WRITING PROGRAM

Wesleyan offers students a vibrant writing community and a multitude of ways to pursue their interest in writing. Writers, editors, and publishers visit campus throughout the year, and students support more than 20 magazines, journals, and literary groups. The curriculum emphasizes academic writing in many subject areas and also offers courses in fiction writing, creative nonfiction, poetry, screenwriting, playwriting, and mixed forms. The establishment of the Shapiro Creative Writing Center at 167 High Street signals the importance the University attaches to writing. The Shapiro Center serves as a hub for writing activities and provides a venue for readings, workshops, colloquia, informal discussions, student-generated events, and receptions. Its lounge is open to all students enrolled in creative-writing courses. The Shapiro Center also houses writing faculty, including fiction writer Amy Bloom, the Distinguished University Writer-in-Residence.

The creative writing concentration in the English major. This concentration allows students to pursue creative writing at a high level in the context of advanced literary study. The concentration fosters the study of the history and practice of individual genres and of new hybrid forms and offers students the opportunity to work closely with the University’s full-time writing faculty: the Shapiro-Silverberg Professor of Creative Writing, the internationally renowned poet Elizabeth Willis; Lisa Cohen, a writer of creative nonfiction, fiction, and poetry; and editor Anne Greene. Recent visiting faculty includes such distinguished writers as Hilton Als, Andre Aciman, Paul La Farge, Douglas A. Martin, and Clifford Chase. Enrollment in creative-writing courses in the English Department is not limited to English majors.

Creative writing in the College of Letters. Creative writing has long been an important component of the College of Letters curriculum, with an entry-level and an advanced course offered every year and open to students in all majors. COL majors are encouraged to write creative honors theses.

The Writing Certificate. The University’s Writing Certificate (catalog.wesleyan.edu/certificates/writing), essentially a minor, is open to students working in any major who wish to make writing an area of concentration. Courses that may count toward the certificate are drawn from many departments. They range from fiction writing, poetry, and creative nonfiction to journalism, biography, arts and film criticism, translation, and writing about science. In addition to fulfilling the coursework requirements for the certificate, students create a portfolio of their work and present their writing in public. The certificate sponsors a number of courses that carry the WRCT designation.

The Writer’s Block. This small residential community provides an opportunity for first-year students and upper-class students with a particular interest in writing to live together and collaborate on formal and informal programs.

FACULTY

Amy B. Bloom
BA, Wesleyan University; MSW, Smith College
Shapiro-Silverberg Professor of Creative Writing; Professor of the Practice in Creative Writing; Professor of the Practice, English

Sean McCann
BA, Georgetown University; PHD, CUNY The Graduate Center
Professor of English; Director, Academic Writing

VISITING FACULTY

Steven B. Almond
BA, Wesleyan University; MFA, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Kim-Frank Visiting Writer

Amita Gaige
BA, Brown University; MFA, University of Iowa
Visiting Writer

Lisa Weinert
BA, Barnard College
Kim-Frank Visiting Writer

Meg Furniss Weisberg
BA, University of Connecticut; MA, Yale University; MPHIL, Yale University; PHD, Yale University
Visiting Assistant Professor, French; Interim Assistant Director of Academic Writing

WRCT150 The Art of Scientific Writing
Mastering the art of effectively communicating ideas and results in written form is vital for success in science. Clarity and simplicity are of paramount importance when communicating complex scientific ideas. This course provides an example-driven approach to developing these science writing skills. Example tasks will require students to master the ubiquitous abstract, and further expand on the styles needed for scientific articles, research proposals, theses, and writing about science for a broad, nonscience audience. Students will be pressed to grasp the importance of the iterative revision process of successful expository writing. Students will complete a final project that ideally connects to independent research work.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: NSM-CIS, NSM-CIS
Identical With: CIS150, CIS150, CIS150, CIS150
Prereq: None

WRCT220 Translating Science
This course is geared both to science majors (including pre-meds) and to students with little background in the sciences. Students will practice explaining complex ideas and processes in the sciences to broad audiences; they will also learn to evaluate how well others have done so. Class members with differing backgrounds will help each other to prepare and to revise.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Identical With: SISP220, SISP220
Prereq: None

