

WRITING PROGRAM

haverford.edu/writing-program

As a vital part of academic study, personal expression, and civic life, writing merits concerted attention in a liberal arts education. The Writing Program, affiliated with the College Writing Center, encourages students to become rigorous thinkers and writers who can construct arguments that matter, craft prose that resonates with their intended audience, and understand how inextricable writing is from learning.

LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- become rigorous thinkers and writers who can construct arguments that matter, craft prose that resonates with their intended audience, and understand writing to describe and define both learning and knowledge.
- explore a particular theme or field of study while emphasizing writing as a means of inquiry, analysis, and persuasion.
- analyze readings, engage in discussion, and work on all aspects of academic writing, from constructing thoughtful arguments to crafting an effective prose style.
- advance critical reading and analytical writing skills, and explore the broad range of thematic interests inherent in these traditions, sharing as they do common roots in the history of our language and its influences.
- develop the vocabulary, skills, and knowledge necessary to understand not only how to decide what texts mean, but how texts generate and contemplate meaning.
- engage with different exercises in speaking with the understanding that this is a rhetoric commensurate with writing in demonstrating sustained critical inquiry.

CURRICULUM

The Writing Program administers the first-year writing seminars, which all first-year students take. Taught by faculty from across the College, the first-year writing seminars explore a particular theme or field of study while emphasizing writing as a means of inquiry, analysis, and persuasion. Different seminars extend intellectual inquiry into:

- visual and aural cultures.
- the interrogation of the literary canon.
- Quaker history and ethics; categories of

difference (racial, sexual, religious, and national identity).

- medical humanities.
- engaged social practice.

The intensive writing seminars (WSI) prepare students who need extra exposure to academic writing.

Seminar topics reflect the range of expertise of the faculty, and small classes encourage close student-faculty interaction. In each course, participants analyze readings, engage in discussion, and work on all aspects of academic writing, frequently in small tutorial groups, from constructing thoughtful arguments to crafting an effective prose style. Students can expect to write frequent, short essays as well as other kinds of informal writing assignments during the semester.

A list of seminars for each incoming class is posted on the Writing Programs website each June, along with information about how incoming students are to register for them.

Creative writing courses are listed under the English Department.

FACULTY

Eli Anders

Visiting Assistant Professor of Writing; Writing Fellow

Natasha Bissonauth

Visiting Assistant Professor of Writing; Writing Fellow

Elizabeth Blake

Visiting Assistant Professor of Writing; Writing Fellow

C. Stephen Finley

Professor of English

Myron Gray

Visiting Assistant Professor of Music

Barbara Hall

Specialist in Multilingual and Developing Writers and Speakers; Lecturer in Writing; Faculty Tutor

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in the Writing Center

Andrew Janco

Digital Scholarship Librarian, Visiting Assistant Professor of Writing

Nimisha Ladva

Visiting Assistant Professor of Writing

Emma Lapsansky

Emeritus Professor of History and Emeritus Curator of the Quaker Collection

Kristin Lindgren

Director of the Writing Center; Visiting Assistant Professor of Writing

Rajeswari Mohan

Associate Professor of English

Benjamin Parris

Visiting Assistant Professor of English

Jaelyn Pryor

Visiting Assistant Professor of English

Lindsay Reckson

Assistant Professor of English

Debora Sherman

Director of College Writing; Assistant Professor of English

Hannah Silverblank

Visiting Assistant Professor of Classics

Theresa Tensuan

Associate Dean of the College; Dean for Diversity, Access and Community Engagement; Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs; Visiting Assistant Professor of English

Christina Zwarg

Associate Professor of English

COURSES

WRPR H101 FINDING A VOICE: IDENTITY, ENVIRONMENT, AND INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY

Nimisha Ladva

This course considers students fluid relationship to identities that they examine, explore, and take on through course materials. We begin by examining how difference is perceived/obscured/challenged and/or bridged in

constructions of identity. We then consider how identities exist in the physical environment and how environment affects these identities. The different positions that experts have taken serves as a model, finally, for students to enter another scholarly debate within an area of interest in a possible prospective major. Open only to members of the first-year class as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017)

WRPR H118 PORTRAITS OF DISABILITY AND DIFFERENCE

Kristin Lindgren

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson writes that “staring is an interrogative gesture that asks what’s going on and demands the story. The eyes hang on, working to recognize what seems illegible, order what seems unruly, know what seems strange.” In this seminar we will explore visual and literary portraits and self-portraits of bodies marked by difference, bodies that often elicit stares. We will ask: What kinds of stories are told about these bodies? How do memoirs and self-portraits by people with disabilities draw on and challenge traditions of life writing and portraiture? How does this work enlarge cultural and aesthetic views of embodiment, disability, and difference? Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017)

