Writing 101 course descriptions Fall 2018

1. Bridgette O'Brien TR 1:45 – 3:30 Admin 221

# Exploring Sustainability and Endurance

Have you ever pondered how someone endures an unpleasant or difficult experience without giving up? Have you ever considered how these kinds of personal experiences might share something with the state of the economy or the environment? This course will explore the themes of sustainability and endurance as springboards for reflecting on what a prisoner of war, an astronaut, an ultrarunner, a ballerina, a samurai warrior, a navy seal, a refugee, the economy and the environment all share. Students will read and reflect on a wide range of material, including interviews, journal articles, memoirs, short stories, plays and documentary films as they develop their critical reading skills and hone their writing skills in a variety of forms.

2. Jen Brown MWF 9:15 – 10:20 Admin 211B

# Living in a Time of Extinction and Salvage

This writing seminar will explore the concept of extinction and salvage as it is being understood, witnessed, and debated in the early 21st century. What kind of deliberations and actions are made on the basis of a way of life, a language, or a body of evidence that is said to be disappearing? Answers to the question of extinction often exceed theoretical frames, making extinction, near-extinction, and the salvage, for that matter, not at all transparent phenomena. Topics for this course are broad and include biodiversity loss and extinction events, language endangerment and cultural and ethnic genocide; sex-selection and femicide, end-of-life ethics and care; climate change and food insecurity, the extinction of diseases & the emergence of new ones, and salvage anthropology and colonial legacies.

As a First Year Writing Seminar, the other aim of the class is to begin engaging with both reading and writing at the collegiate level. We will work together to help you build important writing skills and develop writing strategies that you will need throughout your college career and beyond. These include critiquing and evaluating other's viewpoints, crafting arguments and supporting them with evidence, and conducting close analysis of texts. In order to write well, we need to read well, so this class will also give guidance on how to approach the kinds of texts that you will encounter in college. We will approach writing as a process—a task that we work at over time and can improve. Conducting in-class writing assignments, writing short papers, and submitting rough drafts will help you to develop your abilities.

3. Jennifer Spence

MWF 8:00 – 9:05 Admin 211A

## Inequality, Stress, and Health

Stress is a physiological response to environmental, physical, and social factors. Although adaptive in the short term, chronic stress is strongly linked to a number of negative health outcomes. For humans—and primates generally—stress derives most often from social conditions, and our social and cultural milieux shape both our exposure to stressors and the means by which we cope with these stressors. Among the documented sociocultural stressors that negatively affect human health are unequal distribution of wealth, lack of social support, and racism. In this course, we will explore the complex relationships among inequality, stress, and health across human societies. We will examine how economic and social factors rather than biological differences contribute to most of the health disparities seen among racial and ethnic groups in the US. Students in the course will learn to read scientific and other texts critically. In addition, students themselves will produce a number of readers.

4. STAFF TR 3:40 – 5:25 Xavier 250

5. Jim Albrecht MWF 9:15 – 10:20 Admin 208

### **Democratic Citizenship**

In this seminar, we'll wrestle with the urgent question of what it means to be a responsible and engaged democratic citizen. We'll start by considering some influential American texts on moral selfhood and social justice—Emerson's "Self-Reliance," Thoreau's "Resistance to Civil Government," and King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail." Then we'll explore how their ideas might apply to some specific social issues. Using Michael Pollan's *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, we'll consider the moral issues raised by our status as consumers in the U.S. and global food systems. Next, using Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow* as a starting point, we'll research issues of racial inequality in our criminal justice system here in Washington State. Students will conclude the course by reflecting on the possibilities for activism in their lives and the role a college education should play in becoming an engaged citizen. Our main focus, of course, will be on the skills of college-level thinking and writing. Students will practice various types of writing (exposition and analysis, personal narrative, and research writing for a public web page), and we'll work on the central role of revision in the writing process.

