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Writing 5 Section Descriptions for Fall Term 2026

Writing 5 introduces Dartmouth students to the writing process that characterizes intellectual work in the academy and in educated public discourse. Each section of Writing 5 organizes its writing assignments around challenging readings chosen by the instructor. The course focuses primarily on the writing process, emphasizing careful reading and analysis, thoughtful questions, and strategies of effective argument. Below you will find a list of the courses being offered next term.

Re-order by Class Hour

Writing 5 -- Expository Writing

Section 01

Hour: 9L; **Instructor:** Francine A'Ness

Course Title: Experience and Education

Description: We will examine education in a broad sense. We will analyze, from a cross-cultural perspective, a series of plays, films, essays, and even lived experiences that deal directly with education, learning, social change and mobility. We will read John Dewey's "Experience and Education" and other essays from educational philosophy and sociology. We will ask: What is the relationship between education and schooling? What makes an experience educational? How can education be both oppressive and liberatory?

No required textbooks available

Section 02

Hour: 11; **Instructor:** James Binkoski

Course Title: Knowledge & Disagreement

Description: Epistemology is the study of knowledge, evidence, and justification. Its questions are of fundamental importance—and they're everywhere. Can you know that climate change constitutes an existential threat even if you're not completely certain? Can two people disagree over the existence of God and yet both be equally, fully rational? Why do groups that share evidence sometimes polarize? We'll pursue these questions and more as we study the ins and outs of academic writing.

No required textbooks available

Section 03

Hour: 12; **Instructor:** James Binkoski

Course Title: Knowledge & Disagreement

Description: Epistemology is the study of knowledge, evidence, and justification. Its questions are of fundamental importance—and they're everywhere. Can you know that climate change constitutes an existential threat even if you're not completely certain? Can two people disagree over the existence of God and yet both be equally, fully rational? Why do groups that share evidence sometimes polarize? We'll pursue these questions and more as we study the ins and outs of academic writing.

No required textbooks available

Section 04

Hour: 10A; **Instructor:** Rebecca Clark

Course Title: Image and Text

Description: This class looks at a variety of works—include ekphrastic poetry, graphic novels, and advertisements—that combine images with text to tell stories. How, we will ask, do these hybrid forms help authors create fantastical new worlds, document painful or playful quotidian realities, navigate and narrate traumatic personal and national histories, or sell us goods and/or ideologies? We will work on reading critically, posing analytical questions, crafting well-reasoned arguments, and developing research skills.

No required textbooks available

Section 05

Hour: 2A; **Instructor:** Rebecca Clark

Course Title: Image and Text

Description: This class looks at a variety of works—include ekphrastic poetry, graphic novels, and advertisements—that combine images with text to tell stories. How, we will ask, do these hybrid forms help authors create fantastical new worlds, document painful or playful quotidian realities, navigate and narrate traumatic personal and national histories, or sell us goods and/or ideologies? We will work on reading critically, posing analytical questions, crafting well-reasoned arguments, and developing research skills.

No required textbooks available

Section 06

Hour: 2A; **Instructor:** William Craig

Course Title: Wild Hopes: Anarchism

Description: Most of us know very little about anarchism, but we're quick to declare, "It can't work." Our opinions are usually based on anarchies portrayed in stories, movies and other fictions. We'll survey representations of anarchy in canonical and popular culture, tracing our assumptions back to their sources. We'll sharpen our writing, critical thinking and research skills as we appreciate artworks that have kept anarchism alive in our fears and dreams.

No required textbooks available

Section 07

Hour: 3A; **Instructor:** William Craig

Course Title: Wild Hopes: Anarchism

Description: Most of us know very little about anarchism, but we're quick to declare, "It can't work." Our opinions are usually based on anarchies portrayed in stories, movies and other fictions. We'll survey representations of anarchy in canonical and popular culture, tracing our assumptions back to their sources. We'll sharpen our writing, critical thinking and research skills as we appreciate artworks that have kept anarchism alive in our fears and dreams.

No required textbooks available

Section 08

Hour: 9L; **Instructor:** Phyllis Deutsch

Course Title: Gender and the Holocaust

Description: Writing is a process that includes the ability to undertake research in primary sources, analyze diverse texts, and develop coherent evidence-based arguments. This course explores all aspects of the writing process through the lens of Gender and the Holocaust. Examining three memoirs written in the context of remembered extremity, you will learn how to organize an argument, incorporate evidence, develop a strong voice, and respond to provocative texts in original ways.

No required textbooks available

Section 09

Hour: 10; **Instructor:** Phyllis Deutsch

Course Title: Gender and the Holocaust

Description: Writing is a process that includes the ability to undertake research in primary sources, analyze diverse texts, and develop coherent evidence-based arguments. This course explores all aspects of the writing process through the lens of Gender and the Holocaust. Examining three memoirs written in the context of remembered extremity, you will learn how to organize an argument, incorporate evidence, develop a strong voice, and respond to provocative texts in original ways.