WRPR H128 READING SACRED TEXTS

Naomi Koltun-Fromm, Ken Koltun-Fromm

An introduction to reading sacred texts in an academic setting. In this course we will apply a variety of methodological approaches—literary, historical, sociological, anthropological or philosophical—to the reading of religious texts, documents and materials. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Not offered 2017-18)

WRPR H132 WRITING ABOUT BEETHOVEN

Richard Freedman

Humanities (HU)

An exploration of Beethoven’s life and works, considered in the context of changing aesthetic and cultural values of the last two centuries. Students will listen to Beethoven’s music, study some of his letters and conversation books, and read some of the many responses his art has engendered. In their written responses to all of this material, students will think Beethoven’s music, his artistic personality, about the ideas and

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assumptions that have guided the critical reception of art and life. They will learn to cultivate their skills as readers and listeners while improving their craft as writers. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Not offered 2017-18)

WRPR H133 THE AMERICAN WEST IN FACT AND FICTION

Emma Lapsansky

An examination of the imagery of the American West. Using visual and verbal images, this course explores such diverse aspects of the West as cowboys, cartography, water rights, race and social class, technology, religion, prostitution, and landscape painting. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered occasionally)

WRPR H150 INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY ANALYSIS

C. Stephen Finley, Christina Zwarg, Rajiswari Mohan, Debora Sherman, Benjamin Parris, Lindsay Reckson

Intended like other sections of the Writing Program to advance students' critical reading and analytical writing skills, this course is geared specifically towards introducing students to the discipline that studies the literary traditions of the English language. One of its aims is to explore the broad range of thematic interests inherent in these traditions, sharing as they do common roots in the history of our language and its influences. The powers and limits of language; ideas of character and community, and the relation between person and place; heroic endeavor and the mystery of evil; loss and renovation these are among the themes to be tracked through various strategies of literary representation and interpretation in a variety of genres (epic, narrative, and poetry) and modes (realism, allegory, and romance), and across a range of historical periods. Our goal is to develop the vocabulary, skills, and knowledge necessary to understand not only how we decide what literary texts mean, but also how literary texts generate and contemplate meaning. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017 and Spring 2018)

WRPR H155 ORIGIN STORIES: INITIATIONS, IDENTITIES, AND INDIGENOUS IMAGINATIONS

Theresa Tensuan

In this course we will read a range of origin stories—creation narratives, memoirs, alter/native accounts of settler colonialism, and trickster tales—that delineate constructions of identity and constitutions of community with a focus on the ways in which writers and artists represent ongoing “encounters” between indigenous and imperial cultures, examining inventive work that play with genres ranging from the lyric to the epic to speculative fiction as a means of offering new ways of understanding history and imagining the future. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)

WRPR H156 GOOD GUYS & GALS? QUAKER IMAGERY IN FICTION

Emma Lapsansky

What have been the literary uses of Quaker ideas and images in fiction? How have these changed over time? Here on the Haverford campus, with its Quaker heritage and traditions, is housed perhaps the largest collection of Quaker novels anywhere in the world, fiction by or about Quakers, often populated with characters whose Quakerliness is designed to evoke a certain mood, message, or subtext. For some authors, Quakers became stand-ins for virtue. For others, the Quaker image is of the troublemaker, the naysayer, the haughty, unbending zealot. In this course we will read excerpts from an array of Quaker fiction. Then, through class discussions, written essays, and through considering each other's writing, students will explore how commentators have interpreted the meaning of “Quakerness” in literature.” Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017)

WRPR H162 IMMIGRATION AND REPRESENTATION

Nimisha Ladva

In examining the questions raised by acts of migration across borders or countries, we will examine the assumptions that create community and conflict in the immigrant experience both in the U.S. and abroad. We will read essays, short stories, and a novel or two that help showcase the rich diversity of the immigrant experience. To help ground our exploration, we will read theoretical texts that examine how identities are formed and policed across and within communities. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)

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WRPR H167 GLOBALIZATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Barbara Hall

We will define and explore global interconnectedness from multiple disciplinary perspectives—political, economic, etc.—but will focus primarily on various complex social and cultural dimensions of globalization including local/global tensions, Westernization, cultural borrowing, cultural imperialism, cultural exploitation, tourism, and pop culture (music, movies, etc.), as analyzed in ethnographies set in various locations around the world. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017 and Spring 2018)

WRPR H175 WOMEN'S WORK

Elizabeth Blake

A literary history of women's work and women workers, investigating questions such as: Is femininity itself a form of labor? How can a demand for wages enable a political reorientation? And if work feels good, or happiness feels like work? Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Typically offered every year)

WRPR H176 ARE YOU WHAT YOU EAT? EATING AND IDENTITY

Elizabeth Blake

Investigates the complex relationship between food and identity; engages food practices that can unite families, consolidate ethnic identity, reinforce class boundaries, and express gender; asks whether food can assert contemporaneity or materialize nostalgia for an idealized agrarian past. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017)

