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 can 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	***The Rhetoric of Space: Places of Learning, Difference, and Public Memory***	A B	MWF 8:00-8:50AM MWF 9:00-9:50AM
Rebecca Wigginton	***Politics and Ideology in the Marvel Cinematic Universe***	AA	MWF 9:00-9:50AM
Courtney Novosat	***Museums, Monuments, Fairs & Nation: The Politics of Cultural Memory***	BB	MWF 10:00-10:50AM
Alan Kohler	***AI and Writing***	C	MWF 10:00-10:50AM
Janine Carlock	***Being Human in the Digital Age***	DD FF	MWF 12:00-12:50 MWF 2:00-2:50
Chad Szalkowki-Ference	***AI and Art: Can Machines Tell Our Stories?***	D E EE	MWF 11:00-11:50AM MWF 12:00-12:50 PM MWF 1:00-1:50PM
Rochel Gasson	***Digital Selves and Social Systems: Inquiry through Research and Writing***	F NN O	MWF 1-1:50PM MWF 9-9:50AM MWF 11-11:30AM
Andrea Comiskey	***Film & Media Style***	GG I	MWF 3:00-3:50PM MWF 4:00-4:00PM

Tony Luchini	***Becoming and Un-Becoming Ourselves on Social Media***	CC OO P	MWF 11:00-11:50AM MWF 8:00-8:50AM MWF 9:00-9:50AM
Kat Myers	***Social Media & Identity***	H G	MWF 3:00-3:50PM MWF 2:00-2:30PM
Seth Strickland	***Food and Hunger: Navigating Rhetoric of Scarcity***	HH	MWF 4:00-4:50PM
Rachael Mulvihill	***The Price of Creativity: Fashion, Capitalism, and Cultural Value***	PP	MWF 4:00-4:50PM
Robyn Rowley	***(Dis)Ability and American Identity***	II KK	TR 12:30-1:50PM TR 2:00-3:20PM
Catherine Evans	***Trash(y): Waste and American Culture***	J	TR 9:30-10:50AM
Stephen Sudia	***Politics and Punchlines: The Rhetoric of Humor***	JJ	TR 9:30-10:50AM
Julie Pal-Agrawal	***Becoming and Un-Becoming Ourselves on Social Media***	K LL	TR 8:00-9:20AM TR 9:30-10:50AM
Paul Michiels	***TBD***	L	TR 9:30-10:50AM
Nicole Tanquary	***Reckoning with Me Too***	M	TR 3:30-4:50
Julia Salehzadeh	***Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict***	MM	TR 12:30-1:50PM
Elizabeth Dieterich	***At Home***	N	TR 3:30-4:50PM

76-101 Section Course Descriptions

The Rhetoric of Space: Places of Learning, Difference, and Public Memory (Mayshle: sections A & B)

Places "speak" because places hold meaning. How places embody and convey their meanings is the subject of this course. Building on theoretical work in rhetoric studies and postmodern geography, we will consider how ideas about space and place inform literacy, difference, and public memory. How do the spaces and places where we learn inform and shape how we learn? What are the relationships between space/place and gender, race, social class, sexuality, and other categories of social identification or social experience? How does the way we experience built environments, particularly ones fraught with memory, inform the meaning-making practices that occur at these sites? We will investigate a variety of spaces/places, including classrooms, our neighborhoods, walking tours, museums, memorials, and even cyberspace. In short, this course will explore the question: how is space and place rhetorical? 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.

Politics and Ideology in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (Wigginton: Section AA)

Since the success of Iron Man in 2008, the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) has expanded to include over 30 films, including several of the highest grossing films of all time. This extensive commercial success has spawned media discussion of the artistic and generic merits of the films, but also varied and rich scholarly and popular debate on the films' relationships to ideological issues as democracy, surveillance, heroism and authoritarianism, and representations of race and gender.

Building on critical work in rhetoric, pop culture studies, and political science, in this course we will examine the role of the superhero film in contemporary society. Why are Marvel films so popular and what does this popularity say about our 21st century world? What is the relationship between pop culture and cultural values and ideals, especially those that are politically or intellectually-driven? Students are not required to have any prior knowledge or experience in this area, although the course assignments will include some film watching outside of class in order to highlight and deepen topics from the readings.

As we read both academic and popular press articles addressing these issues in and around the MCU, students will develop skills in the fundamental practices of critical reading and academic writing and apply them to complete assignments in which they will analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems; write an academic research proposal based upon those syntheses; and finally contribute their own research-based arguments to the debates on what place the MCU holds in the current cultural imagination.

