Duke Writes

THOMPSON WRITING PROGRAM

Spring 2025 Writing 101 Courses

Writing 101s Connected to the What Now? Network of First-Year Seminars:

The first grouping of Writing 101 courses are part of the What Now? network of first-year seminars. What Now? courses contain a shared "wellness lab," offering opportunities to engage with faculty and students in other participating seminars. Register for this .5-credit component of the program by adding Ethics 189 to your schedule. Scroll down for a full listing of Spring 2025 Writing 101 offerings.

WRITING 101.44-45

DECODING DISNEY

Instructor: Lisa Andres

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

In the first trailer for Season 4 of Netflix's hit-series The Crown, the narrator ominously intones, "Here is the stuff of which fairy tales are made: a prince and princess on their wedding day. But fairy tales usually end at this point, with the simple phrase, 'they lived happily ever after.'" Accompanied by a series of glimpses of the show's Prince Charles and Princess Diana, the irony of the voice-over lands hard: we know how this fairy tale ends, and it is not happily.

And yet it is only the benefit of hindsight that affords us this knowledge: in July of 1981, the media spun the Royal Wedding between the Prince of Wales and the People's Princess as a fitting end to a whirlwind, fairy-tale romance. But the key phrase here is "the media spun": that is, the wedding (and the relationship) was marketed and sold as the stuff dreams were made of. After all, aren't we conditioned, from years of watching idealized relationships play out in romantic comedies, to want exactly this? A handsome prince to ride in on his white horse and sweep the beautiful maiden off her feet? To ride off into the sunset and live happily ever after?

This course, then, proposes to investigate Disney's role in the construction and perpetuation of the Happily Ever After. What does the media, and specifically Disney, tell us a Happily Ever After looks like? What are the consequences of this portrayal? How can we differentiate between what we truly desire and what the media conditions us to want? What makes us happy? What do we want our future to look like?

We'll explore the answers to these questions through weekly writing assignments. These will occur through (1) weekly readings and film screenings; (2) seminar discussions which will be led by you & your peers in small groups; (3) a series of low-stakes assignments designed to complexify what you know about the writing process & practice essential skills; and (4) the development of a capstone podcast project, which will ask you to work in small groups to synthesize arguments into a cohesive & coherent conversation.

This semester, we will center our conversations around the role Disney plays in teaching its viewers "emotional intelligence," or how to understand the emotions of those around you as well as your own. We will start by reading and discussing some key theoretical, foundational pieces. Next, we will look examine some more general questions of happiness through Pixar's Inside Out (2015) and Soul (2020). We will then shift to an examination of several key Disney animated films, which may include: Frozen I (2013) and II (2019), Up (2009), Coco (2017) and Encanto (2021).

To return to the trailer for The Crown, we will attempt to see that "happily ever after" is not "the place of arrival, but the place where the adventure really begins."

This course is best suited for those who are interested in the intersection of media studies with critical analysis of race, gender, sexuality and identity. Do not be fooled by appearances: this course is not just watching Disney movies. You will be expected to critically engage with the texts, both visual and written. Prior knowledge of the Disney canon is not required but is strongly encouraged.

No textbook will be required; instead you will be required to have a Disney+ subscription.

*Part of the What Now Network for first-year students.

WRITING 101.46

TAYLOR'S VERSION

Instructor: Lisa Andres

TUTH 1:25PM-2:40PM

Dear Reader…

When it comes to Oscar nominations, there are always snubs and surprises. But this year, the biggest talking point came from the fact that while Ryan Gosling was nominated for his role as Ken (well deserved) in Greta Gerwig's *Barbie* film, neither the director nor Barbie herself, Margot Robbie, received nominations. *Maybe* we could overlook this…that is, if the film hadn't been nominated for Best Picture, which seems to imply, at best, that a film which grossed over a billion dollars at the box office ($1.4, to be exact), directed itself.

But what does this have to do with Taylor Swift? Moments like this in pop culture, far from being innocuous and irrelevant, serve as a cultural mirrorball, reflecting back and magnifying our own struggles navigating what the world expects of us. This course, then, proposes to examine some of those struggles through the lens of Taylor Swift. Over the semester, we'll move through The Eras, applying Stuart Hall's theories of "encoding" and "decoding," and examining Swift's discography through various intertextual lenses (narrative, lyrics, cultural). We will also seek to trace thematic developments and evolving life lessons in her songs, as well as the media narratives which surround her and her *Reputation*. Finally, we'll look at pieces of the *Miss Americana* documentary where Time's 2023 Person of the Year poses the same question we're asking of you: *What now?*

We'll explore the answers all too well through (1) weekly readings and album streamings; (2) seminar discussions which will be led by you & your peers in small groups; (3) a series of low-stakes writing assignments designed to complexify what you know about the writing process & practice essential skills including a lyrical analysis and a literature review; and (4) the development of a capstone podcast project, which will ask you to work in small groups to synthesize arguments into a cohesive & coherent conversation.

…[are you] *Ready For It*?

This course is best suited for those who are interested in the intersection of media studies with critical analyses of race, gender, sexuality and identity. *Do not be fooled by appearances:* this course is not just listening to Taylor Swift songs. You will be expected to critically engage with the texts, visual, auditory, and written. Prior knowledge of Taylor Swift is not required; all levels of Swifties are welcome.
No textbook will be required; you will be asked to stream albums via Spotify.

*Part of the What Now Network for first-year students.

WRITING 101.33

SPORTS AND THE WRITTEN WORD

Instructor: James Holaday

TUTH 3:05PM - 4:20PM

For well over one hundred years, sports have played an important role in American (and world) culture. And as long as there have been sports, people have written about them. From game reports in newspapers to biographies to autobiographies to predictions for the future to pure fiction, writings related to sports run the gamut. They often cross the line from journalism to literature or even poetry.

In this class we will examine how writing about sports has changed over time before students embark upon several sports-related writing projects of their own. First, students will produce a memoir-type paper on their experiences with sports. Athlete or fan, success or failure, funny or sad–everyone has a story!

Secondly, students will produce a paper on an element of sports history. Sports have helped shape society (think Jackie Robinson's integration of baseball) or been shaped by them (think performance enhancing drugs or Olympic boycotts). For this paper, students will go beyond the obvious and do some research to examine a bit of sporting history.

A large part of writing about sports involves telling stories about others, often using the words of those people. The next project will consist of interviewing a sports personality. To do this successfully, students will do any necessary research so that relevant questions can be asked of their subjects.

Finally, students will get in touch with their creativity. They will craft a short story that is limited only by imagination. The only requirement is that the story has to include some sporting element.

WRITING 101.59

HIDDEN CURRICLA: SCIFI & GAMIN

Instructor: Sarah Ishmael

TUTH 3:05PM - 4:20PM

HIDDEN CURRICLA: SCIFI & GAMING

Video games are rich with science fiction stories, characters, and worlds that challenge and redefine our understanding of humanity. These games, often intertwined with philosophical and historical ideas, explore the boundaries of what it means to be human. Video games create immersive environments where societal issues are reflected, explored, and sometimes contested.

In this course, we will examine how sci-fi video games contribute to the creation of "hidden curricula"—messages embedded in gameplay that communicate norms and values about identity, humanity, and difference. These video games act as both mirrors and teachers, subtly (and sometimes overtly) influencing players' understandings of humanity. In doing so, they serve as critical platforms for both perpetuating existing stereotypes and offering spaces for reimagining and resisting cultural narratives.

We will play, analyze, and critique a range of video games, looking closely at how they handle themes of futurism and social difference. Some of the key questions we will address include: What do video games like *Mass Effect*, *Cyberpunk 2077*, *The Outer Worlds*, and *Horizon Zero Dawn* suggest about the ideal characteristics of human beings? How do concepts of sameness, and difference play out in the game worlds, and how do these reflect or challenge real-world dynamics in the U.S. and beyond? How can video games, as cultural artifacts, both reflect and resist dominant ideas about how one defines one's own humanity?

In addition to academic readings, we will utilize video game critiques, player-generated content, and various online communities to investigate how these games function as educational tools. Students will also produce their own texts, including personal reflections, game analyses, and essays that critically engage with the themes discussed throughout the course.

