Writing 101.01: ILLNESS NARRATIVES

Instructor: Denise Comer

TuTh 11:45AM - 1:00PM

How does writing intersect with medicine? To what degree and in what capacities can patients participate in their own diagnosis and treatment? Illness narratives--texts that offer a narrative experience of illness written or told by the patient, physician, or other individuals--are one way of addressing these questions. While much of Western medicine has traditionally focused on scientific observation, clinical evidence, and physician interpretation, there has been an increase over the past twenty years in the use of illness narratives as a way of enhancing this approach, improving patient care, and better understanding how medical knowledge is created.

Since our primary focus will be academic writing, this line of inquiry will help us think deliberately about how writing participates in medical learning and knowledge, and what the
impacts are of the broader field of medical humanities. Over the semester, we will read and write about a variety of illness narratives and critical theories that raise and address questions about narrative medicine, and we will work together to revise and develop our writing. Our first shorter writing projects will ask you to write and respond to foundational texts about narrative medicine, including Arthur Kleinman’s The Illness Narratives: Suffering, Healing, and the Human Condition and Rita Charon’s “Narrative Medicine: Honoring the Stories of Illness.” This theoretical work will then help you formulate the questions we will be asking of a full-length illness narrative for your first major writing project. For this project, you may choose from a selected list that includes such narratives as Arthur Frank’s At the Will of the Body or Lucy Grealy’s Autobiography of a Face. Your second and final writing project, developed and revised over stages with a proposal, annotated bibliography, and literature review, will offer you the opportunity to extend your thinking and writing on illness narratives by expanding on one aspect of this field and developing a longer research project, such as women and illness narratives, culture and illness narratives, or cancer illness narratives.

Writing 101.02: INTERROGATING NEW FAD DIETS

Instructor: Cary Moskovitz

TuTh 10:05AM-11:20AM

At the University of Chicago, one scientist is conducting experiments on what the BBC has called "a whole new way of fasting"—eating one's regular diet every other day and eating minimally the other days. The BBC, which aired "Eat, Fast and Live Longer" last February, claimed that such a diet has "powerful results on the body and rolls back the decades, and it’s also good for the brain"—reducing one's risk for diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s. And then there's the "paleo" diet—low carb, high in protein in fat. A quick Google search will turn up dozens of hits for the paleo diet in just the last few years. These diets are big news, with coverage from news outlets such as U.S. News, the L.A. Times and NPR to blogs like WebMD, Huffington Post, and wikiHow. But we've seen such sweeping claims made for diets many times before—diets that ten years later didn't live up to the hype. Are the new ones different?

In this section of Writing 101, we will investigate the hype and science behind current fad diets such as intermittent fasting as the focus for developing skills in academic reading, writing and research. We will begin with an emphasis on research skills, learning how to locate the most relevant and useful sources for an academic project. Then, using select principles of health science research and statistics, students will practice careful reading, effective summary, and skeptical analysis as they draft and revise reviews of recent experimental research reports on different types and possible benefits of alternate-day dieting. Finally, building on their own work and that of their classmates from the first half of the term, students will write scholarly scientific essays discussing some aspect of the current science of alternate day diets. Audiences for student writing will include both classmates and health-science professionals. This course will involve a
considerable amount of out-of-class group work, especially in the first half of the semester. Prior coursework in statistics is useful but not required. Students will have the opportunity to participate in the Duke Reader Project (dukereaderproject.org); those who elect to participate will be matched with a Duke alum or employee in a health science field who will provide feedback on drafts of two writing assignments.

Writing 101.03: EMBODYING SOCIAL MEANING

Instructor: Marcia Rego

TuTh 1:25PM-2:40PM

Everywhere around the globe, people adorn, paint, mutilate, shave, or otherwise transform their bodies. Practices as diverse as cannibalism in the Amazon and extreme body art in North America have variously embodied personal, religious or political values, while prescribing forms of social interaction.

In this course, we will read and write about the physical body as a locus for social meaning, both in industrial and non-industrial societies worldwide. In the process of examining cross-cultural rituals, procedures and beliefs surrounding the body, you will compose short weekly essays in which you will practice different aspects of academic writing (i.e., acknowledging sources, delineating a claim, and supporting an argument). These essays will help you build both a theoretical background and a repertoire of writing skills that you will use to produce two longer projects.

For the first project, you will focus on a specific way in which societies classify, discriminate, consume or commodify bodies, as you research a body practice of your choosing – from body piercing, to circumcision, to organ donation. The second project will be a photo-annotation essay, in which you will critically analyze an advertisement from the popular media (e.g. an ad for cosmetics, sports shoes, deodorant, a gym membership) for the statement(s) it makes about the body. All assignments are designed to foster your skills as an academic writer, as you engage in multiple drafts, revisions and peer-critique workshops of your writing projects.

Writing 101.04 &101.82: STRANGER THAN FICTION

Instructor: Kevin Casey

MW 1:25PM-2:40PM--MW 3:05PM-4:20PM

We categorize our favorite stories: this is realism, that's fantasy, this is romance, that's a vampire-themed fantasy romance, this is a crime thriller, that is Literature. This kind of genre
classification becomes especially fragmented in the broad realm of speculative fiction: science fiction, fantasy, post-apocalyptic, dystopian, horror -- and that's just a quick gloss of major categories, each of which also have all manner of subgenres and hybrids. Speculative stories possess futuristic elements or other qualities that exclude them from neat classification as "realistic." Yet some of these apparently unrealistic stories touch very current nerves: violence, disaster, government oppression, racism, gender inequity, and other issues real people live with or witness every day.

We're going to investigate supposedly unrealistic writing that unsettles our current realities or otherwise challenges the safe haven that "it's just make-believe." We'll focus on stories that rely on speculative genre conventions to engage significant contemporary issues but that simultaneously defy easy categorization in a specific genre. Our reading will include novels such as Margaret Atwood (The Handmaid's Tale), Colson Whitehead (The Intuitionist), Cormac McCarthy (The Road), and selected essays and articles on genre from both scholarly and non-scholarly sources. These form the basis of our conversation and writing about speculative fiction and its intersection with our real worlds.

Major writing projects (all assignments double-spaced) will include a close reading of one of the novels (5 pages), a research proposal (2 pages) and subsequent research paper (10 pages) that makes a significant argument about how one (or more) of the novels we read manipulates speculative genre conventions and archetypes and to what purpose, and a collaborative WordPress blog (brief, regular posts throughout the semester) on contemporary speculative genre definitions and debates. Our blog will engage with other relevant digital media and posts could include, as one example, exploration of how social media impacts contemporary genre creation and interpretation. Drafting, revision, peer feedback, and thoughtful contributions to seminar discussions are all key parts of our work together.

Writing 101.05: AF-AM LITERATURE & OBAMA

Instructor: Sasha Ann Panaram

TuTh 3:05PM-4:20PM

On August 10, 2004, Barack Obama published his first autobiography, Dreams from My Father. This memoir documents how Obama conceived of his biracial identity as a young adult. Apart from showing how blackness manifests in the places he lived, Obama also charts how his vocation develops as he familiarizes himself with his family history. Obama’s search for his father, changing relationship to home, and negotiation of abandonment not only disclose critical life moments, but also signal familiar African American literary tropes. Our task is to deduce if Obama over-determines these tropes as a means of fashioning himself as a black author. In addition to thinking about Obama as a scholar of law and history, this class invites students to read Obama as a scholar of literature and ask questions like: How does Obama relate to
canonical African American texts such as Souls of Black Folk, Invisible Man, and God Help the Child. Together, we will create a working definition of “African American literature” and identify whether Obama contributes to that definition.

Our class will include writing workshops that will establish a community of scholars who can support one another through all stages of the writing process including brainstorming, first drafts, and revisions. The first paper (3-4pp) consists of a close reading of Dreams where students will generate macro arguments after attending closely to the text. The second comparative paper (5-6pp) challenges students to think across texts and note how Obama employs writing techniques that mirror or depart from the black literary tradition. Students will also keep a writing journal. These assignments will prepare students for their final project (800 words), which is to write an opinion-editorial piece that discusses Obama’s self-making. This exercise will invite students to embrace their roles as public intellectuals and write for audiences beyond the academy.

