.” By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work, including their authored texts about the course theme and their texts about their writing processes and error patterns.

Section H
E. Wallace
11:30 AM – 12:20 PM
Digital Selves in a Real World
In this section of 76-100, we will read a variety of different texts that discuss to what extent technology and social media shape the lifestyle and identity of its users, particularly those users considered by some to be the “net generation.” Students will use these readings to build reader-centered, advanced academic English literacy practices for drawing on sources for writing academic papers. Throughout the semester, students will summarize and compare authors and finally write their own positions about so-called “digital identities.” By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work, including their authored texts about the course theme and their texts about their writing processes and error patterns.

Section C
L. Hyman
12:30–1:20 PM
Digital Selves in a Real World
In this section of 76-100, we will read a variety of different texts that discuss to what extent technology and social media shape the lifestyle and identity of its users, particularly those users considered by some to be the “net generation.” Students will use these readings to build reader-centered, advanced academic English literacy practices for drawing on sources for writing academic papers. Throughout the semester, students will summarize and compare authors and finally write their own positions about so-called “digital identities.” By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work, including their authored texts about the course theme and their texts about their writing processes and error patterns.

Section F
R. Miller
12:30-1:20 PM
Whose English is it anyway?: A Language at the Crossroads
With so many people around the world using English to communicate with each other, there are critical consequences on how it shapes our identities in our own cultural spaces, and how it impacts different levels of the global educational system. To address these issues, some of the questions we will ask in this course are: What is English, and who owns it, if anyone? How is the increasing use of English affecting other languages around the world? Why has English become the international language, and what impact is this status having on native and non-native English speakers? What should be the official role of English in the world? In this course, we will draw on readings from news and popular media, book chapters, and academic publications in order to address these questions in our writing.

Throughout the course, students will develop reading and writing skills that will help them to understand and produce texts that follow the conventions of American academic writing. Throughout the semester, students will summarize, compare and respond to individual texts before writing our own positions about a specific topic of their choice within the course theme.
At the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work. Our main priority in the course is understanding how readers understand text and what effects our choices as authors have on readers. In addition, we will use an experimental web-based system developed at CMU to analyze texts we read as well as those that we write.

Section D
B. Carpenter
1:30–2:20 PM
*Digital Selves in a Real World*
In this section of 76-100, we will read a variety of different texts that discuss to what extent technology and social media shape the identity of its users, particularly the users considered by some to be the “net generation.” Students will use these readings to build reader-centered, advanced academic English literacy practices for drawing on sources for writing academic papers. Throughout the semester, students will learn summarize, compare, and synthesize authors before writing their own position about so-called “digital identities.” By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work, including their authored texts about the course theme and their texts about their writing processes and error patterns.

Section E
Y. Zhao
2:30–3:20 PM
*Technology and Modern Society*
In this section of 76-100, we will read a variety of different texts that discuss to what extent digital technology and social media shape us as “users” and our perspectives about the world. We will focus particularly upon those users considered by some to be the “net generation,” those users who have never experienced life apart from the internet and the mobile phone. We will discuss how they portray themselves in social media, how they interact with computers, and what they learn in the process of this interaction. Throughout our reading, we will find authors who argue for a wide range of perspectives about the benefits and drawbacks of living a life that is technologically mediated. We will then use these readings to build reader-centered, advanced academic English literacy practices for writing academic papers. Throughout the semester, we will summarize, compare and respond to individual texts before writing our own positions about one of the three themes we will have read in the course: Self-presentation in social media, Human computer interaction, and Technology & learning. By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work, including their own texts about the course theme and their reflections about their own writing processes and error patterns.

Section G
D. Baumgardt
2:30–3:20 PM
*Digital Selves in a Real World*
In this section of 76-100, we will read a variety of different texts that discuss to what extent technology and social media shape the lifestyle and identity of its users, particularly those users considered by some to be the “net generation.” Students will use these readings to build reader-centered, advanced academic English literacy practices for drawing on sources for writing academic papers. Throughout the semester, students will summarize and compare authors and finally write their own positions about so-called “digital identities.” By the end of the course,
students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work, including their authored texts about the course theme and their texts about their writing processes and error patterns.

Section I
B. Carpenter
3:30 – 4:20 PM
Digital Selves in a Real World
In this section of 76-100, we will read a variety of different texts that discuss to what extent digital technology and social media shape our identities and our perspectives about the world. We will focus particularly upon those users considered by some to be the “net generation,” those users who have never experienced life apart from the internet and the mobile phone. Throughout our reading, we will find authors who argue for a wide range of perspectives about the benefits and drawbacks of living a life that is technologically mediated. We will then use these readings to build reader-centered, advanced academic English literacy practices for writing academic papers. Throughout the semester, we will summarize, compare and respond to individual texts before writing our own positions about so-called “digital identities.” By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester’s work, including their own texts about the course theme and their reflections about their own writing processes and error patterns.

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General Description of 76-101, Interpretation and Argument 9 units
Gen Ed: Fulfills Category 1: Communicating requirement for H&SS and a designated writing course for other colleges. (All sections are offered MWF).

76-101 introduces students to an advanced, inductive process for writing an argument from sources. Because the course is based upon empirical research about professional academic writers, students can expect to learn expert practices that will translate into other academic writing tasks beyond this course. Because reading and writing are inseparable practices for academic writing, students will read a variety of texts so that they can explore and critically evaluate a single issue from multiple perspectives and from different genres. They can expect to learn methods for summarizing, synthesizing, and analyzing arguments so that they can author their own arguments.

