

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

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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	Days and Timeslots
Peter Mayshle	<i>Sites of Innovation: Past, Present, and Future</i>	A AA	MWF 8:00-8:50AM MWF 9:00-9:50AM
Jamie Watson	<i>Selling Self-Care</i>	BB FF HH	MWF 10:00-10:50AM MWF 2:00-2:50PM MWF 4:00-4:50PM
Andrea Comiskey	<i>Engaging with TV & Movie Characters</i>	C	MWF 10:00-10:50AM
Julie Pal-Agrawal	<i>Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media</i>	CC F	MWF 11:00-11:50AM MWF 1:00-1:50PM
Chad Szalkowski-Ference	<i>AI and Art: Can Machines Tell Our Stories?</i>	B D G	MWF 9:00-9:50AM MWF 11:00-11:50AM MWF 2:00-2:50PM
Seth Strickland	<i>Hunger: The Politics and Philosophy of Pangs</i>	DD H	MWF 12:00-12:50PM MWF 3:00-3:50PM
Julie Kidder	<i>Critical Race Theory</i>	E	MWF 12:00-12:50PM
Suzanne Meyer	<i>A Modern Take on Unionization</i>	EE GG	MWF 1:00-1:50PM MWF 3:00-3:50PM
Nicole Tanquary	<i>Me Too</i>	I	MWF: 4:00-4:50PM
Rochel Gasson	<i>Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media</i>	J K	TR 9:30-10:50AM TR 8:00-9:20 AM

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Kat Myers	<i>Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media</i>	KK MM N	TR 2:00-3:20PM TR 12:30-1:50PM TR 3:30-4:50PM
Julia Salehzadeh	<i>Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict</i>	M LL	TR 3:30-4:50PM TR 9:30-10:50AM
Tina Cafasso	<i>Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media</i>	II L	TR 12:30-1:50PM TR 9:30-10:50AM
Barbara George	<i>The Environment: What Does it Mean to Address the Environment in the Rust Belt and Beyond?</i>	NN	TR 3:30-4:50PM

76-101 Section Course Descriptions

Sites of Innovation: Past, Present, and Future (*Mayshle: Sections A & AA*)

...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.

Selling Self-Care (*Watson: Section BB, FF, HH*)

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.](#))

Becoming and Unbecoming Ourselves on Social Media (*Pal-Agrawal: Sections CC & F; Cafasso: Sections II & L; Gasson: Sections J & K; Myers: Sections KK, MM & N*)

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."

AI and Art: Can Machines Tell Our Stories? (*Szalkowski-Ference: Sections B, D, G*)

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.

Hunger: The Politics and Philosophy of Pangs (*Strickland: Sections DD & H*)

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.

Critical Race Theory (*Kidder: Section E*)

Racism is foundational and embedded in all aspects of American law. So claims Critical Race Theory (CRT), a legal scholarly movement that began in the 1980s, which challenges both the substance and style of the conventional US legal system. CRT scholars aim to reveal how US law and legal institutions are implicated in histories of racialized differentiation, subordination, expropriation, and exploitation. This section of 76-101 asks: How do we understand racialization in American law, and why does that matter to us today? To address these questions, we will explore CRT's origins, evolution, future, and current anti-CRT backlash. We aim to understand the benefits and pitfalls of CRT's rejection of formal equality, individual rights, and color-blind approaches to addressing legal questions. No prior knowledge of the law is necessary or expected to enroll in this section!

Over the course of the semester, we will connect our understanding of CRT to ongoing questions of justice by examining legal questions on specific topics such as affirmative action, employment

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discrimination, voting rights, and mass incarceration. Students will engage with these topics through analysis and discussion of a variety of materials including but not limited to cases and statutes, academic essays, public-facing writing, podcasts, and videos. Students will be provided with a rich socio-historical legal framework to think and write critically about institutions and systems of power. Students will learn how to strategically analyze arguments, synthesize multiple perspectives for academic research, identify how audience and genre affect communication, and ultimately contribute to ongoing conversations about racialization in American law. To this end, students will explore a question related to CRT that concerns them most immediately by writing a formal research proposal and academic contribution essay.

A Modern Take on Unionization (*Meyer: Sections EE & GG*)

Organized labor has a long history in the industrialized US, but by the end of the 20th century, unionization was on the decline, the impact of unions on the workplace seemingly relegated to pages in a history book. However, within the past decade, union membership and the creation of new unions have been on the increase.

This section of 76-101 will examine the origins of American unionization in texts about the millworkers of Lowell, MA, the Pullman sleeping car boycott, and the steel workers strike in McKees Rock, PA, for example, to determine gains attributed to organized labor as well as the bases for resistance to unionization. Through this context, more recent movements for unionization will be explored to consider why some 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.

