2024 Wintermester

LOOK BOOK

LIBERAL ARTS AND HUMAN SCIENCES
ENGLISH
VIRGINIA TECH.
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Why You Should Take This Course

It fulfills both practical and emotional needs. Practically, Wintermester is a great time to read poetry because we can look at many examples and styles during a short time. Also, this is a Pathways course, helping you to complete the requirements for graduation. More importantly, however, poetry is the area that most students feel nervous about. Many feel they “don’t get it” or that it is too difficult for them. However, everyone can “get” poetry and this course will show you that. Reading poems, along with commentary from me to help you understand how the poem means what it means and how it works, will show you that poetry is accessible to all readers. If you already love poetry, then this will be a great course to introduce you to a variety of poems that you might not know or maybe some that you already love. If you do not love reading poetry, maybe this class can change that and open a new area of interest for you.
ENGL 1604: Intro to Poetry

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Leslie Neilan

I love the poems themselves and meeting new poems that I have not yet discovered. However, what I like best is the feedback I have gotten through the years from students who left this class with more confidence and ability when reading poetry.
Why You Should Take This Course

Vampires, werewolves, and valkyries? Oh my! Want to enjoy some spicy books with your cocoa this winter? Then join me for a taste of the paranormal romance genre! Paranormal romance is a young but extremely diverse subgenre — the first romance novel to feature a supernatural romantic partner was published in 1987, just one year after the first romance speculative fiction hit the mainstream. We’re now in what’s been called the “Golden Age of Paranormal Romance,” and the genre that owes more of its heritage to Ann Radcliffe than Jane Austen is rapidly overtaking the more traditional historical romance. Paranormal romance readers are rebels, rule breakers, and “wild-haired and electric-eyed eccentrics” — are you?
I fell in love with romance novels accidentally when, at the age of 11, I tried to order sheet music for Aladdin’s A Whole New World from the local library and instead received an inspirational series romance titled A Whole New World. Obviously, I returned it promptly.

Just kidding. I took it out to the barn, snuggled on a stack of hay bales between a horse and a goat, and got lost in the excitement of watching two characters psychologically haggle over their compatibility until, at long last, they lived happily ever after. Sadly, the book itself was eventually eaten by the goat at a later date, but my fascination with romantic relationships, with humans’ internal struggles and navigation of conflicts remained.

Romance novels carried me through the most trying times of childhood and adulthood; in high school they were a comfort through lonely awkward phases, in college they were a source cozy relaxation after tough exams. In and after graduate school they quite literally helped pay my rent-- I worked as a ghost writer and script doctor for an erotic romance publisher for several years. Writing romances only made me love the genre more, and there is still nothing cozier than a warm cup of tea and a romance novel.

When offered the opportunity to teach Intro to Science Fiction & Fantasy, my first and only thought was: “It’s paranormal romance time!” What better way to explore the conventions of science fiction and fantasy than through their Gothic cousin: the paranormal romance.

My background is in *drumroll* popular romance, as both a researcher and writer. In addition to ghost-writing, I have read, researched, and written extensively on narrative structures in popular romance writing, feminism and sex positivity across popular romance subgenera, and the evolution of heat levels [aka: spice] in single title romances. Have questions about the course or just want to chat romance? Send me an email: nettab@vt.edu. And join me for cocoa and spicy books this winter!
ENGL 2744: Intro to Creative Writing

Why You Should Take This Course

Want to tell better lies, to turn the world new and strange on a hunch, to lay waste to enemies or bring back the dead, to wield God-like power as you conjure up people and places from thin air? All this and more is possible, at least on paper. A few things I can promise about this class: poetry really isn’t that scary; you’ll never have to discuss “theme” if you don’t want to; and unlike what standardized education may imply, there are writers alive today, writing about today things, who look and sound and act like you, who deal with the same frustrations and make the same mistakes and ask the same questions you do. You’ll read the work of those writers, and many others, and you’ll write about contemporary characters in contemporary settings dealing with contemporary conflicts, all while focusing on the craft that will help you make that writing shine brighter. You’ll do all of this and more in only three weeks!

