The Program in Comparative Media Studies/Writing has three undergraduate subject options: Creative Writing, Science Writing, and Digital Media.

Introductory subjects are designed for beginning college writers; advanced subjects are designed to develop greater competence in one or more special forms of writing.

INTRODUCTORY

First-Year Writing Subjects

Students write frequently, give and receive feedback on work in progress, improve their work by revising, read the work of accomplished writers, and participate actively in class discussions and workshops. Short oral presentations are also required. Emphasizes writing with an awareness of audience and purpose. Writing and Rhetoric focuses on forms of exposition, including narration, critique, argument, and persuasion, to develop students' ability to write clear and effective prose. Writing and Experience focuses on the ways writers transform experience into finished and polished writing in the forms of essay, memoir, and autobiography. Science Writing and New Media focuses on writing about science and new media and develops students' ability to write clear and effective prose for a range of media. Writing about Literature focuses on reading and writing skills used to analyze literary texts. Writing with Shakespeare focuses on writing and speaking, using Shakespeare as a model. Readings and assignments vary by subject.

21W.011 Writing and Rhetoric: Rhetoric and Contemporary Issues

Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.730
Provides the opportunity for students—as readers, viewers, writers, and speakers—to engage with social and ethical issues they care deeply about. Explores perspectives on a range of social issues, such as the responsibilities of citizens, freedom of expression, poverty and homelessness, mental illness, the challenges of an aging society, the politics of food, and racial and gender inequality. Discusses rhetorical strategies that aim to increase awareness of social problems; to educate the public about different perspectives on contemporary issues; and to persuade readers of the value of particular positions on, or solutions to, social problems. Students analyze selected texts and photographs, as well as documentary and feature films, that represent or dramatize social problems or issues. Students also write essays about social and ethical issues of their own choice. Limited to 18.

A. Walsh

21W.012 Writing and Rhetoric: Food for Thought

Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.013, 21W.730
Explores many of the issues that surround food as both material fact and personal and cultural symbol. Includes non-fiction works on topics such as family meals, food's ability to awaken us to "our own powers of enjoyment" (M.F.K. Fisher), and eating as an "agricultural act" (W. Berry). Students read Michael Pollan's best-selling book *In Defense of Food* and discuss the issues it raises about America's food supply and eating habits, as well as the rhetorical strategies it employs. Assignments include narratives, analytical essays, and research-based essays. Limited to 18.

K. Boiko

21W.013 Writing and Rhetoric: Introduction to Contemporary Rhetoric

Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.730
Considers how rhetoric shapes current events in politics, science, and society. Students study rhetoric as a theoretical framework for developing persuasive arguments, as a method of analyzing written, oral, and visual texts, and as a mode of human inquiry. Assignments include analytical, persuasive, and research-based essays, as well as oral presentations, group discussions, and debates. Readings drawn from political speeches, scientific arguments, and popular media. Limited to 18.

L. Harrison-Lepera

21W.014 Writing and Rhetoric: Exploring Visual Media

Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.015, 21W.730
Explores the rhetoric of visual media and the meaning of the digital revolution. Students analyze readings and films and discuss the power of media in defining social issues and shaping ideas of self, family, and community. They also write essays that sharpen skills in analyzing visual rhetoric, developing and supporting arguments, and using sources. Limited to 18.

A. Walsh

21W.015 Writing and Rhetoric: Writing about Sports

Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.730
Examines the role of sports in our individual lives and American culture at large. Considers a broad range of issues, such as heroism and ethical conundrums, gender equality, steroids, and the proper role of sports in college life. Examples of high-quality, descriptive and analytic sports writing serve as the focus for class discussion and as models for student essays. Limited to 18.

K. Boiko
21W.021 Writing and Experience: MIT Inside, Live
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.022, 21W.023, 21W.024, 21W.025, 21W.026, 21W.731

L. Marx

21W.022 Writing and Experience: Reading and Writing Autobiography
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.021, 21W.023, 21W.024, 21W.025, 21W.026, 21W.731

J. Melvold

21W.023 Writing and Experience: The Hero in the Postmodern World
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.021, 21W.022, 21W.023, 21W.024, 21W.025, 21W.731

S. Lewitt

21W.031 Science Writing and New Media: Explorations in Communicating about Science and Technology
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.032, 21W.034, 21W.035, 21W.036, 21W.732

C. Taft

21W.032 Science Writing and New Media: Perspectives on Medicine and Public Health
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.032, 21W.034, 21W.036, 21W.732

C. Taft

21W.034 Science Writing and New Media: Explorations in Communicating about Science and Technology
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW
Credit cannot also be received for 21W.032, 21W.034, 21W.035, 21W.036, 21W.732

E. Barrett
WRITING 2014–2015

biographer to develop a personal voice; and the
significant transitions, personal struggles, and
phy. Students examine various stages of life,
emphasis on different forms of autobiogra-
ing one's style while studying the nuances of
the language. Literary works are read with an
3-0-9 HASS-A