Writing 101.07, 101.55, 101.71: EXTRA-POETIC

Instructor: Stefania Heim

MW 8:30AM-9:45AM-MW 3:05PM - 4:20PM- MW 4:40PM - 5:55PM

EXTRA-POETIC: THE POETIC IMAGINATION ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES

What if we read poems to find out about current events? What if we read poems to learn about the composition of distant galaxies? What if, instead of defining poetry through a checklist of particular formal techniques, we investigated those techniques (metaphor, repetition, juxtaposition, and white space among them) as interventions in broad fields of thought and inquiry? What if we believed that poetry isn’t just ornamental language, cleverness, or trickery but is, instead, what the poet Muriel Rukeyser called it in 1949: “one kind of knowledge”? In EXTRA-POETIC, we will heed Rukeyser’s description and ask: how does poetry create and communicate knowledge? We will read and write about a range of strange, exciting, and frequently moving poems that trespass into other disciplines—including botany, journalism, history, geology, and philosophy. We will also read and write about an even wider range of source materials—transcripts of government hearings, manuals of urban planning, Linnaean taxonomy, and Charles Sanders Peirce’s logic graphs. In teasing out the possible relationships between form and content, we will take the poetic projects we encounter seriously as art, science, and humanistic inquiry.

As language both reflects and constructs our relationships with fields of knowledge and with the world around us, writing will be the subject as well as a major tool of our inquiry in this course. In other words, through our own creative and exploratory writing experiments, investigative research, analytical writing, peer workshopping, revision, and lively discussion, we will explore
how the texts assigned for the course work and what their forms and language illuminate about
the fields into which they delve. Two major writing projects will be broken into discrete
components that build over the course of the semester. The first is a research paper for which you
will follow a poet down the rabbit hole of investigation, taking on as your own their field of
inquiry, and analyzing their poetic choices through that lens. The second is a collaborative online
anthology of investigative poems that we will create as a class. In developing these projects you
will submit some writing – whether graded or ungraded – each week of the semester. This
weekly writing might include brainstorms, short close-readings of passages, annotated
bibliographies, personal reflections, feedback for your peers, drafts, or revisions of earlier
assignments.

Writing 101.08 & 101.56: INTL MIGRATION IN N. AMERICA

Instructor: Janine Rose

MW 8:30AM-9:45AM- MW 1:25PM - 2:40PM

Encounters with International Migration in North American Cities

Approximately 180 million individuals or 3% of the world’s population reside in places that are
outside their country of birth. The United States and Canada are among the most important
destination countries with cities such as New York and Toronto being major places of settlement.
Additionally, the migration of international populations, particularly racialized groups, has had
significant social, economic and political impacts on the countries of origin and destination. In
this course, you will focus on how geography and identity shape the migration process and the
experiences of immigrants at their destination. Using information derived from text and film, you
will write about the circumstances influencing the nature of international migration as well the
experiences of immigrants who are often of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. The following
themes will be emphasized during the course: theories explaining the causes of migration; the
global interconnections that emerge as a result of the connections that immigrants maintain with
their countries of birth and issues that influence the social and economic integration of
immigrants in the USA and Canada.

To better understand the implications of migration for everyday life in North America, you will
write weekly reflections that will not only allow for an understanding of complex international
migration trends but will also facilitate your practice with different aspects of writing. You will
use these weekly reflections to explore your own ideas and (mis)conceptions about immigrants
and the immigration process. Weekly writing tasks will also include composing critiques that
address gaps and complexities in the readings and examine connections between the course
material and your own personal experiences or observations. Further, these weekly papers will
also allow you to practice and develop a repertoire of writing skills that will prove useful for the final writing project.

For the final writing assignment, you will be asked to use what you have learned about the experiences of immigrants, other individuals implicated in the migration process and the academic literature on international migration to write a research paper that analyzes the impact of international migration on a city of your choice. This writing assignment will allow you to use your understanding of contemporary debates about immigration to explain how immigration is resulting in changes to the social and geographical landscape of many North American cities and communities. This exercise will involve identifying factors that make the immigration experience unique for immigrants in particular locations and interpreting reasons for these differences.

Associated with the final project is an outline that you will create and revise prior to submitting the final writing assignment. This outline will allow you to develop and articulate your ideas before submitting a full draft of your research paper. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to further develop your ideas and arguments through discussions that will take place in workshops dedicated to essay development. During the workshops, you will provide and receive feedback from classmates on the relevance of evidence to be used in your research paper as well as the clarity and effectiveness of the thesis statement, topic sentences and preliminary paragraphs presented in the outline. You will improve your skills as a writer through the practice of revising and editing the final research essay based on critiques received during the essay writing workshops.

Writing 101.09 & 101.10: ETHICS OF OPEN INNOVATION

Instructor: Aria Chernik

TuTh 10:05AM - 11:20AM - TuTh 11:45AM - 1:00PM

Open culture is a free culture movement that shares affinities with the hacker, open source, and maker communities. In this context, “free” refers to our indispensable human freedoms, not to something being free of charge. As Richard Stallman, founder of the GNU Project and the free software movement, famously explained this distinction, freedom here means “‘free speech,’ not ‘free beer.’” Open culture refers to a belief in the freedom to share and modify cultural products (such as, for example, knowledge, creative works, legislative documents) for the benefit of the human commons; it is both a social justice movement and an ethos that understands the human condition as a public commons.

In this course we will compose arguments about some of the most pressing legal and philosophical issues surrounding open culture, such as internet neutrality, intellectual property
innovations, and access to information. Mirroring the shifting, contemporary nature of knowledge delivery, our texts will include TED Talks, news articles, blogs, digital journals, and other open-access modes of information, argument, and inquiry. Similarly, your composing assignments will vary in length and mode of communication. Shorter-form compositions will include, for example, tweets, collaboration manifestos, workshop critiques, and project self-evaluation reflections. There will be two longer-form compositions: a collaboratively designed and produced podcast (Project 1) and a video essay (Project 2). For both Project 1 and Project 2, you will have the opportunity to select and research an area of inquiry pertaining to the topic of our course.

Writing 101.12 & 101.13: DRUG WAR MEXICO

Instructor: Mara Kaufman

TuTh 1:25PM-2:40PM - TuTh 4:40PM-5:55PM

This course will look at what is commonly referred to as the War on Drugs in Mexico and examine its social, economic, and political context. The semester will begin with an overview of current conditions in Mexico and throughout the Americas, with a focus on the role of the drug economy and various aspects of the War on Drugs. We will then make a brief historical tour through key moments of the development of the Mexican nation before moving to the late 20th century political and economic shifts that brought Mexico squarely into the global economy. We then return to contemporary Mexico to examine the intersection of transnational capital, foreign relations, and the transnational drug trade, with a focus on the way communities on the ground throughout the nation live these new realities.

The writing in this course will be focused on developing skills in research-based writing and cultivating the capacity for analytical and ethical expression. Our tasks will include learning to read course materials critically, identify and present the main ideas of assigned texts, plan and carry out independent research, structure an analysis or argument, and develop clarity and coherence in writing style. Core assignments for this course will be a short essay on one aspect of the drug economy and its effects on Mexican society, followed by an in-depth team-based research project on one contemporary grassroots community movement in Mexico in the context of the War on Drugs. Throughout the course, we will engage in an interactive process of sharing, reviewing, and revising our work together in a way that enriches the writing process both individually and collectively.
The 20th century saw the establishment of several significant LGBTQ archival collections. These physical repositories of information include the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives in Los Angeles, California (the oldest and largest LGBTQ archive in the world); the GLBT Historical Society in San Francisco, California; the Lesbian Herstory Archives in Brooklyn, New York; and Durham, North Carolina’s own Sallie Bingham Center for Women’s History and Culture at Duke University. Many of these physical sites also function as exhibit and event spaces for LGBTQ artists and community members.

The goal of this course is not only to explore and analyze the documents, manuscripts, and ephemera held in these archives, to glean what we can from them about LGBTQ life and history, but to also consider how institutional settings, collecting practices, and the arrangement of materials—the composition of the collections—shapes what we think we know about LGBTQ people and communities, both past and present.

While these physical sites remain important resources for scholarly research and community building, new media and affordable digital technologies have also given artists and activist archivists the opportunity to compose community-based “counter-archives.” What constitutes “counter-archival” practices and what stories of LGBTQ life emerge in these other sites and media formats that are perhaps foreclosed by more conventional archives? We’ll look at archival and artistic projects that include Country Queers, the Queer Zine Archive Project, the Trans Oral History Project, Cheryl Dunye’s mockumentary Watermelon Woman and Alison Bechdel’s graphic memoir Fun Home, among others. How and to what extent might these community-based and artistic collections “queer” our notion of the both the archive and the historical narratives we cull from them?

