

CULTURAL FOUNDATIONS (CCCF-SHU)

CCCF-SHU 101W1 Perspectives on the Humanities: Beyond Nature (4 Credits)

Typically offered Fall

The most recent developments in eco-criticism see a fatal flaw in our predominant conception of nature—as pure, beautiful, and grand—arguing that it alienates us from the very thing we wish to protect, and doing so, only ensures continued environmental degradation. The corrective is an expressly 21st century mode of ecological seeing and questioning that allows us to reconceive of ourselves and the world as beyond nature. But because the idea of nature remains so central to our understanding of ethics, law, human sexuality, psychology and personhood, and artistic representation, we must ask what implications the new ecology might have for our understanding of these features of culture. In this course we survey positions of the new ecology, and then apply these methods of critique to examples of society, self, and art. This application will both reveal how central nature is to our ideological understanding of culture and trouble our notion of what is natural. Continuing Writing as Inquiry's line of instruction, this Perspective on Humanities course will cover principles of rhetoric and argumentation—such as problematization, invention (thesis discovery and execution), research methods, and strategies for unity and cohesion—principles that the student will find applicable in a range of academic disciplines and rhetorical situations. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W11 Perspectives on the Humanities: American Superheroes (4 Credits)

Typically offered Fall

This course organizes student writing and research around the study of American superheroes in comics, film, and television. Born in a low-prestige, disposable medium, superhero narratives now drive franchise production at some of the world's largest media conglomerates, which make, distribute, and license content for audiences worldwide. The course aims to introduce students to three interpretative approaches. First, the formal study of texts: Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics* offers a point of entry to the study of comics as a narrative art form, which we can then apply to Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons's *Watchmen*. Second, the historicist study of genre: students will learn about the industrial and commercial forces that converted the superhero from newsstand kid stuff to the subject of negotiations between Hollywood and Wall Street. Third, the political economy of commercial media: we will look at how Hollywood exploits superheroes as intellectual property, and who benefits from that exploitation. We will also look at how studios have navigated the political demands of their largest new market: the People's Republic of China. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W16 Perspectives on the Humanities: Brutes, Monsters, Ghosts, and Other Troubling Creatures (4 Credits)

Typically offered Fall

This course will focus on representations of the "other"—creatures we define as fundamentally different from ourselves. We will examine why we create boundaries between the human and the nonhuman and how writers, artists, and filmmakers throw into question these divisions. How do animals, objects, monsters, ghosts, and other phantasmagoric, hybrid creatures in the texts we will study both reflect and subvert existing power structures? We will examine how these "troubling creatures" speak to societal anxieties about gender, sexuality, class, race, and culture. We will also explore how these creatures, by speaking unexpectedly and out-of-turn, challenge power hierarchies. Course materials include fiction, poetry, visual media, and theoretical texts and will provide an introduction to literary analysis, film studies, gender studies, and philosophical debates about the division between the human and the nonhuman. Monsters we will study may include *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, beasts, and ghostly shapeshifters. The writing skills we practice will build on those from Writing as Inquiry. Primary assignments for this course will be analytical essays, including one with a research component, and a final presentation. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W17 Perspectives on the Humanities: Go West! (4 Credits)

Typically offered Fall

Name the country: armies, exiles, settlers and traders leave behind a crowded eastern seaboard and set forth into a vast western highlands peopled by starkly different cultures, building a nation and spinning its legends under an endless sky. Like NYU Shanghai itself, this familiar story is one shared—at least in its grandest outlines—by both the United States and China. Both nations' centuries-long projects of western expansion have given rise to literature, poetry, film and even computer games that have helped to define each nation's hopes, fears and dreams. While the U.S. tales of cowboys and Indians became famous around the globe, China's lesser-known stories of conquest and nation-building are no less crucial to its national identity. In this course we will explore where these stories overlap, where they diverge, and where they point us in a post-frontier world. This course will extend writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry, focusing on critical theory, research, and academic writing and expression in the humanities. The primary assignments will be analytical essays. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W19 Perspectives on the Humanities: The Truth is Out There? (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