WRCT221 Writing about Science and Other Specialized Topics: A Journalistic Perspective
This seminar teaches students—both scientists and non-scientists—how to become more effective writers. Students will learn the basics of news reporting and feature writing, including the best ways to develop ideas, how to efficiently conduct research, how to organize information, how to ask effective questions, and how to craft different types of articles and essays on deadline. While science journalism is the course’s primary focus, students will also explore reportage in other specialized subjects such as business, education, technology, and politics.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Prereq: None

WRCT222 Writing about Science and Other Specialized Topics: A Journalistic Approach
This seminar emphasizes journalistic writing and will help students learn to present specialized material in a way that will interest general readers. While science journalism is one focus of the course, students may also explore reportage in other subjects such as technology or education. Students will learn the basics of news reporting and feature writing, including the best ways to develop ideas, efficiently conduct research, organize information, ask effective questions, and craft different types of articles and essays on deadline.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Prereq: None

WRCT223 Translating a Story
This course aims to survey the process of translating an experience into a creative written work. With an emphasis on creative nonfiction, students will consider how a real-life event becomes most alive on the page. What parts are best transformed into scene? How do we choose the right language for dialogue, time period, or a work’s mood or tone? What should, or can, we omit? In reading writers who have used both fiction and nonfiction to present a given autobiographical experience, and practicing writing an experience for different audiences, students will compare the craft tools that make a story work within its given form. Concurrently, the class will pursue exercises in translation from other languages into English in order to assess these same language and narrative choices in microcosm.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Prereq: None

WRCT224 Science & Environmental Journalism
This course will concentrate on the challenges of reporting on scientific and environmental news as well as on writing about complex scientific subjects for the non-science reader. It will also address the rapidly changing nature of journalism and the new forms of story telling.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Prereq: None

WRCT225 Writing Biography: Denis Diderot, A Case Study
How does one re-create someone else’s life, in words? How does one conjure up the historical context that surrounds a far away existence? How does one bring together different forms of evidence—from the archive, primary sources, secondary sources, and written shreds of a life—to create the illusion of knowing the dead? In this course, we will ask these questions about the most fascinating figure of the French Enlightenment, Denis Diderot (1713-1784). In addition to editing the greatest encyclopedia of the 18th century, this would-be priest turned atheist also dreamt of natural selection before Darwin, the Oedipus complex before Freud, and a form of genetic manipulation centuries before Dolly the Sheep was born, all while making significant contributions to art criticism, dramaturgy, natural history, and political philosophy. His private life, which includes affairs and prison, is also worthy of scrutiny and examination. While reading about his existence and studying a selection of his works, students in this class will undertake a series of biography-related written exercises that seek to resurrect various aspects of this intriguing thinker or members of his cohort. (Course and readings in English)
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN, HA-RLAN, HA-RLAN
Identical With: FIST225, FIST225, FIST128, FIST225, FIST225, FIST128, FIST225, FIST128
Prereq: None

WRCT227 Life Writing: Writing About the Self and From Experience
This course will examine both the power and the complexities of writing that derives from personal experience. Topics to be addressed, in turn, are Memory (and its reliability); Experience (authoritative/reportial versus interpretative/symbolic); Identity and Voice of the narrator; and Agency (the degree to which the narrator is in control, or not in control, of the narrative). Types of Life Writing that will be explored are coming of age/education narratives, illness and trauma narratives, confessional narratives, spiritual narratives, and end-of-life narratives.
We will also examine selected works of fiction inspired by the novelist’s life experience.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL, HA-COL, HA-COL, HA-COL
Identical With: COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227, COL227
Prereq: None

WRCT250 Topics in Journalism: Introduction to Data Journalism
This course serves as an introduction to the field of data journalism. Students will learn to apply the processes of a data scientist to journalism using the R software platform. Through case studies and practical assignments, students will gain knowledge of data journalism’s rich history and potential, while practicing modern, hands-on methods in acquiring, exploring, analyzing and reporting about data. By the end of the course, students will be able to produce polished data stories and be prepared to continue pursuing their interests in either journalism or data science.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-QAC, SBS-QAC
Identical With: QAC250, CSPL250, QAC250, CSPL250, QAC250, CSPL250, QAC250, CSPL250, QAC250, CSPL250
Prereq: None

WRCT250A Topics in Journalism I
Taught by a distinguished visiting journalist, this course explores selected topics in contemporary journalism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL
Identical With: CSPL250A, CSPL250A, WRCT261, CSPL129, CSPL250A, CSPL250A, WRCT261, CSPL129
Prereq: None