The first major writing project will be a traditional academic research paper that makes use of the archival collections housed at Duke’s Sallie Bingham Center for Women’s History and Culture. After becoming familiar with a range of physical and digital collections, your second major project will ask you to help collect and curate materials for the Durham LGBTQ History Project OR compose an archival collection of your own using Omeka, a digital content curating tool. You will reflect on these experiences of collecting and curating in a mid-project debrief and a short final essay.
Faith and Fury: Violence, Belief, and Literature in the “Secular” West

Can religion be held responsible for violence? Can the interpretation of religious texts justify violence? These questions have become urgently relevant in the wake of the September 11 attacks and the subsequent war on terror. The opening of the twenty-first century has witnessed terrible violence perpetrated by self-declared religious-political movements, from ISIS in Iraq and Syria to the extremist branches of the Hindu nationalist movement in India. Responding to these conflicts, we have come to think of the threat of religious violence as a particularly contemporary problem, a problem that stems from a clash of cultures: peaceful modern secularism against violent primitive fanaticism. Historians and sociologists of religion, however, have recently started to challenge this view. They argue that modern western states were born from the tumults of early modern religious wars in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. In this class we will explore how the concept of nation-state that developed in the Renaissance is deeply implicated with our current war on terror. We will ask: how are religious beliefs used to justify acts of violence and what are the origins of the separation of state and religion that characterize the secular west?

Our investigation of religious violence will begin with three early-modern authors who, in strikingly different ways, addressed the problem of the relationship between religious belief, state power, and violence. First, we will turn to John Milton’s *Samson Agonistes*, a dramatic poem that has been seen as a potentially dangerous incitement to terrorism from the time of its publication in 1671. We will then consider the work of two political philosophers, Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and John Locke (1632-1704), who proposed antagonistic answers to the problem of religious violence. We will tackle the ideas of Milton, Hobbes, and Locke by both placing them within the broader context of early modern writings on religion and violence and by considering them within the theoretical frameworks proposed in post-9/11 reflections on religion and secularism by literary scholars, philosophers, theologians, journalists, and historians.

In turn, you will develop your own approach to the questions raised by these readings in three main writing assignments: the first two shorter papers (4-6 double-spaced pages each) are designed to help you approach primary sources and effectively use secondary readings assigned in class; a longer research essay (8-10 double-spaced pages) will ask you to place two primary readings in conversation with each other and with secondary material of your choice. Throughout the semester, you will turn in a series of shorter assignments that will focus on a specific aspect of writing (paper proposals, close-reading exercises, annotated bibliography, etc.), create a collaborative class blog, and workshop drafts in class and in one-on-one meetings with the instructor. We end the semester by creating a class podcast—*Writing about religion and*
violence, then and now—aimed at first year Duke students who have not taken this writing course.

Writing 101.16 & 101.17: NEUROPLASTICITY: TRAIN YR BRAIN

Instructor: Emily Parks

WF 8:30AM - 9:45AM- WF 1:25PM - 2:40PM

Full Title- “Neuroplasticity: Can we train the brain?”

Can meditating make you smarter? What about playing the piano or even video games? Can the brain, historically considered a static organ, be reshaped as we interact with the world?

Scientists now recognize that the human brain is not completely hard-wired and can change in response to injury or experience. This phenomenon, known as neuroplasticity, has been demonstrated across a variety of contexts from stroke patients to healthy individuals who practice meditation. In response to findings such as these, a surge of products has emerged promising to enhance brain function by “training” the brain. Consumers are told that using these products will improve the “fitness” of the mind. Scientific support for such claims has been mixed, however, leaving researchers to ask questions such as: Do the benefits of brain training last, and can they be generalized across other brain functions? And more broadly, how flexible is the brain?

This course will introduce you to the goals and practices of academic writing as we explore the science behind brain plasticity. We will read, discuss, and write about various forms of neuroplasticity and evaluate claims that brain function has improved as a result of training. Unlike most courses, which tend to emphasize the product of writing, this course will focus on the process of writing - the stages of critical reading, reflection, drafting, and revising of a work-in-progress. Drawing from sources ranging from scientific journals to mainstream media to your own data, you will complete several projects as you engage in the writing process. First, you will learn to actively read and respond to scientific texts by critiquing journal articles within the field of neuroplasticity. In the second project, you will extend the work of others as you articulate a new position, writing a “Letter to the Editor” in response to a news report based on peer-reviewed science. For the final writing project, you will draw upon evidence from scientific research to propose an original study. You will select a type of training and then design and conduct an experiment to investigate its effectiveness. In this project you will serve as both scientist and participant; you will develop the study, as well as measure your own performance during training. Each of these projects will undergo multiple stages of revision and editing as you share your work with other students.
Writing 101.18 & 101.70: CARIBBEAN MUSIC AND POLITICS

Instructor: Vincent Joos

TuTh 1:25PM-2:40PM- TuTh 3:05PM - 4:20PM


Caribbean music is popular the world over. Bangkok has more salsa clubs per capita than any other metropolis in the world. The Stuttgart Bachata Festival attracts thousands of dancers from all over Europe each year. Merengue has been the dominant dance music in Angola since the 1970s, and reggae songs have regularly topped the UK charts for the past 40 years. Caribbean music makes up a great part of our contemporary global entertainment soundscape, but very few listeners of these styles of music know the colonial, religious and scientific environments in which these sounds emerged. The goal of this course is to introduce you to academic writing by asking you to map, analyze and write about Caribbean music, the social context of its emergence and the radical political propositions it puts forth by drawing from the diverse disciplines of anthropology, ethnomusicology, audio engineering and social history.

The course is divided in sections built around specific writing projects that will help us to develop research and listening skills. The class comprises three complementary building blocks. In Section 1 we will use WordPress websites to craft an interactive sonic map where we will discuss the technical and cultural specificities of various musical styles. In Section 2 we will precisely analyze Jamaican Dub Poetry and write a 5-page essay that addresses the science, literature and politics that lie behind this seminal musical style. In Section 3 we will fully use the anthropological lens to critically assess a musical album of your choice in a 7-page essay. The essays will go through peer review and multiple stages of revision and editing. Over the semester, we will of course listen to many different Caribbean musical genres and read CD and vinyl records liner notes in order to glean information about bands, musicians and engineering and production techniques. We will move from famous albums by Bob Marley or Compay Segundo to less known folkloric recordings of early Calypso, Bachata, Mento or Rumba. We will seek to understand the sonic and social qualities of these records by reading ethnographic analysis of Caribbean music. Sonjah Stanley Niaah’s Dancehall: From Slave Ship to Ghetto, Francio Guadeloupe’s Calypso, Christianity, and Capitalism in the Caribbean, Peter Manuel’s Caribbean Currents: Caribbean Music from Rumba to Reggae or Michael Veal’s Dub: Soundscapes and Shattered Songs in Jamaican Reggae will serve as some of our travel guides in the complex worlds of Caribbean music, politics, religion and science.

Have you ever sat in class and asked yourself, “Will I ever use this information in another class, or ever again?” Transferring knowledge from one learning environment to another, different environment is an explicit goal of the Thompson Writing Program and, arguably, the goal of your college education as a whole. But does this transfer happen? If so, how does it happen? And
what can you, or your teachers, or the university, do to foster it? These questions are all subjects of ongoing research and debate in academic circles; the outcomes of these debates directly influence how your classes are structured, what types of assignments you are given, and even the in-class activities teachers assign. But student voices are often omitted from these debates, except as research subjects in case studies.

Writing 101.19: WRITING ON & THROUGH LEARNING

Instructor: Eliana Schonberg

TuTh 3:05PM - 4:20PM

Following on the work of educational researcher Joanne Lobato, who advocates an actor-oriented approach to transfer (2003; 2012), this class will put you, the students, in the writing and research drivers’ seats, specifically examining the transfer of writing knowledge and skills. In other words, we’ll see whether it’s possible to measure the transfer of writing abilities not by whether you successfully met your professor’s standards but by your application of your learning in a new situation, basing our research on your first-hand knowledge. We’ll do this in several ways: by writing in response to existing research on transfer from the fields of education, educational psychology, and composition studies; by proposing and trying our own writing research; and by engaging in plenty of written reflection as we go.

