Pathway 2: Take A Full-Semester Course

Instead of taking two half-semester mini courses, students may choose to take the full-semester course, **76-101: Interpretation and Argument**.

Please continue reading to learn about the specific course topics, schedules, and faculty information for each of the 76-101 courses being offered this semester.

Full-Semester Course Schedules and Descriptions

76-101 At A Glance

76-101, Interpretation and Argument, is a foundational, inquiry-driven writing course that introduces students to a variety of strategies for making compositional decisions in writing and communication. Within the course, students learn genre-based skills applicable to a variety of different fields. Students use a comparative genre analysis method to learn how to use models to take on new writing tasks, including an academic research proposal and a research article that contributes to an ongoing academic conversation. Faculty who teach 76-101 typically select texts—ranging from scholarly texts, journalism, and film—about an issue so that students can identify interesting questions for their own research projects. Students should expect explicit, research-based instruction, practice, and reflection to build knowledge in controlling their writing processes and writing clear, well-supported, reader-oriented arguments. Because the course emphasizes the real stakes of communicating with readers and listeners, students share with their peers both low- and high-stakes written work within an interactive and collaborative classroom environment.

76-101 Course Topics and Schedule

Instructor Name	Course Topic	Section Number	Days and Timeslots
Julie Pal-Agrawal	*Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media*	A	MWF 8:00-8:50AM
Rochel Gasson	*Shaping Identity in the Virtual World: How Social Media Impacts Ideas of the Self(ie)*	AB B CC	MWF 9:00-9:50AM MWF 11-11:50 AM MWF 12-12:50PM
Andrea Comiskey	*Engaging with TV & Movie Characters*	AC C	MWF 10-10:50AM MWF 12:00-12:50PM
Julia Salehzadeh	*Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict*	AD	MWF 10-10:50AM
Suzanne Meyer	*Unions in a Modern Context*	BB E	MWF 11:00-11:50AM MWF 2:00-2:50PM
Janine Carlock	*Community: What is It and Why Should We Care?*	D J	MWF 1:00-1:50PM MWF 3:00-3:50PM
Chad Szalkowki-Ference	*AI and Art: Can Machines Tell Our Stories?*	DD EE LL	MWF 1:00-1:50PM MWF 2:00-2:50PM MWF 11:00-11:50AM
Nicole Tanquary	*Reckoning with Me Too*	F	MWF 4:00-4:50PM
Peter Mayshle	*Sites of Innovation: Past, Present, and Future*	GG	TR 8:00-9:20AM
Seth Strickland	*Hunger: The Politics and Philosophy of Pangs*	HH JJ	TR 2:00-3:20PM TR 12:30-1:50PM
Kat Myers	*Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media*	I II K	TR 2:00-3:20PM TR 3:30-4:50PM TR 12:30-1:50PM
Jamie Watson	*Selling Self-Care*	KK M MM	MWF 3:00-3:50PM MWF 12:00-12:50PM MWF 4:00-4:50PM

Tina Cafasso	*Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media*	N O	TR 11:00-12:20PM TR 9:30-10:50AM

76-101 Section Course Descriptions

Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media *(Pal-Agrawal: Section A; Myers: Sections I, II & JJ; Cafasso: Sections: N & O)*

Social media has become a play space for exploring new identities. Users have reveled in the opportunity to play a seemingly endless array of roles on multiple stages for global audiences. Sherry Turkle talks about the potential of leaving behind a solid, unitary identity and exploring more fluid identities online. For scholars like Annette Markham and Hugo Liu, home pages, avatars, chat rooms, blank webpages, etc. are theatrical spaces where users can try out new identities and therefore invest in their own self-making. Conversely, others like Bernie Hogan and Danah Boyd have claimed that online spaces are not free and in fact maintain sensitivities to social indicators like race, class and gender. Instead of a place of fantasy where people play with multiple roles, people use their social media to craft self-images that are flat, safe and unidimensional. Taking this one step further, theorists like Eli Pariser have argued that our identities are becoming products of a variety of coercive and disciplinary online processes. According to him, we are not expressing ourselves through technological tools. Instead, tools like predictive engines, news filters and algorithms shape us and thereby curtail our opportunities online for self-exploration and growth.

This class seeks to understand the vexed relationship between using the Internet as a place of self-creation, while having to assimilate into existing systems of networked and coded identities. We will answer questions like: Can the Internet propagate genuinely new selves, and to what extent are these selfhoods products of the culture at large? How does the technology we use shape our behavior, and how can the constraints of technology be taken up and reworked by individuals in diverse ways? How are our social media presences wishful imaginings while also contributing to an emerging monoculture? Our class objectives include synthesizing and evaluating a variety of perspectives, organizing persuasive and well-structured arguments and communicating these ideas in clear and effective prose. We will study a variety of genres such as opinion pieces, academic articles, clips from TV series like *Black Mirror,* etc., to craft nuanced arguments on the degrees to which trying to become someone in cyberspace can lead to one's self-assimilation and eventual "un-becoming."

