Option 2: Take A Full-Semester Course

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

During the Spring 2020 semester, two special “stretch” sections of 76-101 will be offered. These courses are open only to students who are enrolled in the 76-100 course during the current (Fall 2019) semester. The stretch sections of 76-101 are taught by instructors who are teaching 76-100 in Fall 2019 and who possess deep knowledge to help students make important connections across the two courses. These sections will enroll a maximum of 15 students each (rather than 19 for ordinary sections of 76-101).

Students will not be able to directly enroll themselves in the stretch sections during registration. If you would like to enroll in one of these two courses, please send an email to Mike Brokos, Assistant Director of First-Year Writing, at engfirst@andrew.cmu.edu or mbrokos@andrew.cmu.edu. In your email, please identify which of the two stretch sections you’d like to enroll in.

Please continue reading to learn about the specific course topics, schedules, and faculty information for each of the 76-101 courses being offered in Spring 2020.

Full-Semester Course Schedules and Descriptions

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*This version of the document was updated on 11/11/2019 and is subject to change.
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 Stretch Section Course Topics and Schedule*

The following “stretch section” 76-101 courses are very similar to ordinary sections of 76-101, except that they are open only to students who are currently taking 76-100, and they will enroll a maximum of 15 rather than 19 students. These courses will include the same major assignments and learning objectives as other sections of 76-101 (see previous page for more information). Students will be encouraged to reflect on and make connections to their experience in 76-100 as they develop and practice the new writing and communication knowledge required for 76-101.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor Name</th>
<th>Course Topic</th>
<th>Section Numbers</th>
<th>Days and Timeslots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heidi Wright</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>MWF 12:30-1:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keely Austin</td>
<td>Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>TR 9:00-10:20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
76-101 Stretch Section Full Course Descriptions

Section C (Wright)

TBD – Please check back soon for the Section C course description

Section K: Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict (Austin)

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.
# 76-101 Course Topics and Schedule

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calvin Pollak</td>
<td><em>Is Information Power? Transparency, Secrecy, and Democracy</em></td>
<td>AC</td>
<td>AC: MWF 10:30-11:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Haworth</td>
<td><em>The Public Intellectual in a Divided Society</em></td>
<td>AD, BB</td>
<td>AD: MWF 10:30-11:20 BB: MWF 11:30-12:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Hancock</td>
<td><em>Coffee Culture: The Brand and Brew of Caffeine Addiction</em></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B: MWF 11:30-12:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colby Gillette</td>
<td><em>Dreaming in the 21st Century</em></td>
<td>CC, D</td>
<td>CC: MWF 12:30-1:20 D: MWF 1:30-2:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Pal-Agrawal</td>
<td><em>Becoming and Un-Becoming Ourselves on Social Media</em></td>
<td>DD, E</td>
<td>DD: MWF 1:30-2:20 E: MWF 2:30-3:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily DeJeu</td>
<td><em>What is College For? Exploring the Purposes of Higher Education</em></td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H: TR 10:30-11:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitty Shropshire</td>
<td><em>CONSPIRACY! Power and Paranoia in American Culture</em></td>
<td>HH</td>
<td>HH: TR 1:30-2:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keely Austin</td>
<td><em>Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict</em></td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I: TR 1:30-2:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadd Adcox</td>
<td><em>Hoaxes, Fakes, and Con-Artists</em></td>
<td>II, JJ</td>
<td>II: TR 3:00-4:20 JJ: TR 4:30-5:50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

If Carnegie Mellon represents innovation, how does the university convey it? 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 students’ 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 Quad, 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.

Is Information Power? Transparency, Secrecy, and Democracy (Pollak)

According to journalist Glenn Greenwald, “a society in which people can be monitored at all times breeds conformity and obedience and submission.” Today, our data is being collected on an unprecedented scale by government institutions like the National Security Agency (NSA) and technology companies such as Google and Facebook. Is our society thus beginning to reflect Greenwald’s nightmare vision? Or is data surveillance relatively benign, even beneficial, as security officials and CEOs of tech companies often claim? If our national security benefits from surveillance policies, should we even consider their costs to individuals’ privacy? (Does our national security in fact benefit from surveillance?) If surveillance constrains whistle-blowers, journalists, and activists, how might our political debates suffer?