Students will engage with scholarly readings, films, and documentaries to develop the skills necessary for conducting a thorough literature review. Students will also gain insight into the following: (1) the writing process, (2) publishing scholarly articles, and (3) crafting connected policy memos on the ethical and social issues surrounding race and gaming. This hands-on approach emphasizes synthesizing research, articulating arguments clearly, and contributing to academic and policy discussions about the construction of humanity in sci-fi gaming narratives.

WRITING 101.60

SCI-FI, THE HUMAN & AI

Instructor: Sarah Ishmael

TUTH 4:40PM - 5:55PM

Science fiction has long used artificial intelligence as a metaphor to explore differing conceptualizations of humanity. From autonomous robots to advanced algorithms, AI narratives raise critical questions about identity, power, and the boundaries between humans and machines. In this course, we'll investigate how science fiction presents AI in futuristic worlds as well as the real one in which we live.

We will explore fiction films like The Terminator, Elysium, Blade Runner, Blade Runner 2049, and episodes of Star Trek, Black Mirror, Battlestar Galactica, and Caprica. In addition to these films, we'll analyze documentaries like Coded Bias, AI and the Future of Education, and In the Age of AI, which delve into real-world implications of AI.

A key discussion in this course will revolve around how Hollywood's depictions of AI differ from real-world AI development. What are the exaggerated risks that Hollywood presents—such as AI revolts or android uprisings—versus the actual risks we are seeing emerge, like the misuse of image generation, deepfakes, and algorithmic biases? How do these differences shape public understanding and ethical debates?

We will also engage in critical discussions around the ethics of generative AI in academic writing, drawing parallels to sci-fi gaming's portrayals of AI and its effects on humanity. Should we be concerned about the "de-skilling" of students as AI in real life begins to mirror the AI technologies seen in games? In a world where AI can accumulate, analyze, and store knowledge, as depicted in many science fiction narratives, how does this change what we consider "worth knowing"? What happens when AI in both gaming and reality challenges human expertise, creativity, and problem-solving? Does knowledge in these futuristic worlds—and ours—become less about mere information acquisition and more about cultivating a specific kind of consciousness or embodied awareness?

These questions will lead us into broader reflections on the ethics of AI, especially as they relate to social inequality. We will critically assess how AI narratives reflect and resist dominant cultural ideas about power and social hierarchies through reading science fiction, watching films, and engaging with academic and journalistic texts. Students will produce essays, reflections, and analyses that tackle the ethical and social questions raised throughout the course.

Students will engage with scholarly readings, films, and documentaries to develop the skills necessary for conducting a thorough literature review. Students will also gain insight into the following: (1) the writing process, (2) publishing scholarly articles, and (3) crafting connected policy memos on the ethical and social issues surrounding AI and education. This hands-on approach focuses on synthesizing research, articulating arguments clearly, and contributing to ongoing academic and policy discussions about humanity and artificial intelligence.

WRITING 101.20-21

NEUROSCIENCE & SOCIETY

Instructor: Emily Parks

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

Can brain scans reveal whether someone is lying? Is there such a thing as a "criminal mind"? Do we have free will, or can we blame the brain for our moral shortcomings?

This course will introduce you to the goals and practices of academic writing as we evaluate how neuroscience can inform ethical, legal, and medical questions of our time. We will reflect on themes both ancient and modern: How can neuroscience inform our understanding of our own minds? And how can that understanding, fueled by cutting-edge advances in brain imaging, impact our modern society? Along the way, we explore scientific inquiry – the process by which scientists work together to build and communicate ideas. You will experience this process first-hand, taking on several roles along the way – the scholar learning to respond to scientific texts, the ambassador deciphering complex research for a public audience, and the researcher working in collaboration with other scientists (your classmates!).

Across the semester, you will write two major projects: a scholarly perspective piece (4 pages) and a scientific literature review (~12 pages), both of which will synthesize neuroscientific research to address a societal problem of your choice (e.g., racial bias, disease treatment, juvenile sentencing, drug addiction). For the latter project, you will work on a team of 2-3 students, co-writing the literature review.

This course is ideally suited for students interested in neuroscience, psychology, biology, or the law. The course is built on three principles. First, writing is a vehicle for critical thinking. It is the tool by which you will bridge the classroom and the real world. Second, good writing depends on revision. Thus, you will have many opportunities to practice giving and receiving meaningful feedback amongst your peers. Third, scientific innovation requires collaboration. By joining this Writing 101, you agree to be a contributing member of a team.

WRITING 101.11-12

THE SLAVE NARRATIVE

Instructor: Crystal Smith

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

“We have nothing to lose but our chains.” ~Assata Shakur

History is one of our most powerful allies in the quest to chronicle and write compelling stories. Fugitive slave narratives concern the past sufferings and escapes of former slaves. They document the journey from slavery to freedom. In this writing and discussion-intensive course, we will read and synthesize texts that explore captivity narratives and abolitionist literature with high cultural stakes as forces for social change. In these works of literature, the fugitive or former slave is given a first-ever public voice to state their new independence and capture the historic truth of their accounts. We will hold close readings of the most notable writers of the genre—Douglass, Jacobs, and Elizabeth Keckley’s *Behind the Scenes: Or, Thirty Years a Slave, and Four Years in the White House*.

Following this historic overview, we will examine the neo-slave narrative, a sub-genre of authors who write works that rediscover the slave narrative through contemporary lens. Of such works, we will examine portions of the Pulitzer-Prize winning, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison and *The Known World* by Edward P. Jones. Students will write reflectively producing two major writing projects, an argumentative essay that considers the connectivity of institutional slavery to contemporary racism and a critical response that examines the evidentiary use of slave narratives in the abolitionist movement. The final project will include one creative project. Prepare to engage in scholarly discussions and critique.

WRITING 101.17-19

COMING OF AGE & HAPPINESS

Instructor: Sheryl Welte

WF 11:45AM - 1:00PM- WF 1:25PM - 2:40PM- WF 3:05PM - 4:20PM

College is one of the many turning points in your coming of age. It is a time when you separate from your family of origin, and thus are in a unique position to be able to reflect on your identity. The questions - “Who am I?”, “Who do I want to be?”, & “What do I want?” – are often daily challenges as you navigate being more independent and living a good life. Together, we will explore your personal and academic identity development, especially in relation to your happiness. In particular, we will reflect on emerging adulthood & student development theories, as well as scientific research on happiness, to help us understand how various factors - such as socioeconomics, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, and culture - shape the development of your authentic self.

By using a variety of sources about coming of age and happiness, we will engage with the work of others, learn to articulate a position, and situate our writing within specific contexts. To begin,

we will read, discuss, and write about our classroom treaty and student learning and other identity stories using both our personal experiences and existing theories on coming of age and happiness (2-3 pages). Informed by these theories, we will write reflect on our own experiences to further our understanding.

The final project will be an exploration in the form of an in-depth Scholarly Personal Narrative about some issue(s) significant to your coming of age and happiness (10-12 pages). The topic, and the related additional readings, will be carefully chosen by you so that each personal narrative will be relevant & meaningful as you continue your coming of age journey at Duke. 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.

If you are interested in and willing to be introspective to learn about yourself & others through personal writing, discussions, readings, along with some yoga & mindfulness, then this Wr101 class might be a great opportunity for you.

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WRITING 101.01-02

BODIES IN CULTURE

Instructor: Marcia Rego

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

Bodies in Culture: Reading and Writing the Social Body

Using the human body as its principal lens, this course invites you to use the framework of cultural anthropology to think critically about pressing social issues and about your own surroundings and daily life. We will examine cross-cultural beliefs and practices concerning bodies, while perfecting important skills of academic writing and posing our own questions: How are our bodies regulated by various governmental, familial, and interpersonal spheres of influence? In what ways do we embody personal, religious, and political values? What are the ways in which different societies punish, reward, or commodify bodies?

In the process of reading about the social meanings of physical bodies—in everything from funerary cannibalism in the Amazon, to extreme body art in North America—you will compose short weekly essays (2-3 pages) 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 major projects.

