First-Year Writing Program

Spring 2018

Course Descriptions

Brief Overview of First-Year Writing Options for Spring 2018

The FYW Program continues to pilot a new design for the university’s foundational writing courses. This newly designed set of courses delivers curriculum modules called “minis,” taught by more than one faculty member.

For these courses, students will enroll in one section through SIO and then pick 2 of 3 mini options via the survey link below. Two minis occur within a full-semester course and fulfill students’ first-year writing requirements. These minis are Writing about Data, Writing about Public Problems, and Writing about Visual Art OR Literature and Culture. (Descriptions follow on page 2.) These “you pick 2” minis are scheduled for

- 9:30 (sections B, BB, and C)
- 10:30 (sections E, EE, and F)
- 1:30 (sections NN, O, and AB)

To enroll in these mini course options, students should (1) enroll through SIO in a section during their preferred timeslot; (2) rank their top two mini course options through this survey link: [http://cmu.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4H1K32WWdri4jmB](http://cmu.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4H1K32WWdri4jmB)

While the FYW program cannot guarantee students’ top two choices for these minis, we will do our very best to place students according to their top two choices. As long as students complete the above survey by November 30, they will be placed in at least one of their top mini course choices. If you have any questions about this procedure, please email Arianna Garofalo at engfirst@andrew.cmu.edu.

Course descriptions for pilot courses

Writing about Data (offered MWF 9:30-10:20, 10:30-11:20, 1:30-2:20)

Our lives are increasingly shaped by writing that involves numbers: newspapers routinely report the latest medical fads; politicians support their political agendas with both dubious and credible statistics; parents use data to decide where to buy a house and where to send their kids to school. This section will focus on interpreting and making arguments using mainly numerical data but also qualitative data. We will look at research in a range of disciplines—including psychology, education, medicine, engineering, and the sciences—and note how writers select and analyze the data they collect. We will also examine what happens to this research when it is picked up by the popular media. Students will also practice collecting and analyzing their own data and reporting it to suit the needs of various stakeholders. There are two primary audiences for this section. Students in data-driven majors will find the section useful preparation for communicating in their disciplines. Students in other fields will learn how to critique and respond to the many ways that numbers shape our lives. This section presumes a basic ability to calculate averages, percentages, and ratios, but no advanced mathematical or statistical preparation. Instead, this section provides a fascinating look at how numbers and words intersect to create persuasive arguments in academic, professional, and popular contexts. Students will compare and analyze texts that make arguments with data, practice rhetorical strategies for synthesizing and representing data so that by the end of the class, students will apply these strategies to write an original data-driven research proposal.
Writing about Literature and Culture (offered only MWF 9:30-10:20 and 10:30-11:20)
In 1967, Roland Barthes (a French literary critic) wrote an essay that claimed that the author is dead. If the author is dead, how do we proceed with reading, analyzing, and writing texts? If the author is dead, why should we? This 76101 course uses artistic, literary, and cultural texts (e.g., poetry, short story, lyrics, video clips) to introduce students to a variety of academic reading and writing practices that enable students to discuss texts and evidence from multiple perspectives. We will examine how literary and cultural scholars write about texts (defined broadly), how they make claims, provide reasoning, and use textual support to argue for particular ways of seeing cultural objects. Throughout the semester, students will draw upon prior strategies and develop new ones for close reading and for critical analysis in order to produce their own thesis-driven arguments about why texts matter. We will consider and write about the extent to which these reading strategies are relevant for other kinds of reading and analysis by comparing texts from a variety of different disciplinary contexts.

Writing About Visual Art (offered only MWF 1:30-2:20)
The philosopher of art Maurice Merleau-Ponty wrote in his essay “Eye and Mind,” “There is clearly no one master key of the visible.” This 76101 course uses two- and three-dimensional art objects (painting, sculpture, and architecture) to introduce a variety of academic reading and writing practices that enable students to discuss artworks and visual evidence from multiple perspectives. First, we will examine how art historians describe visual art, and practice this skill. We will then look at how writers on art make claims, provide reasoning, and use visual support to argue for ways of seeing art objects. We will consider a series of four approaches to thesis-driven writing on art, focusing on personal and period style, biography, iconographic analysis, and historical analysis. Students will develop strategies for close looking and critical analysis in order to produce their own arguments about the significance of art objects. Finally, we will discuss the extent to which these reading and writing practices are relevant for other kinds of analysis by comparing texts from different contexts.

