

*WRIT 101-01: Debbie Kennedy*

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Topic: All's Fair in Love and War

In "How to Tell a True War Story," Tim O'Brien writes, "In any war story, but especially a true one, it's difficult to separate what happened from what seemed to happen. What seems to happen becomes its own happening and has to be told that way." In this course, we will explore how war narrative has the power to simultaneously illuminate and change our perception of reality. Through engaged, analytical reading of a cross section of war writing, including Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*, and Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, students will gain a greater grasp of the tools combat writers use to communicate meaning and learn how to make use of such tools in their own work. Students will be required to produce several pieces of informal writing, as well as four formal essays and a group research project.

*WRIT 101-02: Candler Hallman*

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Topic: Blessed are the Peacemakers?: The cultural politics of peacemaking.

Ten months after his inauguration, President Barack Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for fomenting international cooperation, particularly for his "vision of and work for a world without nuclear weapons" (Norwegian Nobel Prize Committee 2009). The award set off a firestorm of political debate, as many understood the award as aspirational rather than a reflection of his achievements, or even an attempt to influence political policy. This controversy highlighted the often contested nature of peacemakers: for some they are brave negotiators for the cause of harmony, but for others they represent spineless capitulation or worse. This course will study the cultural representation of historical and modern peacemakers and their practices. How are peacemakers represented and how do they represent themselves? Can former combatants (or even "terrorists") become champions of peace? Have the ways in which we talk about peacemakers changed in the post-9/11 world? Has the Nobel Peace Prize affected political and social processes? And finally, how do we define peace and forgiveness? The course will also speak other issues surrounding democracy, human rights, terrorism, and post-conflict reconciliation using a collection of social scientific and biographical sources.

*WRIT 101-03: Kaitlyn Sill*

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Topic: Influence of the News Media

What are the most important issues in facing the world today? What are your views on politics, society, and the world? Are we doing better or worse as a nation? As a society? What if your answers to these questions are being fed to you by the news media? What if you didn't realize it was happening? Every person in a society is provided with information from the mass media, and this information serves as the primary basis for the construction of opinions. We oftentimes passively accept the information provided and fail to examine *how the information is being provided*. Little do we realize that *how* information is provided can actually determine what we believe, want, and feel is important. Thus, by being the conduit of information, media has the power to construct our opinions. In this class, we will explore the impact of the media on the public by evaluating the mechanisms through which they can shape people's perceptions. In particular, we will examine how seemingly innocuous decisions such as

word choice, argument framing, evidence production, structure, and source attribution work to fundamentally alter the perception of the reader, without him or her realizing. From this study of the media, students will develop a better understanding the importance of writing as a communication device and the degree to which small decisions can have a tremendous impact on the message communicated.

#### *WRIT 101-04: Jennifer Cavalli*

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Topic: Femininity in Context: Historical and Contemporary Representations of Women.

This course investigates historical and contemporary representations of women in Western society. It traces the construction of femininity and categories of female existence from the medieval period in Europe to images of women in present-day American culture, asking the questions: what are the roles of religion, the state, and the family in shaping ideas about femininity? What accounts for changes and continuities in female gender roles and the regulation of female bodies? How have categories of womanhood and the imagery associated with them shaped experience and self-perception?

#### *WRIT 101-05: Seth Dowland*

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Topic: “God created them, male and female”.

The title of this seminar comes from the biblical creation story. Christians have used this and other scriptural passages to define expectations for men and women, suggesting that God has clear plans for our gender identities. But as we will discover in this course, expectations for men and women have varied greatly over time. We will spend the semester investigating the shifting gender norms of American Christians, from colonial-era Puritans to contemporary feminists. Students who enroll in this writing seminar will get a chance to read and write about a variety of religious and historical texts that reflect shifts in what Christians expect of men and women. You don’t need to know anything about the Bible, Christianity, or American history prior to taking this course. The course will ask you to think critically and historically about the ways religious belief and cultural values help create gender norms. Along the way, it will sharpen your critical reading skills and your ability to write compelling prose in everything from personal reflections to research papers.

