In an obscure scientific journal published at the start of the 21st century, a pair of scientists asked a relatively simple yet extremely significant question: “Has humanity entered the Anthropocene?” Posed by Nobel Prize winning climatologist Paul J. Crutzen and biologist Eugene Stoermer, this question asks whether the human species has created an age where our impact on the planet is so significant that we can declare a new geological epoch called the Anthropocene, or “The Age of Humans”. This question has sparked a debate that continues to be contested to this day, even more so as our knowledge of the possible effects of climate change improves. What does it mean to declare ourselves within the Anthropocene? And how might this lead us to reevaluate the choices we have made as a species? How does the possibility of technological advancement inform our responses to the threat of climate change? And how do we reconcile our ideas of growth with the possibility of a more challenging future?

To examine these questions, we will read a variety of texts that address the problems of a changing environment from political, economic, and cultural perspectives. We will move from arguments on the policies and beliefs which led to our present situation to current calls for action, including those which embrace technical solutions (such as Thomas Friedman in *Hot, Flat and Crowded* or in writings from The Breakthrough Institute) and those who see such an approach as only a partial answer to the problems humanity currently faces (such as Jason W. Moore’s critique of economic thought and Richard Slaughter’s call for a renewal in higher education). We conclude by considering how writers and artists have imagined possible Anthropocene futures, such as the “eternal engine” found in the film *Snowpiercer*. Over the course of the semester, we will analyze and synthesize
arguments written by experts so that we can make a unique contribution to the overarching question of how we can negotiate the at times conflicting priorities of people, progress, and the environment.

**76-241 Introduction to Gender Studies**

Section: S  
Instructor: Jamie Smith  
Meetings: MWF 9:00—11:20 a.m.  
Units: 9.0  
Prerequisite: none  
Open to: Undergraduates

This course will use fictional, nonfictional and theoretical texts as a means to explore variant representations of gender identities. It will familiarize students with fundamental movements in feminism, gender studies and queer theory while cultivating critical methodologies and frameworks for viewing those movements. As a class, we will consider how different historical moments have constructed gender in order to more fully understand how gender interacts with political and cultural ideologies of the present. Finally, this course will consider how gender has been critiqued as both the primary category of social identification and a primary category amongst others like race, class, sexuality and nationality.

As a class we will explore: How does gender influence the relationships between art, performance and spectatorship? In what ways has the rise of capitalism contributed to a narrative of gender categorization, and what is the role of the public and private spheres in the construction of gender identities? What are the connections between gender, politics, institutional change and human rights? How can language serve as a means of inquiry for critiquing representations of gender? Is globalization changing our conceptions of gender and in what ways can a sense of cosmopolitanism complicate feminist movements? In what ways can feminist and queer theories offer avenues of thought for future gender studies?

**76-265 Survey of Forms: Poetry**

Section: S  
Instructor: Lauren Shapiro  
Meetings: MWF 12:00—2:20 p.m.  
Units: 9.0  
Prerequisite: 76-101 or 76-102  
Open to: Undergraduates

This course is meant to serve as an introduction to the craft of poetry. We’ll look closely at traditional forms in an effort to understand the effects of more formal choices on the page, and we’ll examine the craft choices of modern and contemporary poets to expand our understanding of poetic approaches. Our analysis of poetry will begin at the level of the syllable and progress to words, lines, stanzas, and series. You will be required to read both published work and the work of your classmates with a critical eye, to write your own poems, both formal and not, to write several essays, and to demonstrate your knowledge on one in-class exam. The most important take-away from this class is the ability to talk knowledgeably and critically about poetry. What you learn here will pave the way for your future as both a writer and a reader.
Writing for the Professions

Section: S
Instructor: Margaret Goss
Meetings: MWF 9:00—11:20 a.m.
Units: 9.0
Prerequisite: 76-101 or 76-102
Open to: Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors

Writing in the Professions is a writing course specifically designed for juniors and seniors in all majors other than English. The course is appropriate for upper-level students in all CMU colleges, has no writing prerequisites, and assumes that you may not have had much college-level writing instruction past your freshman year. The basic idea of the course is to give you experience in developing the writing skills you will be expected to have as you make the transition from student to professional. The course will cover resume writing, proposal writing, writing instructions, the difference between writing for general and specific audiences, and analysis of visual aids in various texts. The course requires that students work both independently and in groups.