See description under subject 21L.000J.
Fall: S. Alexandre
Spring: W. Kelley

21W.042] Writing with Shakespeare
(Same subject as 21L.010J)
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-HW

See description under subject 21L.010J.
D. Henderson

C R E A T I V E W R I T I N G

Introductory

See subjects 21W.011–21W.013,

Advanced

21W.735 Writing and Reading the Essay
Prereq: Writing sample and permission of
instructor
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-H

Exploration of formal and informal modes of
writing nonfiction prose. Extensive practice in
composition, revision, and editing. Reading in
the literature of the essay from the Renaissance
to the present, with an emphasis on modern
writers. Classes alternate between discussion of
published readings and workshops on student
work. Individual conferences. Limited to 18.
Staff

21W.740 Writing Autobiography and Biography
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Writing an autobiography is a vehicle for improv-
ing one’s style while studying the nuances of
the language. Literary works are read with an
emphasis on different forms of autobiogra-
phy. Students examine various stages of life,
significant transitions, personal struggles, and
memories translated into narrative prose, and
discuss: what it means for autobiographer and
biographer to develop a personal voice; and the
problems of reality and fiction in autobiography
and biography.
K. Manning

21W.741] Black Matters: Introduction to Black
Studies
(Same subject as 24.912J, 21A.125J, 21H.106J,
21L.008J, WGS.190J)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A, HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject 24.912J.
Staff

21W.742] Writing about Race
(Same subject as WGS.231J)
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-H

The issue of race and racial identity have preoc-
cupied many writers throughout the history
of the US. Students read Jessica Abel, Diana
Abu-Jaber, Lynda Barry, Felicia Luna Lemus,
James McBride, Sigrid Nunez, Ruth Ozeki, Danzy
Senna, Gloria Anzaldua, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Car-
mit Delman, Stefanie Dunning, Cherrie Moraga,
Hiram Perez and others, and consider the story
of race in its peculiarly American dimensions.
The reading, along with the writing of members
of the class, is the focus of class discussions.
Oral presentations on subjects of individual
interest are also part of the class activities.
Students explore race and ethnicity in personal
essays, pieces of cultural criticism or analysis,
or (with permission of instructor) fiction. All
written work is read and responded to in class
workshops and subsequently revised. Enrollment
limited.
K. Ragusa

21W.743 Voice and Meaning: Speaking to
Readers through Memoir, Fact, and Fiction
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-E

Studies the meaning of various texts (fiction,
nonfiction, poetry) through the chosen voice.
Readings include Ian Frazier's "Hints From
Heloise," Robert Hayden's "Middle Passage,"
E.L. Doctorow's "The Waterworks," and Susan
Mitchell's "From The Journals Of The Frog Prince."
Examines how writers of various backgrounds
and in a variety of forms use everything from
rhythm, syntax and line-breaks to lexicon in order
to create character, time, and place. Seeks to ulti-
mately understand how form functions not just as
ornamentation, but as meaning. Limited to 18.
Staff

21W.745 Advanced Essay Workshop
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-H
Can be repeated for credit

For students with experience in writing essays
and nonfiction prose. Focuses on negotiating
and representing identities grounded in gender,
race, class, nationality, and sexuality in prose
that is expository, exploratory, investigative,
persuasive, lyrical, or incantatory. Authors
include James Baldwin, Minnie Bruce Pratt,
Audre Lorde, Richard Rodriguez, Alice Walker,
John Edgar Wideman, Diana Hume George, bell
hooks, Margaret Atwood, Patricia J. Williams,
and others. Designed to help students build
upon their strengths as writers and to expand
their repertoire of styles and approaches in
easy writing. Approved for credit in Women’s
and Gender Studies when content meets the
requirements for subjects in that program.
Limited to 18.
Staff

21W.747 Rhetoric
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-H

For students with a special interest in learning
how to make forceful arguments in written form.
Studies the forms and structures of argumenta-
tion, including organization of ideas, awareness
of audience, methods of persuasion, evidence,
factual vs. emotional argument, figures of
speech, and historical forms and uses of argu-
ments. Limited to 18 per section.
Fall: S. Strong, S. Lane
Spring: E. Schiappa, S. Strong

21W.754J Playwriting I
(Same subject as 21M.604J)
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-A

See description under subject 21M.604J.
L. Harrington

21W.755 Writing and Reading Short Stories
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A

An introduction to writing fiction. Students write
their own stories and study essays and short
stories by contemporary authors from around
the world. Discussion focuses on students’ writ-
ing and on assigned works in their historical and
social contexts.
Fall: H. Lee, J. Diaz
Spring: S. Lewitt

21W.001J, 21W.002J, 21W.003J
(Same subject as 21W.000J)
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A; CI-H

See description under subject 21W.000J.
Fall: S. Alexandre
Spring: W. Kelley

21W.756 Writing and Reading Poems
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Examination of the formal structural and textual variety in poetry. Extensive practice in the making of poems and the analysis of both students’ manuscripts and texts from 16th- through 20th-century literature. Attempts to make relevant the traditional elements of poetry and their contemporary alternatives. Weekly writing assignments, including some exercises in prosody.

