

COMPARATIVE MEDIA STUDIES / WRITING (COURSE 21W)

The Program in Writing offers introductory writing as well as advanced coursework in these areas: 1) Creative Writing; 2) Science Writing; and 3) Digital Media.

Creative Writing

Introductory

21W.011 Writing and Rhetoric: Rhetoric and Contemporary Issues

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.015, 21W.016

Provides the opportunity for students - as readers, viewers, writers, and speakers - to engage with social and ethical issues they care deeply about. Explores perspectives on a range of social issues, such as the responsibilities of citizens, freedom of expression, poverty and homelessness, mental illness, the challenges of an aging society, the politics of food, and racial and gender inequality. Discusses rhetorical strategies that aim to increase awareness of social problems; to educate the public about different perspectives on contemporary issues; and to persuade readers of the value of particular positions on, or solutions to, social problems. Students analyze selected texts and photographs, as well as documentary and feature films, that represent or dramatize social problems or issues. Students also write essays about social and ethical issues of their own choice. Limited to 18.

A. Walsh

21W.012 Writing and Rhetoric: Food for Thought

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.015, 21W.016

Explores many of the issues that surround food as both material fact and personal and cultural symbol. Includes non-fiction works on topics such as family meals, food's ability to awaken us to "our own powers of enjoyment" (M.F.K. Fisher), and eating as an "agricultural act" (W. Berry). Students read Michael Pollan's best-selling book *In Defense of Food* and discuss the issues it raises about America's food supply and eating habits, as well as the rhetorical strategies it employs. Assignments include narratives, analytical essays, and research-based essays. Limited to 18.

S. Carlisle

21W.013 Writing and Rhetoric: Introduction to Contemporary Rhetoric

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.014, 21W.015, 21W.016

Considers how rhetoric shapes current events in politics, science, and society. Students study rhetoric as a theoretical framework for developing persuasive arguments, as a method of analyzing written, oral, and visual texts, and as a mode of human inquiry. Assignments include analytical, persuasive, and research-based essays, as well as oral presentations, group discussions, and debates. Readings drawn from political speeches, scientific arguments, and popular media. Limited to 18.

L. Harrison-Lepera

21W.014 Writing and Rhetoric: Exploring Visual Media

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered

Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.015, 21W.016

Explores the rhetoric of visual media and the meaning of the digital revolution. Students analyze readings and films and discuss the power of media in defining social issues and shaping ideas of self, family, and community. They also write essays that sharpen skills in analyzing visual rhetoric, developing and supporting arguments, and using sources. Limited to 18.

A. Walsh

21W.015 Writing and Rhetoric: Writing about Sports

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.016

Examines the role of sports in our individual lives and American culture at large. Considers a broad range of issues, such as heroism and ethical conundrums, gender equality, steroids, and the proper role of sports in college life. Examples of high-quality, descriptive and analytic sports writing serve as the focus for class discussion and as models for student essays. Limited to 18.

K. Boiko

21W.016 Writing and Rhetoric: Designing Meaning

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

2-2-8 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.015

Explores how we use rhetoric in text, visuals, and other modes to make meaning. Uses analysis, composition, and debate about rhetorical strategies to develop theoretical and empirical knowledge of how design choices shape our texts and our understanding of the world. In lab, students experiment with rhetorical strategies and assess their effects. Limited to 18.

S. Lane

21W.021 Writing and Experience: MIT Inside, Live

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.022, 21W.026

Acting as participant-observers, students investigate MIT's history and culture through visits to the Institute's archives and museums, relevant readings, and depictions of MIT in popular culture. Students chronicle their experiences and insights through a variety of writing projects, culminating in the completion of a portfolio. Limited to 18.

J. Graziano

21W.022 Writing and Experience: Reading and Writing Autobiography

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.021, 21W.026

Draws on a range of autobiographical writing as examples for students to analyze. Students write essays that focus on their own experience, exploring topics such as intellectual growth and development, the childhood and high school years, life at MIT, the influence of place upon one's personality and character, and the role politics and religion play in one's life. Emphasizes clarity, specificity, and structure; investigates various modes of writing (narrative, analytical, expository) and their suitability for different purposes. Limited to 18.