Writing about Public Problems (offered MWF 9:30-10:20, 10:30-11:20, 1:30-2:20)
If all problems required a simple fix, we could don our Avenger costumes, pick up Thor’s hammer, and right the world’s wrongs. But most problems aren’t so simple. Most of the problems we encounter require careful investigation and research so that we might propose solutions that connect with others to make change. In this 76101 class, we will learn how public problems are defined and argued across a range of texts, including proposals, op-ed genres, and white papers. By analyzing a range of proposal texts, we will identify the different kinds of legwork necessary to write a successful proposal, arguably one of the most challenging aspects of writing a persuasive recommendation for change. We will examine how writers unpack problems rhetorically and use evidence to argue solutions for different stakeholders who may not share common values. We will learn strategies for evaluating and synthesizing data from existing research to use in a proposal argument. By the end of the course, students will write their own proposal that recommends a solution and a feasible plan for solving a real problem.
General Description of 76-101, Interpretation and Argument 9 units
Gen Ed: Fulfills Category 1: Communicating requirement for Dietrich and a designated writing course for other colleges.

Interpretation and Argument (76101) is a course that serves as a foundation for many reading and writing tasks you’ll experience in college and in your professional life beyond your undergraduate years. While we can’t guarantee that in 76101 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 communication strategies you will have practiced in the 76101 classroom.

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.

While we do encourage students to pursue their interests, 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
Tim Dawson MWF 8:30-9:20

*Race, American Identity, and Public Policy*

How closely linked are ideas about race and ideas about American identity? How should race be addressed in the public policies developed by a nation founded on the principle of equality before the law? Given the election of Barack Obama, recent U.S. Census data revealing that more people are identifying as multiracial, and projections that the U.S. will be a “majority minority” country by 2050, some argue that traditional lines of racial distinction are no longer relevant, with some going so far as to suggest we have entered a postracial era. However, the very idea of postracial and the category of multiracial suggest that ideas about race continue to play an important role in how we think about individual and group identity in America. In this course we will consider various ideas about “race”, how these ideas relate to other ways of thinking about individual and group identity, and how (or whether) public policies should address racial distinctions. 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 ZZ
Juliann Reineke MWF 8:30-9:20

*The Marvel Universe’s Cultural Effects*

This course closely examines Marvel’s universe and how it reveals and responds to debates about gender, sexuality, disability, and violence. For example, reports of Black Widow being cut from *Avengers* toy sets highlighted the problematic gender bias at play in toy design, marketing, and Hollywood. To explore these issues, we will read articles about *Jessica Jones, Daredevil, Luke Cage, The Avengers* movies, Black Widow, and the Punisher. In this section, students will analyze and synthesize arguments to gain critical thinking skills and awareness of their own rhetorical choices. Moreover, students will contribute to these debates by researching their own unique topic related to the cultural assumptions that shape the Marvel universe.
Sections B, BB, and C
MWF 9:30-10:20
Pilot courses: see pages 2-3

Writing about Data: CP Moreau
Writing about Public Problems: Peter Mayshle
Writing about Literature & Culture: Rachel Goodmanson

Section CC
Daniel Dickson LaPrade MWF 9:30-10:20

Evil in America
In this section of 76-101, students will examine a variety of arguments regarding the nature and causes of evil, 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 saintly.

