First-Year Writing Program
Spring 2015
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
A. Gordon
10:30-11:20
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 write 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 their 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 B
A. Gordon
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 write 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 their 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
12:30-1:20
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.

***

**General Description of 76-101, Interpretation and Argument**

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.
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.

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.

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
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 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, 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 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 C
R. Mennies 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 do 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 CC
R. May
MWF 9:30-10:20
Vampires!

This section of 76-101 uses vampires as a vehicle to develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. We begin the semester discussing Bram Stoker’s Dracula then study critical essays about Dracula that address the vampire as a manifestation of late-Victorian cultural anxieties related to issues like technology, race, class, and gender. We write two papers exploring the argumentative structures of selected critical essays, including one paper in which we analyze the argument of a single critical essay and a second in which we synthesize the arguments of several essays, then return to vampire-related fiction and films of the 20th and 21st centuries to consider whether arguments made about Dracula apply to recent vampire texts. Ultimately we strive to articulate why vampires are culturally persistent. What do 20th century vampires teach us about society, about anxieties, about what scares and titillates us? In a third and final paper, students will conduct research and situate their argument about a vampire-related primary text of their choosing within current relevant academic debates.

Students should note that this class engages explicit representations of sexuality and violence.

Section D
A. Aftab
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
R. Roderick
MWF 10:30-11:20
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 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
R. May
MWF 10:30-11:20
Vampires!

This section of 76-101 uses vampires as a vehicle to develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. We begin the semester discussing Bram Stoker’s Dracula then study critical essays about Dracula that address the vampire as a manifestation of late-Victorian cultural anxieties related to issues like technology, race, class, and gender. We write two papers exploring the argumentative structures of selected critical essays, including one paper in which we analyze the argument of a single critical essay and a second in which we synthesize the arguments of several essays, then return to vampire-related fiction and films of the 20th and 21st centuries to consider whether arguments made about Dracula apply to recent vampire texts. Ultimately we strive to articulate why vampires are culturally persistent. What do 20th century vampires teach us about society, about anxieties, about what scares and titillates us? In a third and final paper, students will conduct research and situate their argument about a vampire-related primary text of their choosing within current relevant academic debates.

Students should note that this class engages explicit representations of sexuality and violence.

Section FF
C. Stamm
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 G  
B. Vukoder  
MWF 10:30-11:20  
*A Seat in the Dark: Why Do We Watch Movies?*

As the story goes, when the French film pioneers Auguste and Louis Lumière premiered their brief 1895 film “The Arrival of a Train a La Ciotat Station,” the crowd of spectators jumped up from their seats in a fit of fear, believing the train was charging directly towards them. They were certain it was real. Seven years later, another Frenchman George Méliès’ debuted the whimsical and bizarre tale of *A Trip to the Moon*, invoking a sense of wonder and possibility in the audience. Cinema from thereon became many things, offering viewers a spectrum of experiences teetering between reality and fantasy, representation and imagination.

Even amidst the rise of television and the Internet, movies today are still a tremendously popular medium. Tickets sales are on the rise, and viewers now have instantaneous access to a seemingly endless library of films via Netflix, Amazon, or On-Demand. Prolific and pervasive, movies have become such a staple of modern culture that we rarely step back and ask why we watch them. In what ways can cinema tell us who we are or what we should be? Is it possible to express ourselves from a seat in the theater? Can cinema make or reinforce communities? To what extent can movies enlighten or trivialize? Why do they entertain us?

These and other questions will serve as the focus for this 76-101 course. In exploring the connection between the spectator and cinema, we will learn and apply analytical methods for engaging academic and popular criticism, feature-length films and clips, other primary artifacts, and more. Students will write essays that analyze arguments and synthesize perspectives surrounding this topic, culminating in a final essay in which they make a contribution to our contemporary knowledge that will in part answer the question of why we watch movies.

Section GG  
S. Seibert  
MWF 10:30-11:20  
*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 H  
J. Harrell  
MWF 11:30-12:20  
*How to Live with Others: Etiquette in the 21st Century*

Is it polite to talk on your cell phone when you’re on an elevator? Should you open the door for a woman? For a man? When may you leave your seat at a baseball game? 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 classical philosophers, media columnists, and academic scholars approach the problem of life lived among others. 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 which persuasively argues for it. Throughout the class you will thinking 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.

Section HH  
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? In this course we will reflect on the meaning and uses of music in modern society, by examining 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.
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.

