

First-Year Writing Program

Fall 2018

Course Descriptions

Brief Overview of First-Year Writing Options

At Carnegie Mellon, all undergraduate students are required to fulfill a First-Year Writing course requirement. This requirement can be completed in two different ways:

Option 1: Enroll in one of two full-semester courses (9 units each):
See p. 3

76-101: Interpretation and Argument
76-102: Advanced First-Year Writing (by invitation only)

Option 2: “You pick 2”: Enroll in two of three half-semester “mini” courses* (4.5 units each):
See p. 16

76-106: Writing About Literature, Art and Culture
76-107: Writing About Data
76-108: Writing About Public Problems

*Minis should be completed back-to-back within a single semester

76-100, Reading and Writing in an Academic Context, is a prerequisite for some incoming students whose first or primary language is not English. Students who are placed in 76-100 should complete it during their first semester, before choosing one of the two above options to fulfill the First-Year Writing requirement during their second semester.

If you are a multilingual student and you have received an email about taking a placement exam, then you should wait to register for a First-Year Writing course until your course placement has been determined. All other students can enroll in either one full-semester course or two mini courses, as detailed above.

Please see the following pages for more information and specific course topics for each of the First-Year Writing courses.

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 who are not native speakers of English or who consider English to be their weaker language. In the course, students develop a rhetorical and linguistic toolkit of resources for accommodating the needs of readers within a North American university context. Students read and write short arguments and then revise those arguments throughout the semester for their portfolios. By the end of the course, students should be able to articulate a stronger understanding of themselves as writers of academic English, which should include identifying particular areas of strength and areas that they need to develop further. Students who take this course qualify through an online placement test that is administered through the university prior to the fall semester.

Scroll down to see the particular descriptions for the 76-100 courses, as well as their schedules and faculty.

Technology and its Quandaries

We are surrounded by technology. It permeates every aspect of our lives enabling us to communicate, work, and heal more efficiently. It also intrudes on our personal and moral spaces raising questions about privacy, job security, and medical boundaries. In this course, we will examine the impacts of the internet/social media, artificial intelligence, and biomedical engineering on daily life and the ethical issues raised by each of these phenomena. We have the ability to create and share items that were once considered part of science fiction, but now we must decide which activities and projects are in the best interest of life on earth, and which could ultimately destroy us.

Over the course of the semester, students will read a range of texts, and then compare, contrast, summarize, evaluate, and synthesize authors' arguments. Students will use the information and skills learned from these analyses to propose the subject for their final papers: a source-based, thesis-driven argument that takes a position on one of the controversies about technology.

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 language choices in academic English.

Section	Day and Timeslot	Instructor Name	76-100 Course Type
76100 A	MWF 9:30-10:20	Kevin Haworth	Self & Language
76100 B	MWF 10:30-11:20	Kevin Haworth	Self & Language
76100 C	MWF 11:30-12:20	Heidi Wright	Technology
76100 D	MWF 11:30-12:20	Alex Helberg	Technology
76100 E	MWF 12:30-1:20	Heidi Wright	Technology
76100 G	MWF 1:30-2:20	Ying Jing	Technology
76100 H	MWF 3:30-4:20	Keely Austin	TBD
76100 I	MWF 4:30-5:20	Rebecca Oreto	Self & Language
76100 J	TR 10:30-11:50	TBD	Technology
76100 K	TR 1:30-2:50	Lexi Adams	Self & Language

Option 1: Full-semester course to fulfill First-Year Writing Option

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 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 76101 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.

Section A

Jamie Smith MWF 8:30-9:20

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 the second installment in 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 AA

Sarah Hancock MWF 8:30-9:20

Coffee Culture: The Brand and Brew of Caffeine Addiction

How do you take your coffee? A shot of espresso? Lots of milk and sugar? Fair-trade only? Do you like to drink your coffee in the shop that features local art? Perhaps the one with the comfy couches? In cities,

coffee shops are around every corner, offering a warm beverage, usually a WiFi connection, and hopefully a seat. These public spaces are often referred to as “third spaces,” a place that is neither home nor work, but is still a place where we spend a lot of our time. Why do we choose to spend our time in particular coffee shops? Does it matter that we prefer to drink our coffee in a certain way? This course will explore the necessity of interrogating our seemingly simple, everyday choices as coffee consumers. We will investigate questions about our personal taste for our coffee drink, the space where we drink it, and the land and people who provide that product for our consumption. These questions will help us to consider our coffee choices outside of the mindlessness of routine.