In addition to informal writings in response to readings, you’ll have the opportunity to write four formal assignments: a learning and literacy narrative; an annotated bibliography and group literature review; an experiment designed to facilitate transfer of writing knowledge and skills in you and your classmates; and a proposal addressing productive transfer approaches. As a class, we will evaluate the experiment designs and decide which to implement—and you will collaborate with classmates, which may involve visual or multimodal presentations depending on what format you feel will be most persuasive to your audience. Finally, you will create a portfolio that highlights your accomplishments in the course. You can select from among your formal and informal writings for the portfolio, and you will also complete a final self-reflection that analyzes your writing and reflects critically on your writing challenges and successes.
Writing 101.21, 101.22, 101.23: ISLAM IS NOT ISIS

Instructor: Aftab Jassal

MW 11:45AM - 1:00PM, MW 3:05PM - 4:20PM, MW 4:40PM - 5:55PM

“What Isis Really Wants,” the most widely shared article in The Atlantic magazine’s history, claims that “the Islamic State is Islamic. Very Islamic.” What is implied by this assertion? What kinds of historical and contemporary voices are left out of such discussions?

This Writing 101 course approaches Islamic thought and practice from a global perspective, to better understand the multifaceted nature of this religious tradition, which counts for approximately a quarter of the world’s population, from Jakarta to Durham. In this course, we will examine: the historical origins of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula; how Islam spread across the globe; the rich literary and cultural legacy of Sufism; and Islam as it is lived and experienced in different parts of the world. By the end of the semester, we will have the critical tools to deconstruct popular representations of Islam prevalent in the media.

The writing for this course will consist of biweekly response papers (250-300 words) and two formal writing projects, which will go through multiple stages of drafting and revision. The first major writing project, a comparative essay, will put two religious texts into conversation with each other. For the second project, we will visit a religious site to gain firsthand knowledge of Islam, interact with practicing Muslims in Durham, and produce a research paper based on our real-world experiences. Through the writing in this course, we will view religious texts as arguments that arise in response to urgent sociopolitical, moral, and aesthetic concerns. We will analyze religion “as argument” and will construct and critique our own written arguments about religion, thereby becoming active participants in ongoing processes of religious interpretation and dialogue.

Writing 101.24 & Writing 101.25: AFRICAN DIASPORA STUDIES

Instructor: Sachelle Ford

TuTh 8:30AM - 9:45AM- TuTh 10:05AM - 11:20AM

Archives and Affects: Composing the African Diaspora

Innovations in African diaspora studies offer new methods for us to examine how writing has been a crucial tool in composing the diaspora. An archival approach reconceptualizes diaspora as the circulation of ideas rather than a historical condition. Whereas, the work of literary writers and critics prompts us to investigate the affects and emotional states that situate being in diaspora.
as a feeling of belonging to a global community. In this section of Writing 101 we will use informal writing assignments and two major project sequences to explore how archives and affects make the African diaspora legible.

Our inquiry begins in the archive. By engaging Brent Hayes Edwards’ influential *The Practice of Diaspora* (2003) among other texts, we will study models of cultivating and excavating the black diaspora archive. Following their lead, you will work on the first major project sequence, the first part of which will give you the opportunity to examine a document from Duke’s special collection holdings. Then, as a member of a small group, you will assemble an archive of print culture by putting *old* texts into conversation to ask *new* questions. Your group will work together to design an effective way to present your findings to the class.

The second unit focuses on “close reading” literary and scholarly texts to examine the ways authors imagine diaspora as an affective experience. Key authors may include Claude McKay, Gayl Jones, Christina Sharpe, and Darieck Scott. You will write 2 informal responses (2-3 pages) to the readings in preparation of the second major project sequence. For this project, you will conduct research on a topic you find fascinating and important within African diaspora studies. You will learn and practice helpful drafting, workshop, and revision strategies while preparing the components of your research project: proposal (4 pages), bibliography (6 sources), and conference paper (8-10 pages).

Writing 101.26, 101.27, 101.28: MAKING MEANING OF "MADNESS"

Instructor: stef shuster

MW 11:45AM - 1:00PM, MW 3:05PM - 4:20PM, MW 4:40PM - 5:55PM

Over the semester we will explore the contexts that shape our collective understanding of why some behaviors come to be labeled as “mental illness” or in colloquial (and highly problematic) terms, “madness.” Mental illness is often cast as an individualized experience and a problem to “fix.” Yet, mental illness also functions by demarcating the boundaries between “abnormal” and “normal.” How are these categories created and how have they changed over time? Furthermore, what evidence is used to construct diagnoses and support psychotherapeutic treatments? We will use social scientific approaches from anthropology, sociology, disability studies, and history to critically analyze these questions.

Through reading, intentional discussion, reflection, written work, and peer reviews we will: (1) Explore responses to, and consequences of social, medical and cultural understandings of mental illness in (mostly) US society; (2) Develop critical thinking, oral communication, and writing skills which strengthen our ability to understand, integrate, analyze, and communicate complex ideas; and (3) Learn how to engage in research and writing processes.
Major course assignments include: 1) Composing a self-reflective blog entry; 2) Viewing and critically analyzing a film representing mental illness (4-6 pages); and 3) Researching a topic of your choosing related to mental illness and writing either a formal research paper (8-10 pages) or carefully constructing a final project in an alternative genre.

Writing 101.29: MUSIC IN SCIENCE FICTION FILMS

Instructor: Paul Sommerfeld

TuTh 8:30AM - 9:45AM

Since the beginning of film, music and science fiction have shared an intimate relationship with our wildest dreams and greatest fears. Science fiction encourages us to associate the fantastical with contemporary issues, and by nature, allows music to assert influence in diverse, expressive forms. Through close viewings—and listenings—of specific films as well as accompanying readings, we will explore how music guides our understanding of a film’s contents. We will begin by exploring the white male hero and Cold War politics in Star Wars (1977), Star Trek: The Wrath of Khan (1982), and The Day the Earth Stood Still (1952). We will continue with 2001: A Space Odyssey (1969) and Blade Runner (1982) to explore the uses of classical Western art music in science fiction. Other modules will focus on the role of popular music genres like techno and metal in The Matrix (1999); the sounds of silence and hyper-realism in Gravity (2013); and modern utopia and environmentalism in Wall-E (2008).

In the process of writing about these films’ diverse uses of sound and music, you will hone your skills as an academic writer, learn how to engage critically with film, music, and other scholars, and expand your own sonic vocabulary. Prior knowledge of musical or film terminology is not required. Your engagement with these films and the scholarship that surrounds them will take the form of 200-word blog-style reviews of each film; weekly readings; informal in-class writing; short weekly response assignments of 50-400 words; and a 2500-word final paper on a science fiction topic or film of your choice. We will develop and build up to all of these projects throughout the semester with writing workshops, small group work, collaboration, and peer review on the various phases of their development.
Writing 101.30 & 101.31: CULTURAL NARRATIVES OF ILLNESS

Instructor: Susan Thananopavarn

WF 8:30AM - 9:45AM-WF 11:45AM - 1:00PM

Implicitly or explicitly, the rock documentary promises to take the viewer-listener to places that are ordinarily off-limits. We go onstage, into the heart of the spectacle; into the recording studio, where the magic happens; and offstage, “behind the music,” where we encounter the artist with his or her mask down. This promise is certainly seductive – after all, who doesn’t enjoy feeling like an insider? But as media scholars point out, and as many documentarians freely admit, the documentary is by no means a disinterested record of what happens in those privileged spaces – rather, the reality projected by the documentarian is willfully composed, no less so than the artist profiles.

Through your study of (and engagement in) music documentary work, this course will help you to develop as an academic writer. Indeed, the processes undertaken by documentarians – sorting, editing, and composing gathered materials into compelling stories – are similar to those processes undertaken by scholars when they write.

Our texts in this course will include rockumentary films (one per week), critics’ responses to those films, and readings in documentary theory. You will respond to these texts in short, weekly writing assignments, and in two short analytical essays (~1000 words). Your course work will also include a six-minute film project (completed with a partner) that documents some aspect of local musical culture. Multimedia production is time intensive, and your project will proceed through multiple stages: proposal, draft, peer feedback, and revision. Familiarity with current technologies and techniques for multimedia productions is not a prerequisite for enrollment, but students with limited experience should expect to shoulder some responsibility for their own learning via one or more campus supports.

Writing 101.32 & Writing 101.43: BIOCULTURAL NATURE-CHILDHOOD

Instructor: Adam Boyette

MW 11:45AM - 1:00PM- MW 3:05PM - 4:20PM

All human societies must reproduce themselves through supporting the physical and social development of children. However, what comprises normal child rearing routines, values, and goals vary widely from culture to culture. While ultimately there is a biological foundation to concepts like “motherhood,” “fatherhood,” and “childhood,” rather than being universal, they are found to be the products of both biology and culture. In this course, students will learn skills in
academic writing and reading by engaging with and generating interdisciplinary research on the biocultural nature of childhood and child development.

