

# WRIT 102 Writing Seminar II

## IMPORTANT DETAILS

CREDITS – 3

PREREQUISITES – WRIT 101 or by placement

This course emphasizes the development of research skills through exercises in the selection of research topics, the use of a variety of library resources, and the evaluation of research materials, leading to the development of an extensive academic argument. In preparation for this major project, students will explore a selected topic from several disciplinary perspectives through a series of written essays and oral presentation assignments. Throughout the term, instructor-student conferences facilitate individualized criticism of research procedures and the development of the final paper. Non-audit.

## Spring 2022 Course Themes

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### WRIT 102.1 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Martha Sledge | T 2:30-5:21

#### **Urban Spaces and Equity**

In this section of WRIT 102, you will read, conduct research, and produce texts around issues of equity in urban spaces. We will take an intersectional, anti-racist approach to understanding how urban spaces are constructed, altered, and destroyed. You will do a lot of writing – in and out of class – to help you understand your writing strengths and areas of growth. This section of WRIT 102 will take you to the next level of skill and confidence as a writer of college papers and as a writer beyond the classroom.

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### WRIT 102.2 & 102.12 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Cecilia Feilla

102.2: M 2:30-5:21

102.12: W 2:30-5:21

#### **Frankenstein**

In this section of WRIT 102, we will read, analyze, and research Mary Shelley's timeless novel Frankenstein. Considered a classic of Romantic, horror, and sci-fi literature, the book remains relevant today, illuminating issues and topics from criminal justice and bioethics to environmentalism, inclusion, gender politics, and mental health. We will compare different interpretations of the novel (psychological, historical, political, gender-based, genre-based, racial, environmental, and so on), as well as the various adaptations it has inspired in film, fiction, and other media. We will conduct research and produce texts in a variety of formats, including a final research paper (8-10 pages) and presentation.

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WRIT 102.3 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Magda Maczynska | F 11:30-2:21

**Climate Futures**

In this class, we will look at how contemporary writers imagine our climate futures. We will read short stories, poetry, and journalism about the impacts of climate change, and imagine new possibilities for climate adaptation and transformation. How is the planet changing? Is there hope for humanity? Do we deserve to survive? Can we envision a better world? Can we learn from past and silenced voices? Can writing become a tool for climate justice? Students will explore these (and other) questions about climate futures through exploratory writing and self-directed research projects.

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WRIT 102.4 & 102.5 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Michael Colvin

102.4: M/W 10:00-11:21

102.5: M/W 11:30-12:51

**Hispanic New York**

Hispanic culture thrives in New York City, and Hispanic New Yorkers of different origins have created distinct cultural identities in this city. In this course students will examine the history of Hispanic migration to New York through literature, film, and popular culture; Students will focus on one of the works of literature to research the perspectives of Spanish-speaking residents of New York City.

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WRIT 102.6 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Leigh Harbin | F 8:30-11:21

**Literary Heroines and Gender**

Classic gothic heroines Marian Halcombe and Mina Harker face villains and monsters, make epic journeys, and escape prisons both exotic and domestic, while romantic heroines like Elizabeth Bennett overcome obstacles to love. Disney princesses may look a bit different in the twenty-first century, but can still be depended upon to dress well and sing sweetly. Wonder Woman's super strength began saving the day in 1940's comics, Buffy Summers updated the image of the asskicking, super-powered heroine, and Bella Swan, according to her critics, set the romantic heroine back to the 1950's. We love heroines on the page, screen, and stage. What character traits do heroines share? How have our most popular heroines changed or remained static? How do they embody or resist the feminisms of their eras? How do our heroines differ from our heroes? How might gender neutral or nonconformist heroism be defined? In this class, students will combine study of assigned literary and critical texts about classic and contemporary

heroines with their own scholarly research, working to discover what popular heroines can teach us about how we feel and think about gender.

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WRIT 102.7 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Deanna Twain | M/W 1:00-2:21

**On Certainty**

Religion, science, philosophy, law, love, and the tooth fairy: is anything certain? In this section of WRIT 102, we will explore the concept of certainty. Can anything actually be proven? How does certainty relate to trust or faith? Is a lack of doubt the same as a sense of denial? In this course students will read texts, view films, and write on this topic, with an eye towards developing an original research paper by the end of the semester.

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WRIT 102.9 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Patrick McCarthy | M/W 5:50-7:11

**Society Through Film**

The Hollywood film industry prides itself on capturing and presenting an image of American society, turning it into a product that it sells to the world. The image switches from an idealized dream to a dark reflection depending on the film genre and the temper of the decade. This course is designed to acquaint students with academic research and documentation techniques, and stimulate their spirit of inquiry. We will practice these skills on the subject of American society throughout the 20th century and how it was represented in contemporary popular film, and will design and complete a final research project on the topic. Readings include essays on cinema by renowned critics and writers such as Pauline Kael, Roger Ebert and William Goldman; as well as film reviews, both historical and contemporary, and analyses of the film industry and its impact on the nation. We will also look at movies that obsessed previous generations, but are forgotten today...and ask why. By researching films and texts, we will explore the complex cause-and-effect relationship between the visionaries who make movies, and the society that both enjoys and inspires their work.