Shaping Identity in the Virtual World: How Social Media Impacts Ideas of the Self(ie) (*Gasson: Sections AB, B & CC*)

Social media is a platform for exploring our identities. It is a space that mingles the "real" with the "virtual" and often leaves us questioning who we are and what it means to be our authentic selves? As users, we often revel in the opportunity to play a seemingly endless array of roles on multiple stages for global audiences. Author, Sherry Turkle talks about the potential of leaving behind a solid, unitary identity and exploring more fluid identities online. Whereas, for scholars like Annette Markham and Hugo Liu, home pages, avatars, chat rooms, blank webpages, etc. are theatrical spaces where users can try out new identities and therefore invest in their own self-making. Conversely, others like Bernie Hogan and Danah Boyd have claimed that online spaces are not free and in fact maintain sensitivities to social indicators like race, class, and gender. Instead of a place of fantasy where people play with multiple roles, people use their social media

to craft self-images that are flat, safe, and unidimensional. Taking this one step further, theorists like Eli Pariser have argued that our identities are becoming products of a variety of coercive and disciplinary online processes. According to him, we are not expressing ourselves through technological tools. Instead, tools like predictive engines, news filters and algorithms shape us and thereby curtail our opportunities online for self-exploration and growth.

As we move into the world of AI and GAI, this class seeks to understand the vexed relationship between using the Internet as a place of self-creation, while having to assimilate into existing systems of networked and coded identities. We will answer questions like: Can the Internet propagate genuinely new selves, and to what extent are these selfhoods products of the culture at large? How does the technology we use shape our behavior, and how can the constraints of technology be taken up and reworked by individuals in diverse ways? How are our social media presences wishful imaginings while also contributing to an emerging monoculture? Our class objectives include synthesizing and evaluating a variety of perspectives, organizing persuasive and well-structured arguments, and communicating these ideas in clear and effective writing. To that end, we will study an array of genres such as opinion pieces, academic articles, clips from TV and movies, etc., to craft nuanced arguments that explore and discuss how we shape our identity through self-perceptions and external influencers on social media platforms.

Engaging with TV & Movie Characters (*Comiskey: Section AC & C*)

Discussions of films, TV shows, and other story-based artworks often revolve around their characters—we might like or dislike them, find them admirable or repellent. Drawing on work in film and media studies, philosophy, social psychology, and other fields, this class will explore the nature and the stakes of our engagement with film and TV characters. For instance: why do we so often care deeply about fictional characters? How are audiovisual stories engineered to affect us emotionally? What are the ethical implications of engaging with characters? How does character engagement work in serial narratives versus standalone ones? No previous training in film and media studies is assumed or required. Because we need some shared examples to which we can apply concepts from the readings, the course will require occasional out-of-class film and TV viewing.

Students will read academic writing on this topic as well as pieces intended for wider, non-specialist audiences. In the process, they'll analyze how different authors present information and construct arguments. This will establish a foundation for writing a research proposal that identifies a researchable problem or question in the field. Then, they'll develop their own argument-based contributions to the intellectual conversation on character engagement.

Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict (*Salehzadeh: Section AD*)

Are virtues such as kindness, honesty, compassion, and a shared sense of responsibility a viable response to conflict? An automatic reply for most people would be, "yes"; however, even a quick news or social media investigation of national and local response to current conflicts suggests that coercion, manipulation, and violence are at least common first reactions. Arguments have been made that specific acts of violence can lessen future acts of violence, perhaps the most extreme being the use of the atomic bomb in World War II. Despite the prevalence of violence as a response to situations, there is ample evidence that people who choose nonviolent, enacted virtue can make a significant difference in social policy and behavior in the public sphere (e.g., Gandhi, King, Mother Teresa, Nightingale, E. Roosevelt, Chief Joseph, Schindler, Parks, Carter, Mandela, Thoreau). This course will explore the efficacy of virtue as a viable, nonviolent response to conflict and the value in

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considering an alternative to violence and selfish individualism when dealing with conflict and disagreement. We will consider questions about shared responsibility in communities, historical perspectives on virtue in civic life, and the influence of virtue outside social relations in fields such as economics, science, and technology. The class is not about praising virtue per se but about investigating where it is valued and what are its effects on outcomes in different fields while still engaging respectfully with others in our community who believe that violent ways of meeting conflict are more efficacious or perhaps simply inevitable.