In the first of three units, we will put Western theories of child development in cross-cultural perspective by reading ethnographic accounts of infancy and childhood from small-scale and non-Western cultures. Students will be given the opportunity to write short reflections on their own childhood in light of this wider view. An ethnographic fieldwork project will also help students get a sense for how anthropologists work and how to apply theories to make sense of the real experiences of parents and children. In the second unit, students will read classic work on John Bowlby’s psychobiological theory of Attachment and then deconstruct his theory in light of research in biological and cultural anthropology. Individual critical essays will let students enter the scholarly discussion and compose informed responses to questions such as: “Is a mother’s love unconditional?” or “Is there a biology of fatherhood?” Finally, in the third unit, students will work in teams and on their own to compose a presentation and research paper in which they apply a biocultural perspective to an issue in contemporary parenting or childcare such as: attachment parenting, “nature deficit disorder,” or childhood obesity.

Writing 101.34 & 101.35: How Did You Get So Smart?

Instructor: Adrienne Morgan

WF 11:45AM-1:00PM- WF 1:25PM - 2:40PM

How Did You Get So Smart? Perspectives on How You Learn What You Learn

When we leave home for the first time to attend college, a primary motivation is to learn-- both to gain knowledge in a specific academic discipline and to discover who we are as individuals. Regardless of your academic interests or career aspirations, understanding how you learn what you learn and the countless personal and environmental factors that influence this learning will help you both inside and outside the classroom. This course seeks to help you explore how your natural abilities, along with your personal relationships and our society-at-large, work together to influence how you learn information and skills and how to behave in a variety of situations.

In this course, we will examine and critique the various theories of learning suggested by several sub-disciplines of psychology and use this theory-base as a vehicle for academic writing. We will read and write about different theories and perspectives (e.g., nature vs nature, behaviorism, cognitivism, brain-based theories, social learning, and pedagogy) on learning across the lifespan (i.e., from birth to old age) using academic and popular culture texts, as well as film. We will understand learning not only as acquiring knowledge, but also as a behavioral process that results in new behavioral responses and skills.

As a student in this seminar, you, along with your peers, will lead our discussions about class topics. There will be 4 major types of writing assignments for this course: 1) weekly reaction papers in response to class reading and/or films; 2) a brief analysis (3-5 pages) of an assigned
reading; 3) current event assignments in which you will integrate your understanding of learning theories and apply them to current, real-world events; and 4) a final writing project (8-10 pages) in which you will propose a research study grounded in a particular learning theory. Our weekly reading, writing, and discussion experiences will give you the theoretical base and writing practice to complete the final writing project that will include several parts: 1) development of a research question and hypothesis; 2) review of the relevant research literature on the topic; 3) an annotated bibliography (4-6 references); and 4) discussion of research methodology you would use to answer your research questions. Class instruction time will be allotted each week for workshopping with your peers to revise and refine your writing assignments throughout the semester.


Instructor: Peter Pihos

TuTh 8:30AM - 9:45AM, TuTh 11:45AM - 1:00PM, TuTh 1:25PM - 2:40PM

The Problem of the Color Line: Studying Race in Urban America

“[T]he problem of the twentieth century,” as W.E.B. Dubois remarked in the opening pages of his 1903 masterpiece The Souls of Black Folk, “is the problem of the color line.” In this class, we will investigate the drawing and redrawing of the line of racial division in America’s cities during the twentieth century, exploring how race has been constructed and invested with meaning. Following Dubois, this class will investigate “the strange meaning of being black” from the 1890s through our times. Between 1910 and 1960, millions of blacks moved from the rural south to cities across the country, remaking the urban landscape. By studying the creation of, and life in, the racial ghettos that resulted, students will learn about how race is constructed and invested with meaning in particular times and places. Over the course of the twentieth century, black activists rose up against racial caste, putting their lives and livelihoods on the line for equality and justice. These freedom movements reconstructed American life.

In addition to reading monographic works by historians, students will spend a substantial proportion of the class reading and writing about primary sources, such as legal cases, oral histories, census data, and contemporaneous sociological studies. Students will do informal writing throughout the course, such as reading responses, short analyses of primary sources, and peer reviews. Students will engage in peer review of informal writing, as well as drafts of their essays. Over the semester, the class will explore what it means to write history in the twenty-first century, engaging in formal essay writing assignments as well as a variety of other types of writing. Students will consider different audiences and the challenges of writing in various forms—for peers, academic audiences, the wider public, etc.—as part of the process of learning the craft of academic writing.

Books will be available at the Regulator Bookshop on 9th Avenue.
In 2008, San Francisco held the first Slow Food conference in the United States. Thousands of “foodies” gathered to sample artisanal cheeses, attend wine tastings, and celebrate lifestyles that emphasized sustainability: eating local foods, driving hybrid cars, contemplating ecofriendly vacation options. There was also a session held on farmwork, although by all accounts it was sparsely attended—but it grabbed national headlines when Fast Food Nation author Eric Schlosser asked one simple question of his audience: “What good is a locally-grown, organic tomato if it was picked by slave labor?”

This simple question offers a glimpse into some of the complexities that underlie our current love affair with “sustainability.” Could we ask similar questions about hybrid cars, many of which are powered by electricity drawn from coal? Is “sustainability” a concept that applies best to ecotourism or might it play a role in thinking about San Francisco’s poorer relative, Oakland, whose minority neighborhoods are a series of food deserts with high rates of obesity, infant mortality, and childhood asthma? What, if anything, does “sustainability” have to do with justice?

This class is going to explore that question by exploring its history, which is a tale of two movements: the mainstream environmental movement, which is overwhelmingly white and middle-class and which gave birth to “sustainability,” and its upstart opponent, the environmental justice movement. The EJ movement emerged in the late 1970s as working-class communities, often populated mainly by people of color, began organizing to fight polluters and politicians for the sake of their communities. They raised difficult questions about what we do with the toxic byproducts of the lives we lead, even as they challenged the common wisdom of epidemiologists, legislators and mainstream environmental groups. To the promises offered by “sustainability,” they reply, always, “but what about justice?” Over time, their challenge has become part of our conversations about issues ranging from public health and hunger in America to how we should understand the impact of climate change.

In this course we’ll be exploring the contentious relationship between these two movements and how that history informs our current debates over justice and sustainability. We’ll be reading quite a few texts by historians, but we’ll also explore online sources and documentary film. There will be reading responses and reflective pieces throughout the semester to help you engage with the sources, as well as a short piece in which you assess a website on a historical controversy over environmental justice. There will also be a major research paper, based on a topic of your choice, and we’ll be doing a great deal of workshopping on that throughout the semester; you’ll have multiple chances to give and receive feedback on your writing as well as
time to revise thoroughly. By the end of the course, my hope is that you will have a better appreciation for the historical roots and current-day complexities that underlie the relationship between justice and sustainability, and feel more confident in your ability to communicate complex ideas clearly and persuasively to readers.

Writing 101.44: DECODING DISNEY

Instructor: Lisa Andres

TuTh 8:30AM - 9:45AM

“Breaking the Disney Spell: Decoding Disney’s Ideological Construction of Gender, Race, and Culture”

Fairy-tale scholar Jack Zipes believes “Walt Disney cast a spell on the fairy tale,” claiming that, for most American children and adults, “their first and perhaps lasting impression of these tales and others will have emanated from a Disney film, book, or artifact.” While originally printed in 1995, Zipes’s claim about the power of Disney still rings true: today, the Walt Disney Company is a multi-billion dollar empire, one which has evolved far beyond the fledgling cartoon studio Walt and Roy Disney founded in 1923. But just what exactly is the Disney empire? How far does its reach extend and how powerful is it? And, perhaps most importantly for this course, what are the values and messages that comprise the company’s ideology? How does the Walt Disney Company represent concepts such as romance, gender, race, history, and family? For example, why are Disney’s heroines primarily young and beautiful whereas the villains are older and less attractive? Why do Disney tales end with a heterosexual marriage? Does Disney accurately portray the story of historical figures such as Pocahontas and Mulan or are their stories twisted to fit Disney’s formulaic fairy-tale plot?