NOTE: Students who enroll in this seminar must also enroll in the J-Term FYEP 190 seminar, “Ethics, Gender, and Religion,” taught by Professor Kevin O’Brien (the 190 seminar satisfies the RC general education requirement).

#### *WRIT 101-06: Cosette Pfaff*

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Topic: Business Writing in the “Information Age,” for a “Knowledge Economy,” delivered at the “speed of light.”

Today, much of a business professional’s communication is accomplished through writing (memos, emails, letters, reports, meeting agendas, minutes, marketing information, RFP/RFQ(s) and proposals, executive summaries, letters of intent, scopes of work, standard operating procedures, employee handbooks, training programs, press releases, etc.). Even the all-important resume and cover letter, which help launch the business professional’s career to begin with, require special consideration and thought to be impactful. Surveys show the most sought –after skill in today’s business arena is: “the ability to communicate clearly, correctly, and concisely.” Most people don’t have time to read long, wordy memos or letters with grammatical errors. Business writing that leaves a powerful and

meaningful impression let's others know you're an intelligent, competent business professional. Students will learn the essentials of business writing, the ability to write simple direct prose that says precisely what it needs to say, how to write well organized and grammatically correct communication, how to write for their reader/audience, how to empower their messages, and how to make their message stand above the noise and crowd in a busy world.

### *WRIT 101-07: Tom Campbell*

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Topic: Fathers and Sons

This seminar offers the chance to spend several months in a small group of peers, thinking, talking, reading, and writing about one of the most significant of human relationships: fathers and sons. But significant in what ways? And for what reasons? What should men know about it? What should women know about it? We'll explore these questions, maybe even discover some answers, about how this key relationship operates for you, how it functions within American culture, and how it unfolds in various other world cultures.

Readings will come from personal memoir, social science articles, short fiction, as well as from the texts of popular culture (TV, ads, movies, fashion, religion, sports, social movements, etc.)--all selected to stimulate and provoke your own writing, which is finally the most important text of all in this course. Looking at fathers and sons gets us fairly quickly into the territory of masculinity and gender, and raises issues about how our particular culture carries out the process of gender construction--the process, that is, of turning males into men, females into women. This is rich material for all students to investigate, and will require you to think critically and candidly about both your own life and the shaping forces of family and culture.

### *WRIT 101-08: Adela Ramos*

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Topic: Girls Gone Wild: Women, Nature, and Social Justice.

In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft published *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* where she called for the reformation of female education: "It is time to effect a revolution in female manners—time to restore [women] their lost dignity—and make them, as a part of the human species, labour by reforming themselves to reform the world." For most women in college today, Wollstonecraft's text might seem a relic from a bygone era: American women can take for granted their right to an education. But hers is also a call to humanize women: before gaining access to education, women had to be granted the status of human beings. Indeed, one of her primary goals was to challenge the deeply held belief that, if left to their own devices, women might "go wild." Two hundred years later, the eighteenth-century association of women with wilderness still holds valence. From *Mother Nature* to *Crazy Cat Ladies*, scenes from the show, "Girls Gone Wild," and political discourse that flaunt "binders full of women," contemporary associations suggest that Wollstonecraft's revolution must continue. This course is an invitation to reconsider the relationship between women and wilderness. We will explore issues of women and education, write about wilderness, and research how women have been associated with animals. Ultimately, we will revive Wollstonecraft's call for women to "[reform] themselves to reform the world" and investigate how our daily practices can make this earth a better place for women, men, and non-human animals through the service component and final project of the course. **Please note: this course has a service component. You will be doing volunteer work as part of one of the course projects.**

*WRIT 101-09: Jennifer James*

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Topic: Water, Politics, Place.