Fall: L. Harrison Lepera, N. Jackson, S. Carlisle

Spring: S. Carlisle, L. Harrison Lepera, A. Walsh

21W.026 Writing and Experience: The Hero in the Postmodern World

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.021, 21W.022

Students examine and analyze concepts of the hero - from ancient Greece through the writings of Jung and Joseph Campbell - using the lens of postmodernist thought and critical theory, which largely reject the concept of a hero as role model or ideal. Studies the flaws of the great leaders of earlier times and discusses how the image of the hero influences world view, informs choices, and functions as metaphor in ethical dilemmas. Explores the characteristics that define a hero and how they have changed over time. Considers whether or not certain figures meet the definition of a hero, whether their deeds remain compelling, and whether they still deserve a place in cultural dialog. Students read essays, fiction, and plays depicting heroes in both literature and history, and use workshops and revision to turn ideas and experience into powerful written communication. Limited to 18.

S. Lewitt

21W.031 Science Writing and New Media: Explorations in Communicating about Science and Technology

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.032, 21W.034, 21W.035, 21W.036

Examines principles of good writing, focusing on those associated with scientific and technical writing. Considers the effects of new media as an avenue for communicating about science. Students discuss scientific articles and essays and work in small groups to critique each other's writing. Assignments include a critical review, a science essay for the general public, and a research or service project proposal. Students choose topics that reflect their background and interests. Formal and informal presentations and group discussions develop oral communication skills. Limited to 18.

J. Melvold

21W.032 Science Writing and New Media: Introduction to Digital Media

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.034, 21W.035, 21W.036

Focuses on digital media production and associated written and oral reports. Working individually and in small, collaborative teams, students create a variety of digital media projects throughout the term, culminating in a larger final project of their choosing. Assignments include audio and video essays, website design, games and interactive fiction, mobile technology, and readings. Students write bi-weekly short essays analyzing their digital projects, as well as a proposal, progress report and completion report for the final project. Limited to 18.

*E. Barrett***21W.034 Science Writing and New Media: Perspectives on Medicine and Public Health**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.032, 21W.035, 21W.036

Public health topics, such as AIDS, asthma, malaria control, obesity, and sleep deprivation, provide a unifying focus as students explore diverse modes of science writing. Readings include essays by such writers as Atul Gawande, Danielle Ofri, Jerome Groopman, and William Carlos Williams, as well as peer-reviewed journal articles. Assignments include a critical review, a scientific literature review, a brochure suitable for general distribution, an autobiographical narrative, a resume, a job application letter, and oral presentations. Limited to 18.

*C. Taft***21W.035 Science Writing and New Media: Elements of Science Writing for the Public**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.032, 21W.034, 21W.036

Provides an introduction to writing about science (including medicine, technology, and engineering) for general readers. Emphasizes background research as a foundation for strong science writing. Students read works by accomplished science writers. Each assignment focuses on a different popular form, such as news article, interview, essay, and short feature. Limited to 18.

*Fall: J. Berezin, A. Carleton**Spring: K. Boiko***21W.036 Science Writing and New Media: Writing and the Environment**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2017-2018: U (Fall)

Acad Year 2018-2019: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.032, 21W.034, 21W.035

Develops written and oral communication skills through the study and practice of environmental science writing. Covers a wide range of genres, including such standard forms as the scientific literature review. Students adapt the content of their papers and oral presentations to the distinctive needs of specific audiences. Assignments provide thematic coherence and a basis for independent student research. Limited to 18.

*C. Taft***21W.041[] Writing About Literature**

Same subject as 21L.000[]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered

Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

See description under subject 21L.000[]. Enrollment limited.

*W. Kelley, I. Lipkowitz***21W.042[] Writing with Shakespeare**

Same subject as 21L.010[]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

See description under subject 21L.010[].

D. Henderson

Advanced

21W.735 Writing and Reading the Essay

Prereq: Writing sample and permission of instructor

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Exploration of formal and informal modes of writing nonfiction prose. Extensive practice in composition, revision, and editing. Reading in the literature of the essay from the Renaissance to the present, with an emphasis on modern writers. Classes alternate between discussion of published readings and workshops on student work. Individual conferences. Limited to 18.

Staff

21W.740 Writing Autobiography and Biography

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Writing an autobiography is a vehicle for improving one's style while studying the nuances of the language. Literary works are read with an emphasis on different forms of autobiography. Students examine various stages of life, significant transitions, personal struggles, and memories translated into narrative prose, and discuss: what it means for autobiographer and biographer to develop a personal voice; and the problems of reality and fiction in autobiography and biography.

K. Manning

21W.741[] Black Matters: Introduction to Black Studies

Same subject as 24.912[], 21H.106[], 21L.008[], WGS.190[]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A, HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject 24.912[].