ENGL 2744
CRN: 40352 with Sean Conaway
Asynchronous Online
3 Credit Hours

Pathways 1a: Advanced/Applied Discourse
Pathways 6a: Critique and Practice in the Arts
Pathways 6d: Critique and Practice in Design
ENGL 2744: Intro to Creative Writing

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Sean Conway

No other class I teach exposes me to new people, places, and ideas as often or more surprisingly than Intro to Creative Writing. Students from every discipline enroll in this class, and their unique experiences, tastes, and goals create a rich and creative learning environment. This class also is a great excuse to do what I love: read, discuss, and debate complicated ideas with smart and interesting people.
ENGL 2744: Intro to Creative Writing

Why You Should Take This Course

This course introduces two genres of creative writing: fiction and poetry. We will read exemplary short stories and poems from notable and emerging writers as students learn foundational craft techniques to employ in their own creative work. This course provides students valuable time to explore the stories and language that compel them and develop the skills to produce original literary pieces themselves. Students will be encouraged to take bold, experimental risks, and will regularly receive feedback and encouragement from the instructor as they compile their final portfolio of original work.

ENGL 2744
CRN: 40353 with Xander Gershberg
Asynchronous Online
3 Credit Hours

Pathways 1a: Advanced/Applied Discourse
Pathways 6a: Critique and Practice in the Arts
Pathways 6d: Critique and Practice in Design
Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Xander Gershberg

Writing, especially creative writing, is a form of self-discovery. Writing fiction and poetry has helped me process my own biggest and most urgent life questions, as well as find new questions to explore, all in ways that have ultimately empowered and fulfilled me. I’m excited to facilitate your own travels through literary, creative landscapes and read your writings that come from it. I can’t wait to see how you all see the world and articulate your place in it.
Why You Should Take This Course

You need a brief but meaningful break from data, statistics, cold emotionless numbers, chemical processes, processes that test structural integrity, therapeutic processes... just, you know, scientific processes in general. You should also take this course if your mom ever once told you that you are so, SO creative, honey! That covers everyone, right?

ENGL 2744
CRN: 40351 with Andrew Hobin
Asynchronous Online
3 Credit Hours

Pathways 1a: Advanced/Applied Discourse
Pathways 6a: Critique and Practice in the Arts
Pathways 6d: Critique and Practice in Design
Why I Am Teaching This Course  
From Andrew Hobin  

like you, I hate writing. Hate, hate, hate it. But you know what I love so profoundly and expansively that it makes the agonizing slog of writing worthwhile? HAVING WRITTEN SOMETHING. That’s right - the shiny final draft, baby. And I love sharing this ecstasy with you, dear reader, because you yourself are capable of writing surprising poetry and piercing fiction. You just haven’t had a good opportunity to see for yourself. Until now!
Why You Should Take This Course

Did you know that communication is one of the top 10 essential skills that employers look for in their potential job candidates? You should take this course because regardless of what profession you enter, communication is essential. Learning how to communicate effectively with colleagues and throughout your professional life can feel daunting, but is a skill that can absolutely be acquired through practice. This course will provide you with opportunities to practice these skills so that you feel confident in your professional communication and writing skills that will transfer into your post-graduate career.

ENGL 3764: Technical Writing

Why You Should Take This Course

Did you know that communication is one of the top 10 essential skills that employers look for in their potential job candidates? You should take this course because regardless of what profession you enter, communication is essential. Learning how to communicate effectively with colleagues and throughout your professional life can feel daunting, but is a skill that can absolutely be acquired through practice. This course will provide you with opportunities to practice these skills so that you feel confident in your professional communication and writing skills that will transfer into your post-graduate career.

ENGL 3764
CRN: 40356 with Marissa Buccilli
Asynchronous Online
3 Credit Hours

Pathways 1a: Advanced/Applied Discourse
I value the impact that communication has in my everyday life. In my experience as a working professional, like many, I have held a variety of jobs with various job titles. However, one skill that I have always leaned on is my ability to communicate information, both written and verbal. Because of this, I want to encourage students to spend time developing and refining their current skills as it relates to technical writing so that they feel confident navigating a variety of communication situations that will extend into their professional life.
ENGL 3764: Technical Writing