The first project (6-8 pages) will be a research proposal focusing on a specific way in which societies classify, regulate, consume, or commodify bodies. You will investigate a practice or issue of your choosing (e.g., organ donation, the plastic surgery industry, eating disorders, the training of medical students), review the relevant anthropological literature, and propose a new set of questions and a research plan.

The second project will be a photo-annotation essay (1-3 PowerPoint slides), in which you will critically analyze an advertisement from popular media (an ad for cosmetics, sports shoes, deodorant, gym membership, etc.) to reveal the value(s) it reinforces or creates regarding bodies. All assignments are designed to foster your skills as a thinker and writer, as you engage in multiple drafts, revisions, and peer-critique workshops of your writing projects.

WRITING 101.03

LANGUAGE DIFFERENCE & WRITING

Instructor: Charlotte Asmuth

TUTH 1:25PM-2:40PM

What "stuff" do linguists know about language, and how can this "stuff" help us with our writing? How do our identities shape our language use/writing—and vice versa? How does language change—and why might some people be resistant to such change? How might we (as readers, writers, researchers, and language users ourselves) respond to language difference?

These are some of the questions we'll explore in this section of Writing 101—questions that are part of debates students are not normally invited into. Historically, language use marked as "different" in some way has been treated by politicians, educators, and the general public as a problem to be fixed or eradicated. Our course operates with two assumptions, both of which make studying language in a college writing course interesting and useful: (1) the ability to communicate in multiple languages and/or use varieties of English is an increasingly common asset in today's world; (2) given that you will need to write for a variety of contexts in college and beyond, it's more useful to explore language patterns and options for what people ***can*** and ***do*** in their writing rather than for someone to tell you what you ***can't*** or ***shouldn't*** do in your writing. Unfortunately for all of us, any proscriptions about writing (e.g., "don't use *I*," "avoid contractions") are not generalizable to all writing contexts.

Our course texts will include published academic articles and websites that offer examples of methods/data for researching language use. Given the professor's disciplinary background in writing studies (which treats writing as not only an activity but also a subject of study), many of

these texts address language difference from the perspective of writing studies practitioners. Perhaps unlike other courses you've taken, our course texts will also include the writing you and your peers will produce in response to these published texts. That is, some classes will revolve around discussions of anonymous samples of *your* writing. As we look at the writing you and your peers have done, we won't be examining it to see what is "good" or "bad" about it. Rather, we'll examine it to hone our sense of how readers might respond to our writing and to learn writing techniques from each other.

We'll start the semester experimenting with and reflecting on strategies for reading challenging texts. As we read our course texts, we'll also analyze them for writing techniques (for anticipating readers' expectations and concerns, representing work with sources, defining and contextualizing key terms, summarizing texts, and taking a position in relation to others).

In addition to regular weekly writing assignments, the course will involve two major writing projects, both of which will be reviewed by your peers and the professor:

1. A "Comment and Response" to one of our course readings that offers new insight into the source's argument and draws on other sources to do so (~1,500 - 2,000 words).
2. A research project (~2,500 - 3,500 words). During the final third of the term, you'll get the chance to further explore these issues through small-scale primary research (e.g., interviews, surveys) that relates to your own interests. The project will be divided into manageable stages over the final third of the term.

No prior knowledge of another language is necessary for the course. This section of Writing 101 may be of special interest to multilingual students, future educators, students curious about how writing/language works, and students who are interested in doing research or studying languages, linguistics, cultures, politics, and policies, but all first-years are welcome.

Email charlotte.asmuth@duke.edu with questions.

WRITING 101.04

VOICES ACROSS BORDERS

Instructor: Yan Li

MW 11:45AM - 1:00PM

Voices Across Borders – Writing, Identity, and Dialogue in a Global Context

What's your understanding of voice? This course prepares students to write for culturally and linguistically diverse audiences for various purposes. By investigating the similarities and

differences among rhetorical traditions—especially non-Western and Western traditions—and by reading texts that manifest these traditions, students will learn how experienced writers navigate different rhetorical traditions as they develop ability to write compelling narratives for audiences of multicultural backgrounds but also develop the capacity to approach contentious topics with a nuanced understanding, embracing the richness of multiple perspectives over dichotomies.

During the semester, students will engage in four significant writing projects, each tailored to enhance their understanding and proficiency in writing for global audiences:

Reflective Narrative - My Voice Story (~1500 words)

Literature Review (~800 words)

Collaborative Multimodal Presentation - Research Proposal (~10 minutes)

Collaborative Research-Based Intercultural Argument (~ 2500 words)

Through collaborative learning, students will engage in the rhetorical dynamics of both non-Western and Western traditions, refining primary and secondary research skills, analyzing audience expectations, and exploring how voices vary across diverse contexts and cultures. Additionally, we will explore audio and visual modes of communication to effectively convey our writing to global audiences. Substantial reflective writing exercises will further deepen our understanding of adapting writing strategies to resonate with various audiences we encounter.

Discussion posts and several in-class writing workshops are designed to support the longer projects, which will evolve over weeks of study. As students write for global audiences, they will also amplify underrepresented voices and prioritize the ethical representation of diverse cultures. In essence, the course will foster an intellectual community dedicated to public exploration, embodying the ethos of ethical cultural engagement and global engagement.

WRITING 101.05

RHETORIC OF COMEDY

Instructor Benjamin Hojem

TUTH 3:05PM - 4:20PM

Rhetoric of Comedy: Humor, Culture, and Composing Funnily

E. B. White, an author best known for writing a sad book about sentient barn animals confronting their mortality, once said, “Humor can be dissected, as a frog can, but the thing dies in the process and the innards are discouraging to any but the pure scientific mind.” Was he right? Was he even serious? And on a scale of 1 to 10, how funny is the word “innards”?

While explaining the joke rarely earns a belated laugh, both fans of comedy and comedians are usually full of opinions about what’s funny and what isn’t. This course aims to take both perspectives, that of joke appreciators and joke tellers. We will look at theories of humor (from seminal, if not particularly funny thinkers such as Aristotle and Sigmund Freud) as well as popular criticism on the role of humor in our discourses and in our culture. In doing so, we will try to understand why we find humor where we do, how we use humor, and what our humor says about us. This investigation will take the form of weekly brief critical responses (~500 words) to comedic works, either assigned or of your own choosing, and will culminate in an in-depth analysis (~2100 words) of a work that helps you define your own sense of humor.

Meanwhile, we will also investigate the practices behind different comedic forms, such as stand-up, improv, writers rooms, and screenwriting. Utilizing some of these practices, you will create a comedic work of your own, either as an individual or as a group. Through a composing process you’ll develop, you will practice writing and rewriting, giving constructive feedback and responding to an audience. In addition to this creative composing, you will write a reflective piece (~2400 words) that doesn’t dissect (or explain) the humor of your comedic work but does examine the process that created it.

By taking a rhetorical approach to comedy, this course treats comedy as seriously as any other art or any other communication. The result will, hopefully, not kill the joke, but rather help us understand why it’s funny and how to make any writing or any communication more effective at hitting its mark.

WRITING 101.06

WRITING AT DUKE: 1924-2024

Instructor: Rhiannon Scharnhorst

MW 4:40PM - 5:55PM

“In Their Own Words: Writing at Duke 1924-2024" immerses you in the world of archival research, tracing the evolution of written communication at Duke University. This course focuses on two central questions: How has writing changed at Duke over the past century, and what can these changes reveal about disciplinary knowledge, education, and language?

You'll gain hands-on experience in archival research methodologies, while exploring documents through the interdisciplinary lens of writing studies. By critically analyzing primary source materials, you'll uncover patterns, shifts, and historical contexts that have shaped Duke's writing history.

Engage in the process of historical interpretation, contribute to ongoing narratives, and choose from collaborative project-based assignments such as curating an online exhibition or producing a collaborative research paper.

WRITING 101.07-.08

WRITING PORTRAYED IN MEDIA

Instructor: Sharieka Botex

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

How do popular media and scholarly texts portray writing, reading, communication, and other literacy practices of various professions and academic disciplines?