Staff

21W.757 Fiction Workshop
Prereq: 21W.755
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit

Intermediate class for students with some experience in writing fiction. Students write short stories and complete other writing exercises. Readings include short story collections by contemporary writers such as Sandra Cisneros, Benjamin Percy, Leila Lalami, Laura Pritchett, Bret Anthony Johnston, and Edward P. Jones. Discussions focus on sources of story material, characterization, setting, architecture, point of view, narrative voice, and concrete detail.

S. Lewitt

21W.758 Genre Fiction Workshop
Prereq: A subject in writing short fiction or comparable writing experience
Acad Year 2014–2015: U (Fall)
Acad Year 2015–2016: Not offered
3-0-9 HASS-A

Students read stories and novels from various genres. Includes Warriors, a collection of short stories in genres such as fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, and horror. Includes novels such as True Grit (western), Hit and Run (crime), Coraline (fantasy/horror), and Starship Troopers and The Dispossessed (both science fiction). Considers genre protocols and how to write within the restrictions and freedoms associated with each genre. Students write a short reaction to each novel, and one short story within a genre (or “between” genres) for roundtable workshops. Limited to 15.

M. Liu

21W.759 Writing Science Fiction
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Students write and read science fiction and analyze and discuss stories written for the class. For the first eight weeks, readings in contemporary science fiction accompany lectures and formal writing assignments intended to illuminate various aspects of writing craft as well as the particular problems of writing science fiction. The rest of the term is given to roundtable workshops on students’ stories.

J. Haldeman

21W.760 Creative Writing and Visual Culture: Writing in the Museum
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H

Critically explores how and why objects are collected and consumed, drawing upon visual culture and museum and cultural studies. Students engage in forms of creative writing that imitate museums, enact curatorial gestures, and/or try to dismantle such structures. They also curate their own writing into a chapbook, blog, or other creative form. Readings cover a range of genres. Includes visits to actual and virtual galleries.

G. Henderson

21W.761 (un)Writing the Book
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H

Explores the material and historical components of books, dissecting and regenerating individual and collective writings into new forms. Students engage in weekly creative experiments and other exercises, handle rare books on field trips to Special Collections, and edit collaborative chapbooks. Examines the history and mystery of the book, considering where this technology has come from and envisioning where it might go.

N. Montfort, G. Henderson

21W.762 Poetry Workshop
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit

For students with some previous experience in poetry writing. Frequent assignments stress use of language, diction, word choice, line breaks, imagery, mood, and tone. Considers the functions of memory, imagination, dreams, poetic impulses. Throughout the term, students examine the work of published poets. Revision stressed.

Fall: E. Barrett
Spring: Staff

21W.769J Playwrights’ Workshop
( Same subject as 21M.785J)
( Same subject as 21M.785)
Prereq: 21M.604, 21W.754, or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-2-7 HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit

See description under subject 21M.785J.
A. Brody

21W.770 Advanced Fiction Workshop
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit

For students with some experience in writing fiction. Write longer works of fiction and short stories which are related or interconnected. Read short story collections by individual writers, such as Sandra Cisneros, Raymond Carver, Edward P. Jones, and Tillie Olsen, and discuss them critically and analytically, with attention to the ways in which the writers’ choices about component parts contribute to meaning. In-class exercises and weekly workshops of student work focus on sources of story material, characterization, structure, narrative voice, point of view and concrete detail. Concentration on revision.

H. Lee

21W.771 Advanced Poetry Workshop
Prereq: Prior manuscript submission required
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A
Can be repeated for credit

For students experienced in writing poems. Regular reading of published contemporary poets and weekly submission of manuscripts for class review and criticism. Students expected to do a substantial amount of rewriting and revision. Classwork supplemented with individual conferences.

E. Funkhouser
**WRITING 2014–2015**

B. D. Colen

Sources—are assigned on a weekly basis for viewing and research into public and private of investigative reporting—including interviews, writing, with an emphasis on accuracy, clarity, and brevity. Most writing done in class whereby students learn to write under time pressure, as required in real-world reporting. Class discussions involve the ways in which science and technology are treated in media and popular culture. Discussions focus on students’ writing and address topics such as false equivalency, covering controversy, and the attenuation of initial observations. Emphasizes long-form narratives; also looks at blogs, social media, and other modes of communication. Not a technical writing class.

S. Mnookin

**SCIENCE WRITING**

**Introductory**

See subjects 21W.031, 21W.034, and 21W.035.

**Advanced**

21W.729J Engineering Communication in Context (Same subject as ES.729J)
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H

See description under subject ES.729J.

D. Custer

21W.736 News Writing
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H

An introduction to the basics of print journalism, including an overview of journalistic ethics and life in the newsroom. Students learn basic reporting techniques, interviewing, and news writing, with an emphasis on accuracy, clarity, and brevity. Most writing done in class whereby students learn to write under time pressure, as well as in a distracting environment. Techniques of investigative reporting—including interviewing and research into public and private sources—are assigned on a weekly basis for outside classroom work.

