First-Year Writing Program

Fall 2016

Course Descriptions

General Description of 76-100, Reading and Writing in an Academic Context (9 units)

76-100 is a portfolio-based, academic reading and writing course for multilingual students, particularly those students who are not native speakers of English or who consider English to be their weaker language. The course introduces students to U.S.-centric readers' expectations for an academic style, and students practice meeting those expectations at the sentence, paragraph, and whole text levels. 76-100 instructors work individually with students so that they will develop methods for controlling their particular reading and writing processes, including their linguistic expression. Students who take this course qualify through an online placement test that is administered through the university prior to the fall semester.

Each 76-100 course is structured by the same reading and writing objectives of the course, but some courses present different themes for reading and discussion. These themes and their related questions are posted below so that students can select a topic that interests them.

Section A
Katie Burns MWF 9:30-10:20

Representing my Self in Language . . . Being Myself in Language
What does it mean when we choose to write in another language? How does multilingualism shape our identities and our perspectives about the world? How do we write with an authentic voice in English? In this section of 76-100, we will read and write a variety of different texts about the general theme of what it means for someone to use more than one language. For our class, we will specifically focus upon themes related to using English as an additional—or second—language. Throughout the semester, we will summarize, compare, and respond to other writers who discuss various topics related to the various ways we might relate to English. Finally, in response to these sources we will have read throughout the semester, we will write our own positions about our relationship(s) with the languages we use. By the end of the semester, 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 in academic English.

*This version of the document was updated on 4/29/2016 and is subject to change.*
Section B
Katie Burns 10:30-11:20
Representing my Self in Language . . . Being Myself in Language
What does it mean when we choose to write in another language? How does multilingualism shape our identities and our perspectives about the world? How do we write with an authentic voice in English? In this section of 76-100, we will read and write a variety of different texts about the general theme of what it means for someone to use more than one language. For our class, we will specifically focus upon themes related to using English as an additional—or second—language. Throughout the semester, we will summarize, compare, and respond to other writers who discuss various topics related to the various ways we might relate to English. Finally, in response to these sources we will have read throughout the semester, we will write our own positions about our relationship(s) with the languages we use. By the end of the semester, 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 in academic English.

Section C
Aurora Tsai 11:30-12:20
Why Do We Play?
Humans play not only as children, but also as adults in the form of sports, video-games, role plays, and other recreational activities. This section of 76-100 will investigate why we play. We will read a variety of texts that address different types of play and the effects of play in everyday life, work, and society. Some of the questions we will try to address include: What is the definition of "play"? How does play influence us as individuals? What amount of play do we need as children and adults? While we engage with this set of questions, students will develop reading and writing skills that will help them to understand and produce texts that follow the conventions of American academic writing. Our main priority in the course is to understand how readers experience text and what effects our choices as authors have on readers. 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. In addition, students will have the chance to propose their own projects to promote beneficial forms of play within the CMU community or within other contexts. By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester's work.

Section D
Maggie Goss 11:30-12:20
Representing my Self in Language . . . Being Myself in Language
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Section E
Nour K Weider 11:30-12:20
Representing my Self in Language . . . Being Myself in Language
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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 in academic English.

Section F
Tim Dawson 12:30-1:20

*Representing my Self in Language. . . Being Myself in Language*

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Section G
TBA 12:30-1:20

*Representing my Self in Language. . . Being Myself in Language*

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Section H
Tim Dawson 1:30-2:20

*Representing my Self in Language. . . Being Myself in Language*

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Section J
Andrew Gordon TR 9:00-10:20

*Representing my Self in Language. . . Being Myself in Language*

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positions about our relationship(s) with the languages we use. By the end of the semester, 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 in academic English.

Section L
Pia Maria Gomez Laich TR 10:30-11:50
Why Do We Play?
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Section K
Pia María Gomez Laich TR 12:00-1:20
Why Do We Play?
Humans play not only as children, but also as adults in the form of sports, video-games, role plays, and other recreational activities. This section of 76-100 will investigate why we play. We will read a variety of texts that address different types of play and the effects of play in everyday life, work, and society. Some of the questions we will try to address include: What is the definition of "play"? How does play influence us as individuals? What amount of play do we need as children and adults? While we engage with this set of questions, students will develop reading and writing skills that will help them to understand and produce texts that follow the conventions of American academic writing. Our main priority in the course is to understand how readers experience text and what effects our choices as authors have on readers. 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. In addition, students will have the chance to propose their own projects to promote beneficial forms of play within the CMU community or within other contexts. By the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester's work.

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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.