In what ways do scholars across disciplines discuss their writing and research on television shows, music, podcasts, and other forms of entertainment and media? When and how do media portrayals of writing, reading, and communication in various fields differ from and/or compare to lived experiences among people in these professions and scholarly fields? These are among some of the questions this class will provide you with an opportunity to explore. In this class, we will explore scholarly texts and popular entertainment media to learn how people discuss the writing, reading, and communication they do in their professional fields. This course requires students to review television shows, podcasts, music, and scholarship that shed light on academic and professional paths to better familiarize themselves with the ways writing, reading and communication transpire in their future majors or careers.

In this class, students are required to complete three main writing projects[1]: 1. Contemporary Issues Journals, in which they respond to assigned writing prompts, explore topics of interest and engage with scholarly texts and popular media sources. 2. An 8-10 page double-spaced research paper, which explores intersections between media and scholarly sources related to a profession or academic discipline of your choosing and a topic you are interested in writing about. 3. A media pitch in which you propose an idea about media content that you believe should be created to inform people about the writing, reading, and communication in your intended major or future career and persuade them about why literacy practices are valuable in the field. Through writing and revising your assignments and participating in peer-review focused on the major writing assignments, you will develop an awareness of the literacy practices you may use in your future

professional and academic endeavors and learn about similarities and differences in writing, reading and communication in different majors and professions.

WRITING 101.09-10

ROAD NOT TAKEN

Instructor: Laurel Burkbauer

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

The Road Not Taken: Alternate Selves, Parallel Lives, and the Choices That Define Us

Do you ever wish you could have a do-over? That you could know the outcome of your choices before you make them? That you could read the last chapter of your own life first? This course will orient you to the world of academic writing while exploring what the essayist Cheryl Strayed calls "the ghost ship that didn't carry us"—the many counterfactual lives we could have lived had we made different decisions at crucial moments along the way.

Our main course texts—Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, Matt Haig's *The Midnight Library*, and the film *Past Lives*—all ask, "What if…?" What if I could go back and make different choices? What if I had been born to other parents? What if I had married someone else? They feature figures who either—through supernatural intervention—experience multiple potential lives or who are prompted to stop and reflect on their own life trajectories because of encounters with other people who represent alternative life paths. These texts will be supplemented by literary criticism, psychological research, and poetry that is concerned with decision-making, regret, potential, and possibility.

Our first major assignment (1200 words) is an analytical essay on *A Christmas Carol*, which allows us to focus on essay structure, thesis development, selection and interpretation of evidence, and MLA format. Our second essay is a research paper (1500 words) on decision-making strategies. This assignment highlights the skills of finding and vetting multiple academic sources, and it introduces APA format. Your final task combines everything you have learned along the way. The culminating assignment (2000 words) requires you to select a novel, film, or piece of narrative nonfiction related to our course themes and interpret it through the lens of relevant secondary sources. You will also complete a project called Inflection Points in which you interview an older adult about a significant life decision they made, compose a written reflection about it (500 words), and present key takeaways to the class in order to cultivate wisdom in our community.

WRITING 101.13-15

AM I A ROBOT?

Instructor: Michael Dimpfl

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

AM I A ROBOT? The Social Life of Technology in the Age of Connection

How do we develop our skills as writers if our goal is to analyze and understand our experience of the world? What is an analytical argument and what writing tools are necessary to develop effective argumentation?

In this seminar, our goal will be to hone our skills as writers by developing a shared analysis of the shifting relationship between technology and society, particularly as it affects our ability to understand our past, relate to our present and construct our future.

In contemporary life, we are immersed in a technological landscape. More than half of the world's eight billion people own a smartphone, and the numbers grow daily. Our financial, medical, educational, informational, and social lives are increasingly mediated and managed through screens, QR codes, the cloud, and AI-enabled chatbots. This has opened tremendous potential and possibility for connection, convenience, access to information, and more. But, the technological landscape is not power neutral.

Tech-enabled interactions have produced profound social alienation and are subjected to surveillance by corporate and governmental actors who are able to intervene in or appropriate these interactions for purposes -- good, bad, or indifferent -- that might be different than those we intend or desire. What does this mean for the future of our "information society"? Does the increasing presence of automation mean that computers will determine our future? Will we, as many science fiction films suggest, find ourselves subordinated to a world controlled by AI? Or will technology serve us, creating more productive ways for technology to deliver a "good life" to increasing numbers of people?

The answers to these questions are central to how we might consider the challenges we face today. In this class, we will develop a set of critical analytical writing skills to explore them. Writing practices will be based first in the development of strong reading habits. From here, we will explore formulating and mobilizing effective claims and the challenges of producing nuanced engagement with course content. We will develop these skills through an investigation of the history of our networked technological world, from the origins of the internet in the department of defense's counterinsurgency projects to the predominance of so-called "big tech." We will examine the power technology has in our daily lives, particularly the effects it has on our psyches, social relationships, politics, and environment.

This is a writing intensive seminar designed to help students develop their facility with writing as a tool for critical analysis in the tradition of the social sciences. We will draw on a variety of different texts, from film to journalism, social science to philosophy. Writing projects will include reading responses to assigned texts, a discussion facilitation project undertaken in collaboration with classmates, and two essays.

WRITING 101.16

H2O 101

Instructor: Jamie Browne

WF 1:25PM - 2:40PM

H2O 101: The Science of a Dynamic Resource

Access to clean, fresh water is emerging as one of the defining challenges of the 21st century. Every day across the globe, decisions are made on a scale from individuals to nations regarding water use, and in the aggregate these decisions have profound implications for our future. Seemingly small actions can have disproportionately large effects, far removed in time and distance from the initial event. Making sense of these relationships requires an understanding of the science of water. We must also be able to communicate that science, not only to other researchers but also to nonspecialists who rely on this information to help them make informed decisions.

In this course, we will study the problem of water by reading and writing in the context of theoretical and applied ecology. Ecologists study the interactions of biotic and abiotic factors in complex systems to try and answer questions at a number of scales. For example: How does sea level rise affect the availability of drinking water? Why would flooding an abandoned golf course to create a wetlands refuge be a dangerous move? Case studies we will investigate during our course include: the Florida Everglades, the Colorado River system, and Standing Rock.

Our readings for the class will consist mostly of scholarly journal articles in the fields of freshwater and coastal ecology, along with some popular sources. As you build proficiency in close reading, you will practice summarizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and ultimately critiquing the research of others. Writing assignments for this part of the course will consist of two short (2-page) papers and one 3-4 page synthesis paper. You will also identify a topic of interest to you and, working in a team, design a research question around that topic, which you will ultimately build into an 8-10 page scientific research proposal. Peer review and revision is a critical part of the scientific writing process, and writing projects in this class will incorporate these stages, allowing you to become comfortable with the process of review and revision. Finally, since

researchers must often communicate with policymakers or the public, you will choose a popular format, such as an infographic, podcast, or storymap, to present your research proposal topic for a nonspecialist audience. Skills gained in this class will be useful for any area of academic writing, as they emphasize engaging with scholarly literature, crafting research proposals, and effectively communicating ideas to different kinds of audiences.

WRITING 101.22-23

ATTENDING TO ATTENTION

Instructor: David Landes

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

Attending to Attention - The Secret Method of the Liberal Arts

A revolution is occurring in the ways we pay attention, demanding that we learn, unlearn, and relearn ways of attending across most aspects of contemporary life. To our aid, a liberal arts education trains students' attention--liberally and liberatorily--to "cultivate and practice the kinds of attention that will make them intelligent observers, diligent critics, and thoughtful actors on the stage of human life" (Sullivan). This academic writing course teaches critical research and writing skills through exploring how different kinds of attention shape our various ways of knowing, thinking, and doing.