B. D. Colen

21W.737J Topics and Methods in 21st-Century Journalism

(Same subject as CMS.350J)
(Subject meets with CMS.850)
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-E

See description under subject CMS.350J.

S. Mnookin

21W.739J Darwin and Design

(Same subject as 21L.022J)
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H

See description under subject 21L.022J.

A. Kibel

21W.746 Humanistic Perspectives on Medicine: From Ancient Greece to Modern America
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: U (Spring)
Acad Year 2015–2016: Not offered
3-0-9 HASS-H

For students with experience in nonfiction prose and interest in the non-science side of medicine. Advanced study of the art of essay (form, style, techniques of persuasion) and practice of that form. Students required to write substantial essays and revise their work. Students read and discuss the writings of distinguished physicians from antiquity to the late 20th century. Limited to 18.

K. Manning

21W.749 Documentary Photography and Photojournalism: Still Images of a World in Motion

(Subject meets with CMS.935)
Prereq: Permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Designed to increase students’ understanding of, appreciation for, and ability to do documentary photography and photojournalism. Each three-hour class is divided between a discussion of issues and readings, and a group critique of students’ projects. Students must have their own photographic equipment and be responsible for processing and printing: either by student or commercial lab. Students must show basic proficiency with their equipment. Readings include Susan Sontag, Robert Coles, Ken Light, Eugene Richards, and others. Previous photographic experience required. Limited to 15.

B. D. Colen

21W.773 Writing Longer Fiction
Prereq: A fiction workshop or permission of instructor
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Designed for students who have some experience in writing fiction and want to try longer forms like the novella and novel. Students interested in writing a novel are expected to produce at least two chapters and an outline of the complete work. Readings include several novels from Fitzgerald to the present, and novellas from Gogol’s The Overcoat to current examples. Students discuss one another’s writing in a roundtable workshop, with a strong emphasis on revision.

J. Haldeman

21W.775 Writing about Nature and Environmental Issues
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H

Focuses on traditional nature writing and the environmentalist essay. Students keep a web log as a journal. Writings are drawn from the tradition of nature writing and from contemporary forms of the environmentalist essay. Authors include Henry Thoreau, Loren Eiseley, Annie Dillard, Chet Raymo, Sue Hubbel, Rachel Carson, Bill McKibben, and Terry Tempest Williams. Limited to 18.

Staff

21W.777 Science Writing in Contemporary Society
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H

Drawing in part from their own interests and ideas, students write about science within various cultural contexts using an array of literary and reportorial tools. Studies the work of contemporary science writers, such as David Quammen and Atul Gawande, and examines the ways in which science and technology are treated in media and popular culture. Discussions focus on students’ writing and address topics such as false equivalency, covering controversy, and the attenuation of initial observations. Emphasizes long-form narratives; also looks at blogs, social media, and other modes of communication. Not a technical writing class.

S. Mnookin

21W.778 Science Journalism
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H

An introduction to print daily journalism and news writing, focusing on science news writing in general, and medical writing in particular. Emphasis is on writing clearly and accurately under deadline pressure. Class discussions involve the realities of modern journalism, how newsrooms function, and the science news coverage in daily publications. Discussions of, and practice in, interviewing and various modes of reporting. In class, students write numerous science news stories on deadline. There are additional longer writing assignments outside of class. Enrollment limited.

B. D. Colen

**Environmental Issues**

21W.775 Writing about Nature and Environmental Issues
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H

Focuses on traditional nature writing and the environmentalist essay. Students keep a web log as a journal. Writings are drawn from the tradition of nature writing and from contemporary forms of the environmentalist essay. Authors include Henry Thoreau, Loren Eiseley, Annie Dillard, Chet Raymo, Sue Hubbel, Rachel Carson, Bill McKibben, and Terry Tempest Williams. Limited to 18.

Staff

21W.777 Science Writing in Contemporary Society
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H

Drawing in part from their own interests and ideas, students write about science within various cultural contexts using an array of literary and reportorial tools. Studies the work of contemporary science writers, such as David Quammen and Atul Gawande, and examines the ways in which science and technology are treated in media and popular culture. Discussions focus on students’ writing and address topics such as false equivalency, covering controversy, and the attenuation of initial observations. Emphasizes long-form narratives; also looks at blogs, social media, and other modes of communication. Not a technical writing class.

S. Mnookin

21W.778 Science Journalism
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H

An introduction to print daily journalism and news writing, focusing on science news writing in general, and medical writing in particular. Emphasis is on writing clearly and accurately under deadline pressure. Class discussions involve the realities of modern journalism, how newsrooms function, and the science news coverage in daily publications. Discussions of, and practice in, interviewing and various modes of reporting. In class, students write numerous science news stories on deadline. There are additional longer writing assignments outside of class. Enrollment limited.