In this course, we will seek to explore answers to these questions. To do this, we will focus *primarily* on those canonical animated films which were created within specific cultural and historical contexts. (In our discussions, however, we will also reference other Disney/Pixar films, the Disney theme parks, Disney’s extensive consumer products, as well as Disney’s corporate assets such as ABC and ESPN, all of which might serve as potential research topics.) We will also read a selection of scholarly articles and book chapters from critics such as Zipes who will offer us different theoretical approaches to the genre.

Ultimately, our readings will inform us about the elements of academic writing and will serve as entry points into the academic conversation. Over the course of the semester, students will engage in a variety of writing assignments. In addition to weekly blog posts, students will be asked to complete: (1) an analysis of a Disney film of your choice (no outside research); (2) a summary of and response to a scholarly article about your Disney film; (3) a larger, research-oriented paper accompanied by an annotated bibliography. This final essay will allow students to come to terms with an issue of their choice, develop their own opinion/stance on that issue, and reflect on and respond to other critics and authors. Finally, in lieu of a final exam, students will
complete a multi-media final presentation. We will not only practice conducting academic research, but we will also practice assessing, organizing and integrating that research into a coherent, unified, final project.


Instructor: David Font

TuTh 8:30AM - 9:45AM, TuTh 1:25PM - 2:40PM, TuTh 11:45AM - 1:00PM

Soundscapes: Artistic, Social, and Biological Approaches to Acoustic Environments

According to David Dunn, “We have always intuited that music is part of our reflection to and from the non-human world. We hear the alien quality of the non-human in our music and the humanity of music in nature.” How do we listen to our world? What can sound tell us about our environment? How do our notions of Music, Noise, or Art coincide with or diverge from Nature? In this course, we will explore “soundscapes” as a way to engage with artistic, social, and biological phenomena. We will draw from diverse disciplinary, cultural, and historical sources, experimenting with the synthesis of contemplation and dialog. In effect, we will be employing sound as a vehicle to fuse qualitative, humanistic and quantitative, scientific modes of inquiry.

Two particular forms of writing will be placed side-by-side at the center of our inquiry: real-time speech (the predecessor and counterpart of all writing) and meditations (a quintessentially classical writing genre and reflective practice). Our class materials will include a variety of texts ranging from Pythagoras and Buddhist scripture to Borges and recent scientific reports prepared by corporations and navies. We will also engage with other media (audio, still image, video) and employ audio recording and amplification equipment to compliment (and occasionally circumvent) our personal computers’ considerable resources. Please note: no prior technical expertise is required.

We will take full advantage of the course’s small size and interactive seminar format by presenting readings and leading discussion individually and in small groups, as well exchanging feedback on various stages of writing. Most writing assignments will consist of relatively brief pieces (1-3 pages) which will function as components of larger projects that will be developed gradually throughout the semester.

More specifically, assignments will take the following forms: a) writing based on first-hand perception, analysis, recording, or design of sound; b) annotations and critical reviews of scholarly, popular, and artistic works; c) meditations and reflections; and d) individual and group research projects on special topics (e.g., noise pollution, acoustical properties of architecture, organic forms in sound, ecological listening habits). The broader objectives of the class are the
development of descriptive and analytical tools through listening, reading, critical thinking, dialog, writing, and revision. Our larger research projects will take the form of broadcasts for Duke's radio station (WXDU 88.7FM).

Writing 101.48 & 101.49: CITIZEN SCIENCE

Instructor: Julie Tuttle

WF 01:25 PM - 02:40 PM - WF 03:05 PM - 04:20 PM

“We the people, using the power of citizen science…!” So begins a recent TEDx talk on how the emerging field of citizen science, also known as public participation in scientific research, can help us navigate the ecological and environmental problems we face in the 21st century. Likewise, in 2012 Janis Dickinson and several colleagues characterized ecological citizen science as “a public good” that is “an indispensable means of combining ecological research with environmental education and natural history observation.” Amateurs and volunteers have long contributed to our understanding of ecology and environment, but these scholars are referring to the surge in citizen science initiatives over the past 20 years, enabled by the rise of the Internet, mobile technology, and geospatial tools. The scope of modern ecological citizen science is broad; for example, volunteers may count birds, monitor water or air quality, report when plants emerge in spring, document wildlife using “camera traps”, or remotely analyze images of penguins. Citizen scientists play many roles, from collecting and analyzing data, to collaborating with scientists on research design, to initiating or co-creating community projects. Meanwhile, scientists and other scholars are reporting the results of these projects and attempting to address critiques of citizen science, such as concerns about data quality, ethics, and the ability of these projects to educate, inspire action, and effect change. How is ecological citizen science evolving in theory and practice? In what ways are citizen science approaches advancing ecological knowledge, methods, and tools? How are these projects influencing scientific literacy, community action, and policy? What are the best practices for designing an effective ecological citizen science project?

In this course, we will turn a scholarly eye on the rapidly expanding use of citizen science in ecology, as our means of gaining experience in the practices of scientific research, thinking, and writing. First, we will briefly read and write about recent syntheses and theoretical developments in ecological citizen science, which will provide a framework for us to consider the scientific, methodological, ethical, educational, and applied dimensions of this field. I will also invite you to participate at least once in a local or online project and reflect on your experience, and we will learn about the range of projects through project websites, guest speakers, and perhaps a local field trip. Next, we will work together as a class on our first of two major projects: an online annotated bibliography of the scientific literature related to ecological citizen science. This project will involve weekly research, writing, and group decision-making tasks as we review and annotate (briefly summarize) relevant publications; organize our research into major themes that we collectively identify; and write brief thematic syntheses to accompany our annotations. Our collective findings from this period of inquiry will inspire ideas for our second major project: a research proposal for an ecological citizen science project. In pairs, you
will select and research an ecological topic of interest to you, develop specific research questions on your topic, and write a proposal to conduct scientific research on your questions with the aid of citizen scientists. Our work on the research proposals will progress in stages and will include revision of drafts. Throughout the semester, we will explore and apply the tools, techniques, and practices of scholarly, scientific writing. An essential element of this process will be the support and feedback we provide each other by participation in writing workshops, group discussions, and other in-class exercises. At all stages, we will reflect both individually and collectively on the process of academic writing and our development as scholarly writers.

Writing 101.50, 101.51, 101.52: ENVIR. JUSTICE & GLOBAL CHANGE

Instructor: Daniel Ahlquist

TuTh 8:30AM - 9:45AM, TuTh 10:05AM - 11:20AM, TuTh 1:25PM - 2:40PM

Every day, we are confronted with news both alarming and hopeful about our changing relationship to the environment. Even as ice caps melt and ecosystems give way to our ceaseless pursuit of energy and resources, we have managed to set aside nearly 15 percent of the Earth’s land area as national parks or other protected areas. And as our global population continues to swell past seven billion, farmers, scientists, governments and agro-food corporations have managed to produce more than enough calories to sustain every person on the planet (though uneven distribution of those calories remains a problem). But neither these challenges nor the efforts by various actors to respond to them are experienced equally by all members of society. From indigenous communities in northern Thailand to the poultry and pork industries in North Carolina, our changing relationship to the environment in the face of unprecedented social and environmental challenges raises a number of pressing questions related to environmental justice: How do different groups experience the costs and benefits associated with efforts to protect the environment and/or exploit its resources? In what ways, and to what effect, are particular narratives, knowledges, or values privileged over others? What, if any, is the relationship between sustainability and environmental justice?

Through scholarly texts from the social sciences, as well as more mainstream articles, reports and film excerpts, we will explore these and other questions related to sustainability, global change and environmental justice. As we do, you will develop your critical thinking and writing skills in tandem through a variety of formal and informal writing activities, as well as through oral presentations. For example, as we wade into debates around environmental conservation and carbon sequestration in relation to the rights of different stakeholders, you will learn to approach academic writing as a scholarly conversation, to engage critically with the work of others, and to craft a coherent and well-supported argument. For your final research paper, you will learn to locate and evaluate sources, and to effectively marshal evidence in support of an original
argument about an environmental justice topic related to industrial agriculture and/or energy production. Because writing and learning are collaborative, recursive and mutually reinforcing processes, you will have ample opportunity to draft, collaborate on, workshop, peer-review and revise your various writing assignments.

Writing 101.53: ARE NOVELS STILL NOVEL?