Section D
J. Timothy Dawson MWF 10:30-11:20

Race, American Identity, and Public Policy
How closely linked are ideas about race and ideas about American identity? How should race be addressed in the public policies developed by a nation founded on the principle of equality before the law? Given the election of Barack Obama, recent U.S. Census data revealing that more people are identifying as multiracial, and projections that the U.S. will be a “majority minority” country by 2050, some argue that traditional lines of racial distinction are no longer relevant, with some going so far as to suggest we have entered a postracial era. However, the very idea of postracial and the category of multiracial suggest that ideas about race continue to play an important role in how we think about individual and group identity in America. In this course we will consider various ideas about “race”, how these ideas relate to other ways of thinking about individual and group identity, and how (or whether) public policies should address racial distinctions. 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 DD
Rachel Kravetz MWF 10:30-11:20

Civil Disobedience and Dissent by Scientists, Hacktivists, and Artists
“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” This course moves from his foundational conception of civil disobedience to contemporary texts that engage questions of about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of protest and resistance and their role in political systems. We will analyze arguments, drawn from various fields, regarding the legitimacy of civil disobedience, and consider how such arguments may be challenged, updated, or extended. Students may pursue inquiry into the connections between science and protest, the legitimacy of hacktivism, or representations of dissent in art. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring to #BlackLivesMatter, addressing these questions allows us to reflect on our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest 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 on political resistance.

Sections E, EE, and F
MWF 10:30-11:20
Pilot course: see pages 2-3

**Writing about Data**: Heidi Wright
**Writing about Public Problems**: Susan Tanner
**Writing about Literature & Culture**: Rachel Goodmanson

Section FF
Sophie Wodzak MWF 11:30-12:20

*Journalism in the digital age: where do we go from here?*

The internet has changed the way we consume news. In their struggle to keep up with the 24-hour news cycle and find new ways to generate revenue online, many news outlets have has changed the way they generate and distribute content: Headlines serve as clickbait, pundits flood the airwaves, and comedy news shows compete with traditional media. Is this the end of journalism as we know it? In this section of 76-101, we will examine the effects the internet is having on fundamental journalistic values such as accuracy and fairness, and consider whether it is possible to preserve these values in the new digital media landscape. Students will analyze the challenges facing journalism today, and synthesize experts’ opinions about how best to cope with these challenges. By engaging with the course readings and conducting their own research, students will make predictions about where journalism is headed in the 21st century, and offer their own suggestions for how to cope with the various challenges it faces.

Section G
Greg Laski MWF 11:30-12:20

*Communicating about Race*

From Ferguson to Charlottesville, and from Michael Brown to Sandra Bland, race has come to occupy a central role in public debates about liberty and equality. But what does it mean to participate in enlightened and inclusive discussions about race in America, past and present? If, as survey data has shown and theorists have argued, white and black Americans live in the same world but often interpret it in radically different ways, then how do we approach the task of talking about race? What are the keywords that should compose this conversation, and how do we effectively describe and present them? As we pursue these and other questions, we will examine competing conceptions of “race,” attending to concerns about argument, evidence, and experience; use digital archives in order to historicize “race” as an idea and lived reality; and consider various modes of addressing and influencing diverse audiences. Our work will culminate in a public exhibition at CMU’s Center for Diversity and Inclusion, which students will plan, promote, and produce in an effort to convene a conversation about race on campus. In essence, this course asks students to use the tools of written, visual, and oral communication to plan and lead an authentic, democratic conversation with members of the Carnegie Mellon community. *Note: This community-based service component is a distinctive feature of the course and integral to the design of the writing and communication assignments. Students must be prepared to engage in this sort of work, which will include an out-of-class evening event during the last week of classes.*

Section GG
Daniel Dickson-LaPrade MWF 11:30-12:20

*Evil in America*

In this section of 76-101, students will examine a variety of arguments regarding the nature and causes of evil, 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 saintly.

Section H
Rebecca Wigginton MWF 11:30-12:20
_Cyborgs, Microchips, and Neural Lace: Technology and the Human Body_
What is the relationship between technology and (or in) the human body, and what could it be? At Code Conference 2016, Elon Musk suggested that “we are already cyborgs,” and as far back as the 1960s, Marshal McLuhan’s groundbreaking work in media studies argued that we’ve always used technology as extensions of ourselves. This course invites you to consider the possible and acceptable forms that human-implanted digital and AI technology may take in the future and what forms they have already taken in the present. Given that this shift is already happening, and that many experts are confident that this is the next big turn in our technological and human evolution, we will not limit our course discussions to whether or not it “will” or “should” occur, but we will instead focus on consideration of what forms human-implanted technology is already taking and seems likely to take next, and what the implications these forms have for ethics, medicine, “big data,” and the law. As we do this, we will enter into an ongoing conversation taking place in a variety of fields, and read one novel that imagines what human-implanted technology might look like in the near future—M.T. Anderson’s *Feed* (2002). In this course, you will develop skills in the fundamental practices of critical reading and academic writing and apply them to complete assignments in which you analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on human-implanted technology.