Throughout the semester, we will read and analyze articles from popular, academic and empirical research journals in order to propose a question to enter research-driven conversations about coffee culture. By engaging with these articles, we will be able to examine the consequences of our choices on a personal, a local, and a global scale. Over the semester, we will synthesize many authors and debates in order to write academic research proposals that argue for original projects on the implications of our coffee preferences and the necessity of understanding the weight of our coffee choices. Students will conduct research and write their own contribution papers that resolve questions posed by these proposals.

Section B

Jamie Smith MWF 9:30-10:20

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Section C

Megan Gounaris MWF 10:30-11:20

The Culture of Economy

Every day we are bombarded with news about the economy. The Dow is up 500 points. Amazon bought Whole Foods. Disney outbid Comcast to buy 21st Century Fox. Your best friend just bought the latest iPhone for half-price. Stories like these paint the economy as a numbers game in which actors behave rationally and growth occurs incessantly. Recent economic studies, however, show this is far from the case. These studies indicate that economic actors are driven by a host of factors and often act against their “rational” economic interest. In doing so, they highlight how “economics is a moral science,” as the father of modern economic theory John Maynard Keynes famously wrote. This course explores Keynes’ idea by considering how culture

shapes economic meaning. As we explore this idea throughout the semester, we will use popular and academic articles on production, consumption, and exchange to hone critical thinking and communication skills, specifically learning how to analyze and synthesize an argument. We will then use these skills to develop an original research question and to produce a unique contribution to the conversations that we encountered throughout the semester.

Section CC

Rebecca Wigginton MWF 10:30-11:20

Cyborgs, Microchips, and "Playing God": The Ethics and Possibilities of Human Enhancement Technology

What is the relationship between technology and (or in) the human body, and what could it be? At Code Conference 2016, Elon Musk suggested that "we are already cyborgs," and as far back as the 1960s, Marshal McLuhan's groundbreaking work in media studies argued that we've always used technology as extensions of ourselves. This course invites you to consider the possible and acceptable forms that human-integrated technology may take in the future and what forms they have already taken in the present. Given that this shift is already happening, and that many experts are confident the shift points to the next big turn in our technological and human evolution, we will not limit our course discussions to whether or not it "will" or "should" occur, but we will instead focus on consideration of what forms human-implanted technology is already taking and seems likely to take next. Within this frame, we will discuss the implications these forms have for ethics, medicine, religion, "big data," and the law. Readings include both popular and academic articles, along with one novel that imagines what human-integrated technology might look like in the near future—M.T. Anderson's *Feed* (2002). As we enter into an ongoing conversation taking place in a variety of fields, you will develop skills in the fundamental practices of critical reading and academic writing and apply them to complete assignments in which you analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, write an academic research proposal based upon those syntheses, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on human-integrated technology.

Section D

Rebecca Wigginton MWF 11:30-12:20

Cyborgs, Microchips, and "Playing God": The Ethics and Possibilities of Human Enhancement Technology

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growth occurs incessantly. Recent economic studies, however, show this is far from the case. These studies indicate that economic actors are driven by a host of factors and often act against their “rational” economic interest. In doing so, they highlight how “economics is a moral science,” as the father of modern economic theory John Maynard Keynes famously wrote. This course explores Keynes’ idea by considering how culture shapes economic meaning. As we explore this idea throughout the semester, we will use popular and academic articles on production, consumption, and exchange to hone critical thinking and communication skills, specifically learning how to analyze and synthesize an argument. We will then use these skills to develop an original research question and to produce a unique contribution to the conversations that we encountered throughout the semester.

Section E

Tim Dawson MWF 11:30-12:20

Race, American Identity, and Public Policy

In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois claimed that “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line.” In the 21st Century, suggestions that America is entering a post-racial era have been answered by controversies, social movements, and demographic trends that reveal the persistent relevance of “race” to notions of identity and to questions of public policy. In this course you will have the opportunity to investigate how ideas about “race” relate to processes of establishing and maintaining cultural, economic, political, and social boundaries; individual and national identity; or contemporary policy debates. To support your investigation, you will learn and practice strategies for critically analyzing arguments in a range of academic and popular genres, prepare group and individual presentations, and write three major papers, with the third developing a contribution to a specific, ongoing discussion in a particular community of inquiry.

Throughout the process of developing your papers and presentations, you will learn and practice skills of analysis, planning, and research for drafting and revising academic arguments and strategies for analyzing your own work and the work of your peers.