How do we re-present history? How do we narrate the past? In this Perspectives on the Humanities course, we consider how various actors—in particular, historians, journalists, artists, memoirists, documentarians, and filmmakers—create texts which contribute to public discourse about our past histories, our present societies, and our shared future. We will examine the ways these visual and written texts shape the contours of our collective memories, giving voice to the underrepresented, establishing (or challenging) authoritative narratives, recasting history to serve the agendas of the present and, at times, eclipsing other possible truths with their evocative power. The goal of our inquiry is not to separate “true” histories from “false” ones. But we will be cautious about these texts’ potential power, undertaking a comparative analysis of how they are constructed and how they work—and work on us. We will continue to build upon the skills of writing and inquiry introduced in Writing as Inquiry. The course will emphasize close reading of visual and narrative texts; the analysis of these texts in the context of relevant theoretical perspectives; and developing an inquiry through research essays. The primary assignments are research essays. In some of our case studies, we will encounter traumatic moments in world history; the texts which re-present these events may include painful content. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W20 Perspectives on the Humanities: The Question of the Anthropocene (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

In 2016, a group of scientists formally declared that the planet Earth recently entered a new geological epoch: the Anthropocene. Though broad scientific consensus on the matter has yet to be reached, the very concept of the Anthropocene — the idea that we humans have fundamentally altered our planet at such a deep level that it registers in the permanent geological record — has not only caught on with scientists, but also philosophers, artists, writers, and filmmakers concerned about the future of life on our planet. In this class, students will explore a range of texts across several genres that take up the question of the Anthropocene while developing and practicing a range of skills central to critical analysis and academic writing. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W21 Perspectives on the Humanities: Sino-Western Literary Exchanges (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This course aims to explore the major literary linkages between China and the West in the modern period broadly understood. We will trace the historical contours of that great encounter, but the main goal is to study its cultural impact. We will examine the images and representations that one culture constructs about the other and probe into the issues and problems that arise in the process, such as intercultural misunderstanding, adaptation and appropriation, translation and interpretation, Orientalism and literary modernization. After a preliminary discussion of the theoretical and politico-ideological issues involved, we will proceed to study several culturally significant cases in the history of contacts between China and the West: Voltaire’s rewriting of traditional Chinese drama, Ezra Pound’s translations and his peculiar understanding of the Chinese language, literature, history, and culture, and Lu Xun’s accommodation and appropriation of Western literary themes and methods in his now classic short stories. These clusters of texts will provide insights and impart lessons that you can then apply in investigating problems of your own in contemporary cultural exchanges. This course will extend writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry, focusing on critical theory, research, and academic writing in the humanities. The primary assignments will be reflective, analytical, and exploratory essays. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W22 PoH: Networked Bodies: Exhibits, Organ Donations, and Alternate States of Ability (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This course will organize student writing and research around the different ways our bodies are, or can be, constructed. We will consider how recent scholarship in disability studies have challenged popular conceptions of health and able-bodiedness, and examine the controversy surrounding international exhibits of deceased human bodies. We will also read fictional narratives of mechanically enhanced human bodies and cyborgs, and discuss the ethics of human organ donation. The boundaries of our bodies are much more porous than we may think, challenging the very concept of what constitutes the human. We will explore various humanities fields to guide this investigation. Much of the work we do will take the form of writing and research, extending writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry. Our discussions, textual engagement, and scholarly research will enable us to consider how the ways in which bodies are connected are much more varied than we may have thought. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCC-SHU 101W24 Perspectives on the Humanities: Medicine and Disease in the Humanities (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This Perspectives on the Humanities course will explore the medical humanities, drawing upon literature, art, history, and anthropology to examine the culturally situated experiences of being ill and treating illness. While the importance of the medical humanities is most often stressed in the context of educating future doctors, the field is relevant to all of us: as Susan Sontag writes, “Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick... sooner or later each of us is obliged, at least for a spell, to identify ourselves as citizens of that other place.” Readings will encompass memoirs by patients and physicians, historical and contemporary case studies, and works by medical anthropologists, including an ethnographic study of healthcare in Shanghai. In discussing these texts, we will consider how social and cultural factors shape perceptions of wellness and disease, with particular attention to the role of language. How objective is “scientific” communication and what experiences might it fail to capture? How does the language used to talk about a disease affect our perception of those who have it? Why do memoirs of illness have such strong appeal to many readers? Key authors include Susan Sontag, Barbara Ehrenreich, Oliver Sacks, and Anne Fadiman. This course will build upon skills and concepts introduced in Writing as Inquiry, such as evaluative reading and writing techniques, rhetorical organization, and strategies for effective research. Primary writing assignments will be analytical essays, at least one of which will involve a research element. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry.

Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCC-SHU 101W25 Perspectives on the Humanities: Everything You Know About Science Is Wrong (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

What is science? Who has the authority to determine what qualifies as science? Is scientific knowledge inherently political? This class will focus on the human dimensions of science. We will examine a number of case studies, including early twentieth-century scientific racism in the U.S. and contemporary global climate change discourse. Drawing from work such as Kapil Raj’s Relocating Modern Science, the class will explore debates about the origins of scientific modernity. Did “modern science” originate in the “West” before diffusing elsewhere? We will focus especially on questions of identity and representation in the making of scientific cultures. For instance, which factors have contributed to the creation of gendered scientific cultures? Our readings will include primary sources, graphic novels, and science fiction. Building on skills and concepts from Writing as Inquiry, we will emphasize issues of argument, evidence, and structure in analytical writing. Paper assignments for the course will include analytical essays in several genres, including a research paper. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCC-SHU 101W27 Perspectives on the Humanities: Memory, Identity, and Resistance in a Global Context (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This course explores how and why 20th and 21st century authors, from across the globe and writing in different genres, depict, re-imagine, and problematize individual, familial, and group identities through tapping into memory. In the process, they offer nuanced representations of their nations. Yet, as the business of representing involves inscriptions and erasures, narratives rarely achieve consensus: some are disapproved by the author’s ethnic group, others dismissed by the dominant culture or banned by a despotic regime. Thematically dynamic and often formally innovative, some of these writings invite fascinating questions which the course aspires to investigate and will have students engage through writing responses and research projects. Some of the larger questions that we will unpack may include the following: Is there a close relation between national myths formation and othering of minorities? Is the imagined group identity fictitious or real? What role does remembering play in unveiling or perpetuating injustices? What solutions do some of the writers suggest to help communities heal or move forward in spite of the trauma? Why do certain women writers reclaim lived traditions and invoke indigeneity, orality, and matrilineal ancestral history? And can we, readers, serve as witnesses to the horrors revisited in a literary text? The course will continue to build upon the writing and critical thinking skills introduced in Writing as Inquiry. Students will be introduced to theoretical perspectives and will sample texts from different literary genres. They are required to produce close readings, analytical pieces, and research projects. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCC-SHU 101W28 PoH: The Pursuit of Beauty (4 Credits)

The recent popularity of the photo-editing app Facetune and Instagram’s and Snapchat’s editing filters, as well as the increasing expression of the view that cosmetic surgery is a form of “empowerment,” prompts us to question – why do we seek to appear beautiful? Which leads to the more profound question: What is the meaning of beauty? What is its role in our human lives? Who decides who or what can be called beautiful? What is the relationship between beauty and desire and how might we try to untangle it? Do we link, perceptively and persistently, beauty and goodness and therefore ascribe morality to beauty itself? What is the relationship between beauty and aspects of power? In this course we will investigate literary interpretations of and reflections on beauty and read philosophical, theoretical and critical texts to help us frame our questions. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded

Repeatable for additional credit: No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W29 Perspectives on the Humanities: Eating Your Words - The Rhetoric of Food (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

How do we translate the rich taste of a wine into words? Does the language we use to describe food affect its taste? Has your grandmother ever told you she loved you by cooking a special meal? When you buy street foods, which languages do you hear being spoken around you? Most of the time, our encounters with food focus on eating, but food is deeply enmeshed with language—what Plato called a “feast of discourse.” This course will give you a taste of how language and food intersect. It will investigate the ways that we speak about food; the ways that we communicate through food; and the ways that languages come into contact in food places. Our readings will include fiction, non-fiction, cookbooks, menus and proverbs. We will watch films, look at still-life painting, and examine commercials, posters, and ads. At the same time, we will further develop your analytical and writing skills. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W3 Perspectives on the Humanities: Tales of Gender and Power (4 Credits)*Typically offered occasionally*