Throughout the semester, we will consider texts from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including rhetoric, philosophy, psychology, technology, and political science. This work will inform research, analysis, and synthesis of current conversations about enacted virtues and give students a starting point to begin their own research proposals. Student writing will culminate in an academic contribution paper that resolves an issue posed by the questions we encounter.

Unions in a Modern Context (*Meyer: Sections BB & E*)

Organized labor has had a long history in the industrialized contexts around the world. By the end of the 20th century, unionization was on the decline in the US, and the impact of unions on the workplace seemingly relegated to pages in a history book. However, union membership and the creation of new unions have recently been in the spotlight again.

In this section of 76-101 will define unions; analyze early American unions in texts about, for example, the millworkers of Lowell, MA, the steel workers strike in PA, and the nationwide Pullman sleeping car boycott as well as in international contexts; and consider rational for collective action, gains attributed to organized labor and bases for resistance to unionization. Recent movements for unionization will be explored to consider why established unions have found new strength, why some efforts to unionize have failed (e.g., Volkswagen) where others succeeded (e.g., Starbucks), how new sectors of the workforce are considering unionization (e.g., tech) and how resistance to unionization has – or hasn't – changed. Modern unionization trends in other countries will also be considered.

In addition to text analysis for content, you will compare texts on the labor movement for different audiences. Additionally, you will propose an area for research for a revitalized union movement, for example, exploring what has prompted a return to organized labor or how current efforts build on or differ from previous union efforts, ultimately writing an essay to share your research findings and producing work that contributes to your and others' understanding of issues in the modern workforce.

Community: What is It and Why Should We Care? (*Carlock: Sections D & J)*

When COVID-19 hit in 2020, the communities all around us – the classroom, campus, the neighborhoods we grew up in, the sports teams or clubs we participated in – became inaccessible. The social isolation experienced worldwide resulted in ongoing negative physical and mental health impacts for many. Quarantining during the Covid 19 pandemic, by depriving us of our ability to interact in our usual ways with our communities, demonstrated the value that a sense of community has in terms of the well-being of individuals and communities themselves. In this course we will look at the conversation around how we can define community to better understand not only what it is but how it can be fostered. This conversation is important because these definitions facilitate our personal, social, and political engagements.

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In this section of 76101, we will look at readings that explore questions such as: What makes a community? How do we 'belong' to a community? How do online communities complicate the definition of community – does it even matter whether communities are virtual or face-to-face? Do various groups conceive of community differently–such as various disciplines in health care, engineering, or the arts? And in the end, how does our understanding of community, and that of institutions, organizations or governments, and communities themselves, impact actions? The texts that we will read offer several perspectives that you will then synthesize and apply to pursue an original research question about community. This question will be launched through a written research proposal. You will then extend that proposal into a formal research paper that you might connect to your future area of study or civic contexts that interest you, making your own unique contribution to how students today might define, shape, and engage community for our future.

AI and Art: Can Machines Tell Our Stories? (*Szalkowski-Ference: Sections DD, EE & LL*) A man receives a direct message from his dead friend, who

has become fully reanimated in the present, ChatGPT-style. Unknown to the judges, an AI-generated submission won a prestigious photography award. These situations come from contemporary literature and the art world, highlighting how artists are integrating algorithms and AI into creative texts. In this course, we will track debates on the ethics and aesthetics of machine learning in the creative arts. Much like scholars at Oxford, who have concluded that "human/[machine learning] complementarity in the arts is a rich and ongoing process," we will temper enthusiasm by exploring issues such as access, originality, ownership, and the degree to which art exceeds the generation of grammar, syntax, and/or images through algorithms to include a deeper meaning rooted in human consciousness and interaction with others and the world.

Through three major writing assignments that include a proposal and academic paper, we will learn to read critically, synthesize productively, and apply theoretical lenses to texts to participate in an ongoing critical conversation. The emerging critical conversation we will enter centers on ethics, aesthetics, narrative/literary theory, and AI, which itself melds a range of disciplines from computer science to biology. Because the work we will be doing is interdisciplinary, students will be able to gravitate toward areas of the arts that interest them most and draw from research related to the academic disciplines they are pursuing at CMU, all culminating in an insightful contribution to the conversation taking place at the crossroads of technology and art.