Section EE

Kevin Haworth MWF 12:30-1:20

The Public Intellectual in a Divided Society

What is the role of a public intellectual in a divided society? Artists and intellectuals often try to use their knowledge for the public good—to inform, to advocate, and to argue for change. But do they do so effectively? Are they able to affect public thought about issues like racism, censorship, or gender inequality? What can their examples teach us about connecting academic discourse and public issues? And how does public intellectualism change across time and cultures? In this section, we will read and explore the work of American public intellectuals such as Ta-Nehisi Coates, Gloria Anzaldúa, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Jedediah Purdy, and Susan Sontag, as well as international artists and thinkers such as Ai Weiwei and Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche. Students will read both academic and popular texts by and about these figures to understand different modes of discourse. We will also analyze and synthesize arguments by and about public intellectuals, to propose and develop an original research question, ultimately leading to a unique contribution on the issues related to intellectualism and the public sphere.

Section F

Bret Vukoder MWF 12:30-1:20

A Seat in the Dark: Why We Watch Movies

As the story goes, when the French film pioneers Auguste and Louis Lumière premiered their brief 1895 film “The Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station,” the crowd of spectators jumped up from their seats in a fit of fear, believing the train was charging directly towards them. They were certain it was real. Seven years later, another Frenchman George Méliès’ debuted the whimsical and bizarre tale of A Trip to the Moon, invoking a sense of wonder and possibility in the audience. Cinema from thereon became many things, offering viewers a spectrum of experiences teetering between reality and fantasy, representation and imagination.

Even amidst the rise of television and the Internet, movies today are still a tremendously popular medium. Tickets sales have remained fairly steady in the last twenty years, and viewers now have instantaneous access to a seemingly endless library of films via Netflix, Amazon, or On-Demand. Prolific and pervasive, movies have become such a staple of modern culture that we rarely step back and ask why we watch them. In what ways can cinema tell us who we are or what we should be? Is it possible to express ourselves from a seat in the theater? Can cinema make or reinforce communities? To what extent can movies enlighten or trivialize? Why do they entertain us?

These and other questions will serve as the focus for this 76-101 course. In exploring the connection between the spectator and cinema, we will learn and apply analytical methods for engaging academic and popular criticism, feature-length films and clips, other primary artifacts, and more. Students will write essays that analyze arguments and synthesize perspectives surrounding this topic, culminating in a final essay in which they make a contribution to our contemporary knowledge that will in part answer the question of why we watch movies.

Section FF

Pierce Williams MWF 12:30-1:20

Drawing Lines around the Arts, Humanities, and Sciences

What is the relationship between the Arts, Humanities, and the Sciences? For those working in the liberal and fine arts, the loaded question of “So, what exactly do you hope to do with your [English, History, Fine Arts, Theater] degree?” is all too familiar. For those working in mathematics, engineering, or the “hard” sciences, it can be frustrating to encounter some assumptions about how science and technical expertise is bland, non-creative, and strictly logic-based. And yet the writing of such contemporary authors as David Foster Wallace, whom we will read, dissolves these distinctions, employing artful expression to relay complex scientific and mathematical ideas, or vice versa. Many authors have also employed rigorous scientific thinking to illuminate art, literature and music. Historically, writers from Benjamin Franklin to Humphrey Davy have taken issue with the distinction between the arts, humanities and sciences, claiming that a balance of each is necessary for harnessing the full potential of the human intellect. This very old debate between the disciplines continues in contemporary debates over not only funding for school programs and research, but also what the public should most emphasize in education: the humanistic production of “well-rounded” or “culturally literate” individuals, proficiency in the expressive potential of the arts, or the technical preparation of eventual participants in the world economy through emphasis on science, math, engineering and business.

This class interrogates assumptions about types of knowledge and examines these assumptions in the popular imagination. By engaging in debates about the distinctions associated with these disciplinary boundaries, we will explore our own assumptions about how productive the arts/sciences distinction is. In some cases it may be; in others it may not. Over the course of the semester, we will analyze and synthesize the arguments of a number of writers and experts in order to formally propose our own research questions and make a unique contribution to a discourse community within this disciplinary debate.

Section G

Hannah Ringler 12:30-1:20

What is my nationality, and how do I know?