The course is also geared toward helping students understand the requirements of advanced college-level writing. Since our students are typically very accomplished readers and writers, Interpretation and Argument has been designed to push their accomplishments toward greater rhetorical sophistication. For this purpose, students will build upon their composing knowledge by thinking strategically as they plan, write, and revise their own texts. Ultimately, they will develop critical reading, rhetorical and linguistic practices for analyzing and producing texts within this course and others.

Each section of 76-101 is structured by the same objectives and core assignments. There is a core vocabulary and set of heuristics that all sections teach. However, students may find particular issues more interesting or appealing than others—we do encourage students to pursue their interests, but we also ask that they engage any 76-101 course with intellectual curiosity. Due to the limits of our schedule, we are unable to meet each student’s individual preferences for course topics, but we do offer a wide variety from which to choose.
Section A
E. Vazquez
8:30-9:20 AM
*Thinking the Urban*
In this section of 76-101, we will explore various definitions of “the Urban” so that students can learn foundational practices for advanced academic literacy. Recent natural disasters like the Hurricane Katrina induced levee failure in New Orleans and the flattening of Port-au-Prince during this year’s earthquake have forced scholars to revisit the fundamental question of urban geography and planning: What is a city? Is it, for example, a site of commerce and the maximization of human resources? Or is it a place of communal interaction and encounter? Is a city a place of unchained freedom or a space of inhuman exploitation? Are cities necessary spaces for structuring complex social systems or are they manifestations of wider aims for profit and control? What other arrangements of human life are available to compare with that which is urban? What different agencies vie to shape the future of a city and how might this management be subverted?

This writing course will provide students with an entry into contemporary arguments concerning issues of space and urbanity using texts that demonstrate a wide array of disciplinary styles—including cultural analysis, fiction and film. Students will summarize, synthesize, and analyze these texts so that by the end of the semester, they will be able to author their own argument about notions of dwelling and urbanity.

Section RR
D. Cerniglia
8:30-9:20 AM
*Reality Television and the Discourse of the Real*
Though we often think of reality television as a new phenomenon, the first “reality” show, *An American Family*, was actually broadcast by PBS in 1973. Since then, the number of reality shows has skyrocketed, now comprising 56% of all American television shows. In this 76-101 course, we will use arguments about reality television shows in order to develop the advanced literacy practices that enable us to become authors in a particular domain. We will use the reality television shows as our primary texts, examining them as a whole as well as discussing various subgenres (such as the Romance, the Adventure, and the Makeover) and debate some of the questions they raise: How “real” is reality TV and does it really matter? What are the ethical implications of putting “real” people—non-actors—in front of the camera? What do these shows tell us about celebrity culture? About American culture generally? To help us frame our debate, we will read articles from critical media studies and cultural theory. Using the scholarly literature on reality TV, students will learn to summarize, synthesize and analyze arguments so that they may eventually contribute an argument of their own about this “reality”-based TV.

Section TT
W. Marcellino
8:30-9:20 AM
*Interrogating Democracy in America*
Is democracy as practiced in America a robust, effective political system, or is democracy a fragile system in need of serious reform? We’ll learn answers to that question in a series of readings from political scientists, commentators and activists who address the issue of how effective democracy is. Because democracy is a broad subject, we will ground our discussion in election reception (how election results are interpreted by winning and losing sides). In this course, you will be exposed to a variety of different authors who offer analysis and criticism of
democracy in America, so that you can explore and critically evaluate the issue from multiple perspectives. Through these shared readings, class discussion, and your own argumentative writing, this section of Interpretation & Argument will introduce you to fundamental practices of advanced academic reading and writing. You'll learn three critical literacy practices for academic writing: how to interpret arguments, analyze arguments, and synthesize multiple arguments, so that you may contribute an argument of your own to the ongoing discussion. The course is also geared toward helping you understand the requirements of college-level argumentation and composition to help you to be able to raise and attempt to answer academic questions. Becoming a competent writer in this way requires that you be reflective and strategic in your composing processes, particularly with planning, writing, detecting and diagnosing problems within your own work, and finally with revising your own texts. This process of achieving competency as a writer will produce a set of skills that are useful beyond academic work, broadly applicable to your future professional, personal, and civic life.

Section B
G. Glover
9:30-10:20 AM
Questioning Race: Is Race Still an Issue in the United States?
This 76-101 section explores the current status of the race debate in the United States. Students will read arguments that define problems in terms of the definition, use, impact, and validity of racial groupings. The course discussions will prepare students to identify constructions of race across cultural mediums and interrogate the validity of those constructions within the context of the larger racial debate. The texts in the course range from theoretical to culturally embedded and will form the three core 76-101 writing assignments: Argument Summary, Synthesis, and Contribution. By the end of the semester, students will construct their own arguments about a particular question interrogating the issue of the validity or construction of race in the United States.

Section C
A. Karlin
9:30-10:20 AM
Scribbling someone’s name in the margin of your notebook during lecture, volunteering your time to take care of abandoned kittens, or just calling your Mom to let her know you’re okay in your new dormitory digs… all of these can be expressions of love. Most of us learn about love implicitly – we don’t take a college course to get it right. But how exactly did we learn to love? What informs our definitions of love and how do these definitions shape how we relate to others? And, honestly, can we get better at it? More specifically, is there such a thing as unconditional love? If so, is it spontaneous, innately felt for certain objects (like babies and kittens), or can we learn it and apply it to any person or object we choose? Can romantic love be unconditional? How about friendship? If not, what are the conditions and how do we fulfill them?