B. D. Colen
DIGITAL MEDIA

Introductory

See subject 21W.032.

Advanced

21W.750 Experimental Writing
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Students use innovative compositional techniques, focusing on new writing methods rather than on traditional lyrical or narrative concerns. Writing experiments, conducted individually, collaboratively and during class meetings, culminate in chapbook-sized projects. Students read, listen to, and create different types of work, including sound poetry, cut-ups, constrained and Oulipian writing, uncreative writing, sticker literature, false translations, artists' books, and digital projects.

N. Montfort

21W.751J Writing for Social Media
(Same subject as CMS.613J)
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Explores how social media is changing our understanding of writing, multimedia, and authorship. Through individual assignments and collaborative work, students contribute to an overarching writing project developed in a networked software environment, and develop their own social media practices. Assigned readings include exemplary selections from existing public social media projects, as well as scholarly work and analysis by noted media critics. Limited to 18.

Staff

21W.752 Making Documentary: Audio, Video, and More
(Same subject with 21W.824)
Prereq: 21W.786, 21A.550, or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-6-3 HASS-A

Focuses on the technical demands of long-form storytelling in sound and picture. Students build practical writing and production skills through a series of assignments: still photo-text works, audio-only documentaries, short video projects (4-6 minutes), and a term-long, team-produced video science documentary (12-15 minutes). Readings, screenings and written work hone students' analytical capacity. Students taking the graduate version complete additional assignments. Students from the Graduate Program in Science Writing center their work on topics in science, technology, engineering, and/or medicine.

Staff

21W.753J Phantasmal Media: Theory and Practice
(Same subject with CMS.314J)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-A

See description under subject CMS.314J.

D. Harrell

21W.763J Transmedia Storytelling: Modern Science Fiction
(Same subject as CMS.309J)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-2-7 HASS-A

Explores transmedia storytelling by investigating how science fiction stories are told across different media, such as the short story, the screenplay, moving image, and games. Students read and write critical essays and collaborate to produce their own work of science fiction in a roundtable workshop environment. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

H. Hendershot

21W.764J The Word Made Digital
(Same subject with CMS.609J)
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Video games, digital art and literature, online texts, and source code are analyzed in the contexts of history, culture, and computing platforms. Approaches from poetics and computer science are used to understand the non-narrative digital uses of text. Students undertake critical writing and creative computer projects to encounter digital writing practice. This involves reading and modifying computer programs; therefore previous programming experience, although not required, will be helpful. The graduate section includes additional assignments. Limited to 18.

N. Montfort

21W.765J Interactive Narrative
(Same subject as 21L.489J)
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-A

Provides a workshop environment for understanding interactive narrative (print and digital) through critical writing, narrative theory, and creative practice. Covers important multisequential books, hypertexts, and interactive fictions. Students write critically, and give presentations, about specific works; write a short multisequential fiction; and develop a digital narrative system, which involves significant writing and either programming or the structuring of text. Programming ability helpful.

N. Montfort

21W.766J Writing for Videogames
(Same subject with CMS.612J)
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A

See description under subject CMS.612J.

C. Fernandez Vara

21W.768J Games and Culture
(Same subject as CMS.616J, WGS.125J)
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-S

See description under subject CMS.616J.

T. L. Taylor
(Same subject as CMS.336J)
(Subject meets with CMS.836)
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A
An introduction to the history of the social documentary from the 1960s through the 1980s. Explores how social upheaval and the shift to smaller, more portable film cameras, and ultimately hand-held video, converged to bring about an upsurge of socially engaged documentary film production. Students screen and analyze a series of key films from the period and work in groups to produce their own short documentary using digital video and computer-based editing. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

21W.787 Film, Music, and Social Change: Intersections of Media and Society
(Subject meets with CMS.837)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H
Examines films from the 1950s onward that document music subcultures and moments of social upheaval. Combines screening films about free jazz, glam rock, punk, reggae, hip-hop, and other genres with an examination of critical/scholarly writings to illuminate the connections between film, popular music, and processes of social change. Students critique each film in terms of the social, political, and cultural world it documents, and the historical context and effects of the film’s reception. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

21W.788j South Asian America: Transnational Media, Culture, and History
(Same subject as CMS.334j)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H
Examines the history of South Asian immigration, sojournning, and settlement from the 1880s to the present. Focuses on the US as one node in the global circulation, not only of people, but of media, culture and ideas, through a broader South Asian diaspora. Considers the concept of “global media” historically; emphasis on how ideas about, and self-representations of, South Asians have circulated via books, political pamphlets, performance, film, video/cassette

21W.789 Communicating with Mobile Technology
Prereq: 1.00, 6.005, or permission of instructor
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-H
Students work in small collaborative design teams to propose, build, and document a term-long project focused on mobile applications for cell phones. Additional assignments include creating several small mobile applications such as context-aware mobile media capture and games. Students document their work through a series of written and oral proposals, progress reports, and final reports. Covers the basics of J2ME and explores mobile imaging and media creation, GPS location, user-centered design, usability testing, and prototyping. Java experience recommended. Limited to 18.