6. Jon Kershner TR 6:00 – 8:00 Admin 211A

#### **Christianity and Slavery**

Was Christianity responsible for Western forms of enslavement, or did Christianity lead to the demise of institutional slavery? Both? This course will examine the rise of slavery in Christian cultures and examine the justifications of those who defended the "peculiar institution" as well as exploring the individuals and groups that resisted and sought to end slavery. Why did some Christians support slavery while others organized against it? What does all of this say about the role of religion in issues of in/justice? Throughout this course, students will practice the craft of writing on assignments related to the topic.

7. Jenny James MW 1:45 – 3:30 Admin 211A

#### Water, Politics, Place

Today, societies across the globe are working to address the increasingly fragile and perilous state of our earth's water systems. This course will explore the environmental challenges that comprise our current global water emergency: re-evaluating our water use to combat scarcity, preserving the earth's aqueous ecosystems, promoting and learning from the sustainment of human cultures centered on water, and responding to the impacts of global climate change on our lakes, rivers and oceans. In this course we'll work together to better understand the political and ethical dimensions of this ecological crisis, considering the ways power, privilege and belief shape humans' relationships to water and equitable management of our water resources. Using an environmental justice lens in our reading and writing, we will explore how race, gender, class, sexuality and religion impact environmental preservation. In turn, we'll analyze water not simply as a resource for human use, but as a complex ecosystem necessary for the survival of all beings.

As this course is charged with preparing students to learn the generic conventions and argumentative skills necessary for successful undergraduate writing, throughout the term we will read scholarly sources about water and work to compose critical and reflective essays that respond to these intellectual conversations and debates. 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 or Women's and Gender Studies, but is open to all!

8. Rona Kaufman TR 1:45 – 3:30 Admin 211B

140 Characters: Reading and Writing in the Twenty-First Century

This course is designed to help prepare you for the reading and writing that you'll do throughout college and, ideally, show you reasons to write long after you graduate. It understands writing as a process of inquiry that adheres to—or plays with—particular conventions involving genre, form, grammar, and citation. To do this work, we'll focus on issues of literacy in the twenty-first century. In an age of text messages, Twitter, and Facebook, of high-stakes standardized testing, of "fake news," of widely and wildly popular novel series like Harry Potter, Twilight, and Hunger Games, of research showing the neurological and social benefits of sustained reading and second-language acquisition—what does it mean to be not only a reader and writer but also a good reader and writer? That's the central question that will drive our work this semester. In this writing seminar, we'll consider the broad range of literacies in the twenty-first century, examining the rhetorical, social, educational, cognitive, and ethical dimensions of digital and print texts.

9. Lisa Marcus TR 9:55 – 11:40 Admin 221

## **Banned Books**

What do *Thirteen Reasons Why, To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* have in common? These books are united near the top of the list of frequently banned books over the last several years. 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 picture books to literary classics that excited the censors' wrath. We will pay special attention to the banning of children's books celebrating sexual diversity and to the targeting for censorship of books written by writers of color. One anti-censorship website proclaims, "Rise to the challenge. Read censored books!" We'll do just that this term.

10. Nathalie op de Beeck MWF 12:30 – 1:35 Admin 211A

### Wonder, Curiosity, Praxis

Environmental activist and marine biologist Rachel Carson, author of The Sea Around Us and Silent Spring, wrote that a deep sense of wonder informed her research and writing. By reporting on the wild places and the small creatures that sparked her vivid sense of wonder, Carson shared her marine research with a wide audience and conveyed the urgency of conserving damaged ecosystems. Carson combined wonder, rigorous study, and an ability to communicate her passions to the public. In our course, we will learn how poets, scientists, philosophers, and others describe awe and wildness, follow their curiosity to new discoveries, develop practical skills to put into action, and speak out for social and environmental justice. We will read, discuss, and write about wonder and curiosity; we will practice asking questions and gathering factual information; and we will develop our future plans as socially engaged scholars.

11. Solveig Robinson MW 3:40 – 5:25 Admin 211A

# The Great War

A century 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).