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 how different situations and readers shape the ways that we write texts and the messages that we construct. We want you to be able to assess your readers’ needs so that you can write convincing arguments in texts that meet the expectations your readers have. We want you to build knowledge about your writing processes so that you will effectively plan and strategize your own reading, research, and writing. Finally, we want you to develop flexible rhetorical strategies that you can adapt for communication tasks beyond the freshman year 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 dedicated to the same objectives and 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.

Section A
David Cerniglia MWF 8:30-9:20
Socialized: Mapping the Social Media Revolution
Have you ever noticed that whenever you’re waiting on line nearly everyone seems to be staring into her phone? Or perhaps you haven’t noticed because you were too busy checking Twitter or Instagram. Whether we like it or not, social media has become a part of our daily lives. According to AdWeek, there are more than 2 billion active social media users globally and social media accounts for 28% of all online media consumption. This course will explore how various forms of social media are not only changing the ways in which we interact with those in our community, but asking us to redefine what “community” means. Students will engage with debates about how social media affects us as global citizens and as individuals. We might ask the extent to which Twitter was responsible for the Arab Spring or Tinder for our love lives. Are we shaping the way social media works, or is it shaping us? Over the course of the semester, students will develop their reading and writing skills by learning to closely analyze arguments, synthesize multiple arguments, and eventually contribute their own arguments on how we should define meaningful interaction and community in a world driven by social media.

Section AA
Rachel Mennies Goodmanson MWF 8:30-9:20
Big Mac, Big Kale: Food Culture in America
Food, necessary to our daily existence, carries as many cultural and rhetorical connotations as it does
biological. Why does what we eat—fast food, local food, home-cooked food, meat-based or vegetarian or vegan food—mean so much to society, and become the subject of so much controversy? Why do food traditions endure, and why do fad diets appear? Does it matter to our bodies if we eat organic, local, big-box? How about to our country? More broadly, how do our decisions about what we eat matter, and to whom? Throughout the semester, you will learn advanced practices for understanding, evaluating, and crafting 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 the creators of convincing arguments around our course issue.

Section B
TBA MWF 8:30-9:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” If we assume Thoreau is right that political resistance is necessary to preserve political freedom, then it raises the question: protest how? With marches? With armed resistance? With digital tools like Low Orbital Ion Cannons? This course engages with historic and contemporary questions about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of political dissent and resistance and their role in political systems. We analyze political theories regarding civil disobedience and freedom of speech, and consider how protest in specific contexts may challenge, update, or extend those arguments. Students may pursue inquiry into issues such as the value of different expressions of dissent, the legitimacy of hacktivism, and the value of digital media for social movements. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring, to #occupy, to Operation Ferguson, addressing these questions helps us reflect on both our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems in order to propose a research project, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on political resistance.

Section BB
Hannah Ringler MWF 9:30-10:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
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Section C
Emily DeJeu MWF 9:30-10:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
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Section CC
Nisha Shanmugaraj MWF 9:30-10:20
By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media
New media – interactive, Internet-based forms of media – have given ordinary citizens unprecedented opportunities to contribute to political debate. Citizen journalists can break news faster than the New York Times, bloggers can bolster American democracy with candid opinions, and anyone can support a political cause on social media through retweets, reposts and hashtags. However, many debate the value and effect of this shift to “participatory media.” How does this shift affect our news and American public discourse? Are the contributions of “amateur journalists” valuable, compared to those of “professionals”? What role does social media play in strengthening democracy – and perhaps spreading it around the world? These questions have significance not only for public policy, but also for how we as individuals negotiate our roles as consumers and producers of public discourse. Engaging with these issues and problems surrounding the rise of new media means entering a conversation; this course will teach you how to enter this conversation. You will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments and genre, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation.

Section D
David Cerniglia MWF 9:30-10:20
Socialized: Mapping the Social Media Revolution
Have you ever noticed that whenever you’re waiting on line nearly everyone seems to be staring into her phone? Or perhaps you haven’t noticed because you were too busy checking Twitter or Instagram. Whether we like it or not, social media has become a part of our daily lives. According to AdWeek, there are more than 2 billion active social media users globally and social media accounts for 28% of all online media consumption. This course will explore how various forms of social media are not only changing the ways in which we interact with those in our community, but asking us to redefine what “community” means. Students will engage with debates about how social media affects us as global citizens and as individuals. We might ask the extent to which Twitter was responsible for the Arab Spring or Tinder for our love lives. Are we shaping the way social media works, or is it shaping us? Over the course of the semester, students will develop their reading and writing skills by learning to closely analyze arguments, synthesize multiple arguments, and eventually to enter into a debate by contributing their own arguments.