This course explores how we experience, understand and speak about water and the importance of place in our everyday life. Today, water is a central concern in our current environmental crisis; people across the globe are working to address the increasingly fragile state of our earth's fresh water resources. In this course we'll work together to better understand the political and ethical dimensions of this ecological crisis, as well as learn more about the scientific and cultural ideologies that impact our efforts at sustainability. Specific topics of study might include water rights, usage and scarcity, pollution and shipping, water preservation and reclamation, flooding, irrigation and overfishing. Throughout the term we will read fictional, non-fictional, and scholarly sources about water and work to compose critical and reflective essays that respond to these environmental challenges. Our interdisciplinary work will also include an off-campus field component in an effort to actively engage with our local Puget Sound waterways. This course would be a great choice for any student interested in majoring in Environmental Studies, but is open to all!

*WRIT 101-10: Solveig Robinson*

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Topic: The Great War.

One hundred years ago, the June 1914 assassination of Archduke Ferdinand and his wife, heirs to the Austro-Hungarian throne, set off a chain of events that eventually pulled all the major powers into a global conflict. World War I—known at the time as the “Great War,” or “The War to End All Wars”—fundamentally changed previous arrangements in politics, social developments, science, and the arts. This course will incorporate fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and film to examine the events and some of the effects of the Great War. We will analyze the causes of the war, experience the horrors of trench warfare through the eyes of British and German poets and novelists, and nurse casualties with memoirist Vera Brittain. Along the way we will consider what qualities—physical, emotional, intellectual—enable people to endure, and even surmount, the hardships of war. The course will concentrate on expository writing (writing that explains).

*WRIT 101-11: Barbara Temple-Thurston*

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Topic: Our Place in the World: Exploring Nature, Spirit, & Culture.

The DaLai Lama suggests that we live in a time when “there is much in the window, but nothing in the room.” Using readings by various thinkers and activists, we examine an alternative to an aggressive and materialist worldview. Focusing on the centrality of nature, spirit, and culture as an inspiration for action in the world, we explore through careful writing notions of personal, social, and political transformations for the common good. Central texts are Resurgence magazine, a journal devoted to a vision of sustainable future where spiritual imperative and governance as trusteeship work in harmony with each other, the novel *Into the Forest* by Hegland, as well as a few autobiographical and short readings by others committed to peace and the common good. All are courageous people seeking change in today's world.

### *WRIT 101-12: Lisa Marcus*

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Topic: Banned Books.

What do Captain Underpants, Huckleberry Finn and Heather has Two Mommies have in common? These books are united on the list of frequently banned books. Whether they are perceived as too racy or too raced, too exciting or too inciting, these books provoke some communities to outrage and censorship. This seminar will explore the ethical/moral/religious/ideological motivations that lead communities to suppress books. You'll write about your own reading transgressions and research the controversies surrounding several book bannings. And, of course, we'll read together a selection of banned books – from children's picture books to literary classics that excited the censors' wrath. One anti-censorship website proclaims, —Rise to the challenge. Read censored books! We'll do just that this term.

### *WRIT 101-13: Christian Gerzso*

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Topic: Scenes of Modern Life: Writing about Art & Literature.

What defines modern life: big cities and crowds, new modes of transport, industry, ever-changing communication technologies, mass entertainment? How do the arts and literature respond to these challenging and exciting new realities? In this course, we will respond to these questions by looking at how different artistic media – poetry, fiction, painting, photography, and film – depict these modern landscapes: urban centers filled with cars, billboards, tall buildings, and factories. Above all, we will explore the ways in which each particular art form employs the resources at its disposal – the written word, visual images, sound – to represent the experience of modern life. In other words, our main task will be to learn.