12. Scott Rogers TR 9:55 – 11:40 Admin 214

# How Writing Works

This section of Writing 101 examines how writing works in academic and professional contexts. We will take a rhetorical approach to writing, meaning we are most concerned with questions related to purpose, argument, evidence, form, genre, and audience. Focusing on these key concepts will help us develop a writing process that should be transferable across a wide range of contexts, including the classroom, the internship, the non-profit, the corporation, and the small business. As part of our preparation, we will consider how readers read (and think) as a way to better understand how and why writers write. Ultimately, I hope students in this course will come to see themselves as problem solvers capable of using words to deal with circumstances that arise in school or at work. The writer as a problem solver means the writer "writes, speaks, reads, and listens strategically" (Flower and Ackerman). When faced with a writing task they are able to quickly examine the variables at hand in order to produce the right text for the right reader at the right time. People think writing is a natural skill, that we are or are not good writers. The truth is that the best writers practice, they develop flexible skills, they know when and how to use them.

This is a writing intensive course. You will be expected to produce multiple drafts of all formal assignments, including academic essays and workplace documents. You will also write informal papers designed for practice and idea development. You will participate in rigorous peer review with peers in class. Additionally, you will work on a collaborative writing assignment that will require you to navigate the challenges of a team writing environment.

MWF 1:45 – 2:20 Ingram 122

## Literature and Medicine

How do we know what's healthy—and when is it okay to judge someone else's health? Going a step further: how can reading and writing lead us to deeper insights about the nature of health itself, including the health of an individual, a group, or even a society? (And what ethics are linked to these questions?) As we read and reflect on a range of material, from journalism (The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks) and memoir (El Deafo; Intern) to a documentary (The Genius of Marian) and a play (Wit), we'll ask how literature and medicine can interact to teach us about observing details, setting priorities, listening to rarely-heard voices, and (even) writing a strong essay in college. Three portfolios will allow you to draft, revise, and hone your work as you think in complex ways about questions of health and wellness.

14. STAFF MWF 9:15 – 10:20 Admin 211A

15. STAFF MWF 11:15 – 12:20 Admin 211A

16. Liam O'Loughlin TR 3:40 – 5:25 Admin 211B

### The Function of University Education

What is the function of university education in the 21st century? What do students expect from the university? How does it—or should it—engage students in learning, prepare them for careers, or involve them in politics? Did students sitting in your seats 50 years ago think about their educations the same way you do? With these questions in mind, how is the university not simply a preparation for, but very much part of, the so-called "real world"? In this course we will reflect upon the university as an institution—considering its history, its place in US culture, and our places within it. Course texts include fiction, scholarly essays, films, and testimonials. Students will hone their writing by working in multiple forms, including personal narrative, argument analysis, reportage, and a historically-informed essay about student debt and a field of study.

17. Rose McKenney TR 9:55 – 11:40 Rieke 108

Into the Wild

The U.S. National Parks have been called *America's Best Idea* by film-maker Ken Burns and the 1964 Wilderness Act is sometimes called one of America's greatest conservation achievements. Others have criticized National Parks and the Wilderness Act because they change our relationship with the natural world. Works by William Cronan, Ken Burns, Carolyn Finney and others will be used to explore a variety of questions including: What do we mean by wilderness and pristine natural environments? What human activities do we think are consistent with the lands in the National Park and Wilderness Preservation system? How are these lands used and by whom? Who is meant to use these lands? How do these areas impact our use of other lands?