Section DD
TBA MWF 10:30-11:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
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of dissent, the legitimacy of hacktivism, and the value of digital media for social movements. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring, to #occupy, to Operation Ferguson, addressing these questions helps us reflect on both our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems in order to propose a research project, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on political resistance.

Section EE
Rachel Mennies Goodmanson MWF 10:30-11:20
Big Mac, Big Kale: Food Culture in America
Food, necessary to our daily existence, carries as many cultural and rhetorical connotations as it does biological. Why does what we eat—fast food, local food, home-cooked food, meat-based or vegetarian or vegan food—mean so much to society, and become the subject of so much controversy? Why do food traditions endure, and why do fad diets appear? Does it matter to our bodies if we eat organic, local, big-box? How about to our country? More broadly, how do our decisions about what we eat matter, and to whom? Throughout the semester, you will learn advanced practices for understanding, evaluating, and crafting 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 the creators of convincing arguments around our course issue.

Section F
Avery Wiscomb MWF 10:30-11:20
What Does Technology Do?
“Technology is just a tool” Bill Gates has argued; it can be used in both good and bad ways. This common belief that technology is neither inherently good or bad—known as “technological instrumentalism”—suggests that humans can control the effects of their inventions. But is this so? This discussion-based course engages in contemporary disagreements over how today’s technologies could be altering our relationships to each other and our world. We will analyze arguments about technology and its effects on politics, society, and economic inequality, and consider how AI, robotics, and automation may challenge, revise, or extend those arguments. In this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize competing perspectives on central problems in technology studies, and contribute your own research-based project on a technology issue from a sociopolitical, scientific perspective.

Section FF
Danielle Wetzel MWF 10:30-11:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
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Section G
Calvin Pollak MWF 10:30-11:20
Is Information Power? Transparency, Secrecy, and Democracy
According to journalist Glenn Greenwald, "a society in which people can be monitored at all times breeds conformity and obedience and submission." Today, government bodies such as the National Security Agency and corporations such as Google are collecting more of our private information than ever before; is US society thus beginning to reflect Greenwald's nightmare vision? Or is bulk data collection actually relatively benign, as officials and supporters of such policies often claim? Since proponents of bulk data collection argue for its benefits to community well-being, should we even consider the potential costs to an individual’s privacy? What about the potential costs to society if whistle-blowers, journalists, and activists find their expression and action increasingly restricted by these policies? To answer these vital contemporary questions, we'll engage with academic, journalistic, and political texts written before and after the disclosures of classified US government documents by former contractor Edward Snowden. Engaging with these questions effectively requires understanding issues of material (economic) and symbolic (linguistic and rhetorical) power in social contexts; thus, students in this course will develop practices of critical academic reading, analysis, and writing. By the end of the semester, students will be able to investigate and interpret arguments according to their material and symbolic characteristics. They will ultimately craft their own informative, critical, and rhetorically effective discourse about privacy, security, and the present-day circumstances of US politics.

Section GG
Ryan Roderick MWF 11:30-12:20
Communicating Across Diversity: We Are What We Speak?
This section of 76-101 explores the effects that linguistic diversity has on how people understand themselves and their world, work with each other, and move across boundaries of various communities. We will explore this topic from a variety of perspectives that will challenge notions of correctness and complicate our understanding of what it means to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries. There are three major writing assignments that build on each other in a way that will enable you to weigh in on this issue from a robust academic perspective. You will move from analyzing one aspect of the argument, to then putting multiple authors in conversation with each other to propose a research project. Finally, you will enter the conversation by carrying out your own informed and socially responsible contribution.