Our inquiry-driven writing within the liberal arts tradition will organize our survey of various conceptions of attention and will aid our building of cutting-edge vocabularies for attention's situational dynamics from the experiencer's point of view (e.g., the kind of attention you're using while reading this). Guiding texts will span the humanities, sciences, arts, and the technological frontier, providing theories and case studies to help us ask: What are the means by which attention is formed in any given situation? How is attention constructed, structured, and variably reconfigured? Students will select situations of their interest where the type of attention used determines differences in outcomes. Writing and research assignments will scaffold the process of conducting attention analyses. The final essay culminates your work as a participant-researcher analyzing and creating modes of attention optimized for goals in a given situation. Ultimately, students will be learning two interrelated fundamental methodologies of the liberal arts: 1) the conventions of academic reading, writing, and researching, and 2) the foundational skills of attention that are implicit to all academic work, disciplinary knowledge, and social action.

WRITING 101.24-26

PREVENTING PANDEMICS

Instructor: Miranda Welsh

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

Preventing pandemics: interdisciplinary approaches to preparedness

In 2015, in the wake of SARS, H1N1, and Ebola, the United Nations and the World Health Organization convened a global team of experts to assess the threat of future epidemics. The team found that outbreaks are becoming more common for a multitude of reasons and we are unprepared to deal with them when they occur. They concluded that without better approaches to prevention and containment, future epidemics are inevitable: a prediction that has come to bear.

Where are new outbreaks most likely to occur and why? What ecological, sociopolitical, and cultural factors contribute to differences across locales in disease emergence, spread, and the capacity to respond? How have our dominant understandings--or narratives--of disease shaped our preparedness and response efforts to date? In the first third of our course, we will use an interdisciplinary case study of a single epidemic to examine these questions together, via guided readings, writings, and small-group discussions. You will summarize two of the guided readings independently (1 page each) and compose a written analysis of one of them (2 pages).

In the second two-thirds of the course, you will use your developing interests to form a three-person research team. Throughout the rest of the course, each team will collaborate to research a contemporary epidemic (e.g., cholera, Zika, SARS) and compose a review and synthesis paper about that epidemic (15-20 pages). In the paper, teams will summarize the epidemiology of and public health response to the epidemic and then present three additional narratives of the epidemic, each from a different disciplinary perspective:

1) Ecological: specific environmental conditions and human-environment interactions encourage outbreaks (e.g., climate change, deforestation, agricultural practices)

2) Cultural/anthropological: specific beliefs, values, norms, or customs (e.g., distrust, stigma, individualism) encourage outbreaks, as do culturally inappropriate interventions

3) Political/economic: specific characteristics of states and sociopolitical systems encourage outbreaks (e.g., by increasing poverty or inequality, by decreasing security or stability)

Each team member will research one of the three disciplinary narratives and present their findings in one of three sub-sections of the review and synthesis paper (3-4 pages per sub-section). Team members will work together to compose: 1) an introduction that summarizes the epidemiology of and public health response to the epidemic; 2) a conclusion that applies the

results of all three sub-sections to suggest specific improvements to prevention and/or mitigation efforts (3-4 pages each). 70% of the grade for the review and synthesis paper will be based on your individual sub-section and 30% will be based on the co-written introduction and conclusion; 5% of the overall grade will be based on team member evaluations.

As you work on the review and synthesis paper, you will be expected to meet with your research team outside of class on a few occasions. Throughout the course, we will use guided workshops and peer review to revise our writing, and you will be expected to consider and incorporate the feedback you receive from your peers and/or professor before submitting a final product.

WRITING 101.27-29

WRITING REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE

Instructor: Hannah Taylor

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

Writing 101: Writing Reproductive Justice, Politics, and Rights

Abbreviated Course Title: Writing Reproductive Justice

"To obtain Reproductive Justice, we must work on injustices in all arenas: social, economic, gender, racial, environmental, financial, physical, sexual, disability, and carceral." – Loretta J. Ross

The landscape of reproductive politics is an example of the complex interaction between belief, culture, law, and embodiment. The past year, in particular, has seen seismic shifts in the way that the United States approaches reproductive rights. But reproductive justice and politics are about more than just abortion. This course will encourage us to think of the many facets of reproductive justice– menstruation, reproductive technologies, IVF, birth justice, and chronic reproductive illness– and how they are written about in a variety of discourses.

This course will discuss through writings– both scholarly and popular– how we got to this moment in reproductive politics, and what we can do to change it. Using lenses from rhetorics of health and medicine, disability studies, and reproductive justice, this course will ask students to consider how writing has shaped the discourses of reproductive health and politics. Throughout the course, students will be asked to complete weekly reading responses and be expected to share

writing via discussion posts regularly. The course will include two longer writing assignments. The first, an analysis of the ways that an aspect of reproductive health has been discussed across mediums, will be between 1,000 and 1250 words. The final project will be a 1,500-2,000 word research paper on a controversy relevant to the course. Students will also produce a public-facing, advocacy document based on a reproductive health issue of their choice.

WRITING 101.30

NARRATING MEDICINE

Instructor: Jessica Corey

TUTH 10:05AM - 11:20AM

This course explores individual and collective experiences with medicine--ranging from medical research to physician training and practice to patient experiences--through an interdisciplinary lens that accounts for perspectives from the humanities, arts, social sciences, and sciences. Moreover, the course topic rests on the principle that all knowledge is subjective. With these notions in mind, we will entertain questions such as: How do subjective experience and objective inquiry inform medical practices and policies in reciprocal, effective ways? How do historical and current social structures determine how meaning is derived from certain forms of knowledge and representations of knowledge? What does the future of medicine look like if it truly adopts a narrative form, and what is advantageous and disadvantageous about that vision?

Throughout the course, we will engage with a variety of media that will help us question how different cultures understand and practice medicine, and the implications of those understandings and practices. We will also produce texts such as collaborative narrative roundtable reports, collaborative narrative maps, and individual reflective essays. Through these practices, students will learn to identify, articulate, and reflect on the rhetorical choices informing any text; analyze and develop their own arguments from multiple points of view; articulate and support their positions with research in a variety of forms; respond critically and ethically to others' ideas; adjust their writing/composing for multiple audiences, purposes, and contexts; and develop compositions that are thoughtful, organized, exact in diction, and structured/designed in a clear manner.

WRITING 101.31-32

US LATINX LIT & CULTURE

Instructor: Sandra Sotelo-Miller

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

According to the 2020 Census Bureau, almost 62.5 million people of Latin American descent live in the United States today. This is about 19% of the total US population, and this group is one of the largest minorities in the country. But what does it mean to be Latinx? How can we define US *Latinidad*? Is this pan-ethnic, monolithic identity helpful in understanding this community? Latinx stories and identities are as varied as their countries of origin, ethnic and racial identities, political relationship with the US, migration histories, and experiences living as diasporic people in the US. To understand and develop a working definition of *Latinidad(es)* and what Latinx Studies are, we will explore literary and cultural production that express some of the fundamental, social, political, and ideological issues affecting this community. In particular, we will analyze essays, poetry, short stories, film, and performance that explore issues central to the field of Latinx Studies. These narratives illuminate the cultural context, diasporic experience, and the role that gender, sexuality, race, and class play in forming this individual and collective identity.

Writing will be the primary mode of investigation into the concepts raised by the texts we examine in class. The core assignments in this course include an oral context report centering the work of a Latinx writer, artist, performer, or director, which you will present to the class. You will also write a review, where you practice using your perspective to effectively analyze a cultural text for a general audience. We will then focus on a research-oriented academic analysis where you interpret a primary text while coming into conversation with secondary sources. A fourth and final assignment asks you to collaborate in a group to produce a podcast where you explore an aspect of the Latinx experience through the telling of a single person's or small group's story. You can pick any topic as long as it is centered around a Latinx perspective. Through multiple writers' workshops and reflective exercises, you will learn to critique your peers' work as well as revise your own. These writing skills, along with the practice of careful observations, gripping descriptions, and critical analysis, will prepare you to articulate your thoughts and ideas in writing here at Duke and beyond.

WRITING 101.34

SPORTS AND THE WRITTEN WORD

Instructor: James Holaday

TUTH 3:05PM - 4:20PM

For well over one hundred years, sports have played an important role in American (and world) culture. And as long as there have been sports, people have written about them. From game reports in newspapers to biographies to autobiographies to predictions for the future to pure

fiction, writings related to sports run the gamut. They often cross the line from journalism to literature or even poetry.