### *WRIT 101-14: Nathalie op de Beeck*

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Topic: Wonder, Curiosity, Praxis

Environmental activist and marine biologist Rachel Carson, author of *Under the Sea-Wind* and *Silent Spring*, wrote that a deep and abiding sense of wonder informed her scholarly and conservationist pursuits. By attending to the places, the things, and the ideas that sparked her vivid sense of wonder, Carson launched her marine research and put her findings and theories into active practice; she most famously combated the use of pesticides that poisoned birds, insects, and fish. She combined rigorous academic study with an ability to communicate her passions to a public audience, and—some sixty years ago—she alerted us to the lasting need for environmental care. Today, we must heed and maintain Carson's urgent message, as individuals and as collective groups. In this FYE writing course, we will:

- read work by and about Carson, as well as essays, prose, and poetry concerning meaningful environmental action;
- investigate how people, among them philosophers and scientists and artists, define and benefit from wonder, curiosity, and praxis;
- talk with PLU students, faculty, and staff engaged with diversity, justice, and sustainability concerns;
- identify our personal sources of wonder;
- cultivate our academic and critical curiosity;
- practice asking rigorous questions as foundations for research;

- learn database skills, information-gathering methods, and writing approaches that will benefit us in our disciplines;
- and develop our future plans as politically and socially engaged scholars.

### *WRIT 101-15: Scott Rogers*

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Topic: Walking and Talking: An Exploration of Language, Movement, and Space

Humans occupy space. When we walk, when we talk, when we select one route instead of another, we are responding to environmental and contextual cues. We are always making choices about how we wish to engage with our environment, to shape it, and to be shaped by it. We are embodied entities and, as such, space defines a large part of who we are and what we can do, say, and/or think. This course examines space as a critical intersection of history, politics, language, and movement. Via our readings and course assignments we will explore relationships between language and the naming, use, and misuse of space. We will consider connections between space and social class. We will consider the potential of language and movement to re-define the social and political circumstances that govern locations and settings. Course readings (from writing studies, sociology, critical theory, cultural geography, art and architecture) will provide us with a critical framework for exploring a variety of subjects, including: graffiti and public art, community revitalization projects, and the PLU campus environment. Because writing is the foremost concern of this course, students will also consider the spatial and embodied practice of university reading and writing. Assignments will include a digital mapping project, an ethnography of student writers, and a substantive researched argument. Students can expect to leave this course with a sustainable process for insightful thinking, reading, and writing that will serve them throughout their career at PLU and beyond.

### *WRIT 101-16: Jason Skipper*

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Topic: Art, the Individual, and Society

Art speaks through many forms and voices, reflecting and shaping the way people experience the world. In this class we will consider the relationship between art, the individual, and society, asking what is art? What did Oscar Wilde mean when he wrote, “Those who go beneath the surface [of art] do so at their own peril?” In what ways does art serve as a means for individuals to understand their identity? What do various scholars view as the purpose of art? What social role does art fill? Are certain styles or works of art considered more valuable than others, and if so, what is the basis of those arguments? In this course, students will analyze texts as part of an overall conversation about the value of art, synthesize perspectives about the topic, and contribute their own arguments to the conversation by considering the ways art plays a role in shaping individuals and society.

### *WRIT 101-17: Christian Gerszo*

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Topic: Scenes of Modern Life: Writing about Art & Literature.

What defines modern life: big cities and crowds, new modes of transport, industry, ever-changing communication technologies, mass entertainment? How do the arts and literature respond to these challenging and exciting new realities? In this course, we will respond to these questions by looking at how different artistic media – poetry, fiction, painting, photography, and film – depict these modern landscapes: urban centers filled with cars, billboards, tall buildings, and factories. Above all, we will explore the ways in which each particular art form employs the resources at its disposal – the written word, visual images, sound – to represent the experience of modern life. In other words, our main task will be to learn.

### *WRIT 101-18: Callista Brown*

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Topic: Perspectives on Violence and Peace

How do we define “violence” and how does violence relate to injustice? How can we respond to violence so that individuals and communities are restored? Can we take preventative action to keep violence from recurring? Can we choose non-violence? Is peace just the absence of violence or something beyond both violence and non-violence?

Using writing as a form of inquiry and reading as an opportunity to enter a conversation, we will examine 1) violence directed against animals, an issue at the heart of this year’s Common Reading text; 2) cancer and ecological destruction; 3) mass incarceration; 4) the everyday violence that seeps into families, schools, and peer relationships; and 5) what it means to be a peace-keeper. We will discuss hidden forms of violence such as structural violence and micro-aggressions, and we will reflect on peace as a goal and as a practice. Readings will include personal narratives, historical and scientific accounts, scholarly articles, and imaginative fiction. Students will write position papers, book reviews, reflective essays, and an annotated bibliography. Throughout the semester we will study the craft of writing as we address genre, structure, and reader expectations for college-level prose.

### *WRIT 101-19 & -20: Ronald Byrnes*

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Topic: The Art of Living.

In this seminar we’ll work together to improve as readers, discussants, and writers and create positive momentum for living meaningful and purposeful lives. Our readings, discussions, and writing overlap with the University’s Wild Hope Project which challenges everyone to ask: what will you do with your one wild and precious life? We’ll draw on history, philosophy, and social sciences to explore different philosophies of life. Guiding questions will include: Is self-understanding important enough to occasionally unplug and be introspective? What quality of life do you want? How important is material wealth? How important is friendship and family? Do you want to marry and/or have children? How important is religion and/or spirituality? Active participation and contending viewpoints will be encouraged.

### *WRIT 101-21: Sarah Meyer*

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Topic: Leaders and Leadership.

Sports are a major part of our culture in the United States. Children grow up idolizing athletes and coaches, wanting to be just like them. We often see these top athletes and coaches as leaders, both on and off the field. In order to better understand the athlete and the coach as a leader we have to ask; what makes a leader? How do we define what a good leader is? How do these people rise to leadership positions? In this class we will attempt to answer some of these questions by studying leaders and their characteristics. In this class we will explore different topics related to leadership in sport. We will examine the attributes of great leaders, the ethical dilemmas that athletes and coaches have to deal with, the dynamics of great teams along with theories of motivation. Students will also be expected to reflect on their own personal leadership style and philosophy.



## WRIT 101-22: Debbie Kennedy

Topic: All's Fair in Love and War

In "How to Tell a True War Story," Tim O'Brien writes, "In any war story, but especially a true one, it's difficult to separate what happened from what seemed to happen. What seems to happen becomes its own happening and has to be told that way." In this course, we will explore how war narrative has the power to simultaneously illuminate and change our perception of reality. Through engaged, analytical reading of a cross section of war writing, including Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*, and Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, students will gain a greater grasp of the tools combat writers use to communicate meaning and learn how to make use of such tools in their own work. Students will be required to produce several pieces of informal writing, as well as four formal essays and a group research project.

## WRIT 101-23: Art Strum

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Topic: Secular Scripture: Writing about Modern Literature.

Literature (and sometimes philosophy) has been called the "secular scripture" of the modern period -- 'secular,' in that it is made by human beings; 'scripture'-like, in that it is sometimes regarded as possessing inspirational, life-transforming, and even sacred qualities. Nevertheless, most scholars today do not write about literature's use for life. Instead, they produce knowledge about literature, and often employ highly technical idioms not accessible to non-scholars. As valuable as this knowledge can be, it has the disadvantage of breaking the connection between criticism of literature and the person who Virginia Woolf called "The Common Reader" -- the private person, reading mostly for her own pleasure. In this course, we will explore modern literature via the rich tradition of non-technical criticism aimed at the "common reader." We will read writer-critics like Woolf and James Baldwin, or scholar-critics like Lionel Trilling, or Erich Auerbach, who wrote about literature first and foremost because they believed in its life-transforming capacity, and will practice -- as they did -- translating our private enthusiasms for literature into perspectives potentially illuminating for other readers.