WRCT250B Topics in Journalism II
Taught by a distinguished visiting journalist, this course explores selected topics in contemporary journalism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL
with spin at a dizzying pace. The avalanche of information and disinformation contemporary journalists cover war, the practice of “embedding” reporters with truly “objective”—and even whether they should be. We’ll look closely at the way correspondents have an important responsibility to hold governments and does the narrator’s experience influence what she sees and recounts? War relationships between combatants, journalists, and other kinds of storytellers coherence, reliability, and the relationship between facts and truth. Our fictional and journalistic, with special attention to style, technique, narrative conflict and how that work is done today; and to explore war stories, both aims: to help students understand how journalists have historically covered them, war stories are endlessly rich in high-stakes human drama. From the Iliad and the Bible to the videotaped beheadings of ISIS hostages in Iraq, these war stories occupy a unique place in public life. They reflect on a nation’s authenticity, voice and dominant narrative, allowing students to examine what it achieves the goals of literature. While this kind of writing tends to be timely, as that strives to do something different than reporting the news—it aspires to do an exemplary job capturing the world and reporting the “news.” It will also examine and dissect articles where writers have fallen short. We will discuss methods, tools, and strategies for trying to depict the world truthfully—interviews, investigative reporting, document searches, pursuing conflicting voices and viewpoints. We will also explore personal memoirs and the tensions between being faithful to memory and being faithful to truth. In this course, we are likely to examine truth, fairness, and distortion when it comes to writing about economics and labor issues and abuses. This course will be taught by Steven Greenhouse of the New York Times, Wesleyan’s Koeppel Journalism Fellow. In spring 2014, this non-fiction writing seminar will be taught by award-winning journalist Tracie McMillan, Wesleyan’s 2014 Koeppel Journalism Fellow. In this nonfiction seminar, students will explore how to write about social issues by identifying inequity; understanding the logic and rhetoric used to both defend and criticize it; and develop their own skills to effectively communicate their opinion. Modeled after journalistic work, the course will also develop students’ abilities to conduct first-person research and observation, and then translate it into written form for use in nonfiction. We will also explore questions of authenticity, voice and dominant narrative, allowing students to examine what it means to write about communities other than their own — and the issues implicit in doing that work. Work from across the political spectrum will be addressed.
WRCT250H Topics in Journalism: Writing Op-Ed Pieces and Political Essays
Practice in writing op-eds and political essays in short and long forms. This class may be of interest not only to writers, but also to students studying political science, history, economics, ethics, sociology, or an interdisciplinary field, such as American studies. The main goal of this class is teaching students how to engage in debate in the public sphere over the major themes and issues of our time. Other than an intense reading schedule and a writing workshop, the other major component will be guest speakers. They include journalist, essayists, and scholars working in their fields but with an authoritative presence in the public sphere.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Prereq: None

WRCT250J Topics in Journalism: Literary Journalism
In this course, we will explore the art and craft of magazine-length journalism that strives to do something different than reporting the news—it aspires to achieve the goals of literature. While this kind of writing tends to be timely, almost all journalism must be when it's first published, at its best, it ought to be worth reading for decades to come. Truman Capote, for example, conceived of IN COLD BLOOD, which he first published as a series of articles in THE NEW YORKER in 1965, as a "non-fiction novel": a work of journalism that employed the techniques and artistry of fiction. We will study the writing of new journalists like Joan Didion, Tom Wolfe, Nora Ephron, and Gay Talese, who pioneered the idea that there is no such thing as unbiased reporting: The writer can't help but bring a point of view to his or her storytelling, so why not admit it? These writers broke with journalistic convention and admitted that there was an "I" behind the typewriter, a mediator between the "true" story and the reader.

We will focus on reading and writing two forms in particular, the profile and the essay. While an excellent profile can be a straightforward examination of another person and his or her place in the world, in the hands of a master like Janet Malcolm or George Trow, it can become an eruption of invention. Essays ask a question or argue a point—but how? There are as many ways as there are writers who explore the form, and in this course we will seek to join them.