M. Degraff

21W.742[] Writing about Race

Same subject as WGS.231[]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

The issue of race and racial identity have preoccupied many writers throughout the history of the US. Students read Jessica Abel, Diana Abu-Jaber, Lynda Barry, Felicia Luna Lemus, James McBride, Sigrid Nunez, Ruth Ozeki, Danzy Senna, Gloria Anzaldua, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Carmit Delman, Stefanie Dunning, Cherrie Moraga, Hiram Perez and others, and consider the story of race in its peculiarly American dimensions. The reading, along with the writing of members of the class, is the focus of class discussions. Oral presentations on subjects of individual interest are also part of the class activities. Students explore race and ethnicity in personal essays, pieces of cultural criticism or analysis, or (with permission of instructor) fiction. All written work is read and responded to in class workshops and subsequently revised. Enrollment limited.

K. Ragusa

21W.743 Voice and Meaning: Speaking to Readers through Memoir, Fact, and Fiction

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-E

Studies the meaning of various texts (fiction, nonfiction, poetry) through the chosen voice. Readings include Ian Frazier's "Hints From Heloise," Robert Hayden's "Middle Passage," E.L. Doctorow's "The Waterworks," and Susan Mitchell's "From The Journals Of The Frog Prince." Examines how writers of various backgrounds and in a variety of forms use everything from rhythm, syntax and line-breaks to lexicon in order to create character, time, and place. Seeks to ultimately understand how form functions not just as ornamentation, but as meaning. Limited to 18.

Staff

21W.744 The Art of Comic Book Writing

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered

Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students create short scripts and full-length comic book narratives across a variety of genres, while analyzing a wide range of comics (corporate and independent, print and web). Focuses on scripts; drawing skills not required, but illustrations or storyboards are welcome. Special attention to questions of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality in both critical and creative work. Limited to 13.

M. Liu

21W.745 Advanced Essay Workshop

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Can be repeated for credit.

For students with experience in writing essays and nonfiction prose. Focuses on negotiating and representing identities grounded in gender, race, class, nationality, and sexuality in prose that is expository, exploratory, investigative, persuasive, lyrical, or incantatory. Authors include James Baldwin, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Audre Lorde, Richard Rodriguez, Alice Walker, John Edgar Wideman, Diana Hume George, bell hooks, Margaret Atwood, Patricia J. Williams, and others. Designed to help students build upon their strengths as writers and to expand their repertoire of styles and approaches in essay writing. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. Limited to 18.

*Staff***21W.747 Rhetoric**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

For students with a special interest in learning how to make forceful arguments in written form. Studies the forms and structures of argumentation, including organization of ideas, awareness of audience, methods of persuasion, evidence, factual vs. emotional argument, figures of speech, and historical forms and uses of arguments. Limited to 18 per section.

*Fall: S. Strang**Spring: S. Strang, A. Karatsolis***21W.748 Apocalyptic Storytelling**

Subject meets with CMS.848

Prereq: Permission of instructor

Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered

Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Focuses on the critical making of apocalyptic, post-apocalyptic and dystopian stories across various narrative media. Considers the long history of Western apocalypticism as well as the uses and abuses of apocalypticism across time. Examines a wide variety of influential texts in order to enhance students' creative and theoretical repertoires. Students create their own apocalyptic stories and present on selected texts. Investigates conventions such as plague, zombies, nuclear destruction, robot uprising, alien invasion, environmental collapse, and supernatural calamities. Considers questions of race, gender, sexuality, colonialism, trauma, memory, witness, and genocide. Intended for students with prior creative writing experience. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 15.

*J. Diaz***21W.754[] Playwriting I**

Same subject as 21M.604[]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21M.604[].

*L. Harrington; K. Urban***21W.755 Writing and Reading Short Stories**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

An introduction to writing fiction. Students write their own stories and study essays and short stories by contemporary authors from around the world. Discussion focuses on students' writing and on assigned works in their historical and social contexts.

S. Lewitt, M. Nathan

21W.756 Writing and Reading Poems

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Examination of the formal structural and textual variety in poetry. Extensive practice in the making of poems and the analysis of both students' manuscripts and texts from 16th- through 20th-century literature. Attempts to make relevant the traditional elements of poetry and their contemporary alternatives. Weekly writing assignments, including some exercises in prosody.

Staff

21W.757 Fiction Workshop

Prereq: 21W.755

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Intermediate class for students with some experience in writing fiction. Students write short stories and complete other writing exercises. Readings include short story collections by contemporary writers such as Sandra Cisneros, Benjamin Percy, Leila Lalami, Laura Pritchett, Bret Anthony Johnston, and Edward P. Jones. Discussions focus on sources of story material, characterization, setting, architecture, point of view, narrative voice, and concrete detail.