Writing Research for Graduate Students

Section: S
Instructor: Heidi Wright
Meetings: MWF 12:00—2:20 p.m.
Units: 9.0-12.0
Prerequisite: none
Open to: Graduate students

This course, open to all graduate students who consider themselves second language writers in English, prepares students to write about their research for academic audiences and to write for the professional workplace. Students who enroll in this course should be preparing to enter the scholarly discourse of their disciplines. As such, the course welcomes students from a variety of disciplines. In the course, students will encounter research-based instruction on various organizational patterns for clearly and effectively communicating. They will also analyze genres from their specific disciplines, as a way to develop explicit strategies for their own writing. Moreover, students will then employ those strategies within their own writing. In the course, students will write several drafts, receive feedback from their peers and from the instructor, as well as engage in discussions that enable them to position their writing in relation to other types of writing in their disciplines. Students who wish to enroll should check first with their advisor.

SUMMER 2 (July 2 – August 9; Exams August 10)

Interpretation & Argument

Section: U (CMU students); E (Pre-College)
Instructor: Craig Stamm
Meetings: MWF 9:00—11:20 a.m. OR MWF 3:00—5:20 p.m.
Units: 9.0
Prerequisite: none
Open to: First-year students

Section: V (CMU students); F (Pre-College)
Instructor: Ryan Mitchell
Meetings: MWF 3:00—5:20 p.m.
Units: 9.0
Prerequisite: none
Open to: First-year students
**Sections U/E Course Description:**
This course looks at video game culture and how it relates to other societal issues and controversies. Initially looking at the 2014 controversy called Gamergate, the course explores the representations of race, gender, and sexual identity in video games.

**Sections V/F Course Description:**
Beginning in 1905, when the United States Supreme Court ruled in Jacobson v Massachusetts that states had the authority to enforce mandatory vaccinations when “necessary for public health or safety,” we have witnessed increases in public health policies. These policies have generated controversies surrounding the ramifications of government-regulated health initiatives.

In our contemporary moment, the Affordable Care Act (i.e. Obamacare) has once again forced political, medical, and lay communities to examine the complex, intersecting biomedical, ethical, legal, and cultural issues at play when considering how governments can best protect the public’s health. For some, public health policies are a matter of social justice, representing a way to prevent millions of unnecessary deaths and build stronger, healthier communities. For others, these policies point to limitations on individual liberties and freedoms. Others still claim that in their attempts to be universal, public health policies often neglect the unique sociocultural conditions that influence a community’s health practices. This section of 76-101 examines the controversies surrounding public health by tracing possible moral, ethical, and sociopolitical implications of public health policies. Through critically examining popular and academic texts regarding government-lead health initiatives, students will learn and practice the analytical skills necessary to understand and responsibly contribute to this complex social issue.

By the time students complete this course, they will be able to analyze the rhetorical structure of multifaceted arguments; synthesize the major perspectives regarding the course topic; and, finally, contribute to the on-going academic conversation by researching and/or analyzing a public health policy of their choosing. Along with acquiring a robust understanding of the course content, students will end the semester with an inventory of strategies for constructing persuasive, authoritative, and reader-friendly prose.

**76-246 Introduction to Shakespeare**
Section: U (CMU students); E (Pre-College)
Instructor: Stephen Wittek
Meetings: MWF 12:00—2:20 p.m.
Units: 9.0
Prerequisite: 76-101 or 76-102
Open to: Section U: Undergraduates; Section E: Pre-College Program
This 200-level course will provide students with an introduction to the major works of William Shakespeare. As we read through the plays together, we will endeavor to understand what—and how—they meant in their original context, thereby developing a historically informed perspective on their influence over our own cultural landscape.