The course will be taught by Steve Almond, the 2016-17 Koeppel Journalism Fellow. He has been an investigative journalist in Miami and El Paso and is an award-winning writer of nonfiction and fiction. He is the author of eight books, including several New York Times bestsellers, and is currently teaching narrative journalism at the Nieman Foundation at Harvard.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Identical With: CSPL250H, CSPL250H, CSPL250H, CSPL250H
Prereq: None

WRCT250K Topics in Journalism: Writing, Wit, and the Natural World
This course will engage students as readers and writers of essays, opinion pieces, and long form articles about the natural world. We live in the shadow of climate change and the sixth great extinction event. So when is outrage effective, and when does wit or irony allow a writer to find a more persuasive voice? What's the role of objectivity in a world where everybody seems to be shouting? We'll consider the work of such writers as Gerald Durrell, David Quammen, Elizabeth Kolbert, and Peter Matthiessen. Students will also write regularly and collaborate together in class to critique and improve one another's work.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Identical With: CSPL250K, CSPL250K, CSPL250K, CSPL250K
Prereq: None

WRCT250M Topics in Journalism: Storytelling and Social Change
How did a TV show help reduce the rate of teen pregnancy to the lowest point in recorded history? Why did a new narrative approach to gay marriage enable the movement to go from losing 31 state referendums to suddenly winning? Storytelling, across mediums and social platforms, has the power to change behavior and shift the cultural narrative. This class will explore the nature of "effective" stories, across a wide variety of issues, that engage audiences and often prompt action. We will discuss how this process works and ways to develop social impact campaigns. Students will have the chance to question some of the leading creators/practitioners who will join as guest speakers.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT
Identical With: CSPL250M
Prereq: None

WRCT255 Translation: Theory and Practice
This course treats the reading of theoretical texts on translation and the production of creative texts in the literary mode of translation as complementary heuristic procedures for opening an investigation into certain problems of language and meaning. Readings will include literary, philosophical, historical, and linguistic accounts of translation in conjunction with (and sometimes directly paired with) influential and experimental translations from a range of 20th-century writers. We will familiarize ourselves with the practical choices that face a translator, from classical distinctions between free and literal translation through contemporary concerns regarding domestication and foreignization, (post-)colonial power relations, and translation across media.

Written assignments will consist of intra- and interlingual translations that will provide firsthand experience with the choices a translator must make and the resistances that language can offer, as well as a space for exploring the limits of rewriting, manipulation, and transformation within a rubric of translation. Final projects will be hybrids of creative and critical writing, with students producing readings of their chosen foreign-language texts through some interaction between translation and more conventional forms of criticism. Students who are working on a longer translation project (e.g., as part of a senior thesis) will be allowed to focus on this text for many of the assignments during the semester.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM, HA-CHUM, HA-CHUM
This demanding, writing-intensive course focuses on (1) the creative development of a script, individually and collaboratively; (2) scene structure, character development, plot, form and formula, dialogue, the role of narrative and narrator; (3) understanding the working and business of television. Each student will conceive of, synopsize, and pitch a story idea with their “producing partners” to “network executives.” Each student will also serve as producer and as an executive for others. After absorbing the feedback, students will construct a detailed beat outline and will turn in an original script at the end of the semester.

Offering: Crosslisting

Grading: A-F

Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-FILM, HA-FILM

Identical With: FILM455, FILM455, FILM455, FILM455

Prereq: None

WRCT257 Reading and Writing Fiction

This demanding, reading- and writing-intensive course focuses on character, structure, and plot; sentence structure; development of a strong and idiosyncratic voice; the role and history of the narrator; points of view; and writing with meaning.

Offering: Host

Grading: A-F

Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL

Identical With: FILM455, FILM455, FILM455, FILM455

Prereq: None

WRCT258 The Journalist as Citizen

In this weekly writing seminar, we will explore how journalists exercise their roles as citizens, and, in turn, how journalism affects the functioning of our democracy. Using historic and contemporary examples, we will examine how, at its best, the media exposes inequity, investigates wrongdoing, gives voice to ordinary people, and encourages active citizenship.

Offering: Host

Grading: A-F

Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: SBS-WRCT, SBS-WRCT

Prereq: None

WRCT259 Writing About Film

This course will introduce students to the major concerns of popular film criticism. Primary emphasis will be placed on actors and styles of acting, the impact of changing social ideologies on film, and the effects of big budget filmmaking on production. Students will be asked to think and write critically as well as personally about these concepts. Each week will include a screening, a lecture, and a group discussion. Students will be graded based on class participation, weekly writings, a midterm, and a final project.