Museums, Monuments, Fairs & Nation: The Politics of Cultural Memory (Novosat: Section BB)

Many of us are likely to have first encountered a museum or monument as a child— a strange, musty building full of attic curiosities or an oddly imposing metalwork tarnished blue or orange by time. And our knowledge of a "world's fair" may be limited to our imagination. Yet, each year museums, monuments, and collections of artifacts preserved from the prime of international fairs are frequented by millions of people. In fact, in the U.S. alone, the American Alliance of Museums found that in 2023, "28% of U.S. adults reported having been to a museum in the past year," a remarkable recovery from Covid-era closures confirming museums' persistent popularity. But why? Why do museums and monuments retain their popularity—and how has their purpose and approach, meaning and reception changed over time? What artifacts and histories has our culture elected to preserve and commemorate? To overlook? And how do these contrived curations privilege some voices at the expense of others? While some of our class examples and excursions will localize Pittsburgh (and the U.S. by extension), students will be encouraged to engage with and write about any museum, monument, or digital museum or fair of interest or significance to them.

Our shared podcasts and readings will draw from cultural theory (Michel Foucault, Donna Haraway), history (Julie Decker, Robert Rydell), museology (Sharon MacDonald, Tony Bennett), anthropology (Lee D. Baker), critical memory studies (Brett Ashley Kaplan), and curators' scholarship in the public humanities (Faith Davis Ruffins, Nadiya A. Swaby), readings that invite us all to revisit that curious space of our childhood with an equally-curious and critical adult sensibility. In this course, students will learn to write a comparative genre analysis, research proposal, and annotated bibliography *en route* to developing an original paper, either thesis-driven or IMRaD, that uniquely contributes to a question on cultural memory. Further, students will develop an assertion-evidence presentation of that written work for an end-of-term class symposium on the politics of cultural memory.

AI and Writing (Kohler: Section C)

This section of 76-101 is a pilot course that explores the question "can AI tools support the writing (and 'learning to write') process without replacing student learning?" In this course, students can expect to analyze use cases, read and conduct research, and engage in discussions of the use of AI across diverse communicative contexts while themselves experimenting and engaging with a range of tools, concepts and approaches to writing and learning with AI. Throughout the semester students will gain experience with library research and case study analysis, rhetorical reasoning, audience-centered writing, and argumentation while writing in a variety of genres that may include reports, annotated bibliographies, proposals, and oral presentations alongside shorter, low-stakes assignments like discussion posts, reflections, learning logs, quizzes and more. As a pilot course with an exploratory and experimental design, this course is a good fit for students that are highly self-directed, motivated, flexible, and curious about emerging trends and best practices at the intersection of AI, education, and responsible, effective communication. *Note: this version of 76101 is experimental. If you are not interested in experimenting and learning deeply about the relationship between writing and AI, do not enroll in this section.*

Being Human in the Digital Age (Carlock: Sections DD & FF)

"Technology doesn't just do things for us. It does things to us, changing not just what we do but who we are." *— Turkle, "The Documented Life," New York Times, Dec.15, 2013*

In a world increasingly shaped by digital technologies, how do we inquire and write about the self, society, and systems of power? This course invites students to critically examine the intersections of identity, technology, and human systems through critical research writing. Drawing on conversations from diverse discourse communities—including those surrounding the integration of digital technologies in our daily lives —we will explore key concepts such as data colonialism, algorithmic bias, surveillance capitalism, and the ethical dimensions of digital identity and selfhood (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Murgia, 2024). Taking an interdisciplinary and inquiry-driven approach, we will read works from historic and contemporary thinkers like Sherry Turkle, Kurzweil (2004), Hogan (2010), Acemoglu, and Harari (2024) to investigate how dominant narratives are constructed and maintained, and how to effectively challenge them to gain new insights into the self and technology.

Emphasizing writing as both a process and a method of critical engagement, this course provides space for you to develop clarity, purpose, and voice in an active academic discourse. Shaping understanding of the world and ourselves, we will bring our own experiences and interests into conversation with course materials to synthesize complex ideas and craft compelling arguments. The research and writing skills gained in this course will equip you for writing an academic research proposal and an article that stems from that proposal. Your engagement with professional academic communication genres will enable you to move into your field(s) of study to question prevailing narratives and create new lines of inquiry to articulate your role as thoughtful, critical participants in a networked society.

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

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.

