First-Year Writing Program
Fall 2014
Course Descriptions

General Description of 76-100, Reading and Writing in an Academic Context 9 units

76-100 is an academic reading and writing course for multilingual students, especially those who are not native speakers of English or who consider English to be their weaker language. The course, designed as a prerequisite for 76-101 and for college writing in general, emphasizes reading comprehension strategies for reading a variety of text types in English (e.g., journalism, textbook selections, popular press arguments, and academic journal articles). Throughout the semester, students use these sources to write summaries and short position papers that integrate sources with their own writing. The course introduces students to readers' expectations for North American rhetorical style at the sentence, paragraph, and whole text or genre levels. Within the course, we discuss explicit genre and linguistic norms for writing in academic English so that writers can connect with their readers, and we help students develop mastery over their literate processes for effective, advanced reading and writing in English. Students who take this course qualify through an online placement test that is administered through the university prior to the fall semester. (All sections are offered MWF.)

Each 76-100 course is structured by the reading and writing objectives of the course as well as a vocabulary for writing in English, but some courses present different themes (or content) in their readings. These themes and their related questions are posted below so that students can select a topic that interests them.

Section A
M. P. Gomez Laich
MWF 10:30-11:20
The Globalization of English

What does it mean to say that “everyone uses English”? What does it mean when some people say that English doesn’t really have a “home” anymore? In this 76-100 course, we will discuss how to understand English within a global context. The spread of English around the world has had an impact on local, national and regional identities. While on the one hand some native speakers may feel the English language is their "possession" and global communication shouldn't change it, the international use of the language has inevitably shaped new accents and varieties as a result of language spread, language contact and language conflict. In addition to these interactions, as local and minority languages are not always given the opportunity to keep up with global demands, language death and language revitalization are also at stake. Native and non-native speakers of the language may ask themselves: What is the current role of English in globalization? Why and how has English become more widely used than other languages? What are the social and cultural consequences of this ongoing process? Does globalization call for new international varieties of English? This course aims to discuss these questions by drawing on academic readings (book chapters, papers, reports) and also mass and popular media (news,
blogs, etc.). Students will have the opportunity to reflect on general aspects of the globalization of English and also to reflect on their own positions as users of the language in academic contexts.

Throughout the course, students will develop the required reading and writing skills to be able to understand academic texts and also produce their own. By focusing on several sub-genres of academic writing, students will become aware of the linguistic and rhetorical choices they need to make when planning a text and the effect these choices have on their readers. By the end of the semester, students will submit a portfolio with all their work throughout the semester. The portfolio will provide them with the opportunity to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their reading and writing skills, their typical linguistic choices, and their writing strategies.

Section B
J. Carlock
MWF 11:30-12:20
Why do we Work?

In addition to earning money, people work for a variety of reasons. A few examples of these reasons include satisfying family expectations, facilitating personal growth, or benefiting society. This section of 76-100 will investigate why we work. We will ask this question as a more general inquiry and also as a more particular one, focusing upon what it means for you, as a student, to work. We will examine this question by reading texts that look at varying motivations for work and the impact of work on a person’s identity. Over the course of the semester we will discuss and writing about the following questions: Why do we work? What does it mean to work? What do we include as work? How do we define work? What motivates us to work? How does our work define us? How does your work influence your identity?

While we engage with this set of questions, students will develop reading and writing skills that will help them to understand and produce texts that follow the conventions of American academic writing. Throughout the semester, students will summarize, compare and respond to individual texts before writing our own positions about a specific topic of their choice within the course theme. At the end of the course, students will submit a portfolio of their semester's work. Our main priority in the course is understanding how readers experience text and what effects our choices as authors have on readers.

Section C
G. Canale
MWF 11:30-12:20
The Globalization of English

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globalization? Why and how has English become more widely used than other languages? What are the social and cultural consequences of this ongoing process? Does globalization call for new international varieties of English? This course aims to discuss these questions by drawing on academic readings (book chapters, papers, reports) and also mass and popular media (news, blogs, etc.). Students will have the opportunity to reflect on general aspects of the globalization of English and also to reflect on their own positions as users of the language in academic contexts.

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Section D
A. Weber
MWF 11:30-12:20

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Section J
M. Glavan
MWF 11:30-12:20

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Section E
G. Stack
MWF 12:30-1:20
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Section F
A. Tsai
MWF 12:30-1:20
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**Section G**  
**J. Carlock**  
**MWF 1:30-2:20**  
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**Section H**  
**W. Penman**  
**MWF 2:30-3:20**  
**Why do we Work?**

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Section I
M. Glavan
MWF 3:30-4:20
*Why do we Work?*

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Section K
A. Gordon
TR 9:00-10:20
*Why do we Work?*

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**General Description of 76-101, Interpretation and Argument**  
9 units  
Gen Ed: Fulfills Category 1: Communicating requirement for H&SS and a designated writing course for other colleges.

Interpretation and Argument (76-101) is a course that serves as a foundation for many reading and writing tasks you’ll experience in college and in your life. The course serves as the First-Year Writing course requirement at Carnegie Mellon University, and it also translates into the First-Year Writing course requirements at many other universities. While we can’t guarantee that in 76-101 you’ll engage in exactly the same kind of reading and writing practices found within your discipline or professional context, we can guarantee that you can (and should!) adapt and use many of the rhetorical strategies and language patterns in other academic and professional communication contexts.

Our curriculum does not allow our students to write arguments in a vacuum that aren’t accountable to a socially networked group of scholars. We believe that kind of writing is irresponsible and does not allow readers to engage with new positions. The sequence of assignments in the course is based upon the moves that experts make when they are writing their original research—something that we call an Argument Contribution. For someone to contribute an argument, that person needs to first analyze individual arguments and then synthesize multiple arguments into clearly defined perspectives.