What is your nationality (American, Chinese, French, Indian-American)? More importantly, how do you know? Is it your family tree? Birthplace? Language? Culture? DNA? Passport? In this section of 76-101, we will grapple with these ideas to ask ourselves, what is nationality? Students will read popular and scholarly arguments about different ways that we can understand who we are as individuals, and what makes up a national people. We will try to understand the different reasons that someone might call themselves one nationality, and why that is a difficult choice. For example, can you call yourself “Irish” if your great-great grandparents immigrated to America from Ireland? Can you call yourself “Japanese” if you are an American emigrant? Can you call yourself “Korean” if only one parent is Korean? In essence, if so many factors can make up how we talk about nationality, what do we call ourselves when some of those conflict? We’ll discuss

why these are difficult questions, how their answers vary, and why this matters to us. In this course, students will engage with these ideas by drawing upon their own experiences and expertise and listening to others. Students will learn to analyze texts for their arguments, synthesize their ideas, and learn the skills needed to participate in a scholarly conversation. After having read and analyzed 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.

Section GG

Pavithra Tantrigoda 12:30-1:20

Climate Change and its Discourses

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, politicians, 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 these varied discourses on climate change, 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 examine how these debates on climate change are shaped by politics and culture.

We will read a range of academic essays, magazine articles, interviews and documentary film to examine the embeddedness of climate change in political and cultural contexts. 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 HH

Sophie Wodzak 12:30-1:20

Journalism in the digital age: where do we go from here?

The internet has changed the way we consume news. In their struggle to keep up with the 24-hour news cycle and find new ways to generate revenue online, many news outlets have changed the way they generate and distribute content: Headlines serve as clickbait, pundits flood the airwaves, and comedy news shows compete with traditional media. Is this the end of journalism as we know it? In this section of 76-101, we will examine the effects the internet is having on fundamental journalistic values such as accuracy and fairness, and consider whether it is possible to preserve these values in the new digital media landscape. Students will analyze the challenges facing journalism today, and synthesize experts' opinions about how best to cope with these challenges. By engaging with the course readings and conducting their own research, students will make predictions about where journalism is headed in the 21st century, and offer their own suggestions for how to cope with the various challenges it faces.

Section I

Sophie Wodzak 1:30-2:20

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Section II

Kendra Williamson 1:30-2:20

Correctness and Communication

"How are you?" "I'm doing good, thanks." "You mean you're doing WELL?" We've all encountered instances where our words are noticed and corrected, and perhaps we sometimes correct others' words. But is there a "right" way to speak? How do we define and prioritize correctness in relation to communication? This course explores the issue of language and standardization, including questions of whether the United States should have a national language, the appropriateness of stigmatized regional or racial dialects, and how (or whether) grammar should be taught. Using readings focused on dialect, language, and language policy, students in this class will learn transferable principles for analyzing, understanding, and writing in different genres. This course includes three papers: a comparative genre analysis (CGA) that aims to identify and characterize writing features, a research proposal that synthesizes the existing conversation surrounding a research need that students identify according to their own interests, and a research paper (contribution paper) that makes an original argument that fills that research need. By the end of the semester, students will have developed an arsenal of skills related to reading, analysis, and writing that can be extended to new contexts throughout their academic, professional, and every-day lives.

Section JJ

Tim Dawson MWF 2:30-3:20

Race, American Identity, and Public Policy

In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois claimed that "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line." In the 21st Century, suggestions that America is entering a post-racial era have been answered by controversies, social movements, and demographic trends that reveal the persistent relevance of "race" to notions of identity and to questions of public policy. In this course you will have the opportunity to investigate how ideas about "race" relate to processes of establishing and maintaining cultural, economic, political, and social boundaries; individual and national identity; or contemporary policy debates. To support your investigation, you will learn and practice strategies for critically analyzing arguments in a range of academic and popular genres, prepare group and individual presentations, and write three major papers, with the third developing a contribution to a specific, ongoing discussion in a particular community of inquiry.

Throughout the process of developing your papers and presentations, you will learn and practice skills of analysis, planning, and research for drafting and revising academic arguments and strategies for analyzing your own work and the work of your peers.

Section K

Keely Austin MWF 2:30-3:20

Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict

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 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 in 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, 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.

Section L

Pavithra Tantrigoda 2:30-3:20

Climate Change and its Discourses

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, politicians, 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 these varied discourses on climate change, 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 examine how these debates on climate change are shaped by politics and culture.