Digital Selves and Social Systems: Inquiry through Research and Writing (Gasson: Sections F, NN, O)

In a world increasingly shaped by digital technologies, how do we write about the self, society, and systems of power? This course invites students to critically examine the intersections of identity, technology, and social justice through critical research writing. Drawing on conversations from diverse discourse communities—including those surrounding artificial intelligence (AI), generative AI (GAI), and explainable AI (XAI)—we will explore key concepts such as data colonialism, algorithmic bias, surveillance capitalism, and the ethical dimensions of digital identity and selfhood (Couldry & Mejias, 2019; Murgia, 2024). Taking an interdisciplinary and inquiry-driven approach, we will read works from historic and contemporary thinkers like Turkle (1995), Kurzweil (2004), Hogan (2010), and Harari (2024) to investigate how dominant narratives are constructed and maintained, and how to effectively challenge them to gain new insights into the self and technology.

Emphasizing writing as both a process and a method of critical engagement, this course provides space for you to develop clarity, purpose, and voice in an active academic discourse. Shaping understanding of the world and ourselves, we will bring our own experiences and interests into conversation with course materials to synthesize complex ideas and craft compelling arguments on the impacts of digital systems on identity. We will write a range of core academic research genres, including a thesis-driven analysis, a research proposal, and a research article that stems from that proposal. The research and writing skills gained in this course will equip you to move into your field(s) of study to question prevailing narratives and create new lines of inquiry to articulate your role as thoughtful, critical participants in a networked society.

Film & Media Style (Comiskey: Sections GG & I)

What gives *Dune* a different look and feel from *Furiosa*? What distinguishes a YouTube explainer from a TikTok reel? One key component is *style*—how these works use the tools of their mediums to create unique audiovisual experiences. The fundamentals of style in modern moving-image media are camerawork, staging, editing, and sound, and these elements can be explored using a wide range of disciplinary perspectives (e.g. art-historical, psychological, philosophical) and methods (qualitative and quantitative). Drawing on this range of approaches, this class will address questions like: how and why does style change over time and across cultures? How and why do we judge a style as "good" or "bad"? To what extent does style interact with meaning and shape interpretation—or, is there a politics of style? In the process, we'll find that style—which is all too often dismissed as insubstantial—is in fact essential to appreciating the media we consume. This is a writing course, and no previous training in film or media studies is necessary. Because we need some shared examples to which we can apply key concepts, 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 project proposal that identifies a researchable problem or question in the field. Then, they'll develop their own contributions to the intellectual conversation on audiovisual style.

Social Media & Identity (Myers: Section H)

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, social media hosts theatrical spaces where users can try out new identities and invest in their 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 multiple roles, people use social media to craft flat, safe, and unidimensional self-images.

This class seeks to understand the vexed relationship between using social media 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 use of social media create and shape genuinely new selves, and to what extent are these selfhoods products of the communities we engage in?”; “How does the technology we use shape our behavior?”; “How are our social media presences wishful imaginings while also contributing to major shifts in culture?”

Our class objectives include synthesizing and evaluating various 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, Ted Talks etc., to craft nuanced arguments on the degree to which trying to create and maintain an identity on social media can influence our behaviors, communities, and realities.

Food and Hunger: Navigating Rhetoric of Scarcity (Strickland: Section HH)

Is hunger a feeling or a physical state? Is it some third thing in complex combination? How does hunger reveal inequality or serve to trace lines of care and power in human society? How do desires and appetite relate to physical hunger? Is hunger a state of being or a lack of food? We’ll discuss how hunger and food play 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,’ that is, producers, and ‘wasters,’ consumers. In recent years, hunger and complex relationships with food appear in Tommy Pico’s poetry, Roxanne Gay’s memoirs, and countless films like Spirited Away and The Menu. The problem isn’t distant or hypothetical, either: Pittsburgh has the highest levels of food insecurity among similarly sized cities. Nearly 13% of Pittsburgh residents (and 19% of children) live in food insecurity, which is on par with national rates in the US. In this, one of the most stupendously wealthy countries in the world, why are people still going hungry? In this course, students will begin to answer these questions through a variety of individual and collaborative research projects.

Students will analyze texts for their arguments, synthesize their ideas, and hone the academic 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.