We hope that this course prepares you to think about what a reader needs from you in order to believe your written arguments, as well as how you need to effectively plan and strategize your own reading, research, and writing processes. We want you to build your expertise in analyzing the demands of new academic literacy and communication tasks, and we also want you to work actively toward adapting that expertise for communication tasks beyond this course toward your own discipline and profession.

Each section of 76-101 is structured by the same objectives and core assignments. There is a core vocabulary and set of heuristics that all sections teach. However, students may find particular issues more interesting or appealing than others—we do encourage students to pursue their interests, but we also ask that they engage any 76-101 course with intellectual curiosity. Due to the limits of our schedule, we are unable to meet each student’s individual preferences for course topics, but we do offer a wide variety from which to choose.
**Section A**  
**R. Goodmanson**  
MWF 8:30-9:20  
*Big Mac, Big Kale: Food Culture in America*

Food, necessary to our daily existence, carries as many cultural and rhetorical connotations as it does biological. Why does what we eat—fast food, local food, home-cooked food, meat-based or vegetarian or vegan food—mean so much to society, and become the subject of so much controversy? Why do food traditions endure, and why do fad diets appear? Does it matter to our bodies if we eat organic, local, big-box? How about to our country? More broadly, how do our decisions about what we eat matter, and to whom?

Throughout the semester, you will learn advanced practices for understanding, evaluating, and crafting scholarly writing by participating in a variety of in-class activities based on the course readings. These activities and the three core 76-101 writing assignments (argument analysis, synthesis, and contribution) will scaffold you toward becoming clearer academic writers and the creators of convincing arguments around our course issue.

**Section AA**  
**S. Tanner**  
MWF 8:30-9:20  
*What is privacy in the digital age?*

We live in an age of exposure. We voluntarily share intimate details about ourselves with the public via social media and yet feel violated when the government or big business tracks that information. In this course, we will examine privacy from the perspectives of law, public policy and science/technology. We will begin with a historical look at privacy laws and philosophies and then examine contemporary legal and popular notions of privacy from a public policy perspective. As we read, we will examine changing conceptions of privacy concerns and the ways in which technological developments enhance or infringe upon privacy rights. Our readings will enable us to respond to questions regarding how we should understand privacy in the contexts of national security, celebrity, the internet, and even our homes.

Over the course of the semester, students will learn to strategically analyze privacy arguments, synthesize multiple viewpoints and perspectives and participate in the scholarly conversation about privacy. The final project will be an academic paper that encourages students to use the knowledge they are developing within their specialized fields of study to contribute to the overall discussion from their unique disciplinary perspectives.

**Section B**  
**A. Aftab**  
MWF 8:30-9:20  
*By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media*

Media scholar Jay Rosen claims that the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies have given “the people formerly known as the audience” new opportunities to contribute to public discourse—as citizen journalists, bloggers, and social media users. Many debate the value and effect of this shift from a one-to-many to many-to-many model of media distribution and public communication. How does this shift affect news and public discourse? What’s valuable about the contributions of
“amateurs” as compared to those of “professionals”? What role does social media play in political change and democracy? These questions have significance not only for public policy, but also for how we as individuals negotiate our roles as consumers and producers of networked public discourse. Engaging with the issues and problems surrounding the rise of participatory media means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation.

Section BB
R. Roderick
MWF 9:30-10:20
Communicating Across Diversity: We Are What We Speak?

This course is driven by a hotly debated question: What does it mean to be “literate” in a society where languages, dialects, and cultures are diverse? If we realize it or not, we are constantly switching among different languages and/or dialects, when we decide the appropriate ways to text friends, family, or co-workers; when we participate in a dorm room conversation one minute and a classroom discussion the next; or when we encounter seemingly “strange” ways people talk/think/write “somewhere else.” Language diversity can even become controversial, like when so many people reacted with sharp criticism or bold support to a Coca-Cola commercial that represented “America the Beautiful” sung in seven different languages. Given these different ways of communicating, what does it mean to “speak (or write) properly,” to “follow the rules (whose rules?)” or make a language “error”? These issues are even more urgent now, given that there are an increasing number of problems, like global warming, that require people to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries as they work collaboratively in the private, public and government sectors.

This section of 76-101 explores the effects that language and cultural diversity has on how people understand themselves, work with each other, and move among diverse communities. We will explore this topic from a variety of perspectives that will challenge notions of “correctness” and complicate our understanding of what it means to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries. There are three major writing assignments that build on each other in a way that will enable you to weigh in on this issue from a robust academic perspective. You will move from analyzing one aspect of the argument, to then putting multiple authors in conversation with each other through a synthesis. Finally, you will enter the ‘conversation’ by developing your own informed and socially responsible position on the issue, forming an argument, and thereby making a contribution to the field.

Section C
S. Seibert
MWF 9:30-10:20
Art and Society: Imitation, Reflection, or Catalyst

Ernst Fischer argued art “must show the world as changeable and help to change it.” His claim raises the question, what is art? What should or can art make us do, think, and feel? Is art an appropriate and effective forum for social criticism? What is the social value of art? Does art have the power to shape individuals or change the world in which we live? In this section of 76-101, we will explore these questions related to the role of art in society by interrogating a range of text including critical essays, poetry, prose fiction, painting, photography, and film.
In this writing course, students will first produce an insightful, focused analysis of one author’s argument on the role of art. In the second assignment, students will synthesize and analyze several sources into one coherent and cohesive description of the debate concerning art’s place within our society. Finally, in the contribution essay, students contribute to the discourse with their own carefully crafted argument on the relationship between art and society.