E. Barrett

21W.790j Short Attention Span Documentary
(Same subject as CMS.335j)
(Subject meets with 21W.890)
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A
Focuses on the production of short (1- to 5-minute) digital video documentaries: a form of non-fiction filmmaking that has proliferated in recent years due to the ubiquity of palm-sized and mobile phone cameras and the rise of web-based platforms, such as YouTube. Students shoot, edit, workshop and revise a series of short videos meant to engage audiences in a topic, introduce them to new ideas, and/or persuade them. Screenings and discussions cover key principles of documentary film—narrative, style, pace, point of view, argument, character development—examining how they function and change in short format. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

21W.772 Digital Poetry
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A
Digital forms of poetry, including hypertext poems, Flash-animated poems, poems within short digital videos and interactive forms of poetry and games. Readings in early hypertext theory and creative writing. Experiment with creating poetry for wireless access on hand held devices. Test the assumptions of these early theorists through practice of creating digital poetry. Students discuss online examples of each of these kinds of digital poetry and then compose their own work, to present in class for critique and revision. The final project allows students to build upon their experience throughout the term with these forms.

Staff

21W.784 Becoming Digital: Writing about Media Change
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
Not offered regularly; consult department
3-0-9 HASS-H; CI-H
Compares pre-digital to digital media to explore the unique problems that arise in this transition in relation to documenting conflicts from the perspectives of soldiers, journalists, and civilians. Class selects periods, conflicts and readings. Readings include subject-specific texts and media, augmented by technical and theoretical articles relevant to the course themes. Frequent writing and revision, an oral presentation, and intensive class participation are required. Limited to 18.

N. Montfort

21W.785 Communicating with Web-based Media
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A; CI-H
Analysis, design, implementation, and testing of various forms of digital communication through group collaboration. Students are encouraged to think about the Web and other new digital interactive media not just in terms of technology but also broader issues such as language (verbal and visual), design, information architecture, communication and community. Students work in small groups on a term-long project of their choice. Various written and oral presentations document project development. Limited to 18.

E. Barrett

21W.786j The Social Documentary: Analysis and Production
(Subject meets with CMS.336j)
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-A
Students work in small collaborative design teams to propose, build, and document a term-long project focused on mobile applications for cell phones. Additional assignments include creating several small mobile applications such as context-aware mobile media capture and games. Students document their work through a series of written and oral proposals, progress reports, and final reports. Covers the basics of J2ME and explores mobile imaging and media creation, GPS location, user-centered design, usability testing, and prototyping. Java experience recommended. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

V. Bald

21W.787 Film, Music, and Social Change: Intersections of Media and Society
(Subject meets with CMS.837)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H
Examines films from the 1950s onward that document music subcultures and moments of social upheaval. Combines screening films about free jazz, glam rock, punk, reggae, hip-hop, and other genres with an examination of critical/scholarly writings to illuminate the connections between film, popular music, and processes of social change. Students critique each film in terms of the social, political, and cultural world it documents, and the historical context and effects of the film’s reception. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

21W.788j South Asian America: Transnational Media, Culture, and History
(Same subject as CMS.334j)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Spring)
3-0-9 HASS-H
Examines the history of South Asian immigration, sojournning, and settlement from the 1880s to the present. Focuses on the US as one node in the global circulation, not only of people, but of media, culture and ideas, through a broader South Asian diaspora. Considers the concept of “global media” historically; emphasis on how ideas about, and self-representations of, South Asians have circulated via books, political pamphlets, performance, film, video/cassette
ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS

21W.791J Network Cultures
(Same subject as CMS.614J)
(Subject meets with CMS.867)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: U (Fall)
3-0-9 HASS-H
See description under subject CMS.614J.
T. L. Taylor

21W.791 Low-Level Programming for Scientists
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2014–2015: Not offered
Acad Year 2015–2016: G (Spring)
6-0-18 H-LEVEL Grad Credit

For students pursuing advanced writing projects with the assistance of a member of the Writing Program. Students electing this subject must secure the approval of the director of the Writing Program and its Committee on Curriculum. Normal maximum is 6 units; exceptional 9-unit projects occasionally approved. HASS credit awarded only by individual petition to the Subcommittee on the HASS Requirement; minimum of 9 units required for HASS credit.

21W.798 Independent Study in Writing
Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring, Summer)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit
Primarily for students pursuing advanced writing projects with the assistance of a member of the Writing Program. Students electing this subject must secure the approval of the director of the Writing Program and its Committee on Curriculum. Normal maximum is 6 units; exceptional 9-unit projects occasionally approved. HASS credit awarded only by individual petition to the Subcommittee on the HASS Requirement; minimum of 9 units required for HASS credit.