H. Lee

21W.758 Genre Fiction Workshop

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students read texts in genres such as fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, noir, and horror, typically focusing on one genre exclusively in a given semester. Formats may include short stories, novels, films, TV shows and other narrative media. Considers genre protocols and how to write within the restrictions and freedoms associated with each genre. Students write fiction within a genre (or "between" genres) for roundtable workshopping. Intended for students with prior creative writing experience. Limited to 15.

S. Lewitt

21W.759 Writing Science Fiction

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students write and read science fiction and analyze and discuss stories written for the class. For the first eight weeks, readings in contemporary science fiction accompany lectures and formal writing assignments intended to illuminate various aspects of writing craft as well as the particular problems of writing science fiction. The rest of the term is given to roundtable workshops on students' stories.

S. Lewitt

21W.760 Creative Writing and Visual Culture: Writing in the Museum

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Critically explores how and why objects are collected and consumed, drawing upon visual culture and museum and cultural studies. Students engage in forms of creative writing that imitate museums, enact curatorial gestures, and/or try to dismantle such structures. They also curate their own writing into a chapbook, blog, or other creative form. Readings cover a range of genres. Includes visits to actual and virtual galleries.

Staff

21W.761 (un)Writing the Book

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Explores the material and historical components of books, dissecting and regenerating individual and collective writings into new forms. Students engage in weekly creative experiments and other exercises, handle rare books on field trips to Special Collections, and edit collaborative chapbooks. Examines the history and mystery of the book, considering where this technology has come from and envisioning where it might go.

Staff

21W.762 Poetry Workshop

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

For students with some previous experience in poetry writing. Frequent assignments stress use of language, diction, word choice, line breaks, imagery, mood, and tone. Considers the functions of memory, imagination, dreams, poetic impulses. Throughout the term, students examine the work of published poets. Revision stressed.

*E. Barrett***21W.769[J] Playwrights' Workshop**

Same subject as 21M.785[J]

Subject meets with 21M.789

Prereq: 21M.604[J], 21W.754[J], or permission of instructor

U (Spring)

4-0-8 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

See description under subject 21M.785[J]. Enrollment may be limited.

*W. Savick***21W.770 Advanced Fiction Workshop**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

For students with some experience in writing fiction. Write longer works of fiction and short stories which are related or interconnected. Read short story collections by individual writers, such as Sandra Cisneros, Raymond Carver, Edward P. Jones, and Tillie Olsen, and discuss them critically and analytically, with attention to the ways in which the writers' choices about component parts contribute to meaning. In-class exercises and weekly workshops of student work focus on sources of story material, characterization, structure, narrative voice, point of view and concrete detail. Concentration on revision.

*H. Lee***21W.771 Advanced Poetry Workshop**

Prereq: Prior manuscript submission required

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

For students experienced in writing poems. Regular reading of published contemporary poets and weekly submission of manuscripts for class review and criticism. Students expected to do a substantial amount of rewriting and revision. Classwork supplemented with individual conferences.

*E. Funkhouser***21W.773 Writing Longer Fiction**

Prereq: A fiction workshop or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2017-2018: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2018-2019: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Designed for students who have some experience in writing fiction and want to try longer forms like the novella and novel. Students interested in writing a novel are expected to produce at least two chapters and an outline of the complete work. Readings include several novels from Fitzgerald to the present, and novellas from Gogol's *The Overcoat* to current examples. Students discuss one another's writing in a roundtable workshop, with a strong emphasis on revision.

*Staff***Science Writing***Introductory***21W.031 Science Writing and New Media: Explorations in Communicating about Science and Technology**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.032, 21W.034, 21W.035, 21W.036

Examines principles of good writing, focusing on those associated with scientific and technical writing. Considers the effects of new media as an avenue for communicating about science. Students discuss scientific articles and essays and work in small groups to critique each other's writing. Assignments include a critical review, a science essay for the general public, and a research or service project proposal. Students choose topics that reflect their background and interests. Formal and informal presentations and group discussions develop oral communication skills. Limited to 18.

J. Melvold

21W.034 Science Writing and New Media: Perspectives on Medicine and Public Health

Prereq: None
 U (Fall)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW
 Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.032, 21W.035, 21W.036

Public health topics, such as AIDS, asthma, malaria control, obesity, and sleep deprivation, provide a unifying focus as students explore diverse modes of science writing. Readings include essays by such writers as Atul Gawande, Danielle Ofri, Jerome Groopman, and William Carlos Williams, as well as peer-reviewed journal articles. Assignments include a critical review, a scientific literature review, a brochure suitable for general distribution, an autobiographical narrative, a resume, a job application letter, and oral presentations. Limited to 18.

C. Taft

21W.035 Science Writing and New Media: Elements of Science Writing for the Public

Prereq: None
 U (Fall, Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW
 Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.032, 21W.034, 21W.036

Provides an introduction to writing about science (including medicine, technology, and engineering) for general readers. Emphasizes background research as a foundation for strong science writing. Students read works by accomplished science writers. Each assignment focuses on a different popular form, such as news article, interview, essay, and short feature. Limited to 18.

Fall: J. Berezin, A. Carleton

Spring: K. Boiko

Advanced

21W.729[J] Engineering Communication in Context

Same subject as ES.729[J]
 Prereq: None
 U (Fall)
 3-1-8 units. HASS-E; CI-H

See description under subject ES.729[J]. Limited to 18; preference to ESG students.

D. Custer

21W.736 News Writing

Prereq: None
 U (Fall)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H

An introduction to the basics of print journalism, including an overview of journalistic ethics and life in the newsroom. Students learn basic reporting techniques, interviewing, and news writing, with an emphasis on accuracy, clarity, and brevity. Most writing done in class whereby students learn to write under time pressure, as well as in a distracting environment. Techniques of investigative reporting — including interviewing and research into public and private sources — are assigned on a weekly basis for outside classroom work.

B. D. Colen

21W.737[J] Topics and Methods in 21st-Century Journalism

Same subject as CMS.350[J]
 Subject meets with CMS.850
 Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject CMS.350[J]. Limited to 12.

S. Mnookin

21W.739[J] Darwin and Design

Same subject as 21L.022[J]
 Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered
 Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Fall)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject 21L.022[J].

A. Kibel

21W.746 Humanistic Perspectives on Medicine: From Ancient Greece to Modern America

Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

For students with experience in nonfiction prose and interest in the non-science side of medicine. Advanced study of the art of essay (form, style, techniques of persuasion) and practice of that form. Students required to write substantial essays and revise their work. Students read and discuss the writings of distinguished physicians from antiquity to the late 20th century. Limited to 18.

K. Manning

21W.749 Documentary Photography and Photojournalism: Still Images of a World in Motion

Subject meets with CMS.935
 Prereq: Permission of instructor
 U (Fall, Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Designed to increase students' understanding of, appreciation for, and ability to do documentary photography and photojournalism. Each three-hour class is divided between a discussion of issues and readings, and a group critique of students' projects. Students must have their own photographic equipment and be responsible for processing and printing: either by student or commercial lab. Students must show basic proficiency with their equipment. Readings include Susan Sontag, Robert Coles, Ken Light, Eugene Richards, and others. Previous photographic experience required. Limited to 15.

B. D. Colen

21W.775 Writing about Nature and Environmental Issues

Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Focuses on traditional nature writing and the environmentalist essay. Students keep a web log as a journal. Writings are drawn from the tradition of nature writing and from contemporary forms of the environmentalist essay. Authors include Henry Thoreau, Loren Eiseley, Annie Dillard, Chet Raymo, Sue Hubbel, Rachel Carson, Bill McKibben, and Terry Tempest Williams. Limited to 18.

C. Taft

21W.777 Science Writing in Contemporary Society

Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered
 Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Drawing in part from their own interests and ideas, students write about science within various cultural contexts using an array of literary and reportorial tools. Studies the work of contemporary science writers, such as David Quammen and Atul Gawande, and examines the ways in which science and technology are treated in media and popular culture. Discussions focus on students' writing and address topics such as false equivalency, covering controversy, and the attenuation of initial observations. Emphasizes long-form narratives; also looks at blogs, social media, and other modes of communication. Not a technical writing class.

Staff

21W.778 Science Journalism

Prereq: None
 U (Fall)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

An introduction to print daily journalism and news writing, focusing on science news writing in general, and medical writing in particular. Emphasis is on writing clearly and accurately under deadline pressure. Class discussions involve the realities of modern journalism, how newsrooms function, and the science news coverage in daily publications. Discussions of, and practice in, interviewing and various modes of reporting. In class, students write numerous science news stories on deadline. There are additional longer writing assignments outside of class. Enrollment limited.

B. D. Colen

21W.792 Science Writing Internship

Prereq: None
 U (Fall, Spring)
 0-12-0 units
 Can be repeated for credit.