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WRIT 102.10 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Ryan Everitt | T/Th 11:30-12:51

**Representing Evil**

In this course, you will build on the skills acquired in WRIT 101. You will continue to practice your critical reading, thinking, and writing skills through different genres of academic writing, and produce an original 8-10 page research project that you will propose, research, and present to the class. This course will engage with different conceptions of evil, as well explore the ways these concepts have shaped who we are. While evil seems a fundamental concept to our ideas of right and wrong, its nature is anything but straightforward. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton's Satan

articulates the concept's difficulty when he declares, "Evil, be thou my good!"—phrasing that prompts us to ask, how can evil ever be good? In this course we will take up this question, along with others, with regards to how literature, philosophy, and the social sciences have explored the concept of evil as we pay attention to its evolution across time and genres.

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WRIT 102.BL13 & 102.BL16 (BLENDED)

Professor Irene Chrysafi

102.BL13 T (ONL) / Th (IP) 4:00-5:21

102.BL16 T(ONL) / Th (IP) 2:30-3:51

### **Self and Society**

Through our everyday experiences, we shape our social worlds, and these worlds shape us. This course will focus on the theme of "self and society." To what extent do societal expectations shape who we are? What does it mean to be included in society? What does it mean to be excluded? We will explore these topics through a variety of texts and genres including prose fiction (Nella Larsen's novel *Passing*), nonfiction stories, film, documentaries, and other modern media. Course readings will encourage us to consider the idea of "self" through prisms of race, culture, gender, class, and other socially constructed identifications. Students will pursue self-directed research projects, developing and honing skills in research practices and essay writing.

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WRIT 102.OL14 (ONLINE)

Professor Monica Colbert | T 7:20-10:01

### **American Social Movements: Revolutionary to Black Lives Matter**

In this writing intensive course, you will examine American social movements as a means of resistance to oppression and injustices, along with their implications and impact on legislation, culture and change. You will engage in critical examinations of movements from revolutionary times through the 21st century, involving topics, like The Boston Tea Party, Women's Suffrage, LGBTQIA, Occupy Wall Street, Environmental Health, Me Too and Black Lives Matter. You will be encouraged to pursue disciplinary interests while accruing and honing skills in research practices and analytical writing. Texts from various disciplines and genres will be incorporated, such as *A People's History of the United States*, *The Purpose of Power: How to Build Movements for the 21st Century*, *Citizen: An American Lyric*, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party*, among others.

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WRIT 102.BL15 (BLENDED)

Professor Jonathan Rachmani | T (IP) / Th (ONL) 2:30-3:51

### **Performance, Image, Text: Writing in the Arts**

New York City is famous for the arts, and one of the joys of living here is the one-on-one engagement with creative expression. Whether you are a performer or just love listening to new genres of music, whether you want to expand your understanding of painting and sculpture or to communicate your passion for film, the benefits of joining in the lively conversation surrounding

these forms of expression are enormous. This course aims to deepen your writing skills through the practice of writing about the arts, making the important leap from spectatorship to active engagement. We will discuss and write about theatre and musical theatre, film, television, opera, popular music albums and music videos, literature, graphic novels, the visual arts, from galleries to graffiti, and more. Through our examination of published reviews, essays, blog postings, and artists' statements, the rich discourse around these forms will come to life. We will take a field trip to the Metropolitan Museum, and you will have many occasions to explore the performing and fine arts around the city this spring. The final research project will give you the opportunity to write about a subject in the arts of your choice

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WRIT 102.BL17 & 102.BL19 (BLENDED)

Professor Leanna McLennan

102.BL17: T (IP) / Th (ONL) 1:00-2:21

102.BL19: T (IP) / Th (ONL) 10:00-11:21

### **Creativity**

What is creativity? Is it the result of divine inspiration? Or is it a practical skill that can be taught? In this course, we will explore different perspectives on creativity in education, literary studies, psychology, and philosophy. We will also discuss artists' perspectives on the creative process. For your individual projects, you will select research questions to pursue through a bottom-up, inquirybased, ethical research process. Along the way, we will share active, engaged scholarship of our own shaped by model research essays we have read. As you extend and deepen your practice of close reading, writing, and critical thinking skills, you will continue to gain comfort with the process of professional-level composition: invention, drafting, revision, peer feedback, editing, reflection, placing sources in conversation with each other, and developing your own voice as a writer. In your final research project, you will explore how creativity is defined and employed in a specific context.

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WRIT 102.BL18 & 102.BL20 (BLENDED)

Professor D'Agostino

102.BL18 T (ONL) / Th (IP) 1:00-2:21

102.BL20 T (ONL) / Th (IP) 10:00-11:21

### **Cyborgs, Clones, and Witches: Feminism and Science Fiction**

This course explores the intersection between feminism and sci-fi. We will study not only speculative fiction that challenges our understanding of gender, sex, biology, and culture, but feminist theory that draws from science fiction the figures of the cyborg, clone, and witch to reimagine womanhood and gender politics for the twenty-first century. Closely analyzing novels by Joanna Russ and Octavia Butler, comic books by Chris Claremont and John Byrne, and films by Lizzie Borden and John Boorman, this class will investigate the role of imagination in politics, and the relationship between fantasy and justice concluding with students conceiving

and executing their own eight to ten page research papers on a feminist fantasy figure of their choice.

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WRIT 102.21 (IN-PERSON)

Professor Mary Brown | Sat 11:30-2:21

**Exploring MMC's Theatre Archives**

Archives are the dictionary definition of primary sources. Marymount Manhattan College's archives contain documents in a variety of formats that cover diverse aspects of dance and theatre in the late twentieth century. Assignments for this course include: a review of a set of primary sources, a literature review, and a research paper combining original research with the published scholarship on a topic, presentations of original research and participation in panel discussions with students doing similar work.

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