Instructor: Hannah Rogers

WF 3:05PM - 4:20PM

Novels have been a staple of popular culture in the western world since at least the eighteenth-century — but why do we still study and consume them for entertainment? In this class, we will examine how a medium hundreds of years old remains popular with the public and how it has maintained its “novelty.” What does the novel help us understand that another form (poetry, film, critical theory) cannot? Has the novel form changed, and, if so, how do we classify novels? Does the novel have universal characteristics or does each novel reinvent itself? This course will investigate these questions that literary scholars debate and use them as an entry point into the practice of academic writing. The class will be divided into three sections, which will explore these novels from radically different genres and time periods: North and South (a Victorian social-romance novel), Watchmen (a Cold War dystopian-superhero graphic novel), and The Bone Clocks (a 2014 “genre-bending,” dramatic-fantasy novel).

We will also incorporate selections of poetry, critical theory, and film to help situate our arguments and give us a vocabulary to examine the novel as a form. The first unit will culminate in a close reading essay (3-4 pages). At the end of the second unit, students will write a second essay (5-7 pages) that will employ outside sources in order to develop an original argument. The final assignment will be a research essay (8-10 pages), which will take up a critical issue related to the course topic. Peer-review, drafting, and revision will be instrumental to all assignments. As we think with these works, we will consider genre “rules” in relation to our own scholarly writing and the writing process itself. Throughout the class students will produce writings in multiple genres (analytical, creative, reaction, and review writings), looking critically at narrative forms to explore how “novelty” may emerge.
Writing 101.54: ANTI-HEROES IN LIT & FILM

Instructor: Michelle Sroka

WF 4:40PM - 5:55PM

Long Course Title: The Anti-Hero in Contemporary Literature and Film

We all know – or think we know – what it means to be a “hero”. We also know that we should root for the “good guys” and condemn the bad ones. Yet many of the characters we read about or watch today seem to have more bad qualities than good ones. Why do we like characters who cheat, steal, lie, and misbehave? What can we learn about our responses to them? Can literature teach us something more about what it means to be human – or even challenge our notions of what it means to be “heroic” or “anti-heroic”?

In this course, we will analyze complicated, flawed, “anti-heroic” characters in contemporary literature and film. We will begin by analyzing characters in short stories by Flannery O’Connor, Junot Diaz, and Raymond Carver. We’ll do “close readings” in three short (250 words) reflections to develop an analytical paper (1000 words). We will then read the poetry of Charles Bukowski, first annotating his poems as we read them, and then writing an original poem modeled on his style. By drafting and revising your poem, as well as working with your peers to produce and receive feedback, you will gain a greater understanding of how authors create appealing characters. Next, we’ll start our transition from literature into film by pairing the novel and film versions of Gone Girl. You will work in groups to write two short responses (500 words) comparing and contrasting the structural differences in narration and point of view between the book and the movie. You’ll use these reflections to write a longer analytical paper (1500 words) considering the situational contexts that influenced such changes. Finally, we will select two story arcs from television shows to illustrate the complicated moral and political dilemmas that anti-heroic characters present (possible choices include The Sopranos, The Wire, Breaking Bad, Mad Men., etc.). Working both individually and in groups, you will engage your peers in short academic debates, considering how the “anti-heroes” onscreen influence both their fictional environments and our society. Ultimately, you will use the content of these debates and your own analysis to develop a final argumentative paper (2000 words).

Our study of the “anti-hero”, then, will be much larger than just an analysis of individual characters. You will not only develop the skills to think and write critically and engage with your peers in a professional, academic manner, but you will also develop opinions about the way literature and our perceptions of human nature influence one another.
Writing 101.57, 101.58, 101.59: GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM

Instructor: Amanda Pullum

MW 8:30AM - 9:45AM, MW 11:45AM - 1:00PM, MW 1:25PM - 2:40PM

We are familiar with stories of individuals who work tirelessly for their vision of a better and brighter world. We can likely name people whose social justice activism has inspired countless others—people like Rosa Parks, Cesar Chavez, Mohandas Gandhi, Malala Yousafzai, and many more. But we do not always hear the stories or see the work of individuals whose efforts are focused on a more local level, even though these leaders often devote their lives to addressing problems in their communities. What are the sociological reasons for how and why individuals become active in their communities? How does community engagement or activism relate to citizenship? What will it mean for you, as a new Duke student, to be a citizen of Durham?

In this course, you will read and write about sociological research on grassroots activism and volunteerism, as well as other forms of activism and civic engagement. Your class will be paired with a local community organization, and you will work with this group on an issue of concern to Durham residents. Each student will complete a total of 20 hours of service (approximately 2 hours per week) with a community organization in Durham. This is a mandatory component of the course, and it will give you an opportunity to learn from local grassroots leaders and experience first-hand the work they do in the community.

Individually, you will write an essay and a literature review that will be drafted, peer reviewed, and revised over the course of the semester. In your essay, you will draw upon course readings and discussion to define and explore the concept of “citizenship”. You will use social scientific literature and your own experiences to define your vision of engaged citizenship, and to think about your role as a citizen. For your literature review, you will create a research question related to grassroots activism and find relevant social scientific literature in order to describe current knowledge related to your question.

Two shorter, less formal reflection papers will give you an opportunity to think critically about what you are learning from your service-learning experience, and to connect it to class readings and discussions. In-class activities and workshops will help prepare you to write these reflections.

Finally, working in a team with your classmates, you will produce a final project that will be presented to your classmates and community partner organization. Final projects will be tailored to each organization’s needs, but will involve working closely with community leaders or those served by the organization in order to write about the organization’s members, its history, and/or its work.
Writing 101.60 & 101.61: EVOLUTIONARY CONVERGENCE

Instructor: Lindsey Smith

TuTh 1:25PM - 2:40PM - TuTh 3:05PM - 4:20PM

At first glance, chimpanzees and dolphins have very little in common. Chimpanzees vocalize and gesture to their groupmates as they climb through the trees eating fruit and an occasional monkey. Dolphins, by contrast, navigate their underwater world through echolocation and glide through the ocean hunting for fish. Upon closer inspection, however, these animals actually lead surprisingly parallel lives. Great apes (orangutans, gorillas, chimpanzees, and bonobos) and cetaceans (dolphins, porpoises, and whales) have large brains, communicate in sophisticated ways, forage with tools, and live in complex societies.

In this course, we will explore the concept of convergent evolution by examining the ways in which great apes and cetaceans have evolved similar cognitive abilities and behaviors in response to shared ecological and social pressures. Our course materials will come from evolutionary anthropology and cognitive psychology journals and books, popular magazines, videos, and podcasts. In the first half of the semester, you will write two short papers that enable you to explore the concept of convergent evolution as it relates to cognitive and behavioral traits and reflect on the significance of convergent evolution in great apes and cetaceans. In the second half of the semester, you will write a research paper that examines behavioral or cognitive convergence in two species of your choosing. Throughout the course, writing will be our primary means of processing information and exploring ideas, and seminar discussions and peer feedback workshops will strengthen critical reading, scientific writing, and communication skills.

Writing 101.63 & 101.65: HOW TO MAKE MISTAKES

Instructor: Jesse Summers

WF 8:30AM - 9:45AM - WF 1:25PM - 2:40PM

Humans make mistakes. Rather than think of mistakes as simple failures, we'll take a philosophical look at how we make mistakes and what they tell us. How do we explain the mistakes of self-delusion, rationalization, lack of self-control, or even compulsion? What about systematic mistakes, like delusions or chronic doubt? How do we in fact respond to mistakes, and how should we?

Different disciplines—psychology, neuroscience, economics, philosophy—study and discuss these topics in different ways. In this course, we will read from various disciplines in order to understand mistakes, and we will organize our thoughts using the argumentative tools of
philosophy. We will also write a lot in this class: free writing, summaries, structured notes, outlines, responses, and many drafts. These writing assignments will build on each other to help us develop and articulate positions and arguments clearly—and to make productive mistakes in our writing. In a first project, we will develop our initial thoughts on mistakes into a short reflective essay. A second project will respond to a philosophical argument through drafts and peer feedback. For the third project, each student will explore a topic of his or her own choosing related to the course, research the topic, present it to others for feedback, and write a final paper.

Writing 101.64 & 101.72: COMING OF AGE AT DUKE

Instructor: Sheryl Welte

WF 11:45AM - 1:00PM-WF 3:05PM - 4:20PM

Coming of Age at Duke: Developing an Academic Voice

During your time at Duke, many professors will tell you that they want to hear “your voice” in your papers and in class discussions. But what is your voice? And where does it come from? When you speak, are the words, the ideas, yours? The notion of voice is central to the concepts of students’ ways of knowing, learning, and academic writing. We will use the field of educational psychology, which studies how people learn in educational settings, to enhance our understanding of the development of self and voice which takes place during the college years. Our writing will focus on revealing students’ beliefs about the role of the instructor, the learner, the subject matter, peers, and evaluation, as well as gender and cultural influences on their learning, ways of knowing, and development.