(Dis)Ability and American Identity (Rowley: Sections II & KK)

At the 2020 Superbowl, deaf woman of color and artist Christine Sun Kim was invited to perform the national anthem and America the Beautiful in American Sign Language alongside singers Demi Lovato and Yolanda Adams. But while her performance was broadcast on the jumbotron in the stadium, it was not part of the live stream of the game, instead cutting to views of the players, and Kim only appeared on television for a few seconds. In the *New York Times,* Kim opined, "Why have a sign language performance that is not accessible to anyone who would like to see it?" The failure of representation captured in this moment is reflective of how we understand and make space for difference and disability: attempts at inclusion and recognition, while well-intentioned, often reveal the lack of understanding and awareness of the experience of the very people they seek to include and speak for. Such misunderstandings are the result of the longer story of American identity, social power, and the co-construction of difference and normalcy, which we will investigate during this course.

As we work to historicize the history of disability in America, we will elaborate, understand, and define concepts of disability and the ways in which they inflect our understanding of American identity. Students will work to build a critical vocabulary of terms and concepts that inform and shape legal texts and public policies, cultural practices, and notions of the citizen. We will use this vocabulary to help us interrogate debates surrounding disability in the domains of education, medical arts, architecture and design, cultural production and more. We will read diverse texts like literature, op-eds, academic writings, supreme court cases and public policies and more to help students analyze arguments and identify features and variations of genre. They will learn to synthesize perspectives, write an academic proposal, and contribute to the conversation with a research project in the form of a contribution paper on the broad topic of (dis)ability and American identity.

Trash(y): Waste and American Culture (Evans: Section J)

TBD

Politics and Punchlines: The Rhetoric of Humor (Sudia: Section JJ)

When Henry Kissinger was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1973, comedian and songwriter Tom Lehrer responded by stating that the award marked the point when "political satire became obsolete." Similar assertions have been made by writers, comedians, and satirists in the intervening decades, leading some to claim that the current state of global politics is beyond parody. Those assertions raise key questions about the role of humor in modern society. How effective are satire and parody as tools for cultural and political criticism? How have rhetors used humor as a means of persuasion in times when social conditions themselves seem to have become absurd? How do we explain what makes audiences laugh and how can we use that understanding to inform our approaches to communication and cultural critique?

Students in this course will address these questions through the lenses of genre, narrative, and rhetorical analysis. The course will introduce foundational theories of rhetoric and humor alongside contemporary studies of comedy and political rhetoric. Over the course of the semester, students will learn to strategically analyze primary source materials across various genres and synthesize multiple viewpoints and perspectives to participate in the scholarly conversation about the way humor is used as a communication strategy. Students will write a formal research proposal that articulates a research gap, argues for its significance, and then develops a plan to address that gap. The final project, developed from the proposal, will be an academic paper that encourages students to use the knowledge they are developing to make a unique research contribution. In addition to exploring the rhetorical differences across various comedic genres and situations, students will compare genres of formal and informal academic writing to develop the key skills necessary to analyze and produce sound scholarly articles.

Becoming and Un-Becoming Ourselves on Social Media (Pal-Agrawal: Sections K & LL; Luchini: Sections CC, OO, & P)

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. Conversely, others have claimed that our opportunities to explore our identities on social media are narrowing as we are increasingly subjected to more forms of power, regulation, and control. 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.

To investigate this potential contradiction, we will study the works of various scholars. Annette Markham and Hugo Liu have described social media as a theatrical space where users can try out new identities and invest in their self-making. Henry Jenkins and Abigail De Kosnik have discussed how participation in online communities has led to both individual empowerment and meaningful moments of societal change. In sharp relief, others have argued that our identities are becoming products of various coercive and disciplinary online processes. Eli Pariser argues that predictive engines work first to create theories of who we are and then control the information we see, thereby hindering opportunities for self-exploration and growth. Lisa Nakamura has found that online games and chat rooms often force players to embody negative stereotypes of women and minorities.

These and related topics will serve as the focus for this 76-101 course. We will study a variety of genres, such as opinion pieces, academic articles and influencer interviews to craft nuanced arguments on the degrees to which trying to become someone on social media can lead to self-assimilation and eventual “unbecoming.” Our class objectives include synthesizing and evaluating various perspectives, organizing persuasive and well-structured arguments, and communicating these ideas in clear and compelling prose.

Reckoning with Me Too (Tanquary: Section M)

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. After that, "Me Too" became shorthand for an internationally-recognized public awareness surrounding acts of sexual violence. Nearly seven

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 as a case study in the activist world 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 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.

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

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 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.