No required textbooks available

Section 10

Hour: 10; **Instructor:** Christopher Drain

Course Title: Ethics of the Internet

Description: Readings are drawn from philosophy, political science, and sociology, as well as recent tech journalism. Topics may include “platform capitalism”; algorithmic harms and digital surveillance; disinformation and echo chambers and trolling in social media. We will also explore philosophical aspects of technological mediation, including questions concerning the agency, design, and political status of technical artifacts, to come to terms with whether technology can ever be a morally neutral enterprise.

No required textbooks available

Section 11

Hour: 11; **Instructor:** Christopher Drain

Course Title: Ethics of the Internet

Description: Readings are drawn from philosophy, political science, and sociology, as well as recent tech journalism. Topics may include “platform capitalism”; algorithmic harms and digital surveillance; disinformation and echo chambers and trolling in social media. We will also explore philosophical aspects of

technological mediation, including questions concerning the agency, design, and political status of technical artifacts, to come to terms with whether technology can ever be a morally neutral enterprise.

No required textbooks available

Section 12

Hour: 10A; **Instructor:** Min Young Godley

Course Title: Metamorphosis and Otherness

Description: Through reading classic and contemporary texts on metamorphosis, we will examine how bodies and forms of life transform themselves or are transformed by others. Following this motif, we will focus on writing as a form of critical thinking that is continually constructed and reconstructed in a multi-stage process. Aiming to produce change in oneself and others, students will learn how to write literary analysis, engage with scholarly conversations, and give and receive meaningful feedback.

No required textbooks available

Section 13

Hour: 2A; **Instructor:** Min Young Godley

Course Title: Metamorphosis and Otherness

Description: Through reading classic and contemporary texts on metamorphosis, we will examine how bodies and forms of life transform themselves or are transformed by others. Following this motif, we will focus on writing as a form of critical thinking that is continually constructed and reconstructed in a multi-stage process. Aiming to produce change in oneself and others, students will learn how to write literary analysis, engage with scholarly conversations, and give and receive meaningful feedback.

No required textbooks available

Section 14

Hour: 9L; **Instructor:** Clara Lewis

Course Title: Authenticity: Self & Society

Description: Social scientists argue that authenticity is now more highly valued than ever. Realness is idealized. Yet the same social forces that make the performance of authenticity a valued marketing ploy also make us crave connection and self-knowledge. These tensions serve as the starting point for our seminar. In previous terms, students have written for public and academic audiences on subjects including the role of authenticity in education, psychology, medicine, culture, dating norms, and tourism.

No required textbooks available

Section 15

Hour: 10; **Instructor:** Clara Lewis

Course Title: Authenticity: Self & Society

Description: Social scientists argue that authenticity is now more highly valued than ever. Realness is idealized. Yet the same social forces that make the performance of authenticity a valued marketing ploy also make us crave connection and self-knowledge. These tensions serve as the starting point for our seminar. In previous terms, students have written for public and academic audiences on subjects including the role of authenticity in education, psychology, medicine, culture, dating norms, and tourism.

No required textbooks available

Section 16

Hour: 10; **Instructor:** Erkki Mackey

Course Title: Philosophy in Fiction

Description: Is it possible that philosophers, novelists, and physicists are trying to reach the same ends by different means? To answer that question we will pursue four primary objectives: 1) become familiar with surprising and unresolved problems in physics; 2) consider how different philosophical perspectives attempt to resolve those problems; 3) analyze works of fiction from those philosophical perspectives; 4) complete several formal essays and informal writing exercises exploring different points of view.

No required textbooks available

Section 17

Hour: 12; **Instructor:** Douglas Moody

Course Title: Foundations of Dartmouth

Description: Samson Occom (1723-1792) was a protégé of Eleazar Wheelock, and although he was never a student at Dartmouth College, Occom's involvement with the college was crucial. Another trailblazer at Dartmouth was Edward Mitchell, Class of 1828, who was Dartmouth's first Black student. We consider these foundational stories as they relate to civil rights and educational access for Natives, African Americans, and other minorities at Dartmouth and in the U.S.

No required textbooks available

Section 18

Hour: 10A; **Instructor:** Rachel Obbard

Course Title: Sports, Science and Ethics

Description: We will read and write about the ethical dilemmas raised by technoscience in sport. Sources include scholarly writing from the fields of philosophy, bioethics, and science/engineering. First, we will examine the dilemma of doping through a close reading of pro cyclist David Millar's memoir "Racing Through the Dark" (2011). In the second part of the course, we will compare scholarly papers on the topic of hyperandrogenic athletes in women's sports. Last is a research paper.

No required textbooks available

Section 19

Hour: 2A; **Instructor:** Rachel Obbard

Course Title: Sports, Science and Ethics

Description: We will read and write about the ethical dilemmas raised by technoscience in sport. Sources include scholarly writing from the fields of philosophy, bioethics, and science/engineering. First, we will examine the dilemma of doping through a close reading of pro cyclist David Millar's memoir "Racing Through the Dark" (2011). In the second part of the course, we will compare scholarly papers on the topic of hyperandrogenic athletes in women's sports. Last is a research paper.