In this class we will examine how writing about sports has changed over time before students embark upon several sports-related writing projects of their own. First, students will produce a memoir-type paper on their experiences with sports. Athlete or fan, success or failure, funny or sad–everyone has a story!

Secondly, students will produce a paper on an element of sports history. Sports have helped shape society (think Jackie Robinson's integration of baseball) or been shaped by them (think performance enhancing drugs or Olympic boycotts). For this paper, students will go beyond the obvious and do some research to examine a bit of sporting history.

A large part of writing about sports involves telling stories about others, often using the words of those people. The next project will consist of interviewing a sports personality. To do this successfully, students will do any necessary research so that relevant questions can be asked of their subjects.

Finally, students will get in touch with their creativity. They will craft a short story that is limited only by imagination. The only requirement is that the story has to include some sporting element.

WRITING 101.35-37

DOLLY PARTON FOR PRESIDENT?

Instructor: Leslie Maxwell

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

During the upcoming United States presidential election, you might notice a different name pop up on T-shirts as a possible contender: Dolly Parton. A search on Etsy reveals that there are dozens and dozens (maybe hundreds and hundreds) of Dolly for President T-shirts and other merch. Of course, Dolly Parton, the famous—dare I say legendary—country singer, pop singer, businessperson, and philanthropist isn't really running for president—but clearly there are many who might at least entertain the notion.

Parton is nearly universally beloved in the United States (and abroad!), and often for different reasons: some may see her as a savvy businessperson, others love her music, and still others admire her philanthropy. Sometimes how we see Parton gets more complicated, too—where some see her embrace of her sexuality as feminist, others see it as decidedly anti-feminist. Some see her as an icon of and advocate for the LGBTQ+ community. At the same time, many conservative Christians celebrate Parton and her faith. Where some see a high-powered businessperson, others may see a cog in capitalism's machine. Some see her embrace of characteristics stereotypically associated with the South, and even more specifically with

Appalachia, as bringing awareness of Appalachian culture to the mainstream—yet others see this as exploitative of a culture that is already marginalized in the United States. Some see a public figure that is outspoken, and others see a public figure that never speaks out (how is this one even possible? we'll explore!).

In this course, we will explore these (and more!) complexities. How much does Parton contribute to the mythology of Dolly Parton, and how much does our culture contribute? How much do we, as members of the same society, continue to contribute? And if she were running for president, what would her platform even be? We will explore these questions and more, all the complications, twists and turns that make Dolly Dolly. Through this investigation, we will hone skills needed in academic writing and discourse, such as those skills that ask us to look at the complexities and complications inherent in an academic discipline. This course will use a multidisciplinary framework to explore these complexities.

We will read books and essays, both in Parton's words and in the words of others. We will listen to podcasts, watch movies/films, and, of course, listen to Parton's music. You will have the opportunity to lead a class discussion, and you will engage in regular online discussion forums and posts. Our class will emphasize critical reading and writing, and you will learn about how and why we use sources and texts in writing. Students will generate three major writing projects: a close reading of a text, an annotated bibliography, and a creative project. Classes will consist of small-group, large-group, and individual activities and small-group and large-group discussions. Engagement is an important part of the course grading components, as well.

Though we'll work hard, we'll also have fun, remembering Dolly's wise advice: "Don't get so busy making a living that you forget to make a life."

WRITING 101.38

AI, ETHICS AND SOCIETY

Instructor: Victor Crespo Santiago

WF 8:30AM - 9:45AM

Artificial Intelligence (AI) development has experienced rapid and significant growth in the last few years. Currently, the most advanced AI systems are close to human-level ability in performing tasks like image identification, speech recognition, and generating images and argumentative texts from natural language prompts. Moreover, some of these systems can perform a wide range of different complex tasks. Based on that rapid growth, many experts argue that AI will transform societies radically this century. According to the most optimistic predictions, AI will significantly contribute to humanity's flourishing. However, if things go wrong, AI may cause humanity to lose its potential indefinitely or even create an astronomical amount of suffering.

In this course, you will first learn what AI is, how it has evolved in the last decades, and how the most developed AI systems, i.e., Large Language Models (LLMs), work. Then, we will examine some of the risks that AI poses and what our political responses to them should be. For example, assessment algorithms are currently used in many social contexts to make predictions that guide decisions in many social contexts, such as college admissions, mortgage approval, and hiring choices. What would it mean for these algorithms to treat people fairly regardless of their protected attributes, such as their race, gender, or national origin? We will also discuss some other AI-related risks that may appear in the long term, e.g., the risk of unaligned AI or what we would owe to AI systems if they became conscious and how likely that is to occur.

WRITING 101.39

CLOSING THE GENDER GAP IN STEM

Instructor: Caleb Hazelwood

WF 8:30AM - 9:45AM

According to a 2018 report from the National Science Foundation, women make up a mere 28% of the American workforce in science and engineering, despite representing over half of the college-educated workforce in general. A 2015 study (Leslie et al.) “identified a correlation between poor representation of women and underrepresented minorities in a discipline and the belief among the discipline’s members that success requires innate brilliance” (Benderly 2019). Organizations such as the American Association of University Women report that these disparities are the result of systemic inadequacies in science education—inadequacies that perpetuate gender stereotypes, reinforce male-dominated cultures, and lead to fewer role models for aspiring female and nonbinary scientists.

For instance, many students know that James Watson and Francis Crick are credited with discovering the molecular structure of DNA, but fewer know of Rosalind Franklin’s instrumental role in this discovery. Nearly every student knows of Isaac Newton, while few have heard of Émilie du Châtelet. In this course, we will actively do our part to bridge these gaps. We will read works by and about female scientists across disciplines—both the unsung heroes in the history of science (such as Ada Lovelace, Barbara McClintock, and Katherine Johnson), as well as female pioneers of the STEM workforce today (such as Jennifer Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier). We will also read and discuss feminist perspectives on science, such as the gendered bias of biological models and evolutionary concepts. Finally, we will read and discuss recent scientific literature on systemic inequities in STEM, as well as possible social and economic causes for these inequities. In addition to weekly reading summaries and discussion questions, students will have opportunities to explore the styles of personal narrative and journalistic prose. Finally, students will write an argumentative research essay on a female or nonbinary "STEMinist" of their choosing.

References:

Benderly, Beryl Lieff. 2019. “Mixed messages about women's representation in science—and a missing piece of the picture.” Science. https://www.science.org/content/article/mixed-messages-about-women-s-representation-science-and-missing-piece-picture

Leslie, Sarah-Jane, et al. 2015. "Expectations of brilliance underlie gender distributions across academic disciplines." Science. 347.6219: 262-265.

National Science Board. 2018. Science and Engineering Indicators 2018. NSB-2018-1. Alexandria, VA: National Science Foundation. Available at https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/indicators/.

WRITING 101.40

SOUNDING THE ROARING TWENTIES

Instructor: David Moenning

MW 4:40PM - 5:55PM

In the aftermath of World War I, American prosperity soared to unprecedented heights, producing a period of consumerism and cultural explosion known as the Roaring Twenties. As the epicenter of this era, New York was teeming with the exploits of modernity—smoke-filled speakeasies, the burgeoning steel skyline, the Harlem Renaissance, and Machine Age innovations all symbolized a break with tradition, heralding an age of American progress. These images are but a few that may be conjured when one thinks of the “Roaring Twenties,” but how did they sound?

This course explores the *sound* of the Roaring Twenties by highlighting the musical products of the period, paying particular attention to early jazz, experimental music, traditional classical music, and symphonic jazz. How might musical endeavors have paralleled progress in other artistic mediums such as painting and sculpture? How did technological innovations influence the way music was created, experienced, and performed? To aid our inquiry and listening we will engage significantly with primary sources such as recordings, essays, and scores, while relying on the deft scholarship of historians and musicologists specializing in the era. Our investigation will not only reveal the sonic vibrancy of American culture in the 1920s but will provide a framework for engaging music in its cultural context, whether it be a century ago or in our contemporary era.