Section HH
Peter Mayshle MWF 11:30-12:20
_The Rhetoric of Space: Places of Learning, Difference, and Public Memory_
Places “speak” because places hold meaning. How places embody and convey their meanings is the subject of this course. Building on theoretical work in rhetoric studies and postmodern geography, we will consider how ideas about space and place inform literacy, difference, and public memory. How do the spaces and places where we learn inform and shape how we learn? What are the relationships between space/place and gender, race, social class, sexual orientation, and other categories of social identification or social experience? How does the way we experience built environments, particularly ones fraught with memory, inform the meaning-making practices that occur at these sites? We will investigate a variety of spaces/places, including classrooms, our neighborhoods, walking tours, museums, memorials, and even cyberspace. In short, this course will explore the question: how is space and place rhetorical? And because this is a foundational writing course, you will practice what it means to write for, within, and beyond the academy, as you develop skills in critical reading and academic writing and apply them to analyze arguments, synthesize various perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on rhetorical space.

Section I
Pavithra Tantrigoda MWF 11:30-12:20
_Climate Change and Us_
Rising temperatures, melting glacial and sea ice, droughts, stronger rainstorms, and warming oceans have made us increasingly aware of the harmful effects of man-made climate change today. These changes have led climate scientists to come to a consensus that we have entered a new geological era called “anthropocene” where humans are having an irreversible impact on the Earth’s ecosystems through the increased use of fossil fuels, machinery, and ecological destruction. There are debates among climate scientists, states, policy makers, economists, environmental activists, academics and lawyers as to the extent and nature of these changes in the environment, its current and future effects on us, and the possible ways of mitigating the negative effects of climate change. In this section of 76-101, we will examine how climate
change is defined and addressed by these various stakeholders. We will examine critical responses to the issue, ranging from those who are convinced that global warming is a serious (if not catastrophic) environmental concern and favor aggressive regulatory interventions to lessen its effects to those who are skeptical of mainstream climate science and oppose governmental intrusions in the marketplace. We will read a range of academic essays, magazine articles, interviews and documentary film that address these different views regarding climate change. We will also analyze and synthesize arguments within these texts and, finally, develop our own contribution on the politics and discourse of climate change.

Section II
Sophie Wodzak MWF 12:30-1:20
*Journalism in the digital age: where do we go from here?*
The internet has changed the way we consume news. In their struggle to keep up with the 24-hour news cycle and find new ways to generate revenue online, many news outlets have changed the way they generate and distribute content: Headlines serve as clickbait, pundits flood the airwaves, and comedy news shows compete with traditional media. Is this the end of journalism as we know it? In this section of 76-101, we will examine the effects the internet is having on fundamental journalistic values such as accuracy and fairness, and consider whether it is possible to preserve these values in the new digital media landscape. Students will analyze the challenges facing journalism today, and synthesize experts’ opinions about how best to cope with these challenges. By engaging with the course readings and conducting their own research, students will make predictions about where journalism is headed in the 21st century, and offer their own suggestions for how to cope with the various challenges it faces.

Section J
Peter Mayshle MWF 12:30-1:20
*The Rhetoric of Space: Places of Learning, Difference, and Public Memory*
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Section JJ
Rachel Kravetz MWF 12:30-1:20
*Civil Disobedience and Dissent by Scientists, Hacktivists, and Artists*
“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” This course moves from his foundational conception of civil disobedience to contemporary texts that engage questions of about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of protest and resistance and their role in political systems. We will analyze arguments, drawn from various fields, regarding the legitimacy of civil disobedience, and consider how such arguments may be challenged, updated, or extended. Students may pursue inquiry into the connections between science and protest, the legitimacy of hacktivism, or representations of dissent in art. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring to #BlackLivesMatter, addressing these questions allows us to reflect on our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest 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 on political resistance.