We will read a range of academic essays, magazine articles, interviews and documentary film to examine the embeddedness of climate change in political and cultural contexts. 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 LL

Craig Stamm MWF 3:30-4:20

The Sociology of Video Games

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 M

Rachel Kravetz MWF 3:30-4:20

Crafts Movements

Recent years have seen an unmistakable interest in the handcrafted. This impulse is apparent in Pittsburgh's pervasive do-it-yourself culture, with its commitment to the original, specially made item, but we can also look for craft in the materials science labs of CMU. This class will examine the contemporary phenomenon within the context of a drama that played out in the late nineteenth century: the British Arts & Crafts movement. In response to industrialization, strong voices declared the value of the handmade over the machine-made as a cure for social ills. Why did writers demand handcrafted architecture and decor, and how did they capture the attention of the public? How did designers implement their mandate? We will trace how the movement flowered in America and globally before considering current calls for ethically produced clothes, food, and experiments. Does contemporary craft combat or extend the "commodity fetishism" that socialists deplored in the nineteenth century? To what extent does craft live up to the aspiration of accessibility to all? How does craft interact with and stand in tension with technology? With fine art? In this course, you will develop academic reading and writing skills, explore various methods and compositional structures, and pursue and argue for a research question that leads to an original argument related to historical or contemporary craft.

Section MM

Robert Calton MWF 3:30-4:20

Smartphones and Society

The mobile computing revolution shifted how we interact with each other and our world, but towards what ends and at what costs? In this course, we will critically explore how mobile technologies shape the way we relate and communicate in today's connected society. In examining the broader impacts of mobile technologies across disciplines of design, education, rhetoric, business, and sociology, students will uncover how we use smartphones and how we are used by them. When we order food at restaurants with our phones or table-side tablets, are we changing the way we understand food and the dining experience? How does it alter the experience of music when artists now offer "couch concerts" for downloads to our mobile devices instead of physical tours? Questions of technology's role in modifying our experiences stretch far back: from early 20th-century critiques of amateur radio trivializing face-to-face and written interactions while enabling instant world-wide communication, to the printing press supplanting hand-written manuscripts but increasing the availability of print material and spreading literacy, and even considering "writing" itself as a technology that displaced the discipline of memorization while simultaneously helping to preserve knowledge, smartphones are the latest iteration of this conversation of how our production and consumption media transform community and communication. As smartphones become more centralized to

our ways of learning and communicating, it behooves us to become more reflective and critical users; our readings will enable us to evaluate to what extents mobile technology connects users across cultures through shared narratives while contributing to a loss of humanity. In this course, students will compare articles across genres that relate to ways in which smartphones both connect and disconnect their users from each other and our world. We will carve research spaces from emerging areas of inquiry and knowledge gaps, including why mobile social media may make us unsocial, how smartphones contribute to both increases in life satisfaction as well as isolation, and in what ways might we leverage smartphones to teach, learn, and train. By the end of the course, students will be able to confidently enter into the argument of how we might more meaningfully bring smartphones out of our pockets and into our world.

Section N

Craig Stamm MWF 4:30-5:20

The Sociology of Video Games

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 OO

Courtney Novosat TR 9:00-10:20

Nevertheless Belief Persists: "Alternative facts," Affect, and Argument

In *Proper Studies* (1927) acclaimed novelist and philosopher Aldous Huxley writes "facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored." Though we might easily understand how Huxley's truism accounts for scientific facts such as the speed of light or the boiling point of water, we might wonder about the fate of oft-ignored facts like climate change or the certainly that slavery caused the Civil War. In a historical moment rife with "alternative facts" and specious arguments that ignore evidence, scholars from a range of disciplines have begun to study why we tend to flee from facts that contradict our beliefs and to theorize about how we might grapple with uncomfortable truths and recover fact.

Drawing on debates in cognitive psychology, cultural studies, and the contemporary media, this course centrally asks: why are appeals to beliefs that ignore evidence so compelling in an age we like to believe is driven by fact? As we explore this overarching question, we will necessarily engage with arguments of definition (What constitutes a fact?; What makes an argument un/ethical?), causality (Why are so many of us compelled by rhetorics of fear or anger?; Has the false dichotomy between reason and emotion become a self-fulfilling prophecy?), and to those of value (Are we, as a society, adversely affected by cultural narratives tainted with half-truths, lies, and conspiracy theories?). Through discussion board participation, group presentations, and three major writing assignments students will not only participate in an ongoing academic conversation about the role affect plays in contemporary discourse, but in the cultural phenomenon of "alternative facts" that reaches well beyond academia.

Section P

Courtney Novosat TR 10:30-11:50

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Section PP

Nathan Pensky TR 10:30-11:50

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 Q

Korryn Mozisek TR 1:30-2:50

Sports and Culture

During every Olympic cycle, fans cheer on their country's athletes as they represent the nation and its ideals. Professional sports leagues are billion-dollar enterprises and their superstars are household names. Sports brings fans to their feet with cheers and makes them red faced with frustration. Quite simply, sports is rarely only sports. In this course, we will discuss and examine the interconnectedness of sports and culture through many forms of writing, which will include analytical, critical, creative, journalistic, and sociological genres. Whether it is a sabermetrically-focused article from *Five Thirty Eight* or *Baseball Prospectus*, a long form article from *Sports Illustrated*, a novel about a sporting hero, or an article examining the symbolism of flyovers at sporting events or the metaphor of the bases, sports writing shapes and influences culture. We will ask questions about how our discussion of sports frames cultural understandings about gender, race,

sexuality, religion, and nationality among other issues.