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 J
G. Stack
MWF 11:30-12:20

Dude, is that a three-eyed fish? Humanity, Technology, and the Environment

From bottle caps to the homes we live in, everything we touch comes at a price. As science and technology continue the rapid progression spurred by industrialization, we are finding ourselves in an increasingly complex society. Part of this complexity is the interconnectivity between ourselves, our progress, and the natural world that we live in. But what is the cost of our progress? How do we understand the environment that we live in? How can we harmonize this understanding with our ever-increasing technological advances? This course will examine these issues and perspectives surrounding the role of humanity and our relationship with the natural environment. To do so, we will read a complex and multifaceted set of arguments from a variety of perspectives and eras in order to get a notion of the “big picture” of humanity, technology, and the environment. The course will begin with the industrial revolution and early visionaries like Andrew Carnegie, tackle environmentalists from John Muir to Bill McKibben, and encounter modern social and technological issues ranging from the amazing advances made by Bill Gates and Steve Jobs to the dystopian visions of the future presented in the movie *Wall-E* and the novel *Feed*. In doing so, this course will focus on the points of tension that exist between technological advancement and environmental awareness, and the problem spaces that arise from issues of progress versus conservation and the role of the consumer.

By examining a variety of opinions and arguments, articulated in a variety of ways (newspaper articles, essays, fiction, academic journals, and film), we will be able to reach some conclusions about our complex relationship with the earth, and how technology can both benefit and impair the future of people and the planet. Over the course of the semester, we will analyze and synthesize the arguments of a number of experts in order to formulate our own opinions, resulting in an effort to make a unique contribution to this field of study. As we progress from our studies and transition into the world-at-large, it will be up to us shape future policy and progress; this course will give us a place to start.

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
P. Tantrigoda
MWF 12:30-1:20
*Understanding Self and Place in a Global Age*

Watching the war on Afghanistan on CNN while enjoying a Chinese take-out dinner is a routine experience of modern life in an age of globalization. However, despite its appearance of mundaneness, globalization seems to have a profound transformative impact on our lives and experiences by creating a complex network of interconnections and interdependencies. This ‘complex connectivity’ changes the very ways in which we define self and place. In this section of 76-101, we will examine the issue of “how do we understand self and place in an era of ‘complex connectivity’?” We will focus on a range of critical responses to the effects of globalization on self/identity, culture, education, and work. While some critics argue that the transformations brought about by globalization are liberatory, enabling us to routinely imagine the possibility of studying, working, and living in different parts of the globe, others regard it as a highly uneven process that poses a threat to our sense of identity and culture.

We will read a range of academic essays, magazine articles, interviews and documentary film that address these different views regarding the experience of globalization. We will also analyze and synthesize arguments within these texts and, finally, develop our own contribution to the discussion on how can we understand our selves, others, and place within a global context.

Section L
K. Sampsel
MWF 12:30-1:20
*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.

Section LL
A. Berardi Tennant
MWF 12:30-1:20
Take Me to Your Leader

According to folklore, Thomas Paine offered the choice to lead, follow, or get out of the way. Most of us encounter these choices in both our daily social interactions with friends and in our work. This section of Interpretation and Argument delves into an idea behind those categories: What does it mean to lead? Beginning with readings from Machiavelli’s classic treatise The Prince, we will consider how classical, scholarly, and public arguments define leadership as a concept and also as an interaction. For example, are good leaders the ones who never “complain down,” or are they individuals who allow us to see their struggles? What happens when we imagine leadership as a collaborative venture rather than an autonomous one? This issue of what makes a leader resonates with us as we consider how we vote for our political leaders and how we make our everyday alliances, both face-to-face and online. Throughout the semester, we will read both popular and academic arguments so that we can analyze single arguments, synthesize diverse arguments on the course issue, and eventually author our own arguments on leadership.

Section M
N. Suzelis
MWF 12:30-1:20
Resistance 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 MM**
**G. Stack**
**MWF 12:30-1:20**

*Dude, is that a three-eyed fish? Humanity, Technology, and the Environment*

From bottle caps to the homes we live in, everything we touch comes at a price. As science and technology continue the rapid progression spurred by industrialization, we are finding ourselves in an increasingly complex society. Part of this complexity is the interconnectivity between ourselves, our progress, and the natural world that we live in. But what is the cost of our progress? How do we understand the environment that we live in? How can we harmonize this understanding with our ever-increasing technological advances? This course will examine these issues and perspectives surrounding the role of humanity and our relationship with the natural environment. To do so, we will read a complex and multifaceted set of arguments from a variety of perspectives and eras in order to get a notion of the “big picture” of humanity, technology, and the environment. The course will begin with the industrial revolution and early visionaries like Andrew Carnegie, tackle environmentalists from John Muir to Bill McKibben, and encounter modern social and technological issues ranging from the amazing advances made by Bill Gates and Steve Jobs to the dystopian visions of the future presented in the movie *Wall-E* and the novel *Feed*. In doing so, this course will focus on the points of tension that exist between technological advancement and environmental awareness, and the problem spaces that arise from issues of progress versus conservation and the role of the consumer.

By examining a variety of opinions and arguments, articulated in a variety of ways (newspaper articles, essays, fiction, academic journals, and film), we will be able to reach some conclusions about our complex relationship with the earth, and how technology can both benefit and impair the future of people and the planet. Over the course of the semester, we will analyze and synthesize the arguments of a number of experts in order to formulate our own opinions, resulting in an effort to make a unique contribution to this field of study. As we progress from our studies and transition into the world-at-large, it will be up to us shape future policy and progress; this course will give us a place to start.
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.