Section K
J Timothy Dawson MWF 12:30-1:20

*Race, American Identity, and Public Policy*

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Section KK
Daniel Dickson LaPrade MWF 12:30-1:20

*Evil in America*

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Section L
Sarah Hancock MWF 12:30-1:20

*Coffee Culture: The Brand and Brew of Caffeine Addiction*

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 wake of our choices on personal, local, and 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.
Section LL
Kendra Williamson MWF 12:30-1:20
Communication and Correctness: Language Standardization in the United States
"How are you?" "I'm doing good, thanks." "You mean you're doing WELL?" We've all encountered instances where our words are noticed and corrected, and perhaps we sometimes correct others' words. But is there a "right" way to speak? How do we define and prioritize correctness in relation to communication? This course explores the issue of language and standardization, including questions of whether the United States should have a national language, the appropriateness of stigmatized regional or racial dialects, and how (or whether) grammar should be taught. Using readings focused on dialect, language, and language policy, students in this class will learn transferable principles for analyzing, understanding, and writing in different genres. This course includes three papers: a comparative genre analysis (CGA) that aims to identify and characterize writing features, a research proposal that synthesizes the existing conversation surrounding a research need that students identify according to their own interests, and a research paper (contribution paper) that makes an original argument that fills that research need. By the end of the semester, students will have developed an arsenal of skills related to reading, analysis, and writing that can be extended to new contexts throughout their academic, professional, and every-day lives.

Section MM
Rebecca Wigginton MWF 1:30-2:20
Cyborgs, Microchips, and Neural Lace: Technology and the Human Body
What is the relationship between technology and (or in) the human body, and what could it be? At Code Conference 2016, Elon Musk suggested that "we are already cyborgs," and as far back as the 1960s, Marshal McLuhan’s groundbreaking work in media studies argued that we’ve always used technology as extensions of ourselves. This course invites you to consider the possible and acceptable forms that human-implanted digital and AI technology may take in the future and what forms they have already taken in the present. Given that this shift is already happening, and that many experts are confident that this is the next big turn in our technological and human evolution, we will not limit our course discussions to whether or not it “will” or “should” occur, but we will instead focus on consideration of what forms human-implanted technology is already taking and seems likely to take next, and what the implications these forms have for ethics, medicine, “big data,” and the law. As we do this, we will enter into an ongoing conversation taking place in a variety of fields, and read one novel that imagines what human-implanted technology might look like in the near future—M.T. Anderson’s Feed (2002). In this course, you will develop skills in the fundamental practices of critical reading and academic writing and apply them to complete assignments in which you analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on human-implanted technology.

Section N
Greg Laski MWF 1:30-2:20
Democracy and Deliberation: The Intellectual Work of Citizenship
"Democracy" is one of the most frequently invoked but least interrogated terms in American public life. In this class, we will critically examine competing definitions of “democracy,” both as ideal and practice. Among other questions, we will ask: What is “democracy,” and what does it mean to be “democratic”? What are the different forms that democracy can take? How do we conceive of the possibilities and problems associated with democracy, especially as this political form purports a commitment to liberty, equality, free expression, and open debate? In what sense is it possible for citizens to engage in the exercise that is a standard definition of democracy: the act of “self-government”? Moving beyond the notion that voting is the essential expression of democratic participation, we will study what political theorists refer to as “deliberative democracy,” a version of democracy that requires the active, informed participation of citizens in public conversations about issues vital to the common good. In this regard, we will explore—and test out—the ways that the academic skills of interpretation, argumentation, and research might be considered crucial democratic capacities.
Section NN, O, AB  
MWF 1:30-2:20  
Pilot course: see pages 2-3

**Writing about Data:** Heidi Wright  
**Writing about Public Problems:** Danielle Wetzel and Alex Helberg  
**Writing about Visual Art:** Rachel Kravetz