At Home (Dieterich: Section NN)

Most of what we learn about history and culture is about events that occur on a grand scale, such as wars, conquests, elections—sweeping events featuring larger-than-life players we'll never meet. But the truth is that the majority of human history has actually happened "offscreen," as it were, in the houses and private lives of everyday people. Stepping back from the grand arc of history, our 76-101 class will focus on the private, domestic spaces of the past and present, engaging with texts and media that examine concepts of domesticity and the physical space of the home. We will reflect on how the notion of "home" can signify safety and security for some, yet "home" is a dangerous place for others, representing forced labor, insecurity, or lack. Together, we'll ask questions like: How does architecture inform our ideas of what happens in the home? To whom does the home belong? Who is responsible for establishing and maintaining the home? Why do people across the U.S. (in cities like Pittsburgh) and other wealthy nations struggle to find shelter and a place to call 'home'? How has recent technology, such as Smart Homes, Zoom, and social media, enhanced, warped, or shattered our concept of what "home" should be?

To dig into these questions and more, we will read a wide array of texts, including historical accounts, academic writing, and op-eds that will interrogate, complicate, or disrupt concepts of dwelling and domesticity. We will also watch documentaries, consider diverse media depictions of "home," and visit CMU's University Archives and Architecture Archives. Over the course of the semester, students will learn to identify features and variations of genre, synthesize perspectives, and make and respond to arguments in formal and informal writing. Students will complete regular, low-stakes journaling and in-class writing as well as dive into topical research online, in the field, and through libraries. Students will write a formal Comparative Genre Analysis and then propose, research, and write a Contribution Paper that posits their original ideas and research within the scholarly conversation on the topic of "Home."

The Price of Creativity: Fashion, Capitalism, and Cultural Value (Mulvihill: Section: PP)

From red carpet spectacles to viral TikTok trends, fashion operates at the intersection of art, identity, and commerce. But what happens when self-expression becomes a marketable asset? This course invites students to critically engage with fashion as a site of cultural production, creative experimentation, and economic exchange. Students will explore how fashion both shapes and is shaped by capitalism, and what it means to create, wear, or value fashion in a world where creativity is often commodified. How do the things we wear reflect or push back against the stories society tells us? Can creativity be a way to challenge or work within the systems that shape fashion? Rather than focusing on fashion history or style tips, this course uses fashion as a platform for creating problem spaces around themes such as consumer ethics, cultural appropriation, digital trends, and the role of AI in creative labor. Course materials will be organized around fashion debates including how runway shows and advertisements shape marketing strategies; how thrifted clothing and streetwear raise questions of authenticity, sustainability, and class; and how curated exhibits frame fashion as art and cultural history. Additionally, films like *The Hunger Games* and *Mad Max: Fury Road* will be used as cultural examples of fashion's impact on identity and class, and designers studied will include Beate Karlsson, Kota Okuda, Vivienne Westwood, Kerby Jean-Raymond, and more.

This is an academic writing course grounded in research, interpretation, and argument. Students will engage with a range of course texts including peer-reviewed academic articles, writings by fashion designers and critics, magazines, and interviews to explore how fashion operates as a form of cultural communication. While the course raises critical questions, it neither requires students to take a single ideological position nor resists the notion that academic inquiry requires neutrality. Instead, it offers a space to reflect on fashion's role in everyday life and to explore how arguments – visual, verbal, and written – shape the world around us.

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: Danielle Wetzel

Writing the Good Life: How are you? I'm good. It's all good.

What is a good life? Is a good life synonymous with happiness? Is there a method for achieving a good life? And how do we define "good" in such a question? Is it cultural, personal, ethical, performative? Various academic disciplines and traditions focus on this question–and the practical implications, for us, are clear. Immanuel Kant said that there is inevitable tension between virtue and happiness, hence the need for a philosophy of a good life and its relationship to values. Philosophers like Meghan Sullivan would have us explore a reflective method for thinking through "big questions" so that we arrive at "loving attention and making meaning" to find our truth. Psychiatry professor Robert Waldinger and psychology professor Marc Schulz, based upon their longitudinal study of happiness, would tell us that the very simple answer to "a more meaningful and satisfying life" is relationships. Professor Laurie Santos draws us to strategies from theories of mind and the science of well being. What happens when we embed technology and progress into a narrative of the good life? Or Faith? Justice? Sexuality? Intergenerational perspective? The discussion can bring us encouragement and sometimes, perhaps, sheer exhaustion.

This advanced academic research writing course uses questions about the good life to introduce students to communication methods to know the self and our campus community and to facilitate meaningful engagement with our community. In pursuit of the question "What is my good life?", students will encounter a variety of oral, written and visual communication tasks, ranging from reflective pieces, research interviews, a research synthesis, a multimodal proposal, a poster, and public presentations. S*tudents who do not wish to participate in a team writing project should not enroll in this section.*