WRPR H178 BEASTS, HYBRIDS, AND GIANTS: CONFRONTING MONSTERS FROM THE PAST

Hannah Silverblank

Figurations of the monster in different literary and artistic traditions, from Greek literature to Gothic fiction and horror cinema. Considers the status of the monster, sometimes a source of horror, of reverence, of disgust, of humor, and even of endearment. Open only first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017)

WRPR H179 TIME AFTER TIME: QUEER PASTS, PRESENTS, AND FUTURES

Elizabeth Blake

This course introduces students to the many ways queer lives and theories challenge normative conceptions of linear time. We will encounter queers feeling backward, growing sideways, and refusing normative futurity in a variety of literary, filmic, and theoretical texts. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)

WRPR H180 HUMANITARIANISM IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

Andrew Janco

In this course, we will study the ideas, practices, and politics of humanitarian action. We'll begin with the origins of humanitarian values in various religious and philosophical traditions: what is the value of human life? What is human dignity? We'll then turn to changing attitudes towards violence, torture and slavery in the 17th and 18th centuries. Why and how did these changes occur? We'll study key texts, figures and organizations, including the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières as well the American Friends Service Committee and Near East Relief. In dialogue with these philosophical and historical experiences, we will study current humanitarian crises. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)

WRPR H181 THE GENIUS OF MOZART

Myron Gray

This course considers the historical evolution of the concept of artistic genius in connection with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's life, works, and representation in literature and film. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)

WRPR H182 THE AMERICAN FAMILY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Emma Lapsansky

Explores values, and stresses, as interfaced with realities of "family, e.g., Native American, Hispanic, African American; Protestant, Jewish, Mormon and Catholic, North, South and West, over time; rituals of birth, marriage, illness, disability; expectations of family "loyalty." Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)

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WRPR 184 QUEER CONTEMPORARY ART

Natalie Bissonauth

This course examines a global range of contemporary artists who resist dominant modes of visual representation by investigating what it means to produce a queer aesthetic. How does a visual object enact queerness? How is this visual logic indebted to feminist, postcolonial, and critical race theories while also inflecting them anew? And what is the role of the image in inciting social change? This course explores, defines, and reassesses terms and various historical, political, and social developments around sexuality, gender, desire, HIV/AIDS, heteronormativity, homonormativity, and homonationalism, animating our visual literacy around what constitutes a queer gaze. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017)

WRPR 185 LANGUAGE, POWER AND JUSTICE

Barbara Hall

This seminar explores a variety of controversies involving the use of the English language in social and cultural context. Across the course, we will emphasize the experiences and consequences of linguistic diversity for variously positioned speakers and writers. Our inquiry will engage the following questions while surely provoking new ones. How is language related to power? How does language use express or indicate a speaker's identity? What kinds of language are stigmatized and what kinds are deemed "correct" or socially powerful, and why? In what ways is language inherently political – i.e. embedded within and constituent of unequal power relations – and how might we choose to navigate the implications of our language use? How might language be a tool for inclusion or empowerment for marginalized communities, or a tool for seeking social justice? Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017)

WRPR 186 REINVENTING QUAKERISM: RUFUS JONES, HENRY CADBURY AND THE RISE OF QUAKER LIBERALISM

David Watt

Quakerism isn't stable. It varies from generation to generation. The form of Quakerism that is mostly closely associated with Haverford College today is, for example, quite distinct from the sort of Quakerism that was connected to the college in 1970s. That variety of Quakerism was, in turn,

quite distinct from the one that was connected to Haverford a century earlier. Students in the course will examine some of the changes that Quakerism underwent between the 1870s and the 1970s by examining the writings of two Haverfordians: Rufus Jones (1863-1948) and Henry Cadbury (1883-1974). Both men tried to reconcile Quaker traditions with modern life and thought, but they reached markedly different conclusions about what Quakerism had been in the past and about what it should be in the future. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)

WRPR 187 SEEING THROUGH DIASPORA

Natalie Bissonauth

This course treats migration as a political condition and considers the role of the visual in enacting and translating such realities to a larger audience. Students will assess theories of diaspora and transnationalism alongside experiences of human mobility (such as immigration but also indenture, dispossession, exilehood, and trafficking) to examine how the formal elements of artworks from the 20th and 21st centuries narrate and reshape these positionalities anew. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)

WRPR H188 EPIDEMICS AND SOCIETY

Eli Anders

An examination of the ways epidemics are shaped by society, culture, and popular representation, using historical sources to explore the politics of disease narratives and how class, race, and identity influence responses to epidemics. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Fall 2017)

WRPR H189 HEALTH AND THE CITY

Eli Anders

An examination of cities as sites of public health concern and intervention in modern history. European and American historical sources will illuminate how health concerns have shaped the meanings, experiences, and responses to disparate urban spaces and populations. Open only to first-year students as assigned by the Director of College Writing. (Offered Spring 2018)