Making ☮

What actions, emotions, and systems accompany a person’s commitment to making peace in contexts such as war, racism, and labor exploitation that operate on both an (inter)national level and in daily life? Why commit to peacemaking in the first place? In this section of 76-101, we will learn academic reading and writing skills by engaging in arguments about peacemaking. We will read explorations of peacemaking from empirical, historical/philosophical, linguistic, popular, and religious perspectives in order to have a broad understanding, and we will “read” multiple media and modes of argument in order to understand and embrace the affordances of each one. In tandem with our reading, we will also write three essays to build up to participating in this conversation, corresponding to the skills of analysis, synthesis, and contribution.

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 OO
N. Pensky
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 P
M. Zebrowski
MWF 1:30-2:20

*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 PP
J. Wilton
MWF 1:30-2:20

*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 Q
A. Cooke
MWF 2:30-3:20
Boycotts, Bullets, or Bits? Questioning Forms of Political Protest

“Disobedience,” according to Henry David Thoreau, “is the true foundation of liberty.” If we assume Thoreau is right that forms of protest are necessary for 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 social protest and their effects in political systems. We analyze civil-rights era arguments regarding the value of violent and non-violent forms of protest, and question how contemporary culture may challenge, update, or extend such arguments. Particularly, how valuable and legitimate is “hacktivism” and digital forms of political resistance? 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 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 QQ
J. Goessling
MWF 2:30-3:20
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 R
A. Wiscomb
MWF 2:30-3:20

**The Question Concerning Technology**

“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 good, bad, neutral, or somewhere in between, however, depends on us understanding: what is technology doing in our lives? In this course we will examine popular disagreements over how technologies change the way we read, encourage or discourage democracy and political participation, and alter our relationships to each other and ourselves. We will pay particular attention to how technologies may or may not determine aspects of our thinking, and to arguments concerning the long-term effects of future technology breakthroughs in genetics, nanotech, and robotics.

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 most) technologies, and learn to articulate fundamental disagreements between those perspectives. Ultimately, students will advance their own arguments that contribute to ongoing, academic discussions in human-computer interaction, information science, business, digital literacy studies, and media and communication technology studies.

### Section RR
T. Dawson
MWF 2:30-3:20

**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
M. Lambert
MWF 3:30-4:20
Pittsburgh: The Landscape of a City

When we think of Pittsburgh, we often envision the Golden Triangle, an image popularized by countless paintings and photographs of the city. But what might have someone seen if beholding the area 300 years ago? What might they have seen 100 years ago? 50 years ago? What will they see in the future?

In this 76101 class, we will examine the development of Pittsburgh from a frontier wilderness to a 21st Century technological urban hub. In doing so, we will look at the special obstacles the region’s unique geography and landscape held for the builders of Pittsburgh, the effects of pollution on Pittsburgh’s civic character and residents, and the effects of various urban reform movements in Pittsburgh of both national and local origins—from the City Beautiful Movement of the late 19th and early 20th century to the more recent redevelopment, urban gardening, and public arts projects in neighborhoods like the Strip and East Liberty. In looking at the physical, economic, and cultural changes occurring in Pittsburgh over the years, we will hone in on debates over problems concerning urban design in the city. These will include problems associated with social issues like race and class (e.g. debates over public space, gentrification, and controversial civil works projects) as well as those associated with the environment (e.g. “green” building, natural resource extraction, and air pollution).

Over the course of the class, we will learn strategies to help us analyze and synthesize the various positions and approaches in these debates and eventually contribute our own argument to one of them. Furthermore, in order to better envision and understand Pittsburgh’s history, we will visit one or two places near CMU (e.g. Schenley Park) when the weather gets warmer. There will also be opportunities to go to events and places on and off campus, particularly those that pertain to the various issues and problems we will discuss.

Section SS
A. Wiscomb
MWF 3:30-4:20
The Question Concerning Technology

“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 good, bad, neutral, or somewhere in between, however, depends on us...
understanding: what is technology doing in our lives? In this course we will examine popular disagreements over how technologies change the way we read, encourage or discourage democracy and political participation, and alter our relationships to each other and ourselves. We will pay particular attention to how technologies may or may not determine aspects of our thinking, and to arguments concerning the long-term effects of future technology breakthroughs in genetics, nanotech, and robotics.

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 most) technologies, and learn to articulate fundamental disagreements between those perspectives. Ultimately, students will advance their own arguments that contribute to ongoing, academic discussions in human-computer interaction, information science, business, digital literacy studies, and media and communication technology studies.

Section T
T. Dawson
MWF 3:30-4:20

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 TT
K. Hamilton
TR 12:00-1:20

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.

Section U
E. Ferris
TR 1:30-2:50
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.