By using a variety of texts, videos, observations and interviews about college student learning and knowing, we will engage with the work of others, learn to articulate a position, and situate our writing within specific contexts. To begin, we will write weekly short (2-3 pages) reflective and critical responses to theories about college students’ ways of knowing. Informed by these theories, we will engage in case study research, which involves in-depth descriptive and analytical writing. The final project will be an exploration in the form of a case study (15 pages) of your own learning, ways of knowing, and/or issue significant to your coming of age. The topic, and the related additional readings, will be carefully chosen by you so that each case study will be personally meaningful. Throughout the course, we will write self and peer evaluations (2 pages) of our academic writing, and thus collaboratively strengthen our ability to improve our works in progress.
When scientists screw up, people can get hurt. Because science holds a position of tremendous authority and power in the 21st century, pseudoscience, scientific fraud, and ethical breaches in the name of science (#sciencefail) pose a grave threat to everyone’s welfare. Whether it’s vaccine-caused autism, the Tuskegee experiment, or the mythical (read: fictional) Piltdown Man of the 19th century, the abuse of science can have major implications for people far and wide. Studying cases where science fails provides an interesting lens on the history and nature of science and its role in society. In this course, students read, discuss, and write extensively about the history and philosophy of scientific misconduct. Exploring the demarcation between science and pseudoscience (e.g. astrology) philosophically and practically provides a conceptual foundation for major independent research projects.

Students read deeply and widely about various cases of scientific fraud, pseudoscience, and ethical misconduct in the name of science. Building on these readings, students develop an independent research project that analyzes a particular philosophical or historical aspect of a pseudoscience, scientific fraud or misconduct. Students develop this project from the ground up, starting with brainstorming and basic research. They work in small and large groups to work through various drafting revising, and editing projects that are central to the development of any excellent argumentative essay. By integrating primary and secondary sources in their projects, students learn techniques that prepare them to write across many disciplines.
world through a different perspective and learn to express this point of view through informed, meaningful writing.

As preparation, we will read texts that examine the treatment and experiences of disabled persons from the early modern period to the present. Our discussions and writing exercises will raise questions about constructed definitions of competence and ability; the responsibility of the community and state to care for those with disabilities; and legal rights related to property, medical treatment, work, family, and citizenship. Through regular written assignments, we will deepen our understanding of the historical context and ideas that shape our concepts of disability. In short essays (750 words), we will examine contemporary examples of disability and analyze historical primary sources. These shorter essays will prepare us to draft, peer review, and revise a research paper (1500-2000 words) on the history of a disability rights issue that is most important to you. Finally, we will learn how to engage the general public in discussion about these topics by drafting a short opinion piece (500-750 words) about contemporary policies. By the end of the course, you will cultivate the skills to participate in academic and public discussions on disability rights in the past and present.

Writing 101.73 & 101.74: LAND OF THE FREE

Instructor: Matthew Whitt

TuTh 11:45AM-1:00PM- TuTh 1:25PM-2:40pm

Land of the Free: Liberty, Justice, and Imprisonment in the United States

A profound tension runs through the public culture of the United States. On the one hand, the U.S. declares itself to be a “land of liberty,” in which individual freedom is cherished and protected. On the other hand, the U.S. has historically denied freedom to large sections of its population, and today imprisons more people per capita than any other nation. What do we make of this? How do we reconcile the ideals of liberty affirmed by U.S. public culture with the realities of bondage and imprisonment that shape U.S. society?

In this class, we will use political theory, philosophy, and academic writing to explore this important issue. Writing is an especially deft tool for examining the apparent disconnect between political ideals and social realities. Effective writing demands that we clarify our thoughts, evaluate our commitments, and genuinely consider opposing views. In your own writing, you will connect philosophical theories of individual freedom, punishment, and justice to concrete issues of imprisonment, policing, and legal reform. This work will help you see how seemingly abstract ideals can have tangible and weighty impact in the real world.

In the first unit of the course, we will examine philosophical theories of individual liberty. Through short writing assignments, students will evaluate these theories with regard to situations
of free choice, bondage, and oppression. In the second unit, we will consider competing theories of punishment and, in particular, justifications for imprisonment. Students will write an argumentative essay concerning whether, when, and why the state is justified in punishing its citizens by restricting their liberty. In the final unit of the course, we will turn to the realities of mass incarceration, crime control, and the criminal justice system. Moving beyond assigned readings, students will pursue independent research on a relevant topic of their choice. A series of workshops, peer review, and revisions will culminate in a final seminar paper suitable for publication.

Writing 101.77 & 101.78: CONSUMING AFRICAN CITIES

Instructor: Nganga Muchiri

TuTh 3:05PM - 4:20PM - TuTh 6:15PM - 7:30PM

This writing class will expose students to texts—novels, short stories, music videos, photography and so on—that change the way they experience, think about, and consume Africa. The course will stimulate student interest in, and engagement with, new texts and discursive practices that broaden their horizons and uncover their involvement in global conversations regarding the African continent, especially its urban areas. We’ll be particularly interested in pursuing a critique of “visual” metaphors. Our concern will be twofold: first, we will examine the 24/7 news cycle and its relentless production of images that are easily recognizable as “African” – war, poverty, famine, etc. Second, the course will focus students’ attention on the role of the imagination in creating, and interpreting, knowledge about an “other.” Ultimately, students will critique, internalize, and digest a broad spectrum of ideas available to them through reading, writing, and cultural engagement.

Writing projects will ask students to perform primary and secondary research, reflect on their own reactions, as well as develop evidence-based arguments. Together, class activities will not only demand facility with hard facts, but also an appreciation of ideological sentiments embedded within various kinds of documents. Writing assignments will follow a sequence that involves class brainstorm sessions, individual reflection, and one-on-one instructor conferences. Peer workshops will be central to student learning and the maturity of academic writers. Finally, student work will undergo several rounds of revision and editing for style, organization, and prose. By focusing on students’ responses to primary texts, we will emphasize reading and writing as social processes wherein communities of learning generate support for superior argumentative prose.
Writing 101.80 & 101.81: COURTROOM, BODIES, AND THE LAW

Instructor: Jennifer Bowles

WF 8:30AM - 9:45AM- WF 3:05PM - 4:20PM

Often we think of rights (legal, human, etc.) as things in writing. They are lettered permissions and prohibitions etched into treatises, statutes, and court cases. But on closer view, we might see rights as embodied, experienced in warm bodies built of bone, flesh, and blood. Like our skin, rights are constantly being shed or replenished. In this course, we open up a space of writing on how rights are felt by those who receive them or have them taken away. How are rights felt by those accused of crimes, victimized by violence, confined because they are considered insane, or deemed criminals because of their addictions?

Your writing will be enriched and complicated by scholarly critiques of the law written from anthropology, sociology, law, social work, and psychology. We will draw also on critical insights from everyday people in digital narratives and testimonials that reflect on rights controversies such as sexual assault on campus or the criminalization of painkiller-heroine addiction. As we reflect on these dilemmas, we will conduct fieldwork by “going to court” to write, heading down the street to the Durham County Courthouse where rights are given and taken away every day of the week. You will keep a Courtroom Journal, writing on what you see, hear, and feel inside the courtroom. Your task will be to analyze how rights manifest in the adjudication of some of the most common offenses on everyday criminal trial court dockets, including drug and alcohol infractions, domestic violence, and sexual misconduct. At the same time, we will keep in focus everyday efforts to bring more social justice to scenarios where rights are lost.

You will cite observations from your Courtroom Journal to support your argumentation in three short position papers (3-4 pages) in which you analyze assigned readings on a particular rights dilemma, e.g. the criminalization of addiction, articulating your own position on attempts for its resolution via citations to the interdisciplinary scholarship we have read. You will present a draft in class and receive both instructor and peer feedback on these short papers that you will then revise before turning them in. Your final paper concerns a rights dilemma of your choice: You will research an area of the law and first turn in an annotated bibliography mid-semester of what you have found. After you receive feedback from both your instructor and peers, you will then craft an 8-10 page paper in which you lay out the historical roots of the given crisis, analyze a social justice endeavor that attempts to remedy it, and use insights from your Courtroom Journal to reinforce your arguments and research. You will workshop two drafts of this paper in class where you will receive both instructor and peer feedback that you then will incorporate into revisions for the final draft.

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