This course will explore how the expression, exercise and experience of power, as it interacts with gender, impacts human relationships. We will start the semester in the realm of the sacred with an examination of various ancient cosmogonies' gender dynamics—the Greek, Chinese and Judeo-Christian. As we move across millennia, we will engage a variety of great works of different cultures, such as *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, *The Arabian Nights*, Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* and the films *Raise the Red Lantern* and *The Truman Show*. Our main area of inquiry will be the primary relational constellations among humans: couples involved in lover-spouse intimacies and families shaped by father-mother-son-daughter allegiances. Gender figures significantly in the dynamics of these relationships, impacting the lives of individuals and families as well as informing the expression of social groups and cultural traditions. As we gain a deeper understanding of the subtle yet complex plays of power involved in certain gender relations, our inquiry will also bring us close to other crucial human issues, such as: the quest for knowledge, the uncertainties of identity and self, the creative need for love and community, the fear of/attraction to death, and the longing for transformation and transcendence, amongst others. Drawing on literary texts ranging from ancient to contemporary times—myth, epic, novel, film, drama, poetry—as well as products of visual culture and the performance arts, this course will examine how each articulates and resolves (or not) the above complex relationships and issues. To gain perspective, we will apply a variety of critical lenses to our close readings of texts, including the works of psychological and philosophical theorists such as Freud, Luce Irigaray, and Judith Butler. One required class attendance at an evening theatre performance will occur. This course will extend writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry, focusing on critical theory, research, and academic writing and expression in the humanities. The primary assignments will be analytical essays and a digital expressions project. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W30 Perspectives on the Humanities: Global China Fiction (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

Nations defend fixed boundaries; stories go where they please. This section of Perspectives on the Humanities will take NYU Shanghai's embrace of a 'Global China' as directive for a semester of reading and writing across a broadly defined Chinese diaspora of searchers, emigrants, rebels, and yes, global citizens, to map the blurred edges of culture, language, blood and home. From Sui Sin Far in 1890s Montreal to Sanmao in 1970s Sahara, from Frank Chin's Chinatown cowboys to a current boom of young writers flying and clubbing between Beijing and New York, we'll close-read and write our way into ever-evolving conversations over nationalism, assimilation, and cultural differences. In the light of both China's rise to superpower and a troubling rise of ethnonationalism around the world, we'll follow these wandering stories to wonder: can any place, or any people, or any one person, become global? And if so, what along the way must be learned, forgotten, held tight, or set free? Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W31 Perspectives on the Humanities: Race/Class/Borders (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

With each reprinting of *Citizen* (Graywolf Press), a hybrid poetry/essay/art collection, Claudia Rankine adds to page 134, a textual monument listing the names of African-American victims of police brutality. And, in her episodic book-length essay, *Tell Me How It Ends* (Coffee House Press), Valeria Luiselli documents and laments her experiences working with migrant children in the United States. Lastly, in her science fiction novel, *Dawn* (Grand Central Publishing), Octavia Butler describes a character's adjustment to an alien invasion. By investigating the formal, sociological, and ethical questions within these contemporary works of literature, students will develop their critical thinking and writing skills. We will employ excerpts of literary and critical theory texts to aid this inquiry with the goal of applying these ideas to contemporary phenomena. Students will ultimately use this material to drive the practical work of the class: to continue to refine their skills primarily as writers, but also as researchers, thinkers, and leaders. The primary assignments will be a series of short analytical essays, one longer researched analysis, and a collaborative service project: the creation of new Wikipedia pages to bring attention to unacknowledged and/or underreported issues, literature, and people in the People's Republic of China. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W32 Perspectives on the Humanities: Art Histories (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