21W.800J Business Writing for Supply Chain Management (New)
(Same subject as ESD.259J)
Prereq: None
G (Fall)
1-0-2
See description under subject ESD.259J.
L. Myka, B. Arntzen

21W.THT Writing and Humanistic Studies Thesis
Prereq: 21W.TH
U (Fall, Spring)
Units arranged
Can be repeated for credit
Completion of work on the senior major thesis under the supervision of a faculty tutor. Includes oral presentation of the thesis progress early in the term, assembling and revising the final text, and a final meeting with a committee of faculty evaluators to discuss the successes and limitations of the project. Required of students pursuing a full major in Course 21W. Joint majors register for 21.THT.
Staff

21W.794 Graduate Technical Writing Workshop
Prereq: None
G (IAP)
2-0-1
Designed to improve the student's ability to communicate technical information. Covers the basics of working with sources, including summarizing and paraphrasing, synthesizing source materials, citing, quoting, and avoiding plagiarism. Also covers how to write an abstract and a literature review. Limited to graduate engineering students based on results of the Graduate Writing Exam. Permission of instructor
Staff

21W.820J Writing: Science, Technology, and Society
(Same subject as STS.477J)
Prereq: 21H.991
Acad Year 2014–2015: G (Spring)
Acad Year 2015–2016: Not offered
3-0-9 H-LEVEL Grad Credit
Examination of different "voices" used to consider issues of scientific, technological, and social concern. Students write frequently and choose among a variety of non-fiction forms: historical writing, social analysis, political criticism, and policy reports. Instruction in expressing ideas clearly and in organizing a thesis-length work. Reading and writing on three case studies drawn from the history of science; the cultural study of technology and science; and policy issues.
K. Manning

21W.823 Lab Experience for Science Writers
Prereq: 21W.825
G (Fall, IAP, Spring)
0-2-1 H-LEVEL Grad Credit
During the fall or IAP, students conduct 20 hours of observation in a lab of their choosing that is outside their previous scientific experience. Participation in the work of the lab encouraged. In the spring, students make an in-class presentation and submit a written report of publication quality. Preference to students in the Graduate Program in Science Writing.
T. Levenson, M. Bartusiak

21W.796 Graduate Technical Writing Workshop
Prereq: 21W.786, 21A.550, or permission of instructor
G (Spring)
3-6-3
Focuses on the technical demands of long-form storytelling in sound and picture. Students build practical writing and production skills through a series of assignments: still photo-text works, audio-only documentaries, short video projects (4-6 minutes), and a term-long, team-produced video science documentary (12-15 minutes). Readings, screenings and written work hone students' analytical capacity. Students taking the graduate version complete additional assignments. Students from the Graduate Program in Science Writing center their work on topics in science, technology, engineering, and/or medicine.
T. Levenson

21W.824 Making Documentary: Audio, Video, and More
(Same subject as CMS.503J)
Prereq: 21W.752
3-0-1 H-LEVEL Grad Credit
Focuses on the technical demands of long-form storytelling in sound and picture. Students build practical writing and production skills through a series of assignments: still photo-text works, audio-only documentaries, short video projects (4-6 minutes), and a term-long, team-produced video science documentary (12-15 minutes). Readings, screenings and written work hone students' analytical capacity. Students taking the graduate version complete additional assignments. Students from the Graduate Program in Science Writing center their work on topics in science, technology, engineering, and/or medicine.
T. Levenson

21W.825 Advanced Science Writing Seminar I
Prereq: Permission of instructor
G (Fall)
6-0-18 H-LEVEL Grad Credit
First term of year-long graduate sequence in science writing offers students intensive workshops and critiques of their own writing, and that of published books, articles, and essays; discussions of ethical and professional issues; study of science and scientists in historical and social context; analysis of recent events in science and technology. Emphasis throughout on
developing skills and habits of mind that enable
the science writer to tackle scientifically formi-
dable material and write about it for ordinary
readers. Topics include the tools of research,
conceived in its broadest sense— including inter-
viewing, websites, archives, scientific journal
articles; science journalism, including culture of
the newsroom and magazine-style journalism;
science essays. Considerable attention to sci-
ence writing’s audiences, markets, and publics
and the special requirements of each.
M. Bartusiak

21W.826 Advanced Science Writing Seminar II
Prereq: 21W.825 or permission of instructor.
G (Spring)
3-0-9 H-LEVEL Grad Credit
Topics include research for writers, science jour-
nalism, and essays; literary science writing, and
the social and historical context of science and
technology. Includes seminars, lectures, and
student writing workshops. Special emphasis on
the science essay and on literary and imagina-
tive science writing that employs traditionally
fictive devices in nonfiction, including scene-set-
ing and storytelling. Assignments cover science
essays, writing on particular disciplines, and
investigative and critical science journalism.
Graduate Program Faculty

