

Spring 2024 Writing Program Course Descriptions

WRIT 1733 Honors Writing and Research

As awareness and action around environmental issues have grown in recent years, we have also sought to achieve a fairer distribution of environmental benefits and burdens in our communities. In this section of WRIT 1133, we will use writing and research to examine issues of environmental (in)justice in America. Specifically, we will use a range of primary research methods--interviews, surveys, archival research, and textual analysis-- to develop a project investigating environmental (in)justice in your local communities. We will study various forms of discourse related to environmental justice, including essays in popular magazines, archival documents, academic and scientific articles, and policy/environmental impact statements. You will develop public and academic facing writing aimed at informing community members, persuading lawmakers, and enacting social change.

Instructor: Russell Brakefield

CRN: 1611 (Schedule: M,W 12:00PM-1:50PM)

In "Storytelling through Research," students will work through the genre of documentary to understand how a blending of fact, fiction, and opinion are represented through visual stories. This course will place strong emphasis on linking the research methods of the social sciences and the humanistic concerns of the arts. Students will work as consumers and producers on a topic of their choosing. They will learn about the genre of documentary, explore a research question (through interview, observation, and archival research), and create a presentation of their research through a 2-minute documentary trailer and a written documentary prospectus.

Instructor: April Chapman-Ludwig

CRN: 1554 (Schedule: M,W 10:00AM-11:50AM)

Stories from the Archives. What stories can we tell? What stories can't we tell? What stories aren't being told? In this section of 1733, we will conduct original research in DU's Special Collections and Archives. Using an inquiry driven approach to research and writing, we will examine texts and artifacts that shed light on the stories--told and untold--that make up the historical record. We will partner with Special Collections to design and install an exhibit in Anderson Academic Commons, and you will also curate a digital exhibit of your research findings.

Instructor: Rob Gilmore

CRN: 1679 (Schedule: T,R 12:00PM-1:50PM)

Zora Neale Hurston once defined research as "formalized curiosity... poking and prying with a purpose... a seeking that [they] who wishes may know the cosmic secrets of the world." We often think of research as a strictly academic and/or objective endeavor, focusing on the results of our inquiry rather than reveling in the inquiry itself. But this section of Honors Writing will adopt Hurston's view of research to unpack its profound and imaginative possibilities. Over ten weeks, students will select a topic of personal interest and explore creative ways to share their findings with the public. Though we will work with multiple research traditions, our primary task will be an ongoing creative nonfiction project aimed at a popular audience. We will turn to TED Talks, memoirs, podcasts, essays, student work, and best-selling books for inspiration.

Instructor: Lauren Picard

CRN: 1553 (Schedule: T,R 2:00PM-3:50PM)

The Question as Quest. All research begins with a question. “Question” always begins with “quest.” This is no accident; in fact, “question” and “quest” are etymologically rooted in the same concept—searching. We ask because we seek something across a gap in our knowledge, and this exploratory approach is not unique to academics. Every year, (re)search writers from diverse backgrounds transform quests for knowledge into nonfiction that informs and entertains. In that spirit, this course invites curious writers to explore a topic of personal interest by conducting a research odyssey. Through this process, you will compose a research vignette, an odyssey essay, and a piece of creative nonfiction that informs and entertains casual (non-expert) readers.

Instructor: David Riche

CRN: 3976 (Schedule: M,W 4:00PM-5:50PM)

This class offers advanced instruction in rhetorical theory and practice. That means that we will read and analyze and produce texts in multiple research traditions. In other words, our focus will be academic/scholarly writing. The theme of our class will be lexicography. How are dictionaries made, how are they related to cultural ideology, how do they reveal but also push against the natural laws of language, and how have they been tools of oppression but also progress? We will read about these issues and do our own primary research in different academic traditions to begin answering these questions.

Instructor: Geoff Stacks

CRN: 1680 (Schedule: T,R 8:00AM-9:50AM)