 Patrick Moneyang MWF 11:15 – 12:20
Ingram 122

## **Zombies Across Cultures**

Today, zombies are everywhere: in movies, books, video games, music videos, television commercials, national headlines and even on the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) website. In cities and towns around the world, there are zombie walks, zombie (mud) runs, zombie flash mobs and other practices involving zombies. What does this global explosion of zombie mania suggest? Are zombies just a product of our imagination or could they exist in the actual world? Are they even "logically possible"? If yes, what are they? What do they want? Should we worry about them? In this course, we will explore contemporary representations of zombies in the US and in various cultures across the world. We will focus on texts and films that portray zombies, including World War Z, The Walking Dead, Maggie, The Serpent and the Rainbow, The Horde (France), The Dead (UK), Juan of the Dead (Cuba), Last Ones Out (South Africa), amongst others. Also we will investigate the significance of these representations by asking broader philosophical questions about our (post)humanity. By writing in different genres, including reviews, summaries and essays, we will make sure our answers follow the stylistic conventions of academic writing.

19. Rebecca Wilkin TR 11:50 – 1:35 Admin 204B

### All Aboard! Adventures in Public Transportation

This course considers public transportation in two ways. First, as a means for an individual to travel from point A to point B, usually in the context of a daily routine. Second, as a closed space in which strangers try very hard not to interact, and thus as a microcosm of the alienation, promiscuity, and diversity of modern cities. The questions we will ask include: When does a commute become a journey? When do strangers coalesce into a community? And how does literature transport readers to unfamiliar destinations and into new communities? You will analyze short stories set in a Dakar bus and a Shanghai tram, assess poems published in Seattle buses, research and present about local public transportation issues, take a Tacoma bus, and convey one anecdote from that experience in three different literary styles.

20. Gina Hames MW 1:45 – 3:30 Hong 246A

# Global Human Rights: The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Special feature: Linked to Hong International Hall.

In September 2000, world leaders came together at the United Nations' Headquarters in new York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to "a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty . . . setting out a series of targets – that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger Achieve universal primary education Promote gender equality and empower women Reduce child mortality Improve maternal health Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases Ensure environmental sustainability Develop a global partnership for development. The UN, in partnership with governments and organizations around the world have worked toward achieving these goals since they were finalized in 2002. 2015 was the target year set out in the 2000

achieving these goals since they were finalized in 2002. 2015 was the target year set out in the 2000 declaration. In 2015 the UN evaluated the progress in the MDGs and set out 17 new goals, called Sustainable Development Goals.

In this course students will read primary documents from the UN, news agencies, and member governments, to name a few. They will also read scholarly articles evaluating the world's work toward meeting these goals.

21. Tyler Travillian MWF 11:15 – 12:20 Admin 211B

# Women, Gender, and Sexuality in the Ancient World

Women, Gender, and Sexuality in the Ancient World will investigate how the usual manner of speaking, writing, and living (i.e., the dominant discourse) in Greek and Roman antiquity chose to depict women, gender, and sexuality; how these depictions create what it means to be masculine and to be feminine; and what we can know historically about women and their lives from and in spite of the limited and one-sided evidence. Ultimately, this investigation should urge you to reconsider how we choose to depict men and women today and how those depictions circumscribe the way we act and react with each other.

Readings will come from ancient Greek and Roman texts (for example, poems, plays, epics, and epitaphs), modern scholarship, and even a bit of critical philosophy – all selected to help think through the ancient sources and our contemporary assumptions. Each student will build a writing portfolio, using as evidence in-class discussion, summaries, response papers, comparison papers, peer review, and argument from textual evidence. Students will conclude the course by writing a

meta-reflection on their growth as writers and their understanding of how gender is contructed differently in different civilizations.

22. Mike Rings MWF 8:00 – 9:05 Admin 211B

# "Pop" Philosophy: Writing About Music, Taste and Culture

What can our musical tastes tell us about who we are, be it as individuals or communities? What, if anything, can they tell us about our personalities, values, and aspirations? Is there such a thing as "good" or "bad" taste (or, for that matter, objectively "good" or "bad" music)? What can we learn by studying, or maybe even trying to share, the tastes of others? Music critic Carl Wilson asks all these questions (and many others) in his book, *Let's Talk About Love*, a reflection on his attempts to appreciate and understand the music of Celine Dion, a superstar singer he had previously only disdained. In this class we will use Wilson's fascinating (and fun) book as a guide in our exploration of the diverse roles that music can play in our lives, particularly in the ways we understand our selves, and the selves of others. We will read a wide range of texts on music—from philosophy to criticism to ethnomusicology to neuroscience—listen to music, talk music, and (of course) *write* about music. Through a variety of writing assignments, including reflective essays, critical analyses, and a final research paper, this class will develop your skills in critical reading and writing, textual analysis, argument construction, and research.