**Section AC**  
Kendra Williamson MWF 1:30-2:20  
**Communication and Correctness: Language Standardization in the United States**  
“How are you?” “I’m doing good, thanks.” “You mean you’re doing WELL?” We’ve all encountered instances where our words are noticed and corrected, and perhaps we sometimes correct others’ words. But is there a “right” way to speak? How do we define and prioritize correctness in relation to communication? This course explores the issue of language and standardization, including questions of whether the United States should have a national language, the appropriateness of stigmatized regional or racial dialects, and how (or whether) grammar should be taught. Using readings focused on dialect, language, and language policy, students in this class will learn transferable principles for analyzing, understanding, and writing in different genres. This course includes three papers: a comparative genre analysis (CGA) that aims to identify and characterize writing features, a research proposal that synthesizes the existing conversation surrounding a research need that students identify according to their own interests, and a research paper (contribution paper) that makes an original argument that fills that research need. By the end of the semester, students will have developed an arsenal of skills related to reading, analysis, and writing that can be extended to new contexts throughout their academic, professional, and every-day lives.

**Section OO**  
Greg Laski MWF 2:30-3:20  
**Democracy and Deliberation: The Intellectual Work of Citizenship**  
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**Section P**  
Rebecca Wigginton MWF 2:30-3:20  
**Cyborgs, Microchips, and Neural Lace: Technology and the Human Body**  
What is the relationship between technology and (or in) the human body, and what could it be? At Code Conference 2016, Elon Musk suggested that “we are already cyborgs,” and as far back as the 1960s, Marshal McLuhan’s groundbreaking work in media studies argued that we’ve always used technology as extensions of ourselves. This course invites you to consider the possible and acceptable forms that human-implanted digital and AI technology may take in the future and what forms they have already taken in the present. Given that this shift is already happening, and that many experts are confident that this is the next big turn in our technological and human evolution, we will not limit our course discussions to whether or not it “will” or
“should” occur, but we will instead focus on consideration of what forms human-implanted technology is already taking and seems likely to take next, and what the implications these forms have for ethics, medicine, “big data,” and the law. As we do this, we will enter into an ongoing conversation taking place in a variety of fields, and read one novel that imagines what human-implanted technology might look like in the near future—M.T. Anderson’s Feed (2002). In this course, you will develop skills in the fundamental practices of critical reading and academic writing and apply them to complete assignments in which you analyze arguments, synthesize perspectives on central problems, and finally contribute your own argument to the conversation on human-implanted technology.

Section PP
Craig Stamm MWF 2:30-3:20

Video Games and Society
In 2014, a series of events now referred to as Gamergate revealed widespread misogyny throughout the larger male-dominated gaming community. Initially debating the ethics of video game journalists, the conversation became loaded with violent threats and the defamation of female video game developers. While the outcome of Gamergate is still hotly debated in relation to the parties involved, one thing was made clear: video games are no longer a niche interest. With over half of the American population reported to play video games, they now outsell the global box office, making video games a new dominant form of media. The virtual societies of video games enable us to participate in experiences difficult to capture through other means, while also paralleling real-world power structures and prejudices. How can we understand video games as tools for social change? How does a post-Gamergate gaming community move forward without abandoning the work of the past? How do we define video games? In terms of goals, interaction, or technology? The goal of this class is to investigate these questions surrounding video games, while also considering issues of race, gender, and sexual orientation in relation to the history of video games. The course requires no previous knowledge of or experience with video games, and some assignments will include playing relevant games that highlight the issues we’ll be discussing in our readings. We will read various articles addressing the sociological issues of games, and students will be asked to write their own papers analyzing, critiquing, and synthesizing these perspectives, leading to a final paper where they will craft their own contribution on how we can understand video games as tools for sociological reflection and progress.

Section Q
Hannah Ringler MWF 2:30-3:20

What is my nationality, and how do I know?
What is your nationality (American, Chinese, French, Indian-American)? More importantly, how do you know? Is it your family tree? Birthplace? Language? Culture? DNA? Passport? In this section of 76-101, we will grapple with these ideas to ask ourselves, what is nationality? Students will read popular and scholarly arguments about different ways that we can understand who we are as individuals, and what makes up a national people. We will try to understand the different reasons that someone might call themselves one nationality, and why that is a difficult choice. For example, can you call yourself “Irish” if you great-great grandparents immigrated to America from Ireland? Can you call yourself “Japanese” if you are an American emigrant? Can you call yourself “Korean” if only one parent is Korean? In essence, if so many factors can make up how we talk about nationality, what do we call ourselves when some of those conflict? We’ll discuss why these are difficult questions, how their answers vary, and why this matters to us. In this course, students will engage with these ideas by drawing upon their own experiences and expertise and listening to others. Students will learn to analyze texts for their arguments, synthesize their ideas, and learn the skills needed to participate in a scholarly conversation. After having read and analyzed a variety of arguments on this issue, students will write a formal research proposal and paper by drawing upon their knowledge from this class and their own disciplines.