Assignments will include weekly readings; several Read/Listen/Reflect prompts (~500 words); an annotated bibliography (~750 words); and two larger papers. In the first paper (~1,500 words)

students will play the role of musical tour guide, creating their own hypothetical concert and composing "program notes"—a discipline-specific writing style that helps audience members enjoy and appreciate the pieces on the concert. Students will engage in a peer-review process by listening to and critiquing their classmates' concert and the accompanying program notes. The final paper (~2,000 words) will be an academic research paper on a course-related topic chosen in consult with the instructor and will entail a drafting process with peers and professor.

Reading musical notation is not a prerequisite for the course.

WRITING 101.41

WRITING THE SENSES

Instructor: Tessa Bolsover

WF 3:05PM - 4:20PM

Have you ever been transported back in time by a familiar scent? Do you ever find that certain words or numbers evoke a color? Starting from the vantage point of the senses, this introductory writing course will look at an eclectic range of essays, novels, memoirs, poems, films, music, and visual artworks while learning techniques for writing critically and creatively about art, literature, and embodied experience.

The course will be organized into sections centering each of the five primary senses—sound, sight, taste, touch, and smell—keeping in mind the ways they constantly intersect and bleed into one another. The final section will focus on what's often called the "sixth sense": the perception of supernatural presences typically thought to be beyond the reach of the bodily senses. In this context, we will examine narrative depictions of ghost sightings, alien abductions, and religious visionary experiences—such as hearing the voice of God—while keeping an eye (and ear) toward the multisensory intricacies of such accounts.

Possible course materials include texts by Anne Carson, Audre Lorde, Nathaniel Mackey, John Berger, Roland Barthes, Maggie Nelson, and Emily Dickinson, films by Hayao Miyazaki, Jordan Peele, and Apichatpong Weerasethakul, and an assortment of sonic and image-based media.

Throughout the semester, we will write rigorously and often. Assignments include reading responses, two short essays with revisions, and a final 7-8 page (or multimedia equivalent) project. You will have ample opportunities to give and receive feedback on one another's work through in-class workshops. We will explore forms of writing for various contexts including academic essays, creative nonfiction, book and film reviews, interviews, and a personal research project.

There are no prerequisites for this course; it is well-suited for anyone who would like to improve their writing abilities and is curious about the arts. The primary goal of this course is to help

students learn to write with clarity and precision while cultivating intellectual practices rooted in inquisitiveness and tuned in to the particularities of the world.

WRITING 101.42

SAPPHIC CINEMA

Instructor: Madeleine Collier

TUTH 4:40PM - 5:55PM

To borrow a question from North Carolina native Renée Rapp, “Can a gay girl get an amen?” The last few years have seen an explosion of sapphic media, including popular music, cinema, and television. Lesbian representation, while increasingly ubiquitous, nonetheless remains an under-studied topic in queer film history and theory. Accordingly, this course seeks to address a gap in queer cinema studies while also providing an introduction to university writing. While surveying a breadth of films from the 1930s to the present, we will use a gender-expansive understanding of the term “sapphic” (including butch, femme, nonbinary, trans, and bi/pansexual identifications) to trace multiple strands of sapphic community and identity across the decades. Simultaneously, we will explore how to think and write critically about art and culture.

Broad themes covered by this course include the politics of representation and enjoyment, the question of whether sapphic stories can ever escape the voyeurism of a straight narrative framework, and how class and race govern access to particular expressions of gender and sexuality. We will consider sapphic villains and heroes, demise and triumph, exploitation and autofiction. In addition to the films themselves, we will also explore sapphic spectatorship and star culture, studying the sapphic communities that coalesce around particular films and thinking about how popular narratives about queer movie stars shape their films’ reception.

This course is writing-focused, and features many opportunities to practice composition and argumentation. Students will complete weekly response posts, midterm and final papers, and in-class presentations. We will read film criticism and theory to practice analyzing and defending opinions on a wide variety of fiction and documentary films. Students will workshop writing with the instructor and with each other throughout the semester.

Likely films include: Mädchen in Uniform (dir. Sagan, 1931), Queen Christina (dir. Marmoulian, 1933), The Watermelon Woman (dir. Dunye 1997), But I’m a Cheerleader (dir. Babbitt, 2000), Gendernauts (dir. Treut, 2000), Saving Face (dir. Wu, 2004), The Shakedown (dir. Weinraub, 2018), Portrait of a Lady on Fire (dir. Sciamma, 2019), Love Lies Bleeding (dir. Glass, 2024).

WRITING 101.43

GOOD & EVIL IN CHILDREN'S LIT

Instructor: Katharine Turner

WF 3:05PM - 4:20PM

GOOD AND EVIL IN CHILDREN'S FANTASY FICTION

What do stories about magic mean when they are read to us as children? What do we make of them now? And why do we continue to tell and retell them?

From J.R.R. Tolkien to J.K. Rowling, this course will investigate what makes children's fantasy fiction such a beloved and enduring genre — and what we can learn from looking back on it as adults. In stories populated by chosen ones and dark lords, timeless prophecies and magic from days long past, what do 'light' and 'darkness' really signify? And what are we learning when we are taught the difference between them? We will seek to understand and interpret these stories — the lessons they offer us, and what they leave out — as tools meant to help navigate coming of age, and ask what are the benefits and limits of the narratives they present about morality, identity, and power. What kind of people get to be heroes? What kind of people are villains? And what do we do with that as we grow up and into the roles we have been given?

We will begin by reading canonical children's fantasy texts before turning to contemporary young adult and middle grade literature that works to challenge and subvert the myths of its predecessors. Texts may include C.S. Lewis's The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, Diana Wynne Jones's Howl's Moving Castle, and C.S. Pacat's Dark Rise, as well as film and television such as Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone and Percy Jackson and the Olympians.

In conversation with the assigned reading, we will discuss how to read closely and attentively as well as how to respond through various kinds of writing to the literary and cultural media we love. Written assignments will include two short analytical essays (3-5 pages) and one longer argumentative paper (5-7 pages) that engage with the readings and class discussions. Through informal homework assignments, class discussion, individual conferences, and a collaborative peer review and workshopping process, students will develop foundational skills of composition, inquiry, and analysis that will prepare them for more complex forms of writing at Duke and beyond.

WRITING 101.47-49

BIOPHILIC CITIES

Instructor: Lindsey Smith

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

TUTH 1:25PM - 2:40PM

In the 1980s, biologist E.O. Wilson popularized the concept of "biophilia," that humans have an innate desire to connect with the living world. Yet, 60% of the global population now lives in urban areas, and a recent Pew survey found that 31% of U.S. adults report being online "almost constantly." Humans are increasingly disconnected from our biophilic nature, and that shift is impacting our health and well-being. Rates of anxiety and depression are on the rise, particularly among urbanites. Doctors are now prescribing a daily dose of nature to treat high blood pressure and anxiety, and people are turning to the Japanese practice of shinrin-yoku, or "forest bathing," to de-stress and recharge. The concept of biophilia has also extended to urban planning as initiatives like rooftop gardens, bird-friendly building design, and green beltways seek to reconnect humans with nature and increase biodiversity in cities.

In this course, we will use seminar-based discussions, research, and writing projects to examine nature's health and wellness benefits and explore what it takes to design thriving biophilic cities. Our course materials will come from environmental science, urban planning, psychology, and conservation journals, popular magazines and books, and documentaries. In your final project, you will work collaboratively to propose an initiative that seeks to integrate nature into an urban space of your choosing. Throughout the semester, you will also take part in a fundamental element of academic writing: reading each other's work and providing feedback for revisions. And, of course, we will get our dose of nature by holding class outside as much as possible, including taking several class visits to the Duke Gardens.

WRITING 101.50

WOMEN, LEADERSHIP, PURPOSE

Instructor: Jennifer Ahern-Dodson

TUTH 11:45AM - 1:00PM

What does it mean to live a life of purpose? What is the role of purpose in women's leadership? How have women who've led lives of purpose navigated the course of their lives and careers? How might their stories and strategies inspire you to reflect on your own?

The first half of the semester includes informal written responses to course readings that help us delve into stories of women leaders in a range of contexts and 3 essays that explore a key course concept related to leadership and purpose: health and well-being, community engagement, and perfectionism.