Throughout the semester, students will focus on identifying and analyzing the varying writing strategies for structuring arguments, comparing argumentative and writing strategies for various genres, learning to synthesize key research contributions, and propose a contribution to research on sports and culture.

Section QQ

Maureen Gallagher TR 1:30-2:50

Visual Representation of Race in Popular Culture and Public Life

We may think that seeing is a straightforward activity. But influential critics, such as Susan Sontag and Stuart Hall, have argued that practices of seeing are influenced by social factors, such as nationality, gender, class, ideology, and technology. Moreover, many power dynamics are at play in the representation of race in particular, arguably perpetuating a culturally dominant “gaze” that has been Western, American, and white. This section of 76-101 considers, how has this dominant “gaze” influenced racial representations of whites and people of color, whether through a sports mascot or a Disney princess? How do such representations, in turn, shape one’s ways of seeing? In this course, we will consider, what uses of images in public life and popular culture might participate in, reinforce, or challenge racial power inequalities? What consequences may result? In order to investigate these issues, students will analyze multiple perspectives on the construction, consumption and power dynamics of visual representations of race in photography, advertising, Hollywood films, sports logos, and Halloween costumes. Throughout the semester, students will synthesize arguments on topics vital to conversations surrounding power and visual images of race, including representation, cultural appropriation, stereotypes, and exoticism. Students will then develop a research proposal based on a case from popular culture or public life, ultimately making a unique contribution to current conversations about visual images of race through a research-based argument.

Section R

Maureen Gallagher TR 3:00-4:20

Visual Representation of Race in Popular Culture and Public Life

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Section RR

Kitty Shropshire TR 4:30-5:50

CONSPIRACY! Power and Paranoia in American Culture

Who killed JFK? Is NASA hiding evidence that the Earth is actually flat? Is the Queen of England a shape-shifting reptilian from the Alpha Draconis star system? And more importantly, how can we know for sure? Despite unflattering representations of conspiracy theorists as paranoid fanatics who exist on the fringes of society, recent research suggests that at least half of all Americans believe in at least one conspiracy theory. If this is true, what are the implications for contemporary American culture and politics? Should we

understand conspiracism as a threat to the intellectual health of the nation, or as a type of radical skepticism and freethought? Does conspiracism depress political engagement or invigorate it in new ways?

Guided by these questions, this section of 76-101 will examine the relationship between the “stigmatized knowledge” of conspiracists and the kinds of “institutional knowledge” produced at universities. Not only will we question how we know what we know, we will also consider the broader social, political, and ethical implications of different forms of knowledge-making. Readings will be drawn from a variety of fields, including political science, sociology, cultural studies, and--of course--from conspiracy theorists themselves. Students in this course will develop critical reading, writing, and media literacy skills while learning the foundations of academic authorship. Ultimately, each student will learn about academic genre features, write an academic research proposal, and produce an original research paper that synthesizes scholarly perspectives and contributes an original perspective on a conspiracy theory of the student’s choosing.

General Description of 76-102: Advanced First-Year Writing: Special Topics (9 units)

Gen Ed: Fulfills Category 1: Communicating requirement for H&SS and a designated writing course for other colleges. **Students enroll in these sections by invitation only.**

Section A

Jamie Smith MWF 11:30-12:20

Gothic Literature

What is the Gothic? A collection of stories about monsters, dungeons, and madwomen? A type of pop culture? A method of social critique? A canonical genre? A time period? A feeling? In this advanced section of First-Year Writing, students will learn what it means for a text to be considered “Gothic” literature and observe how this mode has fluctuated throughout the past two hundred years. We will additionally analyze novels and arguments about literature and culture, explore and adopt literary lenses, and finally propose our own arguments and contribute to ongoing academic discussions about Gothic literature.

In this class, we will read three Gothic novels – Matthew Lewis’s *The Monk*, Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, and Daphne du Maurier’s *Rebecca*– along with secondary criticism and writing that introduces theoretical literary lenses like feminism, digital humanities, and film studies. As we learn to write effectively in an academic and professional setting, we will consider how these vibrant texts engage with important issues of their (and our) time, like revolution, gender, race, sexuality, nationality and religion. Instructor lectures will additionally introduce other cultural and historical materials like visual arts, periodicals, music, film, and letters in order to enhance students’ contextual knowledge and skills for writing about Gothic literature within particular moments and over time. Note: Students enroll in this section by invitation only.