21W.890 Short Attention Span Documentary
(Subject meets with 21W.790J, CMS.335J)
Prereq: None
G (Spring)
3-0-9
Focuses on the production of short (1- to
5-minute) digital video documentaries: a form
of non-fiction filmmaking that has proliferated
in recent years due to the ubiquity of palm-sized
and mobile phone cameras and the rise of web-
based platforms, such as YouTube. Students
shoot, edit, workshop and revise a series of
short videos meant to engage audiences in a
topic, introduce them to new ideas, and/or per-
suade them. Screenings and discussions cover
key principles of documentary film—narrative,
style, pace, point of view, argument, character
development—examining how they function and
change in short format. Students taking gradu-
ate version complete additional assignments.
Limited to 16.
V. Bold

21W.892 Science Writing Internship
Prereq: Permission of instructor
G (Spring)
0-12-0 [P/D/F] H-LEVEL Grad Credit
Field placements tailored to the individual
backgrounds of the students enrolled, involv-
ing varying degrees of faculty participation and
supervision.
Graduate Program Faculty

21W.898 Graduate Independent Study in
Science Writing
Prereq: Permission of instructor
G (Fall, Spring)
Units arranged H-LEVEL Grad Credit
Can be repeated for credit
Opportunity for advanced independent study of
science writing under regular supervision by a
faculty member. Projects require prior approval,
as well as a written proposal and a final report.
Consult Graduate Program Headquarters

21W.899 Graduate Independent Study in
Science Writing
Prereq: Permission of instructor
G (Fall, Spring)
Units arranged [P/D/F] H-LEVEL Grad Credit
Can be repeated for credit
Opportunity for advanced independent study of
science writing under regular supervision by a
faculty member. Projects require prior approval,
as well as a written proposal and a final report.
Consult Graduate Program Headquarters

21W.THG Graduate Thesis
Prereq: Permission of instructor
G (Fall, Spring)
6-0-18 H-LEVEL Grad Credit
Can be repeated for credit
Research and writing of thesis in consultation
with faculty, including individual meetings and
group seminars, undertaken over the course of
one year.
M. Bartusiak
# Bachelor of Science in Writing/Course 21W

## General Institute Requirements (GIRs)

### Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science Requirement</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences Requirement [all but two subjects can be from the Departmental Program]</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted Electives in Science and Technology (REST) Requirement</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory Requirement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total GIR Subjects Required for SB Degree**

17

## Communication Requirement

The program includes a Communication Requirement of 4 subjects:

- 2 subjects designated as Communication Intensive in Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (CI-H); and
- 2 subjects designated as Communication Intensive in the Major (CI-M).

## PLUS Departmental Program

Subject names below are followed by credit units, and by prerequisites, if any (corequisites in italics).

### Option 1: Creative Writing (fiction, nonfiction, poetry)

#### Required Subjects

- 21W.ThT Writing and Humanistic Studies Pre-Thesis Tutorial, 6
- 21W.ThU Writing and Humanistic Studies Thesis, 12, CI-M; 21W.ThT

One of the following (CI-M): 21W.755, 21W.758, 21W.759, 21W.762, 21W.770, 21W.771, or 21W.777

#### Restricted Electives
Six subjects centered on creative writing, of which one is normally introductory; three subjects in literature, one of which may be in CMS.

### Option 2: Science Writing

#### Required Subjects

- 21W.777 Science Writing in Contemporary Society, 12, HASS-H, CI-M
- 21W.778 Science Journalism, 12, HASS-H, CI-H
- 21W.792 Science Writing Internship, 12, HASS-H
- 21W.ThT Writing and Humanistic Studies Pre-Thesis Tutorial, 6
- 21W.ThU Writing and Humanistic Studies Thesis, 12, CI-M; 21W.ThT

#### Restricted Electives
Four subjects in writing, of which one is normally introductory; three are writing subjects approved for this major, and one is in digital media (48 units).

One approved Science, Technology, and Society subject (12 units).

### Option 3: Digital Media

#### Required Subjects

- 21W.764J The Word Made Digital, 12, HASS-A
- 21W.765J Interactive and Non-Linear Narrative: Theory and Practice, 12, HASS-A
- 21W.785 Communicating with Web-Based Media, 12, HASS-A, CI-H
- 21W.ThT Writing and Humanistic Studies Pre-Thesis Tutorial, 6
- 21W.ThU Writing and Humanistic Studies Thesis, 12, CI-M; 21W.ThT

One of the following (CI-M): 21W.755, 21W.758, 21W.759, 21W.762, 21W.770, 21W.771, or 21W.777

#### Restricted Electives
Three subjects in writing, which may be in digital media, creative writing, or science writing, and three related subjects from another department.

### Departmental Program Units That Also Satisfy the GIRs

63–72

### Unrestricted Electives

#### Option 1

114–132

#### Option 2

129–138

#### Option 3

114–123

**Total Units Beyond the GIRs Required for SB Degree**

180

No subject can be counted both as part of the 17-subject GIRs and as part of the 180 units required beyond the GIRs. Every subject in the student’s departmental program will count toward one or the other, but not both.

### Notes

For an explanation of credit units, or hours, please refer to the online help of the MIT Subject Listing & Schedule, [http://student.mit.edu/catalog/index.cgi](http://student.mit.edu/catalog/index.cgi).