Reckoning with Me Too (*Section F*)

In late 2017, a tweet by actress Alyssa Milano--"If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet"--went viral with millions of replies. Since then, "Me Too" has become shorthand for an internationally-recognized public awareness surrounding acts of sexual violence. Nearly six years later, this course asks: *How should we understand Me Too and its aftermath?* And, by extension, *What comes next?*

Together, we will discuss Me Too and assess its value, impacts, and ongoing problematics, as well as consider the stakes of entering into such arguments. What should we make, for instance, of the popular erasures of women of color (such as Tarana Burke) who arguably began Me Too in the US in 2006, but were supplanted by white, affluent Hollywood actresses in the viral moment of

#metoo? And what of effects *beyond* the US? In the wider scope of things, does Me Too even count as a coherent "movement"? This course will offer opportunity to explore such questions via engagement with readings drawn from a range of disciplinary focuses, including feminist studies, media studies, racial criticism, and more. These readings will allow us to consider Me Too's multifaceted impact on everything from politics, to courtrooms, to college campuses.

In the process of reckoning with Me Too, students will hone their rhetorical skills, learning how to compare, interpret, and synthesize texts from a variety of genres that together constitute public and academic conversations about the movement. The final project will ask students to propose, and then undertake, a research paper that supports an argument about the effects and/or limitations of Me Too, from a subject angle that interests them.

Sites of Innovation: Past, Present, and Future *(Mayshle: Section GG)*

> …space is a practiced place.
> -Michel de Certeau-

What does *innovation* mean at Carnegie Mellon? This introductory writing course looks at the rhetoric/s of innovation and asks, how is innovation conceived, perceived, and lived in Carnegie Mellon? Drawing on work in rhetoric and discourse studies and postmodern geography, students shall examine how Carnegie Mellon represents, embodies, and communicates innovation in various sites around campus: "past" sites could include memorials to Mao Yisheng, Judith Resnik, the Randy Pausch bridge, the *CMU@50: For the Founders* celebration, and the like; "present" sites could include the places and practices of their own majors/disciplines/schools, multiple changing exhibits across campus, invited campus speakers, university events, and the like; "future" sites could include newly created spaces such as the Gates and Hillman Centers, the Tepper, the $20M Classroom and Learning Spaces Project, and the like. And because this is a foundational writing course, you will practice what it means to write for, within, and beyond the academy, as you develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize various perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on rhetorical space and innovation.

Hunger: The Politics and Philosophy of Pangs *(Strickland: Sections HH & JJ)*

Is hunger a feeling? Is it a physical state? How much of our human activity is oriented around preventing hunger? How does hunger also reveal inequality? How do desire and appetite relate to hunger? Is hunger a positive state or a lack of food? We'll discuss how hunger plays an important role in our lives, in our communities, and how we can develop a coherent approach to questions of hunger and how developing such an approach can transform the way we interact with our goals, our communities, and even parts of ourselves. As early as the middle ages, poets divided society into 'winners,' i.e. producers and 'wasters,' i.e. consumers. In recent years, hunger provides a locus for social commentary in Tommy Pico's poetry and Roxanne Gay's memoirs. And the problem is local, too: Pittsburgh has the highest levels of food insecurity among similarly-sized cities. Nearly 1 in 5 residents of Pittsburgh live in food insecurity – a much higher rate than national rates. In this 'foodie city' in one of the most stupendously wealthy countries in the world, why are people going hungry? In this course, students will begin to answer these questions through a variety of individual and collaborative research projects. Students will learn to analyze texts for their arguments, synthesize their ideas, and learn the skills needed to participate in a scholarly conversation. After reading and

analyzing a variety of arguments on this issue, students will write a formal research proposal and paper by drawing upon their knowledge from this class and their own disciplines.

Selling Self-Care (*Watson: Section KK, M & MM*)

What is self-care, and who is it for? When you hear the phrase "self-care," you might imagine wealthy white women in spa attire pampering themselves. Or, you may think of self-help books. But how else might we define, name, and understand self-care?

In this section of 76-101, we will examine texts about the history and rhetorical impact of "self-care" as a concept and evolving conversation. In class, we will critique different conceptualizations of self- care as it relates to capitalism, medical practice, racial justice, gender expression, disability studies, and other avenues of inquiry. Students will join in conversation with intellectuals–including, but not limited to– Plato, Henry David Thoreau, Michel Foucault, Audre Lorde, and Tricia Hersey (the Nap Bishop).

Students will hone critical thinking and communication skills in this context, analyzing and synthesizing arguments about self-care. Beyond self-care, this class encourages students to question the practices and commodities that are sold to them on a daily basis. Then, students will propose and develop an original research question within the conversation, ultimately leading to a unique contribution to this intellectual discourse for their final project. Students will leave with skills in argumentation and rhetorical analysis to critique the mental health discourses to which they are often exposed.

(Note: This course examines the discourses around this topic, both their cultural and rhetorical functions. The course is not meant to offer advice on mental health or serve as a psychological resource. Students interested in counseling support should reach out to CaPS, the university's Counseling and Psychological Services.)