No required textbooks available

Section 20

Hour: 10A; **Instructor:** Katherine Riley

Course Title: Word Meaning in Context

Description: We each know many thousands of words. Normally we use them without stumbling over meaning; we must, to some degree, or we wouldn't speak at all. But sometimes we're halted by interpretations or implications heretofore unremarked. What does a word mean? What are its contexts of use? Through juxtapositions of scientific, philosophical, cultural, artistic, AI, and other perspectives, we construct new ideas with our own words and refine them for greater clarity and complexity.

No required textbooks available

Section 21

Hour: 3A; **Instructor:** Ellen Rockmore

Course Title: Happiness for Beginners

Description: In this Writing 5, we will examine happiness and how to achieve it. Our course readings come from many disciplines: popular culture, psychology, economics, cultural criticism. We will begin by looking at songs and movies, with the purpose of analyzing their messages about how happiness is achieved. We will then consider research regarding happiness from the fields of psychology and behavioral economics. Our readings also address unhappiness and its causes.

No required textbooks available

Section 22

Hour: 11; **Instructor:** Sarah Smith

Course Title: Food for Thought

Description: Brillat-Savarin wrote "Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you who you are." Indeed, food choices can reflect our families, religious beliefs, ethics, and emotions. Our decisions may be influenced by the media, our peers, or simply by convenience. What we eat also influences how food is grown, and therefore has wider reaching effects, such as on the environment, the economy, and public health. Readings include personal stories, popular press, and scholarly papers.

No required textbooks available

Section 23

Hour: 12; **Instructor:** Sarah Smith

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No required textbooks available

Section 24

Hour: 10; **Instructor:** Amanda Wetsel

Course Title: Built Environments

Description: We will write as a way to understand the built environment: How do buildings shape our lives? How do values, hierarchies, and inequalities materialize in the built environment? How do architectural spaces affect how people understand themselves and relate to each other? We will analyze spaces at Dartmouth and

interviews with Dartmouth students as well as texts written by architects, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists.

Textbook(s)Required:

Students are not required to purchase any books. Readings will be available for free.

Section 25

Hour: 11; **Instructor:** Amanda Wetsel

Course Title: Built Environments

Description: We will write as a way to understand the built environment: How do buildings shape our lives? How do values, hierarchies, and inequalities materialize in the built environment? How do architectural spaces affect how people understand themselves and relate to each other? We will analyze spaces at Dartmouth and interviews with Dartmouth students as well as texts written by architects, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists.

Textbook(s)Required:

Students are not required to purchase any books for this class. Readings will be available for free.

Section 26

Hour: 11; **Instructor:** Leigh York

Course Title: Reimagining Fairy Tales

Description: This course explores how twentieth- and twenty-first-century authors (Nalo Hopkinson, Angela Carter, Anne Sexton, and others) have adapted and transformed the Grimm fairy tales to address questions of race, gender, and power. You will learn about the ways that fairy tales can reimagine the present and transform the future, while developing strategies of expression, argument, and critique that will prepare you to think and write effectively at Dartmouth and beyond

No required textbooks available

Section 27

Hour: 12; **Instructor:** Leigh York

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Description: This course explores how twentieth- and twenty-first-century authors (Nalo Hopkinson, Angela Carter, Anne Sexton, and others) have adapted and transformed the Grimm fairy tales to address questions of race, gender, and power. You will learn about the ways that fairy tales can reimagine the present and transform the future, while developing strategies of expression, argument, and critique that will prepare you to think and write effectively at Dartmouth and beyond

No required textbooks available

Section 28

Hour: 2A; **Instructor:** James Godley

Course Title: Truth in Fiction

Description: Powerful writing often involves the effort of thought to discover hidden truths in stories, rhetoric, fantasies, myths, and dreams — the fictions of everyday life. In explorations of short stories, films, and theoretical essays we'll work together on such issues as the relationship between authenticity and acting, the painful illusions of love, the ways that trauma distorts reality, how society's obsession with achievement leads to burnout, and how dreams convey messages from the unconscious mind.

No required textbooks available

Section 29

Hour: 10A; **Instructor:** Stefan Aune

Course Title: Violence in the American West

Description: This first-year writing course explores the role that violence played in shaping the United States, with an emphasis on the intersections of Native American history and the US-Mexico borderlands. Our class will work together to analyze how a single traumatic event, the 1871 Camp Grant Massacre, produced a variety of competing stories about what the violence at Camp Grant meant, and how it impacted different communities along the US-Mexico border.

No required textbooks available

Section 30

Hour: 3B; **Instructor:** Stefan Aune

Course Title: Violence in the American West

Description: This first-year writing course explores the role that violence played in shaping the United States, with an emphasis on the intersections of Native American history and the US-Mexico borderlands. Our class will work together to analyze how a single traumatic event, the 1871 Camp Grant Massacre, produced a variety of competing stories about what the violence at Camp Grant meant, and how it impacted different communities along the US-Mexico border.

No required textbooks available

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