Section CC
R. Goodmanson
MWF 9:30-10:20
Big Mac, Big Kale: Food Culture in America

Food, necessary to our daily existence, carries as many cultural and rhetorical connotations as it does biological. Why does what we eat—fast food, local food, home-cooked food, meat-based or vegetarian or vegan food—mean so much to society, and become the subject of so much controversy? Why do food traditions endure, and why do fad diets appear? Does it matter to our bodies if we eat organic, local, big-box? How about to our country? More broadly, how do our decisions about what we eat matter, and to whom?

Throughout the semester, you will learn advanced practices for understanding, evaluating, and crafting scholarly writing by participating in a variety of in-class activities based on the course readings. These activities and the three core 76-101 writing assignments (argument analysis, synthesis, and contribution) will scaffold you toward becoming clearer academic writers and the creators of convincing arguments around our course issue.

Section D
P. Williams
MWF 9:30-10:20
Drawing Lines around the Arts, Humanities, and Sciences

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

This class interrogates assumptions about types of knowledge and examines these assumptions in academic and creative circles, in the history of the arts/sciences divide in schools, and in the
popular imagination. By engaging in debates about the distinctions associated with these
disciplinary boundaries, we will explore our own assumptions about how productive the
arts/sciences distinction is. In some cases it may be, in others it may not. Over the course of the
semester, we will analyze and synthesize the arguments of a number of writers and experts in
order to formulate our own positions, concluding by making a unique contribution to a discourse
community within this disciplinary debate.

Section DD
C. Pollak
MWF 9:30-10:20
*By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media*

Media scholar Jay Rosen claims that the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies have given “the
people formerly known as the audience” new opportunities to contribute to public discourse – as
citizen journalists, bloggers, and social media users. Many debate the value and effect of this shift
from a one-to-many to many-to-many model of media distribution and public communication.
How does this shift affect news and public discourse? What’s valuable about the contributions of
“amateurs” as compared to those of “professionals”? What role does social media play in political
change and democracy? These questions have significance not only for public policy, but also for
how we as individuals negotiate our roles as consumers and producers of networked public
discourse. Engaging with the issues and problems surrounding the rise of participatory media
means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and
academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central
problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation.

Section E
J. Wilton
MWF 10:30-11:20
*From Independent to “Indie”: Assessing a (Sub?)-Cultural Phenomenon*

Calling movies, music, and other cultural products “independent” used to mean these products
were made by small, non-major studios or labels. But recently, as critic Michael Z. Newman
proclaims, “‘indie’ has become a buzzword, a term whose meanings—alternative, hip, edgy,
uncompromising—far exceed the literal designation of media products that are made
independently of major firms.” Indie groups like The Arcade Fire can now win Grammy Awards,
most Oscar nominated films have some Indie status, and PBR-toting, flannel and skinny-jean clad
hipsters have overrun every major city. Indie now seems less descriptive of a subculture than a
mainstream style choice. Has Indie culture run its course? If so, what did it once represent and
why has it become what it is today? What was, or is, its social, political, and commercial value?

These (and other) questions will serve as the focus for this 76-101 course. We will use academic
and popular criticism, film, music, and more to explore Indie culture. Students will write essays
that analyze the arguments and issues surrounding Indie culture, culminating an essay in which
they make a contribution to our contemporary knowledge of this cultural phenomenon.
Section EE
J. Bowman
MWF 10:30-11:20
Of Many Minds

In 1621, Richard Burton proposed that melancholy (as aspect of what we now call depression) was a result of an imbalance of the body’s four humors. In addition to physiological explanations, there were religious ones, such as demonic possession. Both explanations seem odd to us, but are at the root of contemporary thought about mental health and mental illness. Take anxiety disorders, for instance, one of the diagnostic categories recently revised in the American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th Edition (DSM –V) and the topic of the recent best seller *My Age of Anxiety* both published in 2013. Is anxiety a medical illness with identifiable physical or environmental causes, a philosophical problem, a psychological problem, a spiritual condition, a cultural condition? Is mental health a norm based on what is best for an individual or for society? How do we diagnose illness? There’s a lot at stake as how we identify and label “health” impacts the behavior of institutions, the growth or atrophy of particular economies and fields of study and research, and our attitudes toward particular diagnoses of ill health and those who bear them. In this section of 76-101, you will read arguments and write about how mental health, disease, and illness have been defined, identify the stakeholders invested in specific understandings of what is healthy, and explore the impact of these definitions on individuals and institutions. You will analyze and synthesize the conversation that this course presents through assigned readings and discussion and, finally, make your own contribution to the conversation in a final paper.

Section F
E. Mohn-Slate
MWF 10:30-11:20
Gender and Popular Culture

What does it mean to be a woman? A man? John Gray, author of the popular book *Men are from Mars, Women are From Venus*, claims men and women “think, feel, perceive, react, respond, love, need, and appreciate differently.” In what ways do gender narratives affect our lives and behaviors, and what assumptions underlie these narratives? How does popular culture shape the way we define our gender? And, how does gender intersect with sex, power, politics, culture, and our social worlds?