In conjunction with text analysis, you will compare texts on the labor movement for different audiences. Additionally, you will propose an area for research for the revitalized union movement, for example, exploring what has prompted the return to organized labor or how current efforts build on or differ from previous union efforts, contributing to your understanding of issues that you may face in the modern workforce.

Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict (*Salehzadeh: Sections M and LL*)

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

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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.

Me Too (Tanquary: Section I)

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 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 the Me Too movement in 2006, but were supplanted by white, affluent Hollywood actresses in the viral moment of #metoo? 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. This will allow us to consider Me Too's multifaceted impacts 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.

Engaging with TV & Movie Characters (Comiskey: Section 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.

The Environment: What Does it Mean to Address the Environment in the Rust Belt and Beyond? (*George: Section NN*)

Often, environmental issues are framed as catastrophic: this might be natural phenomenon that we can feel, see & experience ourselves (flooding, wildfires, rapidly warming temperatures, drought, agricultural concerns etc.), but there are threads of other discourses as well: environmental policy considerations (the intricacies of the Paris Climate agreement or the racial concerns of environmental justice), or the science related to a myriad of environmental concerns about emerging human technologies (the Anthropocene).

Other times, the environment is shared through various mediums as a place of peace, respite, and hope: once industrial towns like Pittsburgh are “greening” one neighborhood at a time, there is a rise in the sharing of environmental phenomena in an effort to protect it – from a sketchbook of a wildflower to a selfie in a National Park on social media.

The readings in this class help us to question our relationship with and understanding of the environment. How is our understanding of the environment mediated through various representations of environmental phenomena? From our own observations about nature, to historical environmental texts, to environmental social media and real time campaigns that create opportunities for public participation, and to formal academic environmental research. How do new technologies complicate our understanding of the environment and what does that mean about ethics surrounding nature? How various science claims complicate policy action surrounding different environmental controversies?

In this course, students will analyze a variety of texts to explore features of different written genres. Students will then synthesize and apply these texts in a research proposal that poses a question on a real-world environmental concern. The proposal then extends into a formal research paper, which students often connect to their future area of study, civic, community or workplace considerations.

76102 Course Description and Schedule

Advanced First-Year Writing courses are designed for students who have demonstrated an understanding of academic writing that most incoming freshmen have not. Because of the students' level of preparedness, the Writing & Communication Program provides intensive, advanced courses for students to work closely with senior faculty within the English department. Advanced courses assume that students have established strong reading and synthesizing skills, as well as a demonstrated interest in writing and communication, prior to entering Carnegie Mellon. The course topics shift each semester. Students enroll and are admitted through an application process that takes place before the Fall semester of each year.

76-102 B: MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM

Professor: Peter Mayshe

Your Heart in The Work, Your Self in The Writing

"Tell what is yours to tell. Let others tell what is theirs."

-Margaret Atwood, "Nine Beginnings" in Janet Sternberg, *The Writer on Her Work* (Norton, 1991)

Typically, when you are asked to write in your classes—say, for a writing assignment or a research paper—you are being asked to write about a specific topic you know very little about or even far removed from yourself and your own experiences. But what if the topic were *about you*? More specifically, what if the topic were about your place in whatever it is you are writing? In this small seminar-like advanced first-year writing course, we will discuss and interrogate our own subject positions as writers and researchers. We will write from what we know and don't know (yet) about ourselves. We will look closely at concepts of subjectivity, belonging, community, and difference, as we think critically on how these concepts infuse and complexify our (writing) lives. Therefore, some of the key questions we will ask include: How do I make logos from ethos, or, how do I write, make meaning, and perform research from my own positionality, my own subjectivity? What intersectionalities of difference do I adhere to (in terms of sex, gender, race, class, ethnicity, nationality, ability, etc.) and how do these inform my writing? How do I position myself in my own discipline? In short, *who am I as a writer and as a researcher?*

To help us engage with these questions, we will be reading and writing widely across various genres, including ethnography, narrative inquiry, personal essays, literacy narratives, autobiography, and autofiction. We will encounter writers such as Victor Villanueva, Richard Rodriguez, Ruth Behar, Amy Tan, Kirin Narayan, Tommy Orange, Anton Chekhov, Karl Ove Knausgaard, among others. For a first project, you will be writing a short memoir or autobiography. For a second project, you will be writing an ethnography about a community you belong to. In the end, you will create a multimodal final project that engages with your own research interests, with the express intent of helping you articulate your developing professional and/or academic identity. Throughout, you will be engaging

with the key questions of the course as you begin embodying truly and fully what Andrew Carnegie meant when he famously said, “My heart is in the work.”