To answer these questions, we'll engage with academic, journalistic, and political texts written before and after the disclosures of classified NSA documents by former contractor Edward Snowden. We'll also examine more recent scandals surrounding Facebook's collection of user data and other social media exploitation by state actors such as Russia and Israel, along with private security firms. Engaging with these issues effectively requires understanding how material (economic) and symbolic (linguistic and rhetorical) power operate in social contexts; thus, students in this course will develop practices of critical academic reading, analysis, and writing. By the end of the semester, students will be able to break down and interpret arguments according to their material and symbolic characteristics, and craft rigorous, well-researched writing about the present-day circumstances of personal privacy and state power.
The Public Intellectual in a Divided Society (Haworth)

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.

Coffee Culture: The Brand and Brew of Caffeine Addiction (Hancock)

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 form our own arguments about the implications of our coffee preferences and the necessity of understanding the weight of our coffee choices.

Dreaming in the 21st Century (Gillette)

Around ten percent of our lives are spent dreaming, a state which is as likely to produce great scientific discoveries and artistic inspiration as the everyday bafflement we all feel upon waking and remembering a particularly strange dream. Since Freud’s pronouncement that dreams are “the royal road to the unconscious,” dreams have been a subject of renewed interest in Western culture; this abiding interest has led to dreams becoming an area of study within the fields of psychology, neuroscience and anthropology. In this course we will examine some of the
significant contributions to the field of dream research and deepen our understanding of how this research has impacted the human sciences and our broader culture. Throughout the course we will attempt to answer the basic question, What is Dreaming?, by studying some of the major theories of dreams, investigating some common quantitative approaches, such as content analysis, and by examining recent research on the neurological, biochemical basis of dreaming. The varying answers to this question will allow us to see how dream studies can present new perspectives on issues such as the nature of cognition, cultural reality, and the human experience. Assignments will include a comparative genre analysis, research proposal, and research paper.

**Becoming and Un-Becoming Ourselves on Social Media (Pal-Agrawal)**

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 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 a variety of scholars. Annette Markham and Hugo Liu have described social media as a theatrical space where users can try out new identities and therefore invest in their own self-making. Henry Jenkins and Abigail De Kosnik have discussed the ways that 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 a variety of coercive and disciplinary online processes. Eli Pariser argues that predictive engines work to first 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 into embodying existing negative stereotypes of women and minorities.

These and other related topics will serve as the focus for this 76-101 course. 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 on social media can lead to one’s self-assimilation and eventual “un-becoming.”

**Approaching Conflict: Ethical Engagement in a Globalized World (Ganoe)**

Prior to WWII, the world-renowned Japanese martial artist Morihei Ueshiba (1883 – 1969), grew to oppose militarism. He declined to participate in Japan’s war efforts, moving to a barn in the countryside rather than helping to train soldiers. While opting out of the war effort, he codified a new non-violent approach to martial arts.
Such acts of political and artistic resistance are the inspiration for this class. We will consider the work of scholars like Stephen Duncombe, Jocelyn Hollander, and James C. Scott, whose surveys of political and cultural resistance have focused on people’s creative responses to their politically situated, everyday lives. While these scholars agree on the importance of analyzing relationships between personal and political agency, they differ in methodological approach. The interdisciplinary engagement of history, anthropology, linguistics, performance studies, economics, and area studies enables rich scholarly debates regarding questions such as: In what spaces might resistance thrive? Have new technological developments ushered in an age of democratized access to information? If so, must political and economic systems necessarily follow suit? Under what circumstances are ideas of resistance used in support of nefarious purposes? How do the dynamic actors in historical and contemporary social movements clarify conceptions of justice, violence, and nonviolence?

Students will describe a contemporary cultural conflict from at least three perspectives, outline past attempts to address that conflict, analyze successes and challenges of past interventions, and contribute an original potential solution.

**Work & Society (Huber)**

This class, inspired by Carnegie Mellon’s motto, is about work. What is it? Why do we do so much of it when everything from the automatic dishwasher to the smart phone is supposedly designed to save us from working?