Section B

Peter Mayshle MWF 10:30-11:20

The Rhetoric of Memory: Monuments, Museums, and Publics

Memory resides privately in the mind but once made public, memory becomes rhetorical. How, then, does memory act in the public sphere? In this seminar-like advanced first-year writing course, students will be introduced to the rhetoric of memory, in particular, to the ways public memory informs and performs in built environments. Drawing on classical and contemporary readings in rhetoric and communication studies, we will explore a variety of memory sites such as monuments, museums, cultural events and performances. While students will engage with these spaces through site visits and participation, and producing multimodal projects, we’ll be focused primarily on learning to write a social science article: you’ll learn to create research questions, write literature reviews, describe your methods, conduct analysis, and draw meaningful conclusions from that analysis. By experiencing and examining public memory, students gain important knowledge and skills applicable to public communication and civic engagement, thereby helping them develop as engaged citizens. Note: Students enroll in this section by invitation only.

Option 2: “You pick 2” mini course options for First-Year Writing Requirement

Guide to Understanding the Skills in Each Mini Course (76-106, 76-107, & 76-108)

Each of the “you pick 2” First-Year Writing course experiences have been designed to introduce students to particular organizational structures, writing situations, and sets of rhetorical skills. You can see a brief overview below. Scroll down for the particular descriptions of these courses, as well as their schedules and faculty.

	Genre or type of writing & purpose	Organizational structure	Rhetorical skills
76-106: Writing About Literature, Art & Culture	Academic writing, interpretive, humanistic	Thesis-driven with Topic Sentences, Claim/Reason/Evidence Explanation	Applying a theoretical lens
76-107: Writing About Data	Data-driven, academic writing	IMRD & visualizing data	Synthesizing data from sources
76-108: Writing About Public Problems	Writing for professional or public purposes	Problem/Solution/Feasibility & formatting for busy readers	Perspective taking (for audience and for stakeholders)

General Descriptions of 76-106: Writing About Literature, Art and Culture (4.5 Units)

76-106 courses focus upon teaching skills for making arguments from literary and artistic texts and extending those interpretive and communicative skills beyond the first-year writing classroom. The skills you'll encounter in these courses are highlighted below.

- **Genre or type of writing & purpose** Interpretive, humanistic academic writing
- **Organizational structure** Thesis-driven with topic sentences, hierarchical argument (Claim, Reason, Evidence, Explanation)
- **Rhetorical skills** Applying close reading strategies, applying a theoretical lens

Writing about Literature and Culture

In 1967, Roland Barthes (a French literary critic) wrote an essay that claimed that the author is dead. If the author is dead, how do we proceed with reading, analyzing, and writing texts? If the author is dead, why should we? This 76101 course uses artistic, literary, and cultural texts (e.g., poetry, short story, lyrics, video clips) to introduce students to a variety of academic reading and writing practices that enable students to discuss texts and evidence from multiple perspectives. We will examine how literary and cultural scholars write about texts (defined broadly), how they make claims, provide reasoning, and use textual support to argue for particular ways of seeing cultural objects. Throughout the semester, students will draw upon prior strategies and develop new ones for close reading and for critical analysis in order to produce their own thesis-driven arguments about why texts matter. We will consider and write about the extent to which these reading strategies are relevant for other kinds of reading and analysis by comparing texts from a variety of different disciplinary contexts.

Writing about Art and Culture

The philosopher of art Maurice Merleau-Ponty wrote in his essay "Eye and Mind," "There is clearly no one master key of the visible." This course uses two- and three-dimensional art objects (painting, sculpture, and possibly architecture or photography) to introduce a variety of academic reading and writing practices that enable students to discuss artworks and visual evidence from multiple perspectives. First, we will examine how art historians describe visual art and practice this skill. The class will analyze how writers make claims about art, provide reasoning, and use visual support to argue for ways of seeing art objects in an academic context. We will then encounter a series of approaches to thesis-driven writing on art, focusing on the "lenses" of personal and period style, biography, and iconographic analysis. At this stage, you'll compare one of our academic texts to a piece of art writing for the public to reflect on how genre, purpose and audience shape a writer's rhetorical strategies. These reflections will help us to consider how such strategies vary based on context, and thus to reflect on how the work of this class carries beyond our classroom. Finally, having developed strategies for deep analysis and clear argumentation, you will apply a lens to produce your own academic argument about the significance of a chosen art object or set of objects.