Students developing professional writing and publishing skills in part-time internships with Boston area media companies can apply to receive credit. Students planning to take this subject must contact the instructor by the end of November (if they are applying for spring semester) or the end of May (if they are applying for the fall semester).

S. Mnookin

Digital Media**Introductory****21W.032 Science Writing and New Media: Introduction to Digital Media**

Prereq: None
 U (Fall)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW
 Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.034, 21W.035, 21W.036

Focuses on digital media production and associated written and oral reports. Working individually and in small, collaborative teams, students create a variety of digital media projects throughout the term, culminating in a larger final project of their choosing. Assignments include audio and video essays, website design, games and interactive fiction, mobile technology, and readings. Students write bi-weekly short essays analyzing their digital projects, as well as a proposal, progress report and completion report for the final project. Limited to 18.

E. Barrett

Advanced**21W.750 Experimental Writing**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered

Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students use innovative compositional techniques, focusing on new writing methods rather than on traditional lyrical or narrative concerns. Writing experiments, conducted individually, collaboratively and during class meetings, culminate in chapbook-sized projects. Students read, listen to, and create different types of work, including sound poetry, cut-ups, constrained and Oulipian writing, uncreative writing, sticker literature, false translations, artists' books, and digital projects.

*N. Montfort***21W.751[] Writing for Social Media**

Same subject as CMS.613[]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Explores how social media is changing our understanding of writing, multimedia, and authorship. Through individual assignments and collaborative work, students contribute to an overarching writing project developed in a networked software environment, and develop their own social media practices. Assigned readings include exemplary selections from existing public social media projects, as well as scholarly work and analysis by noted media critics. Limited to 18.

*Staff***21W.752 Making Documentary: Audio, Video, and More**

Subject meets with 21W.824

Prereq: 21W.786[], 21A.550[], or permission of instructor

U (Spring)

3-6-3 units. HASS-A

Focuses on the technical demands of long-form storytelling in sound and picture. Students build practical writing and production skills through a series of assignments: still photo-text works, audio-only documentaries, short video projects (4-6 minutes), and a semester-long, team-produced video science documentary (12-15 minutes). Readings, screenings and written work hone students' analytical capacity. Students taking the graduate version complete additional assignments. Students from the Graduate Program in Science Writing center their work on topics in science, technology, engineering, and/or medicine.

*T. Levenson***21W.753[] Phantasmal Media: Theory and Practice**

Same subject as CMS.314[]

Subject meets with CMS.814

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject CMS.314[].

*D. F. Harrell***21W.763[] Transmedia Storytelling: Modern Science Fiction**

Same subject as CMS.309[]

Subject meets with CMS.809

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-2-7 units. HASS-A

Explores transmedia storytelling by investigating how science fiction stories are told across different media, such as the short story, the screenplay, moving image, and games. Students read and write critical essays and collaborate to produce their own work of science fiction in a roundtable workshop environment. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*H. Hendershot***21W.764[] The Word Made Digital**

Same subject as CMS.609[]

Subject meets with CMS.846

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Video games, digital art and literature, online texts, and source code are analyzed in the contexts of history, culture, and computing platforms. Approaches from poetics and computer science are used to understand the non-narrative digital uses of text. Students undertake critical writing and creative computer projects to encounter digital writing through practice. This involves reading and modifying computer programs; therefore previous programming experience, although not required, will be helpful. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

N. Montfort

21W.765[J] Interactive Narrative

Same subject as 21L.489[J], CMS.618[J]

Subject meets with CMS.845

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Provides a workshop environment for understanding interactive narrative (print and digital) through critical writing, narrative theory, and creative practice. Covers important multisequential books, hypertexts, and interactive fictions. Students write critically, and give presentations, about specific works; write a short multisequential fiction; and develop a digital narrative system, which involves significant writing and either programming or the structuring of text. Programming ability helpful.

N. Montfort

21W.768[J] Games and Culture

Same subject as CMS.616[J], WGS.125[J]

Subject meets with CMS.868

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

See description under subject CMS.616[J].

T. L. Taylor

21W.785 Communicating with Web-Based Media

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A; CI-H

Analysis, design, implementation, and testing of various forms of digital communication through group collaboration. Students are encouraged to think about the Web and other new digital interactive media not just in terms of technology but also broader issues such as language (verbal and visual), design, information architecture, communication and community. Students work in small groups on a term-long project of their choice. Various written and oral presentations document project development. Limited to 18.