This section of 76-101 will consider debates about gender and its relationship with popular culture. Students will engage with academic and popular arguments via essays, literature, film, television, advertisements, music, and other media to interpret different perspectives in the ongoing conversation about gender. We will explore narratives about women, men, and transgender people via gender studies, masculinity studies, cultural studies, neuroscience, sociology, and psychology. Throughout the semester, students will analyze and synthesize arguments about gender and popular culture. Once students understand the landscape of these issues, they will be able to contribute their own convincing argument to the conversation.
Section FF
C. Wike
MWF 10:30-11:20
*The U. and You*

What should the 21st century American university look like? What roles will it serve in society and in the lives of future students? In this section of 76101, these questions will guide our inquiry as we examine the history of and developments in the post World War II university, as well as the implications these changes may have on the future of higher education. Over the course of the semester, we will read a number of scholarly and popular articles taking up arguments about the relationship between university research and industry, the role of technology in higher education, the ever increasing price of a college degree, and what effect the university should have on the lives of students. This course will give students the opportunity to produce an analysis of an academic argument about the university and synthesize multiple perspectives that attempt to address a specific issue brought up in the course readings. Students will ultimately develop, compose, and present their own arguments, making their own contributions to the ongoing debates surrounding the future of American higher education.

Section G
N. Pensky
MWF 10:30-11:20
*By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media*

Media scholar Jay Rosen claims that the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies have given “the people formerly known as the audience” new opportunities to contribute to public discourse – as citizen journalists, bloggers, and social media users. Many debate the value and effect of this shift from a one-to-many to many-to-many model of media distribution and public communication. How does this shift affect news and public discourse? What’s valuable about the contributions of “amateurs” as compared to those of “professionals”? What role does social media play in political change and democracy? These questions have significance not only for public policy, but also for how we as individuals negotiate our roles as consumers and producers of networked public discourse. Engaging with the issues and problems surrounding the rise of participatory media means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation.

Section GG
J. Harrell
MWF 11:30-12:20
*By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media*

Media scholar Jay Rosen claims that the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies have given “the people formerly known as the audience” new opportunities to contribute to public discourse – as citizen journalists, bloggers, and social media users. Many debate the value and effect of this shift from a one-to-many to many-to-many model of media distribution and public communication. How does this shift affect news and public discourse? What’s valuable about the contributions of “amateurs” as compared to those of “professionals”? What role does social media play in political change and democracy? These questions have significance not only for public policy, but also for how we as individuals negotiate our roles as consumers and producers of networked public
discourse. Engaging with the issues and problems surrounding the rise of participatory media means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation.

Section H
N. Suzelis
MWF 11:30-12:20
Resistence in Subcultures

Only three years after the Sex Pistols emerged as representatives of a new social movement known as “punk rock,” the British group Crass had already declared that “Punk [was] Dead” by comparing it to other pop culture trends emerging at the time. Yet, since this declaration, the label of “punk” has been used to refer to anything from underground musical styles, fashions, and even attitudes, to social groups and political movements.

This course will use punk as a lens to discuss the dynamic relationship between popular or “mainstream” culture and individual or “resistant” subcultures. For example, what makes something mainstream, and why or how would an “alternative” or “sub”-culture wish to resist the mainstream? For that matter, can subcultures effectively remain “resistant” once they are incorporated into mainstream or mass culture? Additionally, in what ways do subcultures respond to and represent race, gender, and class in opposition to the "social" dominance of the mainstream?

This course will draw from cultural theory to define concepts of mass or “dominant” culture and subcultures. We will explore the history, influence, and controversies of punk and other subcultures through text, figures, music, and film (for example: figures like Kathleen Hanna – a feminist icon of riot grrrl punk and Punk Attitude, a film that concentrates on the use of style in various “scenes” of the punk movement.). Using methods of critical reading and academic writing, students will engage responsibly with the controversial topic of cultural resistance and discuss how effective that resistance can be. Students will analyze arguments as part of an overall conversation of alternative or subcultural practices, synthesize perspectives on central issues within that topic, and finally contribute to the overall discussion, considering to what extent and why alternative or subcultures can or would wish to resist mainstream or mass culture.

Section HH
D. Dickson-LaPrade
MWF 11:30-12:20
Evil in America

Is religion the root of all evil? Or is the lack of religion? Should we blame mindless obedience to authority and tradition for the world’s evils? Or individualistic, hedonistic rejection of authority and tradition? Are conservative ideas and policies more likely to generate evil, or liberal ones?

In this section of 76-101, students will examine a variety of arguments regarding the nature and causes of evil in the United States, as well as how the world’s evils should be remedied. Students will analyze these arguments using a variety of conceptual tools, describe how these varying arguments work against and inform one another, and finally enter the argument themselves in a contribution assignment. In addition to learning what different authors have to say about the
nature, causes, and remedies for evil, students will also gain experience with the argumentative strategies which authors use to make opposing positions seem despicable, irrational, and dangerous, and to make their own seem desirable, reasonable, and practical

Section I
C. Wike
MWF 11:30-12:20
The U. and You

What should the 21st century American university look like? What roles will it serve in society and in the lives of future students? In this section of 76101, these questions will guide our inquiry as we examine the history of and developments in the post World War II university, as well as the implications these changes may have on the future of higher education. Over the course of the semester, we will read a number of scholarly and popular articles taking up arguments about the relationship between university research and industry, the role of technology in higher education, the ever increasing price of a college degree, and what effect the university should have on the lives of students. This course will give students the opportunity to produce an analysis of an academic argument about the university and synthesize multiple perspectives that attempt to address a specific issue brought up in the course readings. Students will ultimately develop, compose, and present their own arguments, making their own contributions to the ongoing debates surrounding the future of American higher education.