Some people want work and can’t get it, some have work but hate it, and some love their work but still struggle to make ends meet. Why is this unavoidable and evidently necessary aspect of our lives so fiercely contested—why are our hearts so “in the work”? How does our work shape who we are, what we want, and what we can imagine? What does it mean to be a worker, employed, productive? What does it mean to not be a worker in the conventional sense—to be unemployed, or unproductive, or just lazy? And what, finally, might happen to our understanding of what it means to be human if work as we know it was automated out of existence?

To address questions like these, students will first be introduced to classical theories of work which have influenced the modern world (Locke, Smith, Marx). To gain an understanding of how far “work” has moved beyond these classical conceptions, we will analyze texts on contemporary forms of work such as care and emotional labor (Fraser, Rivas), internships (D. Thompson, Dholakia), and student athletics (Kalman-Lamb), as well as the relationship of work to time (E. P. Thompson) and to money (Bell, Henry, and Wray). We will also look to sociological accounts of the worksites of global employers such as Starbucks (Simons) and get a glimpse into the history of struggles over work in Pittsburgh (Krause). Finally, students will examine some possible futures of work by discussing the political and economic challenges of technological unemployment and the possibilities of automation (Keynes, Kolbert, Srnicek and Williams).

By the end of the semester, students will build on these readings and on class discussions to develop an argument that makes an original contribution to conversations about work and its role
in society. Along the way, students will be invited to examine their own experiences at work and to reflect on their pasts, presents, and futures as workers.

**What is College For? Exploring the Purposes of Higher Education (DeJeu)**

In 2015, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker quietly attempted to change the University of Wisconsin’s mission statement, replacing the objectives “search for truth” and “improve the human condition” with “meet the state’s workforce needs”. The backlash was furious, and ultimately, the University’s mission statement remained intact. However, this incident raises a pressing question: what’s the purpose of education, anyway? Is it, as Plato argued, to turn one’s soul to the light? Is it, as John Dewey posited, to make one a better democratic citizen? Is education, as Paulo Freire and bell hooks contend, a practice of liberating the oppressed? Or is education really about vocational training?

In this section of 76-101, we will engage with a variety of philosophical perspectives on education. Students will focus in particular on one of three sub-issues: the problem of student debt and the promise of free and open education, the presence of activism and protest in higher education, and the role of the humanities in an increasingly vocationally-oriented college landscape. In the context of this course, students will propose an original research project that identifies and fills a gap in the existing academic conversation related to the purpose of education. Then, as a final project, students will author their own academic arguments that offer new perspectives on the purpose of a college education.

**CONSPIRACY! Power and Paranoia in American Culture (Shropshire)**

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 free thought? 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 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.
**Virtue or Violence: Choosing a Response to Conflict (Austin)**

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.

**Hoaxes, Fakes, and Con-Artists (Adcox)**

In 1835, the New York Sun reported that life had been discovered on the moon: men with bat wings, moon-bison, and a species of large, bipedal beaver. Sales of the Sun soared. In 1938, radio reports of a Martian invasion caused panic throughout the country—a (perhaps unintentional) hoax that helped establish Orson Welles as one of the greatest dramatists of the twentieth century. In 2009, people watched breathlessly as authorities tracked a homemade weather balloon, supposedly carrying a scared six-year-old boy (who later told reporters that his parents had staged the whole thing to get on TV). That same year, Bernie Madoff pled guilty to operating the largest pyramid scam in history. Though the hoaxer is by no means a character restricted to the United States, the US has always had a particular affinity (and, arguably, has been a particularly good breeding-ground) for what showman P.T. Barnum referred to as “humbug.” In this class we will explore hoaxers and con-artists as they have appeared in popular culture, literature, and real life, investigating how these characters, real and fictitious, exert such fascination over both victims and audiences. Why are we attracted to stories about con-artists? Why do we often find them more sympathetic, and even more heroic, than other sorts of criminal? And what does this attraction tell us about ourselves and the society around us?

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Over the course of the semester you will engage analytically with a variety of sources, including theoretical texts such as David Shields’s *Reality Hunger* and Kevin Young’s *Bunk*, longform journalism such as Maria Konnikova’s *The Confidence Game*, literary representations of con-artists, and hoax memoirs by James Frey and Margaret Seltzer. You will summarize and respond to arguments about the nature and meaning of hoaxes, and propose and develop an original research question which you will use to write your own, research-based essay contributing to the course’s conversation.