Section QQ
Ryan Mitchell MWF 3:30-4:20
**Doctor Who? Social Justice and Public Health**

In 1905, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Jacobson v Massachusetts* that states had the authority to enforce mandatory vaccinations when “necessary for public health or safety.” Over the past century, increased public health legislation and policy have fueled the controversy surrounding government-regulated health initiatives. For some, public health policies represent a way to prevent millions of unnecessary deaths and build stronger, healthier communities. Others argue that these policies signal gross intrusions on individual liberties and freedoms. Others still claim that public health policies neglect the unique sociocultural and economic conditions that affect a community’s identity and health practices. This section of 76-101 examines the controversies surrounding public health by tracing the moral, ethical, and sociopolitical implications of public health policies by examining their individual, local, and national implications. Through the critical examination of legislative, popular, and academic texts regarding government-led health initiatives, students will learn and practice the analytical skills necessary for understanding and responsibly contributing to this complex social issue, which affects every one of us. By the time students complete this course, they will be able to analyze the rhetorical structure of multifaceted arguments, synthesize the major perspectives regarding the course topic, and contribute to the on-going academic conversation by researching and analyzing a public health policy of their choosing. Along with acquiring a robust understanding of the course content, students will end the semester with an inventory of strategies for constructing persuasive, authoritative, and reader-friendly prose.

**Section RR**

Ryan Mitchell MWF 4:30-5:20

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**Section S**

Jacob Goessling MWF 4:30-5:20

**The Anthropocene: Entering the Age of Humans**

In an obscure scientific journal published at the start of the 21st century, a pair of scientists asked a relatively simple yet extremely significant question: “Has humanity entered the Anthropocene?” Posed by Nobel Prize winning climatologist Paul J. Crutzen and biologist Eugene Stoermer, this question asks whether the human species has created an age where our impact on the planet is so significant that we can declare a new geological epoch called the Anthropocene, or “The Age of Humans”. This question has sparked a debate that continues to be contested to this day, even more so as our knowledge of the possible effects of climate change improves. What does it mean to declare ourselves within the Anthropocene? And how might this lead us to reevaluate the choices we have made as a species? How does the possibility of technological advancement inform our responses to the threat of climate change? And how do we reconcile our ideas of
growth with the possibility of a more challenging future? To examine these questions, we will read a variety of texts (news articles, academic and non-academic essays, and film) that address the problems of a changing environment from political, economic, and cultural perspectives. We will move from arguments on the policies and beliefs which led to our present situation to current calls for action, including those which embrace technical solutions (such as Thomas Friedman in *Hot, Flat and Crowded* or in writings from The Breakthrough Institute) and those who see such an approach as only a partial answer to the problems humanity currently faces (such as Jason W. Moore’s critique of economics and Richard Slaughter’s call for a renewal in higher education). We conclude by considering how writers and artists have imagined possible Anthropocene futures, such as the “eternal engine” found in the film *Snowpiercer*. Over the course of the semester, we will analyze and synthesize arguments written by experts so that we can make a unique contribution to the overarching question of how we can negotiate the at times conflicting priorities of people, progress, and the environment.