Section II
S. Gotzler
MWF 11:30-12:20
How Music Works

What would it mean to situate music in its cultural context? What should the role of music be in a capitalist society? In this section of 76-101, current methods and debates in the ‘new musicology’ will be explored as a way of understanding the social and cultural contexts within which music, as artistic representation, as work, and as a cultural commodity, can be interpreted and understood. Doing so will allow us to ask seriously: What is music good for? What should the role of music be in public education and cultural programming? And, how might our interaction with the music as listeners and consumers shape our view of ourselves, and of the world in profound and unexpected ways? Using David Byrne’s 2012 book How Music Works as a touchstone to guide our reflections on the meaning and uses of music in modern society, this course will examine various aspects of popular music over the last 50 years including concert spaces, musical scenes/genres, record labels, individual artists, and of course the music itself. In addition to these musical sources we will utilize academic texts, non-fiction articles, and films in our exploration of this topic.

In this course, students will be asked to analyze a single argument about music, synthesize multiple perspectives around a re-current issue from the course readings, and make their own research contribution to the study of music’s meaning and function in the contemporary world.
Section J
J. Reineke
MWF 11:30-12:20
*Fandom or Fan Dumb?*

This course explores fan culture and its influence on literary and cultural production, and we examine the arguments for and against fandom’s growing influence on creative works. Through looking at a variety of topics related to fandom, like fan fiction and subgenres like slash fan fiction, consumerism of media-related goods such as action figures and costumes, Live Action Role-Playing (aka LARPing), and even Comic-cons, we examine the effects of fandom and the blurry line separating fandom from fan dumb. In this section, students will analyze arguments regarding the interplay of fans and creators as well as issues regarding ownership and copyright laws. Students will synthesize one of the major debates that we cover in the class as a way to discuss arguments as texts in conversation with other authors’ work, and they will also contribute to these debates by researching their own unique topic related to fan culture.

Section JJ
M. Goss
MWF 11:30-12:20
*By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media*

Media scholar Jay Rosen claims that the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies have given “the people formerly known as the audience” new opportunities to contribute to public discourse – as citizen journalists, bloggers, and social media users. Many debate the value and effect of this shift from a one-to-many to many-to-many model of media distribution and public communication. How does this shift affect news and public discourse? What’s valuable about the contributions of “amateurs” as compared to those of “professionals”? What role does social media play in political change and democracy? These questions have significance not only for public policy, but also for how we as individuals negotiate our roles as consumers and producers of networked public discourse. Engaging with the issues and problems surrounding the rise of participatory media means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation.

Section K
M. Zebrowski
MWF 12:30-1:20
*Food for Thought*

In this section of 76-101, we will be focusing on the social and environmental impacts of food production and consumption. We will think about what it means to eat a particular way, as an individual and as a society, focusing our discussion on American food culture. We will also explore some of the unintended consequences of modern agribusiness and think about some important related issues like animal and food worker rights and fad diets.

We will consider these topics and more as we practice valuable skills necessary for successful academic argumentation and analysis of public rhetoric, and by the end of the semester, you will have researched and produced an argument of your own creation about food culture. Our goal in this course is to use our discussions about food to model academic discourse at large and hone the
skills necessary to analyze and synthesize arguments about any topic.

Section KK
J. Bowman
MWF 12:30-1:20
Of Many Minds

In 1621, Richard Burton proposed that melancholy (as aspect of what we now call depression) was a result of an imbalance of the body’s four humors. In addition to physiological explanations, there were religious ones, such as demonic possession. Both explanations seem odd to us, but are at the root of contemporary thought about mental health and mental illness. Take anxiety disorders, for instance, one of the diagnostic categories recently revised in the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th Edition (DSM –V) and the topic of the recent best seller My Age of Anxiety both published in 2013. Is anxiety a medical illness with identifiable physical or environmental causes, a philosophical problem, a psychological problem, a spiritual condition, a cultural condition? Is mental health a norm based on what is best for an individual or for society? How do we diagnose illness? There’s a lot at stake as how we identify and label “health” impacts the behavior of institutions, the growth or atrophy of particular economies and fields of study and research, and our attitudes toward particular diagnoses of ill health and those who bear them. In this section of 76-101, you will read arguments and write about how mental health, disease, and illness have been defined, identify the stakeholders invested in specific understandings of what is healthy, and explore the impact of these definitions on individuals and institutions. You will analyze and synthesize the conversation that this course presents through assigned readings and discussion and, finally, make your own contribution to the conversation in a final paper.

Section L
J. Wilton
MWF 12:30-1:20
From Independent to “Indie”: Assessing a (Sub?)-Cultural Phenomenon

Calling movies, music, and other cultural products “independent” used to mean these products were made by small, non-major studios or labels. But recently, as critic Michael Z. Newman proclaims, “‘indie’ has become a buzzword, a term whose meanings—alternative, hip, edgy, uncompromising—far exceed the literal designation of media products that are made independently of major firms.” Indie groups like The Arcade Fire can now win Grammy Awards, most Oscar nominated films have some Indie status, and PBR-toting, flannel and skinny-jean clad hipsters have overrun every major city. Indie now seems less descriptive of a subculture than a mainstream style choice. Has Indie culture run its course? If so, what did it once represent and why has it become what it is today? What was, or is, its social, political, and commercial value?