23. Adam Arnold MWF 12:30 – 1:35 Admin 204A

### Boredom, Idleness, and Meaninglessness

The phenomena of boredom, idleness and meaninglessness are everywhere in the modern human experience. What is it to be attuned to the world in these ways? Is the relationship between these phenomena? Can we diagnose a common cause? Do these phenomena indicate an absence within us or with the world itself? Should we think of these different phenomena negatively or can they be beneficial to individuals and society? We will explore these questions through a critical engagement with literature, popular culture, history and philosophy. Using a variety of texts and approaches, students will hone their writing skills and develop their abilities to articulate their own perspectives in a variety of writing styles.

24. Terri Farrar TR 9:55 – 11:40 Olson 103

### **Current Issues in Sports and Wellness**

This writing seminar provides opportunities for students to learn and apply principles of current issues in sports and wellness. Because it is a writing seminar, the class structure will minimize lecture and maximize learning through class writings/discussions, group activities, reading related materials, research, and written and oral presentations that require critical thinking and reflection. An important purpose of this course is to establish a community of learners in a safe and supportive learning environment that respects and celebrates diverse backgrounds, interests, values, ideas, preferences, abilities, and needs. Each student's contribution will be critical to the success of this writing seminar.

25. Lizz Zitron TR 8:00 – 9:45 Hinderline 020

## Youth Identity in Young Adult Literature

How individuals come to define themselves is considered one of the central tasks of adolescence. We'll explore the ways in which young adults define themselves and examine how various disciplines view adolescent identity development. We'll apply what we learn as we read and analyze some of the most robust and innovative young adult literature available today, focusing on identity formation and the various dimensions of self. Through a variety of writing assignments, including personal narratives and research papers, this class will develop your skills in critical reading and writing, text analysis, argument construction, and research. Students will also have the opportunity to hear from authors how they approach the writing process.

26. Lizz Zitron TR 9:55 – 11:40 Hinderlie 020

### Youth Identity in Young Adult Literature

How individuals come to define themselves is considered one of the central tasks of adolescence. We'll explore the ways in which young adults define themselves and examine how various disciplines view adolescent identity development. We'll apply what we learn as we read and analyze some of the most robust and innovative young adult literature available today, focusing on identity formation and the various dimensions of self. Through a variety of writing assignments, including personal narratives and research papers, this class will develop your skills in critical reading and writing, text analysis, argument construction, and research. Students will also have the opportunity to hear from authors how they approach the writing process.

27. Paul Sutton TR 9:55 – 11:40 Admin 215

Triumph and Struggle: Three Perspectives on the Black American Experience

This course will examine the experience of Black Americans from the time of legalized segregation, to the Great Migration of Blacks from the South to Northern and Western cities, to a modern-day depiction of a Black female teenager living in a Midwestern city. These three perspectives will provide educational, sociological, and personal context to TaNehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me* and will provide complex, nuanced, and multi-dimensional perspectives of what it has meant to be Black in America. Required texts include Vanessa Siddle Walker's *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South*, Isabel Wilkerson's *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, and Angie Thomas' *The Hate You Give*.

28. Angie Hambrick TR 11:50 – 1:35 Stuen 101

## Between the World and Me: Race and Identity in The United States

James Baldwin wrote, "I am what time, circumstance, history, have made of me, certainly, but I am also, much more than that. So are we all." Our racial identities are constructed not only by the understanding and meaning that we have created of ourselves, but also through an understanding of history, social and political context, and our relationship to others. This seminar will explore the social, political, cultural, and economic implications of race and racial identity in The United States. We will read a selection of text including anthologies, articles, and blogs that explore racial identity through multiple lenses and frameworks. You will write personal narratives, essays, and positions papers as we synthesize and critically reflect on what it means to be racialized human beings.