Offering: Crosslisting

Grading: A-F

Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-FILM, HA-FILM, HA-FILM, HA-FILM

Identical With: FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452, FILM452

Prereq: None

WRCT260 Advanced Fiction

This demanding, reading- and writing-intensive course focuses on character, structure and plot, sentence structure, development of a strong and idiosyncratic voice, the role and history of the narrator, points of view, and writing with meaning. This course previously carried the title "Reading and Writing Fiction II.

Offering: Host

Grading: A-F

Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-FILM, HA-FILM, HA-FILM

Identical With: FILM455, FILM455, FILM455, FILM455, FILM455, FILM455, FILM455, FILM455

Prereq: None

WRCT261 Topics in Journalism I

Taught by a distinguished visiting journalist, this course explores selected topics in contemporary journalism.

Offering: Host

Grading: A-F

Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL


Prereq: None

WRCT262 Topics in Journalism II

Taught by a distinguished visiting journalist, this course explores selected topics in contemporary journalism.

Offering: Host

Grading: A-F

Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL


Prereq: None

WRCT263 Writing for Television II

This advanced course requires that each student act as writer, producer/network executive as well as lead discussant on one of the professional scripts we read. Students will be responsible for two meetings with the professor during the semester, two to three meetings with their producing partners, and one meeting with their actors (who will perform a short scene from the student’s script at the end of the semester.) Each student will conceive of and pitch three story ideas in the first classes, winnowing down to one idea for which they will write a story area, an outline, and a final script (which will go through three major revisions). Students are expected to come to class with a background in creative writing, focusing on character and dialogue as well as having completed one TV screen play.

Offering: Crosslisting

Grading: A-F

Credits: 1.00

Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL

Identical With: ENGL357, FILM459, FILM459, FILM459, ENGL357, FILM459, FILM459, FILM459, FILM459

Prereq: None

WRCT264 Creating Children’s Books

In this course each student will create and illustrate a children’s book, at the picture book or illustrated chapter book level. Assignments include examining a variety of children’s books (from 1930 to the present) and emulating specific authors and illustrative techniques as we develop original work. We will discuss both text and illustration in published picture books, and the creative assignments and workshop discussions will focus on both components, and their interaction.

We will look at a range of questions: What is this book for? Who is it for? Does it appeal to children and adults in different ways? What assumptions does it make about the world of childhood and the relationships children have? How does it obscure, reveal, comment on, or attempt to change the truths of life--things like
love, desire, satisfaction, hurt, difference, sickness, and death? What values or norms does it establish—or subvert? What do the words and pictures do to each other? What values or expectations are at stake as the story or pattern unfolds? We’ll use questions like these to help drive our experiments and revisions as we workshop all stages of our books.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL297, ENGL297, ENGL297, ENGL297, ENGL297, ENGL297, ENGL297, ENGL297
Prereq: None

WRCT265 Identity and Alterity in Israeli Literature
Contemporary Israeli literature attests to a significant turn in Israeli identity. We will read and discuss contemporary texts that reflect different conceptions of various aspects of “traditional” Israeli identity. We will start with the modernist Israeli canon and proceed to contemporary writing. Our questions will focus on the gap between the public national ethos and private, nonnational identities. At the center of our attention will be some of the alternative spaces and discourses that have recently moved to the center of Israeli literature: the individual vs. society, Zionism vs. anti-establishment, Sabre (Israeli-born) vs. immigrants, the powerful vs. the vulnerable, center vs. periphery, monolithicity vs. pluralism, the major vs. the minor, etc. We will ask to what extent representations of the “other” in the Israeli texts parallel those present in American culture and society. Writing assignments include a series of review essays.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CJST, HA-RELI, HA-CJST
Identical With: CJST220, CJST220, HEST220, CJST220, CJST220, HEST220
Prereq: None

WRCT266 Topics in Journalism: Techniques of Narrative Journalism
Techniques of narrative journalism, with an emphasis on profile-writing as a means of powerful storytelling that captures both internal and external action. Weekly reading and writing assignments, resulting in each student’s production of a narrative profile suitable for publication.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Prereq: None

WRCT267 Creative Criticism and Inquiry: Writing Documentary Nonfiction and Poetry
As readers we often assume an inherent distinction between critical and creative forms of writing. In this class we will bridge such a divide by designing and completing semester-long creative nonfiction or poetry-based writing projects that incorporate archival research from Wesleyan’s renowned Special Collections and Archives. We will read creative and critical texts that engage archival research in distinct ways, but much of the emphasis of the course will be on your own research and reading in the archives, as well as your work as a writer experimenting with different forms to incorporate this research into your writing. In class, we will collaborate as a group to assist with writing and revision through workshops and peer critique, in addition to discussions of reading.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Identical With: ENGL268, ENGL268
Prereq: None

WRCT268 Topics in Journalism: Writing (and Arguing) About Inequality: How to Make Your Case
In spring 2014, this non-fiction writing seminar will be taught by award-winning journalist Tracie McMillan, Wesleyan’s 2014 Koeppel Journalism Fellow.