These (and other) questions will serve as the focus for this 76-101 course. We will use academic and popular criticism, film, music, and more to explore Indie culture. Students will write essays that analyze the arguments and issues surrounding Indie culture, culminating an essay in which they make a contribution to our contemporary knowledge of this cultural phenomenon.
Motivating the Millennials: Definitions of Civic Engagement in the 21st Century

Education scholar, Thomas Ehrlich defines civic engagement as “working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference.” Recent studies have claimed that the “Millennial” generation, which includes individuals born after 1980, is less interested in civic engagement and less invested in political participation. Is it true that young people today are less interested in making a difference than young people in the past? What could be the cause of this lack of interest? In this course, we will question how our definitions of civic engagement have changed throughout the past and explore the ways that younger generations participate in their communities. For example, we will consider how volunteerism, service learning, and military service constitute civic engagement. We will also question to what extent technology is enhancing, or perhaps inhibiting, opportunities for civic involvement. Does posting a Youtube video in response to public policy or current events count as civic activism? How does your understanding of community engagement evolve when you question whether Facebook serves as a space for civic deliberation or rather a distraction from pertinent community issues? In addition to addressing questions of definition, we will also reflect on contemporary challenges to community involvement including the civic achievement gap between race and class in America.

Students will address these key questions by engaging with a variety of texts across disciplines. From Alexis de Tocqueville’s nineteenth century work Democracy in America to Robert D. Putnam’s contemporary critique Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, course texts address the central question: what does it mean to be civically engaged in the 21st century? Students will return to this key dilemma throughout the semester in order to analyze single arguments, synthesize a variety of arguments addressing the course topic, and ultimately author their own arguments on issues of civic engagement and the Millennial generation. Students’ decisions to either engage or disengage with local and global communities will remain relevant during and after college. This course prepares students to make informed decisions about community involvement by developing definitions of civic engagement that are unique to their own generation and reflecting upon the challenges that young people face in becoming engaged with communities beyond the university.

Art and Society: Imitation, Reflection, or Catalyst

Ernst Fischer argued art “must show the world as changeable and help to change it.” His claim raises the question, what is art? What should or can art make us do, think, and feel? Is art an appropriate and effective forum for social criticism? What is the social value of art? Does art have the power to shape individuals or change the world in which we live? In this section of 76-101, we will explore these questions related to the role of art in society by interrogating a range of text including critical essays, poetry, prose fiction, painting, photography, and film. In this writing course, students will first produce an insightful, focused analysis of one author’s argument on the role of art. In the second assignment, students will synthesize and analyze several sources into one coherent and cohesive description of the debate concerning art’s place
within our society. Finally, in the contribution essay, students contribute to the discourse with their own carefully crafted argument on the relationship between art and society.

Section MM
R. Mitchell
MWF 1:30-2:20

By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media

Media scholar Jay Rosen claims that the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies have given “the people formerly known as the audience” new opportunities to contribute to public discourse – as citizen journalists, bloggers, and social media users. Many debate the value and effect of this shift from a one-to-many to many-to-many model of media distribution and public communication. How does this shift affect news and public discourse? What’s valuable about the contributions of “amateurs” as compared to those of “professionals”? What role does social media play in political change and democracy? These questions have significance not only for public policy, but also for how we as individuals negotiate our roles as consumers and producers of networked public discourse. Engaging with the issues and problems surrounding the rise of participatory media means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation.

Section N
A. Wiscomb
MWF 1:30-2:20

The Technology Question

“Technology is just a tool” Bill Gates has argued; it can be used in good and bad ways. This common belief that technology is neither inherently good or bad—known as “technological instrumentalism”—suggests that humans control the effects of technology. Whether we believe that technology is inherently good, bad, or somewhere in-between, however, depends on our understanding: what is technology doing to our lives? In this course we will examine popular disagreements over how digital technology changes the way we read, encourages or discourages democracy and political participation, and alters our relationships to each other and ourselves. We will pay particular attention to how technologies such as video games, search engines like Google, and social media like Twitter may determine aspects of our thinking and behavior.

Students in this course will interpret and analyze arguments, and learn to identify main claims and the underlying values and assumptions of those claims. Students will also synthesize a multiplicity of competing perspectives, including those radically opposed to the growth of some (or all) digital technologies, and learn to articulate fundamental disagreements between those perspectives. Ultimately, students in this course will advance their own arguments that contribute to ongoing, academic discussions in human-computer interaction, digital literacy, business, and media and communication technology studies.
By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media

Media scholar Jay Rosen claims that the Internet and Web 2.0 technologies have given “the people formerly known as the audience” new opportunities to contribute to public discourse – as citizen journalists, bloggers, and social media users. Many debate the value and effect of this shift from a one-to-many to many-to-many model of media distribution and public communication. How does this shift affect news and public discourse? What’s valuable about the contributions of “amateurs” as compared to those of “professionals”? What role does social media play in political change and democracy? These questions have significance not only for public policy, but also for how we as individuals negotiate our roles as consumers and producers of networked public discourse. Engaging with the issues and problems surrounding the rise of participatory media means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation.

Is Technology Overrated?

We often use the phrase “technological progress” automatically and without really thinking about it. After all, technology moves us forward and makes our lives better. Or, does it? Recently, a number of high-profile news stories have called our attention to the dilemmas that accompany our “high tech” lifestyles. Whether we’re talking about drones, disappointing new Apple products, or ways in which our favorite internet companies are complicit with the NSA’s invasion of our privacy, we’re increasingly being confronted with the idea that maybe “technological progress” isn’t so progressive after all.

In this course we’re going to assess technology critically by reading and dealing with arguments that approach technology from a number of different perspectives. Although we will cover a few significant technological issues from decades past, most of our focus will be on the last two generations or so. And of course, “technology” can’t mean anything and everything: our scope will be broad but not limitless, including such diverse topics as the emergence of the interstate highway system in the US, dilemmas that come with advances in health care, and the extent to which Silicon Valley is being a “good neighbor.” These are some of the subjects we’ll be encountering while we practice 101’s general goal of dealing with arguments: both in the classroom and in writing, students will assess, analyze, synthesize, and respond to arguments about the impact and role of technology in our lives. At the end of the course, students will contribute to the discussion with their own argument. This course intends to help students deal with arguments and think critically by questioning something that we often take for granted: the ultimate goodness of technological progress – or, perhaps we should say, technological change.
What Should a University Be in the 21st Century?

Student debt, skyrocketing tuition, adjunct faculty, competition for scarce funding, online learning, an encroaching for-profit sector: United States universities have entered the twenty-first century amid a barrage of challenges and threats to their traditional missions and organizational structures. This section of 76-101 will focus on ongoing debates about American higher education and the issues it faces, and it will highlight how these debates are relevant to you, its students, and to your education and futures. Not only introducing you to academic essays, this course will also equip you to critique and interpret arguments made by journalists, activists, politicians, and philosophers. You will reflect on your position as students and workers in the university and will consider the powers and responsibilities that come with it. Throughout the semester, you will learn advanced literacy practices for understanding and evaluating scholarly writing by participating in a variety of in-class activities based on the course readings. These activities and the three core 76-101 writing assignments (argument analysis, synthesis, and contribution) will scaffold you toward becoming clearer academic writers and craftspeople of convincing arguments.

Race and Otherness in America

How closely linked are ideas about “race” and ideas about American identity? In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois claimed that “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line.” However, with the election of Barack Obama and the recent U.S. Census data that reveals more people identifying as multiracial some have suggested that the problem of the color line has been solved and America has entered a postracial era. Whether Americans have or have not entered a postracial era, the very idea of postracial and the category of multiracial suggests that ideas about “race” continue to play an important role in ideas about American identity. In this course we will consider how ideas about “race” relate to other processes of establishing and maintaining boundaries of individual and national identity and consider how ideas about “race” impact on contemporary debates surrounding immigration.

In this course students will learn and practice specific strategies for critically analyzing the arguments in academic and popular essays, contemporary news accounts, and documentary film. Students will write three major papers: an academic summary, an academic synthesis of various positions on an issue related to the course topic, and, finally, a paper that proposes the students’ contribution to a discussion about race and otherness in America. In the process of developing these papers, students will learn and practice specific analysis and planning skills for drafting and revising academic arguments, and they will learn and practice specific strategies for analyzing their own written work and the written work of their peers.
Section PP
A. Wiscomb
MWF 2:30-3:20

The Technology Question

“Technology is just a tool” Bill Gates has argued; it can be used in good and bad ways. This common belief that technology is neither inherently good or bad—known as “technological instrumentalism”—suggests that humans control the effects of technology. Whether we believe that technology is inherently good, bad, or somewhere in-between, however, depends on our understanding: what is technology doing to our lives? In this course we will examine popular disagreements over how digital technology changes the way we read, encourages or discourages democracy and political participation, and alters our relationships to each other and ourselves. We will pay particular attention to how technologies such as video games, search engines like Google, and social media like Twitter may determine aspects of our thinking and behavior.

Students in this course will interpret and analyze arguments, and learn to identify main claims and the underlying values and assumptions of those claims. Students will also synthesize a multiplicity of competing perspectives, including those radically opposed to the growth of some (or all) digital technologies, and learn to articulate fundamental disagreements between those perspectives. Ultimately, students in this course will advance their own arguments that contribute to ongoing, academic discussions in human-computer interaction, digital literacy, business, and media and communication technology studies.

Section Q
J. Smith
MWF 2:30-3:20

Never Tickle a Sleeping Dragon: Harry Potter and Popular Culture

In 1997, J.K. Rowling first published *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*. Since then, the Harry Potter series has been the most widely sold book franchise to date. It has been translated into 67 languages, made into eight blockbuster films, commercialized excessively and even built into a theme park. With all of this excitement, the main question our 76-101 course will explore is: are the Harry Potter books “good”? Why or why not? What has made Harry Potter so popular in our culture, and is this popularity deserved? We will consider issues related to Harry Potter and education; for instance, how do we reconcile the novels’ current status in popular culture with a more formal literary tradition? Additionally, we will interrogate the economic role of the Harry Potter series: is the formidable franchise merely a money-making game? Or are technological and social media like Pottermore revolutionizing the way we read and consider literary culture? Finally, we will explore how literary critics (both inside and outside of academia) question whether the Harry Potter books are harmless entertainment or whether they promote potentially dangerous ideologies for children.

In this course, we will look at a collection of articles, excerpts and film that explore these questions. As a class, we will converse around all of the Harry Potter novels, *though students need not have read the series previously*. Students will write their own papers that analyze and synthesize perspectives on Harry Potter in popular culture. At the end of the course, students will write their own contributions to the ongoing discussion regarding Harry Potter’s place in culture, academia, and the marketplace.
By the People, For the People? News, New Voices, and New Media

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The Culture of Sports Fandom

In 1975 NFL films announcer John Facenda first used the phrase “steeler nation” in the team’s highlight film “Blueprint for Victory.” Today, one can walk around in just about any neighborhood in Pittsburgh and see a black and gold banner or flag displayed on a front porch that reads “Steel Nation.” In this section of Interpretation and Argument, we will read texts about sports fandom in order to develop practices for advanced academic literacy. The texts we will read and the questions we will discuss focus upon controversies about what makes a sports fan. Are sports fan communities about sports or are they about something else? How does one become a fan? How does a fan become part of a larger community of fans, and how do race, class and gender figure into these fan communities? What is the role of radio, television, and the Internet in sustaining these communities? Why does fan loyalty sometimes turn into fanatical violence?