In this 76-101 course will examine a wide array of definitions of love, from current thinkers and ancient scriptures, through contemporary and classic films, and through personal, real-life accounts. This course leads students through three major writing projects: 1) summarizing a single argument, 2) synthesizing and analyzing multiple arguments in relation to one another, 3) based upon the arguments of others, presenting an informed, creative, and well-composed personal contribution to an ongoing discussion of… luv.
N. Gentry  
Section D  
9:30–10:20 AM  
**Transhumanism: Can we use technology to become more than human? Should we?**

The cover of the February 2011 edition of Time Magazine reads, “2045: The Year Man Becomes Immortal.” Transhumanists predict that in the near future we will use advancements in nanotechnology, genetic engineering and artificial intelligence to overtake evolution, making humanity as we know it obsolete. According to proponents of transhumanism, we will soon meld with our technology and become immortal cyborgs, achieving levels of intelligence and capability heretofore unimaginable.

Is this science or science fiction? Are the prospects hopeful or horrifying? What would it mean to be “transhuman,” and if transhumanists are right, how soon will their vision of the future unfold? Is it unfolding right now? What would be the social consequences of using technology to enhance our abilities so greatly that we are no longer merely human? Who would benefit from these advancements and who would be left behind — and who gets to decide? How would religions and political systems respond? Should we tinker with what, since the beginning of time, only nature has controlled? In this 76-101 course, we will address these and many other questions, and you will learn to analyze arguments, synthesize differing perspectives on an issue, and ultimately contribute to an ongoing academic conversation about transhumanism.

Section E  
D. Markowicz  
9:30 – 10:20 AM  
**Agriculture and the Politics of Sustainability**

There has been a recent shift in the politics of agriculture to supporting local food production. Even mainstream culture and media seem to favor more sustainable agricultural practices as a replacement to the ravages of industrial style “agribusiness.” This class will explore the ramifications of this recent shift in thinking, both regionally and globally. Issues we will attend to include environmental conditions of agricultural production, commercial conditions of agricultural distribution, food quality and access to quality foods, working conditions of agricultural labor, and the ideological conditions of both commercially driven agricultural practices and “green” social movements. We will also look at and question the motives of federal legislation concerning such topics as land rights, organic certification, and food security versus food sovereignty.

This writing course will provide students with an entry into both historical and contemporary arguments concerning issues of agriculture and politics using texts that demonstrate a wide array of disciplinary styles—including anthropological investigations, cultural analysis, press releases, editorials, testimonials, interviews, and film. Students will interrogate these texts through a sequence of assignments (argument summary, argument synthesis, and contribution) that will allow them to critically examine issues involving agricultural production and whether such production can be truly “sustainable.”
Section LL
A. Longini
9:30-10:20 AM

Help Yourself! Self-Help in the United States

Over the years, the American self-help movement has blossomed into a multi-billion dollar industry, its literature promising success in everything ranging from making money, to finding true love, to curing alcoholism. In this class, we will examine the reasons people turn to self-help as well as critiques on the movement's overall effectiveness. What does self-help do? Is it an authentic path to actualization, a mere addiction, or something else entirely? To investigate some of the answers to those questions, we will use primary sources, including readings from Harvard's popular "Positive Psychology" course, as well as critical secondary sources to enter the academic debate on what self-help means for our society. Students will be asked to analyze arguments on a particular issue, synthesize arguments from multiple perspectives across the genre, and contribute original work to the ongoing academic discussion on the value of the self-help movement.

Section F
D. Zawodny Wetzel
10:30-11:20 AM

C is for Cookies…

…is that good enough for you? Food, after all, has life beyond the table; there are biological, cultural, ethical, moral, and political implications for every burger we order or apple we buy. This 76-101 course takes up the question “what makes food good” and considers academic and popular arguments on the topic. In discussing multiple perspectives on the good food question, we will analyze how people define food, as well as consider food’s role in an individual’s life and food’s role in society. Over the semester students will read a sampling of arguments about what food is, does, and should be. We will also consider how assumptions about food play out in cookbooks, film, and the recent spate of food documentaries. As with all 76-101 courses, students will produce analyses of individual arguments and a synthesis of multiple course readings. Students will also develop, compose, and present their own arguments that will contribute to the ongoing academic discussions in food studies.

Section G
D. Cloud
10:30 -11:20 AM

Is Gay the New Black?

In public speeches about diversity, people often put marginalized groups in a list, saying things like “I stand for all Americans, be they young, old, rich, poor, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, gay, straight, disabled and not disabled.” When we talk about oppressed groups and civil rights, is it really as simple as being in or out, oppressed or not oppressed? In other words, is the difference between black and white the same as disabled and not disabled or gay and straight? For example, many have drawn a comparison between court cases related to same-sex marriage and now-defunct prohibitions on interracial marriage. Does this mean that these two civil rights struggles and the groups behind them are essentially the same? In this section of 76-101, we will explore the historical, political and personal issues involved in comparing civil rights movements, especially the African American and LGBT movements. Students will first learn to analyze and synthesize other authors’ views on the relationship
between civil rights groups organized around race and sexual orientation. By the end of the semester, students will be ready to enter the debate and make their own argument about what it means to talk about minority status and civil rights in an increasingly pluralistic society.

Section H
A. Klein
10:30-11:20 AM
Democracy and Public Deliberation
In recent years, authors from a variety of disciplines have argued that democracy needs to be more deliberative, that the strongest form of democracy is realized through social participation in issue-based, public discussions. While these arguments assume that public deliberation plays a foundational role in democratic decision-making, political representation, and citizenship engagement, many of them disagree on the best way to think about and implement a form of democracy that will most accurately reflect the voice(s) of the public. In general, this section of 76-101 addresses the question: What does good democratic deliberation look like? Some of the issues that we will explore in this course, which are at the center of these conflicting perspectives, include consensus-building, voting, polling, public accountability, policymaking, political pluralism, education, religion, violence, multilingualism, and literacy. Students will analyze and synthesize a variety of academic and popular perspectives on public deliberation. The course readings will also provide students with the opportunity to learn about and contribute to conversations about the democratic roles of deliberative tools such as text-messaging, blogging, and online forums.

Section HH
J. Matty
10:30 – 11:20 AM
C is for Cookies…
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Section GG
A. Teagarden
10:30-11:20 AM
C is for Cookies…
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food is, does, and should be. We will also consider how assumptions about food play out in cookbooks, film, and the recent spate of food documentaries. As with all 76-101 courses, students will produce analyses of individual arguments and a synthesis of multiple course readings. Students will also develop, compose, and present their own arguments that will contribute to the ongoing academic discussions in food studies.

Section J
K. Lundgren
11:30 AM - 12:20 PM
Religion & Power
Whether as a form of resistance or as a source of domination, religion often plays a role in discussions of power, discrimination, and violence. What is religion, and how do differing understandings of religious faith impact its relationship to power? In this section of Interpretation & Argument, we explore the factors that determine whether religion and religious faith become forces for liberation or oppression, and chart the connections between religion, power, and violence. While course material emphasizes the Abrahamic faiths of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, students are welcome to incorporate their interests in other religions. Students will read and construct arguments connecting different perspectives on religion and faith to a variety of issues, including political legislation, terrorism, homosexuality, and gender. Course material will draw upon political theory, theology, current events, film, and other sources. Over the course of the semester, students will learn to analyze an argument, synthesize differing perspectives on an issue, and ultimately contribute to an ongoing academic conversation about the nature of religion and its relationship to power, legitimacy, and violence.

Section K
J. Reineke
11:30 AM - 12:20 PM
“What if?”: Science fiction and Society
What is the purpose of science fiction? Is science fiction literary trash, great art, or biting social commentary (or something else)? Through an examination of H. G. Wells’ seminal science fiction novel, The Time Machine, this section of 76-101 will explore how the time travel narrative illustrates the current debates surrounding the value of science fiction. We will read a variety of arguments debating the social and academic value of The Time Machine, and we will explore the effects of the time travel narrative in other genres. Throughout the course, we will discuss multiple perspectives on science fiction’s impact on scientific developments, other literary genres, and society. Students will use the arguments about science fiction to write an argument analysis, an argument synthesis, and finally a contribution, in which students will author their own arguments about science fiction’s place in society and academia.

Section L
K. Sampsel
11:30 AM - 12:20 PM
Is Popular Culture Ruining Our Children?
As many media scholars have pointed out, the history of mass media is the history of anxiety regarding its influence. Today’s apprehensions about Cosmopolitan magazine and bloody video games, for instance, are the contemporary equivalent of fears from a hundred years ago concerning dime novels and cops-and-robbers movies. On one hand, most of us are skeptical about the influence of our media and pop culture; we just can’t believe that media can truly shape our personalities or affect our behavior. On the other hand, we see corporations and advertising
agencies spend billions based on the assumption that they can influence us using the media. We acknowledge that the music we love and the movies we watch help us figure out the clothes we wear, the people we hang out with, and the way we spend our evenings and weekends. Even the old belief that reading great literature and viewing classic films will make you a “good” and “well-rounded” person suggests that media and culture have the power to impact us.

In this course we’re going to take media and pop culture seriously. Although starting with a brief history of media anxiety for the sake of background, we’ll ultimately focus on today’s media, reading a variety of texts that speak to this tricky question of influence as related to books, advertisements, magazines, movies, pop music, television, pornography, and the internet. These are the subjects on which we’ll be practicing and developing our critical reading, critical thinking, and critical writing skills: both in the classroom and in writing, students will assess, analyze, synthesize, and respond to arguments about the influence of mass media and popular culture. At the end of the course, students will contribute to the discussion with their own argument. This course intends to make students better critics, shrewder consumers, and most importantly, stronger writers.

Section M
M. Glavan
11:30 AM-12:20 PM
Next to Normal: The Cultural Politics of Disability
“He’s a little off center.” “She’s not quite right.” “That’s not normal.” We typically use this language when we recognize that someone or something is abnormal. However, according to disabilities studies scholar Lennerd Davis, the concept of normal did not enter public consciousness until the mid 19th century. In this section of 76-101 we will apply the notion of normalcy to examine the cultural politics of disability. To engage this discussion from a variety of perspectives, we will look at disability as a socio-cultural construct, disability as an identity, and disability as it relates to public policy. As we evaluate appropriate civic and academic responses to disability, we will discuss the social, political, and economic advantages and disadvantages of being both normally-abled and disabled. In doing so, we will address a crucial question: Why is disability almost always represented as difficulty?

Students will be expected to analyze and synthesize arguments made by a variety of authors—some of these authors are considered normally-abled, while some identify as disabled. Texts will include public policy documents, academic articles, and journalistic pieces. Finally, students will be asked to develop and present their own argument that will serve as a responsible contribution to the ongoing discussion concerning the complex interactions of disability, ability, and normalcy in our society.

Section NN
S. Ryan
11:30 AM-12:20 PM
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food is, does, and should be. We will also consider how assumptions about food play out in cookbooks, film, and the recent spate of food documentaries. As with all 76-101 courses, students will produce analyses of individual arguments and a synthesis of multiple course readings. Students will also develop, compose, and present their own arguments that will contribute to the ongoing academic discussions in food studies.

Section JJ
J. Harrell
11:30 AM - 12:20 PM
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Section O
K. Hamilton
12:30-1:20 PM
Gender, Media, and the Politics of Representation
In today’s Western culture, the media holds considerable power over our collective and individual constructions of gender. In this course, we will examine how gender is represented in the mass media – including advertisements, films, newspapers, blogs, and more. What are the dominant narratives about men, women, and transgender peoples? Why do these gender narratives matter? And is there room in the mainstream media to challenge these gender narratives?

In this section of 76-101, we will read different responses to these challenging questions so that we can learn strategies for summarizing, synthesizing, and analyzing arguments within an academic discourse. We will critically examine works by gender studies, media studies, and masculinity studies theorists, including those of Sut Jhally, Michael Kimmel, and Raewyn Connell. We will examine debates ranging from the different ways of interpreting media texts to the evolving role of the Internet in shaping gender discourse. Ultimately, you will become an informed participant in media culture, offering your own written contributions on gender in the media.

Section P
E. Vazquez
12:30-1:20 PM
Thinking the Urban
In this section of 76-101, we will explore various definitions of “the Urban” so that students can learn foundational practices for advanced academic literacy. Recent natural disasters like the Hurricane Katrina induced levee failure in New Orleans and the flattening of Port-au-Prince during this year’s earthquake have forced scholars to revisit the fundamental question of urban
geography and planning: What is a city? Is it, for example, a site of commerce and the maximization of human resources? Or is it a place of communal interaction and encounter? Is a city a place of unchained freedom or a space of inhuman exploitation? Are cities necessary spaces for structuring complex social systems or are they manifestations of wider aims for profit and control? What other arrangements of human life are available to compare with that which is urban? What different agencies vie to shape the future of a city and how might this management be subverted?

This writing course will provide students with an entry into contemporary arguments concerning issues of space and urbanity using texts that demonstrate a wide array of disciplinary styles—including cultural analysis, fiction and film. Students will summarize, synthesize, and analyze these texts so that by the end of the semester, they will be able to author their own argument about notions of dwelling and urbanity.

Section Q
J. Wilton
12:30-1:20 PM
*From Independent to “Indie”: Assessing a (Sub?)-Cultural Phenomenon*
Calling movies, music, and other cultural products “independent” used to mean these products were made by small, non-major studios or labels. But recently, as critic Michael Z. Newman proclaims, “‘indie’ has become a buzzword, a term whose meanings—alternative, hip, edgy, uncompromising—far exceed the literal designation of media products that are made independently of major firms.” Indie groups like The Arcade Fire can now win Grammy Awards, most Oscar nominated films have some Indie status, and PBR-toting, flannel and skinny-jean clad hipsters have overrun every major city. Indie now seems less descriptive of a subculture than a mainstream style choice. Has Indie culture run its course? If so, what did it once represent and why has it become what it is today? What was, or is, its social, political, and commercial value?

These and other questions will serve as the focus for this 76-101 course. We will use academic and popular criticism, film, music, and more to explore Indie culture. Students will write essays that analyze and synthesize the arguments and issues surrounding Indie culture, and a contribution essay that culminates a semester’s work.

Section R
M. Lambert
12:30-1:20 PM
*Why No Socialism in the U.S.?*
The recent so-called “Great Recession” has fostered new critiques and defenses of American capitalism as a national and international economic system. At the same time, it seems to have fostered a reemergence of a debate over socialism as an alternative social and economic system. But not only has socialism reemerged to challenge some of the most important and long-held assumptions of American capitalism, it has also reemerged as a pejorative “catch-word” to describe everything from the Health Care Bill to Financial Reform. In this course, we will rhetorically investigate a range of different meanings and practices associated with the term socialism from a variety of past and present cultural objects—e.g. academic and popular articles, historical studies, as well as films, songs, and political speeches. While doing so, we will analyze, synthesize, and contribute to a range of academic and popular arguments attempting to answer a question that has been haunting academics as well as community and political leaders since the nineteenth century: Why no socialism in the U.S.?
More Human than Human: The Posthuman and Digital Media

We are no longer just human. Once only the domain of science fiction, this preposterous projection has become increasingly accepted in a variety of academic discourses. Putting a particular emphasis on media, this course will examine the ways in which uses of technology – in our everyday lives and in the classroom – destabilize classic understandings of humanity’s relationship to its environment. Much like Marshall McLuhan prophesized the end of “typographic man” in the early 1960s, we will interrogate the prospects for humanity and humanism during the contemporary eclipse of the printed word.

Throughout the semester students will learn to interrogate the political and intellectual agendas of these provocative--and possibly dangerous--speculations by decoding and criticizing arguments from a wide range of disciplines. Alongside readings, students will engage film, fiction, and digital media sources in order to contextualize the representations and realities of the future of this supposed post-humanity. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with strategies to analyze texts, put conflicting viewpoints into conversation, and construct well-informed arguments so that they can enter the debate themselves.

The U. and You

What should the 21st century American university look like? What roles will it serve in society and in the lives of future students? In this section of 76101, these questions will guide our inquiry as we examine developments in the post World War II university and the implications these changes may have on the future of higher education. Over the course of the semester, we will read a number of scholarly and popular articles taking up arguments about the relationship between university research and industry, the role of technology in higher education, the ever-increasing price of a college degree, and what effect the university should have on the lives of students. This course will give students the opportunity to produce an analysis of an academic argument about the university and synthesize multiple perspectives that attempt to address a specific issue brought up in the course readings. Students will ultimately develop, compose, and present their own arguments, making their own contributions to the ongoing debates surrounding the future of American higher education.

The “Official English” Language Policy Controversy in the US: Superficial or Super Official?

Thirty states have passed legislation making English their official language, and numerous attempts have been made to implement Official English at the federal level. Although such measures ostensibly affect people of many backgrounds, the debates most often seem to pit Spanish-speakers against English-speakers. As the Spanish-speaking population in the United States continues to grow, what is the relationship between language policy, a person’s right to public services in her native language, and pressures to maintain English as the predominant
language? When opposing sides insist that they have the best interests of Spanish-speaking immigrants and their children in mind, what are the criteria for deciding the best path? Who should get to decide? What are the assumptions that underlie the different ways of defining the problem? Does strict egalitarianism always make sense? What realms of society does such legislation affect? What is the potential impact on national identity and national unity?

In this section of 76-101 we will explore a range of perspectives about the moral legitimacy of state immigration control. As we explore this topic, we will build critical reading and writing skills and a vocabulary that are transferable to situations outside of the classroom and to our respective disciplines. The three major writing assignments are sequenced so that they build upon each other. We will move from explaining how one author constructs an argument, to then putting multiple authors together in conversation through an argument synthesis. Finally, we will enter the ‘conversation’ by developing our own informed and socially responsible position on the issue, forming an argument, and thereby making a contribution to the field.

Section T
S. Liming
1:30-2:20 PM
Geek Culture and the Image of the Intellectual
Geeks. Nerds. Dorks. We have, as a culture, developed a range of labels for this type of smart, introverted, and sometimes socially awkward person. In addition to these largely mocking or derogatory labels, though, we have others, including scholar, intellectual, and expert. How do we get from “poindexter” to “prodigy,” then? What’s the relationship between “trekkies,” “techies,” and the so-called “intelligentsia”?

This section of 76-101 addresses the social legacy of the “geek”, and charts the evolution of geek culture. We will examine a number of texts – some historical, some critical, and some drawn from popular culture, even – in order to assess the cult and culture of the geek in contemporary society. We will examine, for instance, symbolic “geeks” in popular culture, and attempt to explain the mass appeal and significance of these figures, including fictional geeks (like Steve Erkel, or characters from TV’s The Big Bang Theory) and real-world geeks (like Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, and self-professed “politics geek” Rachel Maddow). Students will hone critical thinking and communication skills in this context, analyzing and synthesizing arguments about geek and intellectual culture so that they can develop and write their own ideas on the subject.

Section U
W. Marcellino
1:30 – 2:20 PM
Interrogating Democracy in America
Is democracy as practiced in America a robust, effective political system, or is democracy a fragile system in need of serious reform? We’ll learn answers to that question in a series of readings from political scientists, commentators and activists who address the issue of how effective democracy is. Because democracy is a broad subject, we will ground our discussion in election reception (how election results are interpreted by winning and losing sides). In this course, you will be exposed to a variety of different authors who offer analysis and criticism of democracy in America, so that you can explore and critically evaluate the issue from multiple perspectives. Through these shared readings, class discussion, and your own argumentative writing, this section of Interpretation & Argument will introduce you to fundamental practices of advanced academic reading and writing. You’ll learn three critical literacy practices for academic
writing: how to interpret arguments, analyze arguments, and synthesize multiple arguments, so that you may contribute an argument of your own to the ongoing discussion. The course is also geared toward helping you understand the requirements of college-level argumentation and composition to help you to be able to raise and attempt to answer academic questions. Becoming a competent writer in this way requires that you be reflective and strategic in your composing processes, particularly with planning, writing, detecting and diagnosing problems within your own work, and finally with revising your own texts. This process of achieving competency as a writer will produce a set of skills that are useful beyond academic work, broadly applicable to your future professional, personal, and civic life.

Section QQ
R. Kilpatrick
1:30-2:20 PM
C is for Cookies…
…is that good enough for you? Food, after all, has life beyond the table; there are biological, cultural, ethical, moral, and political implications for every burger we order or apple we buy. This 76-101 course takes up the question “what makes food good” and considers academic and popular arguments on the topic. In discussing multiple perspectives on the good food question, we will analyze how people define food, as well as consider food’s role in an individual’s life and food’s role in society. Over the semester students will read a sampling of arguments about what food is, does, and should be. We will also consider how assumptions about food play out in cookbooks, film, and the recent spate of food documentaries. As with all 76-101 courses, students will produce analyses of individual arguments and a synthesis of multiple course readings. Students will also develop, compose, and present their own arguments that will contribute to the ongoing academic discussions in food studies.

Section X
C. Koepfing
1:30 – 2:50 PM, Tuesday and Thursday
By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media
Printed newspapers are closing or downsizing, bloggers are choosing the day’s headlines, and revolutions are being coordinated through new social media. There’s no question that the Internet and social media play an ever-increasing role in our lives, but how do these sea-changes in communications technology shape news and public information, and how do the new opportunities for collaboratively-produced information affect democracy? In this course, we will examine perspectives surrounding the increasing role that the people play in creating and disseminating news and information through the use of new media. We will consider issues related to the reliability of collaboratively-produced sites such as Wikipedia; journalistic standards, citizen journalism, and credibility; the role of profit in shaping online news outlets; and the relationship between the Internet (and social media), politics, and public accountability. Throughout the course, students will build critical reading and academic writing skills, moving from analyzing arguments to synthesizing perspectives on how the presence of new voices shapes news and information in the public sphere, finally contributing their own arguments to the ongoing discussion.

Section CC
M. Zebrowski
2:30-3:20 PM
Food for Thought
In this section of 76-101, we will be focusing on the social and environmental impacts of food production. We will think about what it means to eat a particular way, as an individual and as a society, focusing our discussion American food culture. We will also explore some of the unintended consequences of modern agribusiness and think about some important related issues like animal rights, fad diets, and global hunger.

We will consider these topics and more as we practice valuable skills necessary for successful academic argumentation, and by the end of the semester, you will have produced an argument of your own creation about food culture. Our goal in this course is to use our discussions about food to model academic discourse at large, and to hone the skills necessary to analyze and synthesize arguments about any topic so that you can author your own arguments with credibility.

Section DD
D. Schuldt
2:30-3:20 PM
Comics are for Kids; Comics are Art
Are comic books an artistic medium or a form of children’s literature? There has been a long-standing tension in American society between the public’s general stereotype that comics are an innocent form of children’s literature and the actual role that the artistic form of the comic book has played. This section of 76-101 will focus on the tensions between the artistic medium of the comic book and its accepted role as children’s literature. Throughout the semester we will engage this discussion from a variety of positions including history of the medium, race, gender, ideological propaganda, children’s culture, and the role of art in society. After learning to summarize, synthesize and analyze arguments about the role of comics as a medium in American culture, students will write their own arguments examining a comic book and its implications as a product of American culture.

Section EE
H. Steffen
2:30-3:20 PM
Making Sense of Millennial Students
Who are Millennial college students? Are you money-hungry, Ritalin-fueled future yuppies? Empty-headed whirlwinds of texts and tweets? Romantic seekers of possibility? Amoral illiterates? Debt-laden, superexploited workers? None of these things, or all of them?

This section of 76-101 will focus on the ongoing debates about who Millennial college students are and the issues they face in the twenty-first century university. Most of the essays we will read are by professors, journalists, cultural critics, and other non-Millennials. So this course will equip you to interpret and critique academic arguments, while at the same time asking you to write back to those who represent you without your permission or input. You will critically consider your position as “Millennial students” and explore the history and many meanings of your generational label. Throughout the semester, you will learn advanced literacy practices for understanding and evaluating scholarly writing by participating in a variety of in-class activities based on the course readings. These activities and the three core 76-101 writing assignments (argument analysis, synthesis, and contribution) will scaffold you toward becoming clearer academic writers and craftspeople of convincing arguments.
Section KK
J. Bowman
2:30-3:20 PM
Making Mothers
Some argue that cultural, social, and legal institutions define motherhood and mothers in a particular time and place. Others insist that the value and duty of motherhood serves an essential social function as part of natural familial relationships, and that this essential role is more often culturally undermined than culturally defined. In this section of 76-101, we will interrogate the idea of motherhood in contemporary America. We will read arguments related to the following kinds of questions: What are the standards for “good” and “bad” mothering, and who defines and enforces them? What affect does legislation, economic, or public policy have on women’s ability to be a mother and social attitudes towards mothers’ decisions? What is the role of the economy in motherhood? How is the labor of mothering valued? What do media depictions of motherhood and mothering reveal about attitudes towards mothers? How do media images reinforce or challenge dominant ideas about mothers? How are women working to resist the pressures of dominant ideas and pressures? After learning to analyze, summarize, and synthesize arguments that address these questions, you will conclude the course by writing your own argument to address an element of the debate.

Section AA
A. Cooke
2:30-3:20 PM
By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media
Printed newspapers are closing or downsizing, bloggers are choosing the day’s headlines, and revolutions are being coordinated through new social media. There’s no question that the Internet and social media play an ever-increasing role in our lives, but how do these sea-changes in communications technology shape news and public information, and how do the new opportunities for collaboratively-produced information affect democracy? In this course, we will examine perspectives surrounding the increasing role that the people play in creating and disseminating news and information through the use of new media. We will consider issues related to the reliability of collaboratively-produced sites such as Wikipedia; journalistic standards, citizen journalism, and credibility; the role of profit in shaping online news outlets; and the relationship between the Internet (and social media), politics, and public accountability. Throughout the course, students will build critical reading and academic writing skills, moving from analyzing arguments to synthesizing perspectives on how the presence of new voices shapes news and information in the public sphere, finally contributing their own arguments to the ongoing discussion.

Section FF
T. Dawson
3:30-4:20 PM
Race and Otherness in America
How closely linked are ideas about “race” and ideas about American identity? In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois claimed that “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line.” However, with the election of Barack Obama and the recent U.S. Census data that reveals more people identifying as multiracial some have suggested that the problem of the color-line has been
solved and America has entered a postracial era. Whether Americans have or have not entered a postracial era, the very idea of postracial and the category of multiracial suggests that ideas about “race” continue to play an important role in ideas about American identity. In this course we will consider how ideas about “race” relate to other processes of establishing and maintaining boundaries of individual and national identity and consider how ideas about “race” impact on contemporary debates surrounding immigration.

In this course students will learn and practice specific strategies for critically analyzing the arguments in academic and popular essays, contemporary news accounts, and documentary film. Students will write three major papers: an academic summary, an academic synthesis of various positions on an issue related to the course topic, and, finally, a paper that proposes the students’ contribution to a discussion about race and otherness in America. In the process of developing these papers, students will learn and practice specific analysis and planning skills for drafting and revising academic arguments, and they will learn and practice specific strategies for analyzing their own written work and the written work of their peers.

Section V
M. Nelson
3:30 – 4:20 PM

The Culture of Sports Fandom
In 1975 NFL films announcer John Facenda first used the phrase “steeler nation” in the team’s highlight film “Blueprint for Victory.” Today, one can walk around in just about any neighborhood in Pittsburgh and see a black and gold banner or flag displayed on a front porch that reads “Steeler Nation.” In this section of Interpretation and Argument, we will read texts about sports fandom in order to develop practices for advanced academic literacy. The texts we will read and the questions we will discuss focus upon controversies about what makes a sports fan. Are sports fan communities about sports or are they about something else? How does one become a fan? How does a fan become part of a larger community of fans, and how do race, class and gender figure into these fan communities? What is the role of radio, television, and the Internet in sustaining these communities? Why does fan loyalty sometimes turn into fanatical violence?

Students will address these questions and issues by summarizing, analyzing and synthesizing the different arguments occurring in these texts. Once students have grasped a coherent understanding of the current debates, they will then carve out a space to insert their own contribution into the academic discussion.

Section MM
D. Phillips
3:30-4:20 PM

Take Two of These And Call Me in the Morning
Ask any doctor why she chose her profession and you’ll likely hear something like, “To help people.” But you’ll also be likely to hear that the prospect for helping people is more complicated than it sounds: there are ethical, political, economic, moral, and religious concerns that health professionals, legislators, drug makers, and patients negotiate every day. From assisted suicide to stem cell research, medical marijuana to anti-immunization movements, students will investigate a range of recent medical debates as we engage the question: what is the role of medicine in society? To help answer that question we will analyze how people define “medicine,” and explore
its historical codification as a professional practice and how that shapes our ideas about what medicine as a practice should do, how it should be funded, and what its limitations are.

We will draw on and analyze arguments made in public policy, academic journals, and newspapers, and identify main claims and the underlying values of those claims. Additionally, we will synthesize multiple perspectives on the issue of medicine in order to articulate the fundamental disagreements separating them. By the end of the course, students will learn how to make an academic contribution by constructing their own arguments in response to the course issue.

Section N
J. Mando
3:30 - 4:20 PM
C is for Cookies…
…is that good enough for you? Food, after all, has life beyond the table; there are biological, cultural, ethical, moral, and political implications for every burger we order or apple we buy. This 76-101 course takes up the question “what makes food good” and considers academic and popular arguments on the topic. In discussing multiple perspectives on the good food question, we will analyze how people define food, as well as consider food’s role in an individual’s life and food’s role in society. Over the semester students will read a sampling of arguments about what food is, does, and should be. We will also consider how assumptions about food play out in cookbooks, film, and the recent spate of food documentaries. As with all 76-101 courses, students will produce analyses of individual arguments and a synthesis of multiple course readings. Students will also develop, compose, and present their own arguments that will contribute to the ongoing academic discussions in food studies.

Section I
A. Wiscomb
4:30-5:20 PM
Are you Reading This? Literacy and Communication Technology in the 21st Century
Being literate has usually meant being educated to some degree. Even today, you might think that how well you can read and write—in the most powerful languages—presumably has something to do with how well you have been educated, and so how well you can do in life. Recently, however, educators, scientists, and public policy makers have suggested that our traditional ideas of literacy have to be rethought in our digital 21st century. This 76-101 course takes up the question “What makes someone literate today?” We will read contemporary academic and popular arguments that try to answer this question, analyzing how experts define and argue for definitions of literacy. We will pay particular attention to arguments made about the effects of digital technology on our reading and writing practices, on our thinking, and the role technological literacy necessarily plays in our modern, global world. Like all 76-101 courses, students in this course will analyze arguments and synthesize a multiplicity of competing perspectives. Students will also develop and advance their own arguments that contribute to ongoing, academic discussions about literacy and communication technology.

Section UU
H. Steffen
4:30-5:20 PM
Making Sense of Millennial Students
Who are Millennial college students? Are you money-hungry, Ritalin-fueled future yuppies? Empty-headed whirlwinds of texts and tweets? Romantic seekers of possibility? Amoral illiterates? Debt-laden, superexploited workers? None of these things, or all of them?

This section of 76-101 will focus on the ongoing debates about who Millennial college students are and the issues they face in the twenty-first century university. Most of the essays we will read are by professors, journalists, cultural critics, and other non-Millennials. So this course will equip you to interpret and critique academic arguments, while at the same time asking you to write back to those who represent you without your permission or input. You will critically consider your position as “Millennial students” and explore the history and many meanings of your generational label. Throughout the semester, you will learn advanced literacy practices for understanding and evaluating scholarly writing by participating in a variety of in-class activities based on the course readings. These activities and the three core 76-101 writing assignments (argument analysis, synthesis, and contribution) will scaffold you toward becoming clearer academic writers and craftspeople of convincing arguments.

Section VV
D. Haeselin
4:30-5:20 PM
More Human than Human: The Posthuman and Digital Media
We are no longer just human. Once only the domain of science fiction, this preposterous projection has become increasingly accepted in a variety of academic discourses. Putting a particular emphasis on media, this course will examine the ways in which uses of technology – in our everyday lives and in the classroom – destabilize classic understandings of humanity’s relationship to its environment. Much like Marshall McLuhan prophesized the end of “typographic man” in the early 1960s, we will interrogate the prospects for humanity and humanism during the contemporary eclipse of the printed word.

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