Why You Should Take This Course

You should take this course because it will use disability studies and access as a lens for technical writing skills and genres. For three weeks, you will work diligently on a portfolio of assignments that employ concision, document design, structure, plain language, audience-centered approaches to communicating complex information. This course can ultimately help you think about the ways you understand yourself and consider others with a wide range of ability while sharpening your writing.
I am teaching this course because I know that strong writing skills take a lifetime to acquire and for a short amount of time, just three weeks, we are able to explore these skills together in the hopes that they open up deeper interests. Technical Writing also highlights many of the most common features of composing students will use inside and outside of the university. I love teaching this course, even when abbreviated, because it has so many different types of Hokies enrolled and it lets me use industry and academic experiences to guide students in their development.
ENGL 3764: Technical Writing

Why You Should Take This Course
If you’re applying for a job or internship this year, this course is for you. In Technical Writing, you’ll learn how to design a cover letter and resume for a specific position you want in the future. You’ll also have the advantage of working with me one-on-one to perfect your job materials.

Over the course of this short, face-paced Wintermester, you will learn document design and how to effectively communicate with professional and public audiences--both crucial skills for communicating your research and for workplace communication in general.

ENGL 3764
CRN: 40354 with Laura Fehr
Asynchronous Online
3 Credit Hours

Pathways 1a: Advanced/Applied Discourse
VT students have unique skills that employers need. My goal is to teach students how to write about their skills with confidence and style. I’m also deeply invested in enabling students to adapt their writing for various, practical uses.
Why You Should Take This Course

You will find that Technical Writing is one of the most practical writing classes you can take. You will use its basic principles in other classes and in your job. If I could rename the class, I would call it Writing for the Work World. It is NOT about using multi syllable words to sound important. It is about using plain language to address the needs of a particular audience. Your work might involve writing instructions on updating software in your office, designing a brochure that highlights a new hiking trail, writing a proposal that seeks funding for a new after school reading program for fifth graders. This class will give you opportunities to improve your writing in a low stress environment. Our text is an Online Education Resource – otherwise known as a free textbook!

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ENGL 3764
CRN: 40354 with Alice Kinder
Asynchronous Online
3 Credit Hours

Pathways 1a: Advanced/Applied Discourse
Students who take this course are among the brightest and most talented at Virginia Tech, and I love being a part of the energy that comes with that! Helping students become better communicators is a very rewarding experience as I know the skills they gain in Technical Writing will be skills they use in their other classes, in their careers, and in their lives. And selfishly, I want to empower students to create a world in which my grandchildren can thrive!
Why You Should Take This Course

No matter what the field, you will need to communicate clearly and professionally. The way you present yourself—both in writing and design—can say a lot about you, your expertise, and your trustworthiness as a speaker and a professional. This course gives you a sampling of the types of textual work you will do throughout your career: proposing projects, designing clean presentations, communicating and collaborating with colleagues, and writing in a professional manner. Not only do my students gain experience creating and designing deliverables, they also refresh their grammar and language skills.
ENGL 3764: Technical Writing

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Vanessa Ruccolo

I enjoy introducing students to a variety of technical projects, such as memos and proposals, and helping them learn how to refine pre-existing documents, such as personal statements and resumes. I believe that discussing possible workplace scenarios and ethical technical communication is important in order to prepare for possible conflicts of interest; I also find these discussions to be really fun. I also love learning about my students’ career and research interests—they teach me new things every year.
ENGL 3774: Business Writing

Why You Should Take This Course

Through collaboratively exploring a number of common rhetorical contexts and challenges one might encounter in business environments, students in this course will gain the following skills: insights into the vital role communication plays within the business world, a flexible writing process that can adapt to numerous rhetorical contexts, making rhetorically-informed choices in style, syntax, tone, formatting, word choice, structure and conventions, document design and circulation, intercultural communication, familiarity with genres vital to contemporary business practices, using writing as a source of innovation, policy-building, and solution-creating, growth as a professional and human being.
ENGL 3774: Business Writing

Why I Am Teaching This Course
From Jenna Zan

As someone who has a faceted background in nonprofit fundraising, intercultural communication, documentation management, and higher ed administration, I have seen firsthand the power of audience-centered writing. Having the skills to communicate effectively not only fosters strong relationships with individuals, communities, and organizations; it also ignites positive change. I cherish any opportunity to teach those skills to others.