Section H
Craig Moreau MWF 11:30-12:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
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Section HH
Nathan Nikolic MWF 11:30-12:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
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Section I
Jamie Smith MWF 11:30-12:20
Never Tickle A Sleeping Dragon: Harry Potter and Popular Culture
In 1997, J.K. Rowling first published *Harry Potter and Philosopher’s Stone*. Since then, the *Harry Potter* series has been the most widely sold book franchise to date. It has been translated into 67 languages, made into eight blockbuster films, excessively commercialized and even built into a theme park. This year we will additionally see its spin-off series, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. With all of this excitement, the main question our 76-101 course will explore is: are the *Harry Potter* books “good”? Why or why not? What has made *Harry Potter* so popular in our culture, and is this popularity deserved? We will consider issues related to *Harry Potter* and education; for instance, how do we reconcile the novels’ current status in popular culture with a more formal literary tradition? Additionally, we will interrogate the economic status of the *Harry Potter* series: is the formidable franchise merely a money-making game? Or are technological and social media like Pottermore revolutionizing the way we read and consider literary culture? In what ways does *Harry Potter* compare with other commercially successful series (*Star Wars*, *The Hunger Games*, the Marvel universe)? Finally, we will explore how literary critics (both inside and outside of academia) view the novels from an ethical standpoint; namely, are the *Harry Potter* books harmless entertainment, or do they promote potentially dangerous ideologies for children? In this course, we will look at a collection of articles, excerpts and film that explore these very questions. As a class, we will converse around all of the *Harry Potter* novels, though students need not have read the series previously. Students will demonstrate their ability to analyze and synthesize the arguments around perspectives on *Harry Potter* in popular culture. At the end of the course, students will have the opportunity to develop their own contributions to the ongoing discussion regarding *Harry Potter*’s place in culture, academia, and the marketplace.

Section II
TBA MWF 11:30-12:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” If we assume Thoreau is right that political resistance is necessary to preserve political freedom, then it raises the question: protest how? With marches? With armed resistance? With digital tools like Low Orbital Ion Cannons? This course engages with historic and contemporary questions about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of political dissent and resistance and their role in political systems. We analyze political theories regarding civil disobedience and freedom of speech, and consider how protest in specific contexts may challenge, update, or extend those arguments. Students may pursue inquiry into issues such as the value of different expressions of dissent, the legitimacy of hacktivism, and the value of digital media for social movements. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring, to #occupy, to Operation Ferguson, addressing these questions helps us reflect on both our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems in order to propose a research project, and finally contribute your
own argument to the conversation on political resistance.

Section J
Tim Dawson MWF 11:30-12:20
Race, American Identity, and Public Policy
How closely linked are ideas about race and ideas about American identity? How should race be addressed in the public policies developed by a nation founded on the principle of equality before the law? Given the election of Barack Obama, recent U.S. Census data revealing that more people are identifying as multiracial, and projections that the U.S. will be a “majority minority” country by 2050, some argue that traditional lines of racial distinction are no longer relevant, with some going so far as to suggest we have entered a postracial era. However, the very idea of postracial and the category of multiracial suggest that ideas about race continue to play an important role in how we think about individual and group identity in America. In this course we will consider various ideas about “race”, how these ideas relate to other ways of thinking about individual and group identity, and how (or whether) public policies should address racial distinctions. 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 K
Ryan Roderick MWF 12:30-1:20
Communicating Across Diversity: We Are What We Speak?
This section of 76-101 explores the effects that linguistic diversity has on how people understand themselves and their world, work with each other, and move across boundaries of various communities. We will explore this topic from a variety of perspectives that will challenge notions of correctness and complicate our understanding of what it means to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries. There are three major writing assignments that build on each other in a way that will enable you to weigh in on this issue from a robust academic perspective. You will move from analyzing one aspect of the argument, to then putting multiple authors in conversation with each other to propose a research project. Finally, you will enter the conversation by carrying out your own informed and socially responsible contribution.

Section KK
Kitty Shropshire MWF 12:30-1:20
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.
**Section L**
**Alex Helberg MWF 12:30-1:20**

*Living in Public: The Role of the Internet in Society and Politics*

Former CEO of Google Eric Schmidt once famously quipped that the internet has become “the largest experiment in anarchy” that humanity has ever seen. Indeed, since its popular inception in the late 1980s and early ‘90s, the internet has inspired waves of doomsday-predictors and techno-utopians alike to forecast the ways in which the internet will radically change daily life and the institutions of society. In this course, we will seek to understand the foundational perspectives on the internet and its relation to politics and social change by analyzing written work on the subject from both academic and popular genres, and formulating our own positions in writing. We will read authors who discuss the social and political functions of online platforms, those who debate the role of business and government in creating and influencing internet technologies, as well as those who examine case studies of international social movements such as Occupy and the Arab Spring, which heavily involved the use of new media and the internet in shaping societal politics and culture. These readings will allow us to interrogate a number of important questions: Does the internet change the way we think about citizenship in our societies? Does it serve the interests of mass media corporations and authoritarian governments through the marketization of communication and content, and open a Pandora’s Box of new avenues for surveillance? Or does it serve the interests of citizens by creating new roles for democratic participation, expanding individual freedom of expression, and increasing citizens’ ability to raise awareness and collectively organize? Can we really call technologies like the internet fundamentally liberatory and democratic when over 15% of Americans and 60% of people in the world don’t have (or don’t want) access to them? Throughout this course, we will learn about and practice a variety of writing strategies for analyzing arguments, identifying and comparing different written genres, synthesizing approaches in a specific academic controversy, and ultimately, discovering ways to contribute our own arguments to real-world scholarly conversations surrounding the relationship of internet-based technologies to the shape of politics and the realization of social change worldwide.

**Section LL**
**Will Penman MWF 12:30-1:20**

*Rainbows, Butterflies, and Robots*

What’s the difference between having a “smart” watch and having a “smart” dog? Robotic technologies today are progressing quickly, and might one day be able to feel pain, rebel, and die (or be happy, free and alive). In this class we explore philosophies of human interaction with animals and the environment (or “rainbows and butterflies”) as analogies for human interaction with emerging robotic technologies. To what extent can we model human treatment of intelligent machines on animals and nature? Or to put it another way, to what extent are computational technologies different from animals and from nature? We explore these questions from a historical perspective, covering a variety of readings on topics such as robot and animal work, emotion, purpose, evolution, rights, and agency. We start by learning reading strategies to delve into authors’ claims. Then we write three essays through the semester, structured in increasing complexity. First is an analysis of a single text. Next is a synthesis paper, in which students draw together disparate arguments around a question of their choosing. Finally, students enter into the conversation with a researched contribution argument of their own about the application of dealing with animals/the environment to the realm of robots. Overall, this section of 76-101 equips students to think deeply about the ethics of robot development and develops space to practice a new set of interpretive and argumentative techniques applicable across disciplines.

**Section M**
**Jamie Smith MWF 12:30-1:20**

*Never Tickle A Sleeping Dragon: Harry Potter and Popular Culture*

In 1997, J.K. Rowling first published *Harry Potter and Philosopher’s Stone*. Since then, the *Harry Potter* series has been the most widely sold book franchise to date. It has been translated into 67 languages, made into eight blockbuster films, excessively commercialized and even built into a theme park. This year we will additionally see its spin-off series, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. With all of this excitement, the main question our 76-101 course will explore is: are the *Harry Potter* books “good”? Why or why not? What has made *Harry Potter* so popular in our culture, and is this popularity deserved? We will consider
issues related to *Harry Potter* and education; for instance, how do we reconcile the novels’ current status in popular culture with a more formal literary tradition? Additionally, we will interrogate the economic status of the *Harry Potter* series: is the formidable franchise merely a money-making game? Or are technological and social media like Pottermore revolutionizing the way we read and consider literary culture? In what ways does *Harry Potter* compare with other commercially successful series (*Star Wars*, *The Hunger Games*, the Marvel universe)? Finally, we will explore how literary critics (both inside and outside of academia) view the novels from an ethical standpoint; namely, are the *Harry Potter* books harmless entertainment, or do they promote potentially dangerous ideologies for children? In this course, we will look at a collection of articles, excerpts and film that explore these very questions. As a class, we will converse around all of the *Harry Potter* novels, though students need not have read the series previously. Students will demonstrate their ability to analyze and synthesize the arguments around perspectives on *Harry Potter* in popular culture. At the end of the course, students will have the opportunity to develop their own contributions to the ongoing discussion regarding *Harry Potter*’s place in culture, academia, and the marketplace.

Section MM  
Pavithra Tantrigoda MWF 12:30-1:20  
*Climate Change and Us*  
Rising temperatures, melting glacial and sea ice, draughts, stronger rainstorms, and warming oceans have made us increasingly aware of the harmful effects of man-made climate change today. These changes have led climate scientists to come to a consensus that we have entered a new geological era called “anthropocene” where humans are having an irreversible impact on the Earth’s ecosystems through the increased use of fossil fuels, machinery, and ecological destruction. There are debates among climate scientists, states, policy makers, economists, environmental activists, academics and lawyers as to the extent and nature of these changes in the environment, its current and future effects on us, and the possible ways of mitigating the negative effects of climate change. In this section of 76-101, we will examine how climate change is defined and addressed by these various stakeholders. We will examine critical responses to the issue, ranging from those who are convinced that global warming is a serious (if not catastrophic) environmental concern and favor aggressive regulatory interventions to lessen its effects to those who are skeptical of mainstream climate science and oppose governmental intrusions in the marketplace. We will read a range of academic essays, magazine articles, interviews and documentary film that address these different views regarding climate change. We will also analyze and synthesize arguments within these texts and, finally, develop our own contribution on the politics and discourse of climate change.

Section N  
Matt Nelson MWF 12:30-1:20  
*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 NN  
TBA MWF 1:30-2:20  
*Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest*  
“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” If we assume Thoreau is right that political resistance is necessary to preserve political freedom, then it raises the question: protest
how? With marches? With armed resistance? With digital tools like Low Orbital Ion Cannons? This course engages with historic and contemporary questions about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of political dissent and resistance and their role in political systems. We analyze political theories regarding civil disobedience and freedom of speech, and consider how protest in specific contexts may challenge, update, or extend those arguments. Students may pursue inquiry into issues such as the value of different expressions of dissent, the legitimacy of hacktivism, and the value of digital media for social movements. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring, to #occupy, to Operation Ferguson, addressing these questions helps us reflect on both our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems in order to propose a research project, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on political resistance.

Section O
Sophie Wodzak MWF 1:30-2:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” If we assume Thoreau is right that political resistance is necessary to preserve political freedom, then it raises the question: protest how? With marches? With armed resistance? With digital tools like Low Orbital Ion Cannons? This course engages with historic and contemporary questions about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of political dissent and resistance and their role in political systems. We analyze political theories regarding civil disobedience and freedom of speech, and consider how protest in specific contexts may challenge, update, or extend those arguments. Students may pursue inquiry into issues such as the value of different expressions of dissent, the legitimacy of hacktivism, and the value of digital media for social movements. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring, to #occupy, to Operation Ferguson, addressing these questions helps us reflect on both our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems in order to propose a research project, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on political resistance.

Section OO
TBA MWF 1:30-2:20
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” If we assume Thoreau is right that political resistance is necessary to preserve political freedom, then it raises the question: protest how? With marches? With armed resistance? With digital tools like Low Orbital Ion Cannons? This course engages with historic and contemporary questions about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of political dissent and resistance and their role in political systems. We analyze political theories regarding civil disobedience and freedom of speech, and consider how protest in specific contexts may challenge, update, or extend those arguments. Students may pursue inquiry into issues such as the value of different expressions of dissent, the legitimacy of hacktivism, and the value of digital media for social movements. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring, to #occupy, to Operation Ferguson, addressing these questions helps us reflect on both our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems in order to propose a research project, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on political resistance.

Section P
Jess Wilton MWF 1:30-2:20
DIY, Makers, and “Indie”: Assessing a (Sub?)-Cultural Phenomenon
Until the recent boom in DIY production and “maker” culture, to “hack” meant to illegally access private
networks, and DIY was an anti-capitalist principle of the punk movement. 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,” and DIY/maker culture is hardly anti-corporate. Indie, hacker, DIY and maker cultures now seems less revolutionary than they once were, but are able to touch many more lives. Has independence 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 and DIY issues. Students will write essays that analyze the arguments and issues surrounding Indie culture, culminating an essay in which they make a contribution to our contemporary knowledge of these cultural trends.

Section PP
Matt Nelson MWF 1:30-2:20
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 Q
Will Penman MWF 2:30-3:20
Rainbows, Butterflies, and Robots
What’s the difference between having a “smart” watch and having a “smart” dog? Robotic technologies today are progressing quickly, and might one day be able to feel pain, rebel, and die (or be happy, free and alive). In this class we explore philosophies of human interaction with animals and the environment (or “rainbows and butterflies”) as analogies for human interaction with emerging robotic technologies. To what extent can we model human treatment of intelligent machines on animals and nature? Or to put it another way, to what extent are computational technologies different from animals and from nature? We explore these questions from a historical perspective, covering a variety of readings on topics such as robot and animal work, emotion, purpose, evolution, rights, and agency. We start by learning reading strategies to delve into authors’ claims. Then we write three essays through the semester, structured in increasing complexity. First is an analysis of a single text. Next is a synthesis paper, in which students draw together disparate arguments around a question of their choosing. Finally, students enter into the conversation with a researched contribution argument of their own about the application of dealing with animals/the environment to the realm of robots. Overall, this section of 76-101 equips students to think deeply about the ethics of robot development and develops space to practice a new set of interpretive and argumentative techniques applicable across disciplines.

Section QQ
Craig Stamm MWF 2:30-3:20
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 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.

Section R
Jess Wilton 2:30-3:20

DIY, Makers, and “Indie”: Assessing a (Sub?)-Cultural Phenomenon

Until the recent boom in DIY production and “maker” culture, to “hack” meant to illegally access private networks, and DIY was an anti-capitalist principle of the punk movement. 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,” and DIY/maker culture is hardly anti-corporate. Indie, hacker, DIY and maker cultures now seems less revolutionary than they once were, but are able to touch many more lives. Has independence 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 and DIY issues. Students will write essays that analyze the arguments and issues surrounding Indie culture, culminating an essay in which they make a contribution to our contemporary knowledge of these cultural trends.

Section RR
Sarah Hancock MWF 3:30-4:20

Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest

“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” If we assume Thoreau is right that political resistance is necessary to preserve political freedom, then it raises the question: protest how? With marches? With armed resistance? With digital tools like Low Orbital Ion Cannons? This course engages with historic and contemporary questions about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of political dissent and resistance and their role in political systems. We analyze political theories regarding civil disobedience and freedom of speech, and consider how protest in specific contexts may challenge, update, or extend those arguments. Students may pursue inquiry into issues such as the value of different expressions of dissent, the legitimacy of hacktivism, and the value of digital media for social movements. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring, to #occupy, to Operation Ferguson, addressing these questions helps us reflect on both our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems in order to propose a research project, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on political resistance.
In 1905, 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.” Over the past century, increased public health legislation and policy have fueled the controversy surrounding government-regulated health initiatives. For some, public health policies represent a way to prevent millions of unnecessary deaths and build stronger, healthier communities. Others argue that these policies signal gross intrusions on individual liberties and freedoms. Others still claim that public health policies neglect the unique sociocultural and economic conditions that affect a community’s identity and health practices. This section of 76-101 examines the controversies surrounding public health by tracing the moral, ethical, and sociopolitical implications of public health policies by examining their individual, local, and national implications. Through the critical examination of legislative, popular, and academic texts regarding government-led health initiatives, students will learn and practice the analytical skills necessary for understanding and responsibly contributing 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 contribute to the on-going academic conversation by researching and 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.
To focus on the ethics of this cultural engagement, we will discuss several models of social responsibility, and apply these models to our own participation with pop culture. Our goal will be to question how ethics and social responsibility intersect with pop culture. Social issues now weigh more heavily on mainstream pop cultural artifacts than ever before. The discussion of online fandom communities and their social justice concerns, for example, play a large part in this cultural shift. We will attempt to make sense of this shift by reading and analyzing a series of ethical arguments on the subject of pop culture consumption. Through these readings, we will address questions such as these: Am I personally responsible for the culture of violence in professional sports, and if so, how? Do I contribute to Western culture's obsession with unrealistic standards of beauty for women? Can I watch a Woody Allen movie or a Bill Cosby comedy special and still be a good person? For our purposes, interrogating our engagement in pop culture means entering an academic conversation. In this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the ongoing conversation on the ethical dilemmas related to consuming pop culture.

Section TT
Nathan Pensky TR 9:00-10:20
Pop Culture and Social Responsibility

In this section of 76-101, students will analyze their involvement in and engagement with pop culture. To focus on the ethics of this cultural engagement, we will discuss several models of social responsibility, and apply these models to our own participation with pop culture. Our goal will be to question how ethics and social responsibility intersect with pop culture. Social issues now weigh more heavily on mainstream pop cultural artifacts than ever before. The discussion of online fandom communities and their social justice concerns, for example, play a large part in this cultural shift. We will attempt to make sense of this shift by reading and analyzing a series of ethical arguments on the subject of pop culture consumption. Through these readings, we will address questions such as these: Am I personally responsible for the culture of violence in professional sports, and if so, how? Do I contribute to Western culture's obsession with unrealistic standards of beauty for women? Can I watch a Woody Allen movie or a Bill Cosby comedy special and still be a good person? For our purposes, interrogating our engagement in pop culture means entering an academic conversation. In this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the ongoing conversation on the ethical dilemmas related to consuming pop culture.

Section U
Maria Poznahovska TR 10:30-11:50
To Eat or Not To Eat? The Ethics of Food Cosmopolitanism in the “Foodie” Movement

Using the foodie movement as an entrance point, this course engages with questions about the ethics of consumerism, the politics of production, and the larger social assumptions surrounding the value of food cosmopolitanism. Being a foodie evokes images of “exotic” dishes posted on Instagram, trips to farmers markets for artisan honeys, and epurces such as Anthony Bourdain who travel the world on global culinary adventures. Being a foodie frees you from being bound to any cultural or even physically available food; you’re free to explore and experiment with what you find. However, what the foodie finds is not always readily available to everyone. In this class, we will examine underlying tensions surrounding the foodie movement asking questions such as: Is being a foodie really as liberating as it seems? What does it mean to have access to food? What ethical obligations might be attached to carrying the “foodie” label? We will look at cases studies on quinoa, corn, and coffee to examine how the foodie movement has sought to counter, reframe, or extend various perspectives on the ethics of food. The goal of the class is will be to learn how to enter an ongoing conversation on a contested topic through analytical reading and writing. Throughout the course, you will learn and practice critical analytical skills to understand different arguments, synthesize various perspectives, and finally contribute your own argument to the foodie discussion.
Section UU
Daniel Dickson LaPrade TR 10:30-11:50

*Evil in America*

In this section of 76-101, students will examine a variety of arguments regarding the nature and causes of evil, as well as how the world’s evils should be remedied. Students will analyze these arguments using a variety of conceptual tools, describe how these varying arguments work against and inform one another, and finally enter the argument themselves in a contribution assignment. In addition to learning what different authors have to say about the nature, causes, and remedies for evil, students will also gain experience with the argumentative strategies which authors use to make opposing positions seem despicable, irrational, and dangerous, and to make their own seem desirable, reasonable, and saintly.

Section V
Matt Lambert TR 1:30-2:50

*Pittsburgh: the Landscape of a City*

When we think of Pittsburgh, we often envision the Golden Triangle, an image popularized by countless paintings and photographs of the city. But what might have someone seen if beholding the area 300 years ago? What might they have seen 100 years ago? 50 years ago? What will they see in the future? In this class, we will examine the development of Pittsburgh from a frontier wilderness to a 21st Century technological urban hub. In doing so, we will look at the special obstacles the region’s unique geography and landscape held for the builders of Pittsburgh, the effects of pollution on Pittsburgh’s civic character and residents, and the effects of various urban reform movements in Pittsburgh of both national and local origins—from the City Beautiful Movement of the late 19th and early 20th century to the more recent redevelopment, urban gardening, and public arts projects in neighborhoods like East Liberty. In looking at the physical, economic, and cultural changes occurring in Pittsburgh over the years, we will hone in on debates over problems concerning urban design in the city. These will include problems associated with social issues like race and class (e.g. debates over public space, gentrification, and controversial civil works projects) as well as those associated with the environment (e.g. “green” building, natural resource extraction, and air pollution). Over the course of the class, we will learn strategies to help us analyze and synthesize the various positions and approaches in these debates and eventually contribute our own argument to one of them. Furthermore, in order to better envision and understand Pittsburgh’s history, we will visit one or two places near CMU (e.g. Schenley Park). There will also be opportunities to go to events and places on and off campus, particularly those that pertain to the various issues and problems we will discuss.

Section VV
Daniel Dickson LaPrade TR 1:30-2:50

*Evil in America*

In this section of 76-101, students will examine a variety of arguments regarding the nature and causes of evil, as well as how the world’s evils should be remedied. Students will analyze these arguments using a variety of conceptual tools, describe how these varying arguments work against and inform one another, and finally enter the argument themselves in a contribution assignment. In addition to learning what different authors have to say about the nature, causes, and remedies for evil, students will also gain experience with the argumentative strategies which authors use to make opposing positions seem despicable, irrational, and dangerous, and to make their own seem desirable, reasonable, and saintly.

Section X
Steve Gotzler TR 3:00-4:20

*What Intellectuals Do*

In a time when knowledge and expertise often seems secondary to public reaction, what does it mean to be an intellectual today? And what is the primary function of specialist knowledge and intellectual work in our contemporary society? In this section of 76-101, we will explore debates surrounding these questions, both historical and current, in an attempt to understand the relationship between intellectuals and their social and cultural contexts. We will begin by asking what meaning the term “intellectual” has today by examining our own position as scholars within the university, and reflecting upon our own experiences of the intellectual life.
and culture at an elite institution like Carnegie Mellon. We will then move on to consider the role of intellectuals more broadly as a public figures and social actors. Finally, we will call into question the category of “the intellectual” altogether by examining common strains of anti-intellectualism in American thought and culture. Doing so will allow us to consider a range of critical questions such as: What constitutes intellectual value for us within the university today? How might this differ depending on the different disciplinary protocols by which we conduct our work? Do intellectuals occupy a privileged position in society, and does that position entail a measure of civic duty or social obligation? If so, what might these obligations look like? In attempting to answer these questions we will interrogate various arguments about the meaning and character of intellectual life and culture, including academic articles, non-fiction essays, and critical journalism, as well as in select instances in film, television, and literature. Over the course of the semester, students will analyze and synthesize arguments written by experts so that we can make a unique contribution to the conversation about the meaning and function of intellectuals in the contemporary world.