In the second half of the semester, each of you will pursue an individual project that helps you consider your own intentional next steps at Duke that reflect your commitments to what you care about. You will identify something important to you that relates to your future plans, goals, or aspirations. You will develop and explore a central research question about it, learn about it, and resource yourself as you make it a part of your future. Project culminates in a research talk and essay.

WRITING 101.51-52

ASIAN AMERICAN NARRATIVES

Instructor: Susan Thananopavarn

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

Asian American Narratives: Literature, History, and Activism

What does it mean to be Asian American in the twenty-first century? How are Asians and Asian Americans represented in popular culture, and how do writers and activists resist and complicate these narratives? Asian American writers have employed various genres to make meaning of their lives and the lives of others, including fiction, autobiographical essays, creative nonfiction, graphic memoirs, and film. Through these texts and your own writing, we will examine the choices people make in framing Asian American experiences. We will also explore how literature, history, and theory can help us better understand key issues in Asian American studies such as the "model minority" myth, gender and sexuality, international adoption, refugee experiences, and anti-Asian violence. Our reading and weekly writing about these topics will culminate in three major projects for the class. In the first project, a 3-4 page essay, you will explore the issue of Asian American representation in a text of your choice. The second project will consist of a 4-6 page literary analysis that considers how a text responds to a key issue in Asian American studies. The final assignment is an exploration of Asian American oral histories through narrative. For the last project, you will decide the best form—essay, multimedia presentation, graphic novel, etc.—in which to convey an aspect of Asian American history through the lens of a single person's story.

WRITING 101.53

WRITING AS A CREATIVE PROCESS

Instructor: Hannah Davis

TUTH 8:30AM - 9:45AM

What does it mean to be creative? What does it mean to be a writer? What is academic writing? In "Writing as a Creative Process," we will explore these and related questions as we engage with both creativity and writing as academic fields of study. As composition scholar Wendy Bishop says, “Writing is, after all, a creative process; and like any such process, it depends on human connection.” As such, we will engage in discussions, writing workshops, and activities that help you explore and investigate the course questions and to learn about yourself, creativity, and writing. Throughout the course, you’ll practice creative thinking, invention, critical reading, drafting, workshopping, and revising as you complete writing projects that introduce you to writing as a mode of inquiry.

This semester, you will use writing as a mode of inquiry to explore myths about writing and creativity and to join academic conversations. Throughout the semester, you will write short responses and longer, researched papers (1500-2000 words). Each major assignment will receive feedback and undergo multiple revisions. We will spend class time working through the major assignments with a variety of activities that guide your ability to think creatively and engage with writing as a process.

The goal of this course is not to arrive at definitive answers about the course’s guiding questions but to practice critical thinking, reading, and writing as we explore new perspectives and form evidence-based arguments. If you are interested in learning about and discussing writing and creativity, then "Writing as a Creative Process" is the Writing 101 course for you.

WRITING 101.54-55

RADICAL MAGIC

Instructor: Cheryl Spinner

MW 3:05PM - 4:20PM- MW 4:40PM - 5:55PM

Radical Magic: Feminism and the Occult

“We are the weirdos, mister.”

—Nancy, The Craft

“So I leap from the gallows and I levitate down your street.”

—Taylor Swift, “Who’s Afraid of Little Old Me?”

“I’ll follow you down to the ground
My voice will haunt you."

—Stevie Nicks, Fleetwood Mac, “Silver Springs”

The past decade has witnessed the renaissance of the witch, which last had its height amidst the “goth weirdos” of the 1990’s. Currently, patches, t-shirts, and pins pepper Etsy with statements like “Hex the Patriarchy” and “‘We Are the Granddaughters of the Witches You Could Not Burn.’” Books and think-pieces have been published about this current phenomenon by popular tarot readers, astrologists, and witches, all of whom address the feminist, queer, activist potential of these practices. Most recently, performing powerhouse Taylor Swift has been accused of witchcraft on stage during her record-breaking concert, “Eras,” and Swifties are experiencing a real psychological condition known as “post-concert amnesia.”

Did you manage to snatch tickets to Eras and can’t remember anything about the show? Why is Miss Americana being accused of a witch now, at the height of her popularity? We will address such questions and more over the course of this semester by surveying the ways in which magic and the supernatural have been coded as feminine, irrational, and sinister. We will begin with the Salem Witch Trials, traverse the 19th-century spiritualist and occultist movements, pivot to witches and second-wave Feminism in the 1960’s and 70’s. spend some time in the grungy 90’s, and end with witchcraft in our current moment. We will explore the feminist and queer communities who have gravitated towards spells, incantations, and Tarot decks to provide a greater insight into a dominant world that was not made for them. We will examine the literary qualities of Tarot, spells, and incantations, and question the distinction between writing and magic. Is there really a difference between a poem and an incantation? Can the lyrics of a rock song be a hex? We will look into histories and theories of the bookbinding and books as objects that age, warp, yellow, and develop that distinctive smell. With spines that hold them together, are books bodies?

As a whole, the course is an alchemy of disciplines. You might think of it as the following equation:

RM = W+L+H+A

(Radical Magic = Writing + Literature + History + Art)

Expect to produce quite a bit of writing over the course of the semester, which will include:

* Weekly Blog Posts
* Digital Archival Research Project
* Literature Review
*Grimoire

These assignments are intended to teach you varying techniques of writing genres over the course of the semester, which range from traditional academic writing, writing for the general public, and magical writing. Bi-weekly blog posts will clock in at around 250-500 words and will be informal responses to the reading of the week, and/or be a space to complete short assignments in response to a prompt. With the digital archival project you will learn how to conduct advanced academic research in David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Duke University. You will choose an object from the treasures of Duke's extensive collections related to magic and the supernatural and provide a 1,000 word description of the piece and why it is important for an exhibit on magic, feminism, and the supernatural. Collectively, we will gather the artifacts each of you have chosen and present them in a virtual exhibition. The archival project is intended to give you an opportunity to engage in writing that is not academic but intended for a more public facing audience. The literature review will train you in traditional academic writing. You will choose your topic of interest and write a literature review requiring a minimum of 10 peer-reviewed sources that outlines the major debates in the field.

For your final project, you will create your own physical grimoire. Creativity is encouraged. These grimoires, or "spell-books," are yours. If something inspires you, don't ask me—just put it in! There are parameters to the assignment that make it gradeable, but aside from those you really have free-range.

WRITING 101.56-58

POST-APOCALYPTIC FICTION

Instructor: Kevin Casey

TUTH 10:05AM - 11:20AM -TUTH 1:25PM - 2:40PM- TUTH 3:05PM - 4:20PM

"I think, as a species, we have a desire to believe that we're living at the climax of the story. It's a kind of narcissism. We want to believe that we're uniquely important, that we're living at the end of history, that *now*, after all these millennia of false alarms, *now* is finally the worst that it's ever been, that finally we have reached the end of the world."—Emily St. John Mandel, *Sea of Tranquility*

“Had I been informed of the impending apocalypse, I would have stocked up.” —*The Walking Dead*, Season 1

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Nuclear annihilation. Infectious disease. Environmental catastrophe. Zombie apocalypse.

We have a rich literary tradition of stories that imagine the end of the world as we know it. When set in the aftermath of such cataclysmic events—some of which may seem more plausible than others—these stories are often referred to as “post-apocalyptic.” Audiences have an insatiable appetite for the genre.

Why do we appear to enjoy envisioning our own doom? Are apocalyptic (and post-apocalyptic) scenarios entertaining or otherwise satisfying? If not, why do so many people read and (watch) them? Why does this genre occupy a significant, recurring space in our literary and popular culture?

We’ll ask these and other questions using literature as a primary disciplinary lens, with likely overlap in other disciplines and non-scholarly contexts. Our primary texts will include: Severance, by Ling Ma; The Road, by Cormac McCarthy; and Station Eleven, by Emily St. John Mandel. These novels will form the foundation of our reading, writing, and discussion this semester. Writing will include a close reading essay, a research paper, and a personal essay, among other potential projects.

Updated: 11/11/24