E. Barrett

21W.786[J] Social Justice and The Documentary Film

Same subject as CMS.336[J]

Subject meets with CMS.836

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered

Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Explores the history and current state of social-issue documentary. Examines how cultural and political upheaval and technological change have converged at different moments to bring about new waves of activist documentary film production. Particular focus on films and other non-fiction media of the present and recent past. Students screen and analyze a series of key films and work in groups to produce their own short documentary using digital video and computer-based editing. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

21W.787 Film, Music, and Social Change: Intersections of Media and Society

Subject meets with CMS.837

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered

Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines films from the 1950s onward that document music subcultures and moments of social upheaval. Combines screening films about free jazz, glam rock, punk, reggae, hip-hop, and other genres with an examination of critical/scholarly writings to illuminate the connections between film, popular music, and processes of social change. Students critique each film in terms of the social, political, and cultural world it documents, and the historical context and effects of the film's reception. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

21W.788[J] South Asian America: Transnational Media, Culture, and History

Same subject as CMS.334[J]
 Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2017-2018: Not offered
 Acad Year 2018-2019: U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines the history of South Asian immigration, sojourning, and settlement from the 1880s to the present. Focuses on the US as one node in the global circulation, not only of people, but of media, culture and ideas, through a broader South Asian diaspora. Considers the concept of "global media" historically; emphasis on how ideas about, and self-representations of, South Asians have circulated via books, political pamphlets, performance, film, video/cassette tapes, and the internet. Students analyze and discuss scholarly writings, archival documents, memoirs, fiction, blogs and films, and write papers drawing on course materials, lectures, and discussions. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

21W.789 Communicating with Mobile Technology

Prereq: 1.00 or permission of instructor
 U (Spring)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Students work in small collaborative design teams to propose, build, and document a semester-long project focused on mobile applications for cell phones. Additional assignments include creating several small mobile applications such as context-aware mobile media capture and games. Students document their work through a series of written and oral proposals, progress reports, and final reports. Covers the basics of J2ME and explores mobile imaging and media creation, GPS location, user-centered design, usability testing, and prototyping. Java experience recommended. Limited to 18.

E. Barrett

21W.790[J] Short Attention Span Documentary

Same subject as CMS.335[J]
 Subject meets with 21W.890
 Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Focuses on the production of short (1- to 5-minute) digital video documentaries: a form of non-fiction filmmaking that has proliferated in recent years due to the ubiquity of palm-sized and mobile phone cameras and the rise of web-based platforms, such as YouTube. Students shoot, edit, workshop and revise a series of short videos meant to engage audiences in a topic, introduce them to new ideas, and/or persuade them. Screenings and discussions cover key principles of documentary film - narrative, style, pace, point of view, argument, character development - examining how they function and change in short format. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 16.

R. Adams

21W.791[J] Network Cultures

Same subject as CMS.614[J]
 Subject meets with CMS.867
 Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject CMS.614[J].

T. L. Taylor

Additional Subjects

21W.798, 21W.799 Independent Study in Writing

Prereq: None
 U (Fall, Spring, Summer)
 Units arranged
 Can be repeated for credit.

Primarily for students pursuing advanced writing projects with the assistance of a member of the Writing Program. Students electing this subject must secure the approval of the director of the Writing Program and its Committee on Curriculum. Normal maximum is 6 units; exceptional 9-unit projects occasionally approved. HASS credit awarded only by individual petition to the Subcommittee on the HASS Requirement; minimum of 9 units required for HASS credit. 21W.798 is P/D/F.

Staff

21W.S60 Special Subject: Writing

Prereq: None

U (IAP)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

*Staff***21W.THT Writing and Humanistic Studies Pre-Thesis Tutorial**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Definition of and early stage work on a thesis project leading to 21W.THU. Taken during the first term of a student's two-term commitment to the thesis project. Student works closely with an individual faculty tutor. Required of all students pursuing a full major in Course 21W. Joint majors register for 21.THT.

*Staff***21W.THU Writing and Humanistic Studies Thesis**

Prereq: 21W.THT

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Completion of work on the senior major thesis under the supervision of a faculty tutor. Includes oral presentation of the thesis progress early in the term, assembling and revising the final text, and a final meeting with a committee of faculty evaluators to discuss the successes and limitations of the project. Required of students pursuing a full major in Course 21W. Joint majors register for 21.ThU.

*Staff***21W.UR Research in Writing and Humanistic Studies**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

*J. Paradis***21W.URG Research in Writing and Humanistic Studies**

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

*J. Paradis***Graduate Subjects****21W.794 Graduate Technical Writing Workshop**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (IAP)

2-0-1 units

Designed to improve the student's ability to communicate technical information. Covers the basics of working with sources, including summarizing and paraphrasing, synthesizing source materials, citing, quoting, and avoiding plagiarism. Also covers how to write an abstract and a literature review. Limited to graduate engineering students based on results of the Graduate Writing Exam.