In this nonfiction seminar, students will explore how to write about social issues by identifying inequity; understanding the logic and rhetoric used to both defend and criticize it; and develop their own skills to effectively communicate their opinion. Modeled after journalistic work, the course will also develop students’ abilities to conduct first-person research and observation, and then translate it into written form for use in nonfiction. We will also explore questions of authenticity, voice and dominant narrative, allowing students to examine what it means to write about communities other than their own -- and the issues implicit in doing that work. Work from across the political spectrum will be addressed.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Identical With: WRCT250D, CSPL250D, WRCT250D, CSPL250D, WRCT250D, CSPL250D, WRCT250D, CSPL250D
Prereq: None

WRCT269 Topics in Journalism: Journalism, Nonfiction Writing, and the Search for Truth
Journalism is a kind of nonfiction writing about the present, in the service of the public. Journalists seek to give an accurate depiction of the world around us—the hell of war, the horror of poverty and exploitation, the beauty of art and dance, the delight of travel. All too often, especially in today’s world of wonks and publication at the speed of Twitter, journalism falls short of describing the world with accuracy—sometimes because of deliberate distortion, personal or political, sometimes because of a failure to do adequate research and sometimes because it isn’t always easy to give a fair description of the truth. Truth can be a slippery thing—there can be many competing versions. Who is to say which version is right? The course will examine examples of journalism and other nonfiction writing that do an exemplary job capturing the world and reporting the "news." It will also examine and dissect articles where writers have fallen short. We will discuss methods, tools, and strategies for trying to depict the world truthfully—interviews, investigative reporting, document searches, pursuing conflicting voices and viewpoints. We will also explore personal memoirs and the tensions between being faithful to memory and being faithful to truth. In this course, we are likely to examine truth, fairness, and distortion when it comes to writing about economics and labor issues and abuses. This course will be taught by Steven Greenhouse of the New York Times, Wesleyan’s Koeppel Journalism Fellow.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Prereq: None

WRCT317 Special Topic: Character
In this class we will read classic novels and stories that present striking, unforgettable human beings. Our priorities will be close reading for the pleasure
and enlightenment of the works as wholes, as well as an examination of the choices the writer has made to bring the character to life on the page.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317, ENGL317
Prereq: ENGL292 OR ENGL296

WRCT347 Special Topic: Day Books, Diaries, Notebooks, Etc. This class will take as its focus both creatively and critically the daily and episodic tracking of our own and others' insights, observations, inspirations, motivations; incidents and encounters that seem worthy of (personal) note, whether this be for instant gratification, imprint, or later expansion; simple records as well as flights of writing. We will read and keep journals of various kinds. Very little will be out of bounds.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347, ENGL347
Prereq: ENGL292 OR ENGL296 OR (ENGL216 OR ENGL292 OR ENGL296)

WRCT350 Writing Certificate Senior Seminar This is the capstone course of the writing certificate program. The course offers an opportunity to work closely with other students completing the writing certificate and to receive advice from professional writers about editing and compiling work for publication.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT, HA-WRCT
Prereq: None

WRCT355 Special Topics in Creative Writing: The Use of Humor In this prose writing workshop, we will explore a variety of ways that humor can be deployed, in works ranging from the obviously comic, such as César Aira's novel THE LITERARY CONFERENCE (wacky hilarity) to works that might not be thought of as comic, such as Lynne Tillman's NO LEASE ON LIFE (jokes as a formal element in an otherwise grim fictional landscape), and Wayne Koestenbaum's HUMILIATION (a serious meditation with many funny examples and an antic voice). Other readings by Donald Barthelme, Renee Gladman, David Rakoff, Mary Robison, and Lynne Tillman. Students may write fiction or nonfiction; humor is optional.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL, HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355, ENGL355
Prereq: None

WRCT401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

WRCT402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT