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.

Interpretation and Argument (76-101) is a course that serves as a foundation for many reading and writing tasks you'll experience in college and in your life. The course serves as the First-Year Writing course requirement at Carnegie Mellon University, and it also translates into the First-Year Writing course requirements at many other universities. While we can't guarantee that in 76-101 you'll engage in exactly the same kind of reading and writing practices found within your discipline or professional context, we can guarantee that you can (and should!) adapt and use many of the rhetorical strategies and language patterns in other academic and professional communication contexts.

We hope that this course prepares you to think about what a reader needs from you in order to believe your written arguments, as well as how you need to effectively plan and strategize your own reading, research, and writing processes. We want you to build your expertise in analyzing the demands of new academic literacy and communication tasks, and we also want you to work actively toward adapting that expertise for communication tasks beyond this course toward your own discipline and profession.

Our curriculum does not allow our students to write arguments in a vacuum that aren't accountable to a socially networked group of scholars. We believe that kind of writing is irresponsible and does not allow readers to engage with new positions. The sequence of assignments in the course is based upon the moves that experts make when they are writing their original research—something that we call an Argument Contribution. For someone to contribute an argument, that person needs to first analyze individual arguments and then synthesize multiple arguments into clearly defined perspectives.

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 to choose from.
Summer Session 1: May 22-June 30

Section S
Matt Lambert MTWRF 3:00-4:20
Pittsburgh: the Landscape of a City
Named “most livable city” by magazines like Forbes and The Economist, the city of Pittsburgh has experienced a dramatic renaissance from a smoke-filled industrial center that lost half of its population after its mills closed down in the 1970s and 80s to a “hot” destination for young professionals, particularly those associated with what urban theorist, Richard Florida, call the “creative class.” What accounts for this resurgence? What issues have arisen in its wake? How can we ensure a more socially- and environmentally-stable future for the city?

In this course, we will focus on social and environmental issues concerning Pittsburgh, including gentrification, “green” urban design, natural gas “fracking” and combined sewer overflow. To examine these issues, students will learn strategies that will help them analyze and synthesize the various positions and approaches to them, eventually contributing their own argument to a debate of their choosing. Furthermore, the course will include one or two walking field trips to places near CMU like Panther Hollow Lake, which will help illustrate the major issues and problems we will address. The course will also encourage students to explore Pittsburgh through off-campus assignments that offer students chances to visit “places of interest” in the community, particularly those that pertain to these issues.

Section T
Kitty Shropshire MTWRF 12:00-1:20
Does the Devil Wear Prada?: Fashioning Meaning in Clothing and Culture
What is fashion? If you posed this question to fifty different people, you’d likely receive fifty different answers in response. Indeed, the definitional flexibility and ineffable quality of fashion can explain much of its enduring appeal. As American fashion designer Ralph Lauren once said, “I don’t design clothes. I design dreams.” In this section of 76-101, we will examine what kinds of dreams are expressed through fashion and question the multifunctional role that fashion plays in our society: as art form, as commodity, and as visual language. In addition to exploring the creative promise and symbolic function of fashion, we will confront contemporary concerns about the fashion industry’s social, economic, and environmental impact. Accordingly, students in this course will be encouraged to reflect on the role that fashion plays within their own lives as they simultaneously develop and practice critical reading and writing skills. Students will use these skills to analyze and synthesize expert arguments and, ultimately, to contribute their own original argument to the existent academic debate over the social and cultural function of fashion.
Summer Session 2: July 3-August 11
*Please note that summer session 2 courses are cross listed. Undergraduate CMU students should sign up for sections U or V. APEA students should sign up for sections E or F.

Section E/U*
Ryan Mitchell MTWRF 1:30-2:50
*Doctor Who? Social Justice and Public Health*
As we anticipate Trump’s White House, a matter of paramount concern is the state of public health care in the United States. During his campaign, Trump pledged to repeal the Affordable Care Act (commonly referred to as Obamacare), claiming that it results from unilateral party politics as well as places an undue burden on an individual's self-determination. Trump’s comments are but the latest in a century-long debate concerning the legitimacy of government intervention within the domain of public health. Beginning in 1905, when the United States Supreme Court ruled in Jacobson v Massachusetts that states had the authority to enforce mandatory vaccinations when "necessary for public health or safety," we have witnessed increases in public health legislation and policy, which have spurred controversies surrounding the ramifications of government-regulated health initiatives. For some, public health policies are a matter of social justice, representing a way to prevent millions of unnecessary deaths and build stronger, healthier communities. For others, these policies point to gross intrusions on individual liberties and freedoms. Others still claim that in their attempts to be universal, public health policies often neglect the unique sociocultural conditions that influence a community's health practices. This section of 76-101 examines the controversies surrounding public health by tracing possible moral, ethical, and sociopolitical implications of public health policies. Through critically examining popular and academic texts regarding government-lead health initiatives, students will learn and practice the analytical skills necessary to understand and responsibly contribute to this complex social issue, which affects every one of us.

By the time students complete this course, they will be able to analyze the rhetorical structure of multifaceted arguments; synthesize the major perspectives regarding the course topic; and, finally, contribute to the on-going academic conversation by researching and/or analyzing a public health policy of their choosing. Along with acquiring a robust understanding of the course content, students will end the semester with an inventory of strategies for constructing persuasive, authoritative, and reader-friendly prose.

Section F/V*
Craig Stamm MTWRF 1:30-2:50
*Video Games and Society*
In 2014, a series of events now referred to as Gamergate revealed widespread misogyny throughout the larger male-dominated gaming community. Initially debating the ethics of video game journalists, the conversation became loaded with

---

*Please note that summer session 2 courses are cross listed. Undergraduate CMU students should sign up for sections U or V. APEA students should sign up for sections E or F.*
violent threats and the defamation of female video game developers. While the outcome of Gamergate is still hotly debated in relation to the parties involved, one thing was made clear: video games are no longer a niche interest. With over half of the American population reported to play video games, they now outsell the global box office, making video games a new dominant form of media. The virtual societies of video games enable us to participate in experiences difficult to capture through other means, while also paralleling real world power structures and prejudices. How can we understand video games as tools for social change? How does a post-Gamergate gaming community move forward without abandoning the work of the past? How do we define video games? In terms of goals, interaction, or technology? The goal of this class is to investigate these questions surrounding video games, while also considering issues of race, gender, and sexual orientation in relation to the history of video games. The course requires no previous knowledge of or experience with video games, and some assignments will include playing relevant games that highlight the issues we’ll be discussing in our readings. We will read various articles addressing the sociological issues of games, and students will be asked to write their own papers analyzing, critiquing, and synthesizing these perspectives, leading to a final paper where they will craft their own contribution on how we can understand video games as tools for sociological reflection and progress.