29. Eric Thienes MWF 8:00 – 9:05 Admin 209

### Pillaging the Past: Ancient Artifacts in Society

What do Indiana Jones, The British Museum, and all Interpol have in common? Ancient artifacts. This writing seminar explores the importance of antiquities for individuals and societies and serves as our point of inquiry into a contentious issue that involves many fields and disciplines. We will look at artifacts as every-day objects and as great works of art; we will see how artifacts appear in ancient literature, modern fiction and cinema, history, and current events. We will consider the problem of ownership: Who owns ancient artifacts? What are the benefits and consequences of giving them back? What is the value of artifacts to archaeologists versus connoisseurs? Do antiquities belong to private individuals, nations, or museums? How do professionals authenticate, assess, and conserve artifacts? Are antiquities reserved for cultural heritage or universal human heritage? Can looting, smuggling, and fakes be avoided? Students will explore these issues by investigating their own assigned object, which will serve as the lens to develop reflective, critical, and analytical skills via writing. Most importantly, students will learn how to enter into the conversation.

30. Karen Travis MWF 1:45 – 2:20 Admin 200

### Health Care Policy

Why is healthcare in the U.S. the most expensive in the world? Why are we spending so much and so many people don't even have access to basic care? We will analyze and write about the impact of economic forces at work that influence who has access to care and who does not. In this course, we will focus on two very different perspectives: a comparison of the US with other developed countries and a deep dive into how the U.S. health care system has been particularly inadequate in the arena of mental health care. We will respond to a range of both analytical readings as well as works by provocative advocates to consider different perspectives including those of healthcare providers, policy-makers, patients, and their families. This course may be ill-suited for those potentially triggered by discussions around the well-being of the severely mentally ill.

31. Paul Manfredi MWF 12:30 – 1:35 Admin 206

### **Contemporary Chinese Film**

This course will provide an introduction to contemporary Chinese filmmaking, taking a generic approach to works produced from 1980, when China's "New Wave" filmmakers came to prominence domestically and globally, through the present day, when China is emerging as the dominant force for both film production and consumption worldwide. By 'generic' I mean that we will examine a series of films as examples of four specific genres: Martial Arts; Romance; Documentary; and Political Drama. Towards the end of the course we will view and discuss the ways in which some films defy easy assignment to any one of these four categories.

32. Liam O'Loughlin TR 11:50 – 1:35 Admin 211A

### The Function of University Education

What is the function of university education in the 21st century? What do students expect from the university? How does it—or should it—engage students in learning, prepare them for careers, or involve them in politics? Did students sitting in your seats 50 years ago think about their educations the same way you do? With these questions in mind, how is the university not simply a preparation for, but very much part of, the so-called "real world"? In this course we will reflect upon the university as an institution—considering its history, its place in US culture, and our places within it. Course texts include fiction, scholarly essays, films, and testimonials. Students will hone their writing by working in multiple forms, including personal narrative, argument analysis, reportage, and a historically-informed essay about student debt and a field of study.

33. Tom Ryan TR 1:45 – 3:30 Rieke

34. Galen Ciscell MWF 12:30 – 1:35 Ingram 122

### The Intersections of Inequality: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality

In this seminar we will consider how four major identities (race, class, gender, and sexuality) shape our life chances for better or worse, giving special attention to how multiple identities sometimes combine to create unique experiences of privilege or oppression. We'll unpack the idea that these identities are "socially constructed" and critically examine the possible causes of widespread inequality in the U.S., based on these identities. Beginning from the PLU mission statement's promise to "care for other people, their communities, and the Earth," we'll consider how we can engage in social change to eliminate personal biases and structural inequalities based on race, class, gender, and sexuality.