*Staff***21W.820[J] Writing: Science, Technology, and Society**

Same subject as STS.477[J]

Prereq: 21H.991[J]

Acad Year 2017-2018: G (Fall)

Acad Year 2018-2019: Not offered

3-0-9 units

Examination of different "voices" used to consider issues of scientific, technological, and social concern. Students write frequently and choose among a variety of non-fiction forms: historical writing, social analysis, political criticism, and policy reports. Instruction in expressing ideas clearly and in organizing a thesis-length work. Reading and writing on three case studies drawn from the history of science; the cultural study of technology and science; and policy issues.

*K. Manning***21W.823 Lab Experience for Science Writers**

Prereq: 21W.825

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

0-2-1 units

During the fall or IAP, students conduct 20 hours of observation in a lab of their choosing that is outside their previous scientific experience. Participation in the work of the lab encouraged. In the spring, students make an in-class presentation and submit a written report of publication quality. Preference to students in the Graduate Program in Science Writing.

T. Levenson, M. Bartusiak

21W.824 Making Documentary: Audio, Video, and More

Subject meets with 21W.752

Prereq: 21W.786[[], 21A.550[[], or permission of instructor

G (Spring)

3-6-3 units

Focuses on the technical demands of long-form storytelling in sound and picture. Students build practical writing and production skills through a series of assignments: still photo-text works, audio-only documentaries, short video projects (4-6 minutes), and a semester-long, team-produced video science documentary (12-15 minutes). Readings, screenings and written work hone students' analytical capacity. Students taking the graduate version complete additional assignments. Students from the Graduate Program in Science Writing center their work on topics in science, technology, engineering, and/or medicine.

T. Levenson

21W.825 Advanced Science Writing Seminar I

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

6-0-18 units

First term of year-long graduate sequence in science writing offers students intensive workshops and critiques of their own writing, and that of published books, articles, and essays; discussions of ethical and professional issues; study of science and scientists in historical and social context; analysis of recent events in science and technology. Emphasis throughout on developing skills and habits of mind that enable the science writer to tackle scientifically formidable material and write about it for ordinary readers. Topics include the tools of research, conceived in its broadest sense- including interviewing, websites, archives, scientific journal articles; science journalism, including culture of the newsroom and magazine-style journalism; science essays. Considerable attention to science writing's audiences, markets, and publics and the special requirements of each.

Staff

21W.826 Advanced Science Writing Seminar II

Prereq: 21W.825 or permission of instructor.

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Topics include research for writers, science journalism, and essays; literary science writing, and the social and historical context of science and technology. Includes seminars, lectures, and student writing workshops. Special emphasis on the science essay and on literary and imaginative science writing that employs traditionally fictive devices in nonfiction, including scene-setting and storytelling. Assignments cover science essays, writing on particular disciplines, and investigative and critical science journalism.

Graduate Program Faculty

21W.890 Short Attention Span Documentary

Subject meets with 21W.790[[], CMS.335[[]

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Focuses on the production of short (1- to 5-minute) digital video documentaries: a form of non-fiction filmmaking that has proliferated in recent years due to the ubiquity of palm-sized and mobile phone cameras and the rise of web-based platforms, such as YouTube. Students shoot, edit, workshop and revise a series of short videos meant to engage audiences in a topic, introduce them to new ideas, and/or persuade them. Screenings and discussions cover key principles of documentary film - narrative, style, pace, point of view, argument, character development - examining how they function and change in short format. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 16.

R. Adams

21W.892 Science Writing Internship

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

0-12-0 units

Field placements tailored to the individual backgrounds of the students enrolled, involving varying degrees of faculty participation and supervision.

Graduate Program Faculty

21W.898 Graduate Independent Study in Science Writing

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Opportunity for advanced independent study of science writing under regular supervision by a faculty member. Projects require prior approval, as well as a written proposal and a final report.

Consult Graduate Program Headquarters

21W.899 Graduate Independent Study in Science Writing

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Opportunity for advanced independent study of science writing under regular supervision by a faculty member. Projects require prior approval, as well as a written proposal and a final report.

Consult Graduate Program Headquarters

21W.596 Special Subject: Writing

Prereq: None

G (IAP)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

21W.THG Graduate Thesis

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

6-0-18 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Research and writing of thesis in consultation with faculty, including individual meetings and group seminars, undertaken over the course of one year.

S. Mnookin