**Section SS**
**Craig Stamm MWF 4:30-5:20**

*Video Games and Society*

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**Section T**
**Matt Nelson TR 9:00-10:20**

*The Culture of Sports Fandom*

In 1975 NFL films announcer John Facenda first used the phrase “Steelernation” 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 “Steelernation.” 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.
Section U
Matt Nelson TR 10:30-11:50
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Section UU
Emily DeJeu TR 10:30-11:50
Boycotts, Bullets, Bits? Political Resistance and Forms of Protest
“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” If we assume Thoreau is right that political resistance is necessary to preserve political freedom, then it raises the question: protest how? With marches? With armed resistance? With digital tools like Low Orbital Ion Cannons? This course engages with historic and contemporary questions about the legitimacy, value, and efficacy of different forms of political dissent and resistance and their role in political systems. We analyze political theories regarding civil disobedience and freedom of speech, and consider how protest in specific contexts may challenge, update, or extend those arguments. Students may pursue inquiry into issues such as the value of different expressions of dissent, the legitimacy of hacktivism, and the value of digital media for social movements. In an era marked by patterns of resistance that range from the Arab Spring, to #occupy, to Operation Ferguson, addressing these questions helps us reflect on both our own cultural and political histories as well as our roles as global citizens. Interrogating the value of historic and contemporary forms of protest means entering a conversation; in this course, you will develop analytical skills to identify features—some more flexible and some less flexible—within different academic genres. You will then use those skills to engage in academic inquiry, from research proposal to the research article or contribution essay that adds to the conversation about political resistance.

Section V
Kitty Shropshire TR 1:30-2:50
CONSPIRACY!: Power and Paranoia in American Culture
Who killed JFK? Could the Earth actually be flat? Is George W. Bush a shape-shifting reptilian from the Alpha Draconi star system? And more importantly, how can we know for sure? Despite unflattering representations of conspiracy theorists as paranoid fanatics with a penchant for tin foil hats, recent research suggests that at least half of Americans believe in at least one conspiracy theory. By investigating the relationship between “stigmatized knowledge” and “institutional knowledge,” this section of 76-101 will examine the role that conspiracy theories play in American culture and politics. Readings will be drawn from a variety of 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 producing a research paper that synthesizes scholarly perspectives and contributes an original perspective on a conspiracy theory of the
Section Z
Scott Riess TR 3:00-4:20

Baristas and Bohemians: Issues in Gentrification from Paris to Pittsburgh

In 1964, British sociologist Ruth Glass coined the term "gentrification" to describe the displacement of lower-class Londoners. In the half-century since then, the debate over the renovating and revitalizing of previously lower-class districts into middle-class neighborhoods has emerged as a major issue intersecting the fields of sociology, architecture and urban planning, and public policy, and touching on problems of racial disparity, class, and deindustrialization, among many others. From Paris to Jakarta, Sydney to Johannesburg, and even right here in Pittsburgh, gentrification is remaking cities all over the globe. This course is designed to explore the claims being made about gentrification. Guiding this discussion is this: What are the theoretical causes and practical effects of gentrification? With Gen X and millennial citizens spearheading a return to the urban core of many cities, Pittsburgh included, understanding the causes, effects, and controversies of gentrification has never been more important. In this course, you will develop rhetorical reading and writing skills while analyzing popular and academic articles addressing gentrification. 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 (comparative genre analysis, research proposal, and contribution) will scaffold you toward becoming clearer academic writers and the creators of convincing arguments that add to the conversation about gentrification.

Section AD
Scott Riess TR 4:30-5:20

Baristas and Bohemians: Issues in Gentrification from Paris to Pittsburgh

In 1964, British sociologist Ruth Glass coined the term "gentrification" to describe the displacement of lower-class Londoners. In the half-century since then, the debate over the renovating and revitalizing of previously lower-class districts into middle-class neighborhoods has emerged as a major issue intersecting the fields of sociology, architecture and urban planning, and public policy, and touching on problems of racial disparity, class, and deindustrialization, among many others. From Paris to Jakarta, Sydney to Johannesburg, and even right here in Pittsburgh, gentrification is remaking cities all over the globe. This course is designed to explore the claims being made about gentrification. Guiding this discussion is this: What are the theoretical causes and practical effects of gentrification? With Gen X and millennial citizens spearheading a return to the urban core of many cities, Pittsburgh included, understanding the causes, effects, and controversies of gentrification has never been more important. In this course, you will develop rhetorical reading and writing skills while analyzing popular and academic articles addressing gentrification. 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 (comparative genre analysis, research proposal, and contribution) will scaffold you toward becoming clearer academic writers and the creators of convincing arguments that add to the conversation about gentrification.