Students will address these questions and issues by summarizing, analyzing and synthesizing the different arguments occurring in these texts. Once students have grasped a coherent understanding of the current debates, they will then carve out a space to insert their own contribution into the academic discussion.

Race and Otherness in America

How closely linked are ideas about “race” and ideas about American identity? In 1903, W.E.B. DuBois claimed that “the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line.” However, with the election of Barack Obama and the recent U.S. Census data that reveals more people identifying as multiracial some have suggested that the problem of the color line has been
solved and America has entered a postracial era. Whether Americans have or have not entered a postracial era, the very idea of postracial and the category of multiracial suggests that ideas about “race” continue to play an important role in ideas about American identity. In this course we will consider how ideas about “race” relate to other processes of establishing and maintaining boundaries of individual and national identity and consider how ideas about “race” impact on contemporary debates surrounding immigration.

In this course students will learn and practice specific strategies for critically analyzing the arguments in academic and popular essays, contemporary news accounts, and documentary film. Students will write three major papers: an academic summary, an academic synthesis of various positions on an issue related to the course topic, and, finally, a paper that proposes the students’ contribution to a discussion about race and otherness in America. In the process of developing these papers, students will learn and practice specific analysis and planning skills for drafting and revising academic arguments, and they will learn and practice specific strategies for analyzing their own written work and the written work of their peers.

Section S
H. Steffen
MWF 4:30-5:20
What Should a University Be in the 21st Century?

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Section TT
M. Nelson
MWF 4:30-5:20
The Culture of Sports Fandom

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class and gender figure into these fan communities? What is the role of radio, television, and the Internet in sustaining these communities? Why does fan loyalty sometimes turn into fanatical violence?

Students will address these questions and issues by summarizing, analyzing and synthesizing the different arguments occurring in these texts. Once students have grasped a coherent understanding of the current debates, they will then carve out a space to insert their own contribution into the academic discussion.

Section U  
J. Goessling  
TR 9:00-10:20  
*The Meanings of Subculture*

Only three years after bands like the Sex Pistols and the Clash initiated a new social movement known as “punk rock,” the British group Crass had already declared that “Punk [was] Dead” by comparing it to other new consumer trends that were popular at the time. Since the emergence of punk, it has been considered just one example of a subculture that claims to “resist” mainstream culture. This course will use primarily punk as an interpretive lens to discuss the dynamic relationship between mainstream or “mass” culture and alternative subcultures. For example, what makes something mainstream, and why or how would a subculture wish to resist the mainstream? For that matter, can one even speak of a mainstream culture?

This course will draw from the field of Cultural Studies to define and elaborate concepts of mass culture and subcultures. We will explore the history, influence, and controversies of punk and other subcultures through texts that analyze the political nature of subcultures (e.g., Dick Hebdige’s *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*) and films which document how individuals participate in subcultures (e.g., *Afro-Punk*). Using methods of critical reading and academic writing, students will engage responsibly with the controversial topic of resistance in subcultures. Students will analyze arguments as part of an overall conversation of subcultural practices, synthesize perspectives on central issues within that topic, and finally contribute their own arguments to the discussion of the meanings of subcultures.

Section SS  
E. Ferris  
TR 10:30-11:50  
*I.Q. and You: What is Intelligence?*

You’ve heard it online, in college guides, and from your teachers back home – Carnegie Mellon students are smart (and you, no doubt, are no exception). But just what does that label mean? Is it based on your grades and test scores, your personality, your chosen field of study? Does it capture all that it took to succeed in high school or what it will take to succeed at this university and beyond? How has “being smart” gotten you to where you are today? This section of 76-101 critically examines the many ways our society defines intelligence, with careful attention paid to the tools we use to measure it and the social consequences of meeting or falling short of the standards we set. We will do so through discussion of a variety of broadly interdisciplinary readings (including selections from the neuro- and cognitive sciences, education, literacy studies, and disability studies) from both popular and academic sources. These different approaches will
allow us to see the affordances and constraints inherent in each of our definitions and consider their implications for education approaches and policy, college admissions, the workplace, and other sites where we are subject to “assessment.” Additionally, we will engage this issue through writing by completing a series of major assignments that will require you to analyze and synthesize existing arguments. These will equip you with the rhetorical skills to join an ongoing academic conversation with an insightful, persuasive, and reader-based contribution of your own that in some way accounts for what’s at stake when these definitions shape how we see our world and, more importantly, each other.

Section T
K. Hamilton
TR 1:30-2:50

“The fashion of the polite World”: Etiquette in Context

How has etiquette been historically dependent upon gender, class, and culture? Is politeness still culturally relevant? For instance, should you open the door for a woman? For a man? We might dismiss these questions as mere quirks of etiquette—the purview of Miss Manners and a relic of close-minded times—but deeper inquiry suggests neither their answers nor etiquette’s meaning is simple. So how do we make sense of civility when new technologies disrupt social traditions, gender norms change rapidly, and diverse cultural settings become more and more common? How, in short, do we peaceably work and live with others?

In this version of 76-101, we will consider how Enlightenment philosophers, media columnists, and contemporary scholars approach the problem of how to navigate politeness in an interconnected society. To enter this discussion we will read works from multiple genres, eras, and cultures, all of which have bearing on our 21st-century lives. As a writer you will analyze individual arguments and synthesize multiple perspectives around a question you choose. Ultimately you will develop your own stance on etiquette and write an academic contribution essay that persuasively argues for it. Throughout the class you will think critically and creatively about how you and others understand etiquette and its significance to personal character, professional work, and the social fabric as a whole.