Section	Day and Timeslot	Instructor Name	76-106 Course Type
A1 & A2	MWF 9:30-10:20	D. Wetzel & R. Rowley	Literature
B1 & B2	MWF 10:30-11:20	D. Wetzel & J. Quirk	Literature
C1 & C2	MWF 12:30-1:20	Rachel Kravetz	Art
D1 & D2	MWF 2:30-3:20	Steven Gotzler	Literature
E1 & E2	MWF 1:30-2:20	Rachel Kravetz	Art

General Descriptions of 76-107: Writing About Data (4.5 Units)

76107 courses focus upon teaching skills for reading data-driven texts and writing data-driven, academic writing. These courses apply to all majors, because we encounter arguments about both quantitative and qualitative data in our global society. The skills you'll encounter in this course are highlighted below.

- **Genre or type of writing & purpose** Data-driven, academic writing
- **Organizational structure** IMRD & data visualization structures
- **Rhetorical skills** Synthesizing data from sources

Writing about Data

Our lives are increasingly shaped by writing that involves numbers: newspapers routinely report the latest medical fads; politicians support their political agendas with both dubious and credible statistics; parents use data to decide where to buy a house and where to send their kids to school. This section will focus on interpreting and making arguments using mainly numerical data but also qualitative data. We will look at research in a range of disciplines—including psychology, education, medicine, engineering, and the sciences—and note how writers select and analyze the data they collect. We will also examine what happens to this research when it is picked up by the popular media. Students will also practice collecting and analyzing their own data and reporting it to suit the needs of various stakeholders. There are two primary audiences for this section. Students in data-driven majors will find the section useful preparation for communicating in their disciplines. Students in other fields will learn how to critique and respond to the many ways that numbers shape our lives. This section presumes a basic ability to calculate averages, percentages, and ratios, but no advanced mathematical or statistical preparation. Instead, this section provides a fascinating look at how numbers and words intersect to create persuasive arguments in academic, professional, and popular contexts. Students will compare and analyze texts that make arguments with data, practice rhetorical strategies for synthesizing and representing data so that by the end of the class, students will apply these strategies to write an original data-driven research proposal.

Section	Day and Timeslot	Instructor Name
A1 & A2	MWF 9:30-10:20	David Brown
B1 & B2	MWF 10:30-11:20	Joanna Wolfe & Calvin Pollak
C1 & C2	MWF 12:30-1:20	Robert Calton
D1 & D2	MWF 2:30-3:20	Rebecca Wigginton
E1 & E2	MWF 1:30-2:20	Robert Calton

General Descriptions of 76-108: Writing About Public Problems (4.5 Units)

76108 courses focus upon teaching skills for communicating a need for change in practice or policy, interacting with stakeholders with professional consideration, and for producing oral, written, and visual communication to make a nonacademic proposal for change. The skills you'll encounter in this course are highlighted below.

- **Genre or type of writing & purpose** Professional, nonacademic genres
- **Organizational structure** Problem/solution/feasibility and formatting for busy readers
- **Rhetorical skills** Perspective taking for audience and stakeholders

Writing about Public Problems

If all problems required a simple fix, we could don our Avenger costumes, pick up Thor's hammer, and right the world's wrongs. But most problems aren't so simple. Most of the problems we encounter require careful investigation and research so that we might propose solutions that connect with others to make change. In this 76101 class, we will learn how public problems are defined and argued across a range of texts, including proposals, op-ed genres, and white papers. By analyzing a range of proposal texts, we will identify the different kinds of legwork necessary to write a successful proposal, arguably one of the most challenging aspects of writing a persuasive recommendation for change. We will examine how writers unpack problems rhetorically and use evidence to argue solutions for different stakeholders who may not share common values. We will learn strategies for evaluating and synthesizing data from existing research to use in a proposal argument, and we will learn to communicate with individuals professionally over email and other kinds of communication channels in order to pursue relevant information. By the end of the course, students will write their own change proposal that recommends a solution and a feasible plan for solving a real problem.

Section	Day and Timeslot	Instructor Name
A1 & A2	MWF 9:30-10:20	Susan Tanner & Richard Branscomb
B1 & B2	MWF 10:30-11:20	Susan Tanner & Laura McCann
C1 & C2	MWF 12:30-1:20	Peter Mayshle
D1 & D2	MWF 2:30-3:20	Peter Mayshle
E1 & E2	MWF 1:30-2:20	Tim Dawson