In 2017, three archaeologists came across a depiction of a hunt painted on a Sulawesi cave wall. Having established that the painting was 44,000 years old, the researchers debunked the long-standing notion that cave painting originated in Europe. This ascertainment has two important implications. First, it emphasizes the universality of art as a form of human expression. Second, some scholars surmise that similarities between the cave paintings in Indonesia and Europe indicate the existence of earlier prototypes in Africa, where humanity originated. That is, while each Indonesian and European cave painting is unique unto itself and thus an exemplar of the particular, each simultaneously reflects something fundamental about the archetypes on which they were modeled, an essentiality that represents the universal. In this way, the Indonesian and European cave paintings embody the concept of the *Urphänomen* introduced by the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In this course, we'll explore art as a medium of thought and emotion common to all civilizations while evaluating Goethe's idea of the *Urphänomen*. Using the resources of Shanghai's art museums as our foundational "texts," we will comparatively examine works on exhibition at these institutions. After exploring the significance of these pieces as they've been informed by the aesthetic and broader cultural traditions to which they respectively belong, we will contemplate these objects as artefacts and/or as archetypal representations in light of how they are situated within other contexts beyond China's borders. In so doing, we'll gain an understanding of the cultural significance of these works and/or their motifs across various disciplines, cultures and eras while ascertaining the extent to which they testify to the *Urphänomen*'s existence. Building upon what students learned in Writing as Inquiry, this course will further develop their analytical, creative and research skills through analytical essays and a digital research project. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W33 Perspectives on the Humanities: World-Building (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This course will explore Margaret Atwood's idea of creating an "Utopia." We will imagine building a better world—the roles governance, science, and the arts would take. Instead of relying on science fiction as escapism or impossible fantasy, Atwood describes her speculative fiction as exploring Utopias: the liminal space between utopia and dystopia. Literary theorist Kenneth Burke argues that story features characters with a purpose (goal) encountering passion (trouble) and achieving perception (epiphany). Might we apply that story arc to our own human experiences, and by extension to social evolution? How might scientific advancements impact our efforts to build an ideal society? How do politics and law weigh personal freedoms against societal needs? How might globalization and translingualism shape an Utopia? This course will extend writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry by focusing on critical theory (including gender and critical race theory), close readings, and analytical essays. Texts will include fiction, film, and art to analyze how Utopias are translated across genres. A capstone project asks writers to explore humanity's potential via a research-based creative project. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W34 Perspectives on the Humanities: (Mis)Adventures in Language (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

We have created texts all our lives. You may have written down a grocery list for yourself, sent a brief text message to a friend, posted a WeChat moment, revised a draft of an academic essay, written a scientific lab report with data and figures, or edited your resume for a job application. When someone says, "I'm not a writer," they usually mean that they don't write novels or movie scripts or academic journal articles. But we are all writers. Given a broad definition of what a text can be, we will empower ourselves to analyze the texts that we encounter and create in the world around us. To discuss any text is an act of translation, an interpretation from one way of communicating to another—from one language, dialect, discourse community, rhetorical situation, or set of genre conventions to another. As a research and writing community, we will build a shared language for discussing language itself across contexts. We will become familiar with several foundational concepts in the fields of rhetoric, composition studies, sociolinguistics, and translation studies. For example, we will introduce the concepts mentioned above, alongside the concepts of dialect, language variation, linguistic prescriptivism and descriptivism, and standardized ways of communicating. We will explore language explicitly by way of one special theme each week. Such weekly themes might include cultural identity, gender, sexuality, crime, religion, offensive language, journalism, scientific communication, figures of speech, historical narratives, literature, censorship, and comedy. Your assignments will primarily be academic essays, and will culminate in a final project in which you create and analyze a multimodal text with a specific goal, audience, and genre of your choice. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W35 Perspectives on the Humanities: Science Fiction in Three Media (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This course introduces students to some of the major topics and themes in so-called science fiction (SF), using SF stories to further develop the major skills trained in Writing as Inquiry: analytical reading, argumentative writing, and library research. Students will read short stories, watch episodes from theatrical serials, and listen to radio plays (both complete dramas and episodes from serials); students will attend to the ways that these three different media not only shape the narrative choices of the artists, but also inflect familiar themes like alien contact, interplanetary travel, and artificial intelligence. Furthermore, nonfiction readings will introduce students to three complimentary approaches to understanding SF: the formal study of narrative texts, the political economy of mass media, the historicist study of commercial genres. Students will use these approaches in prompted writing assignments, which will range from shorter exercises to a medium-length analytical essay, and which will include a major research essay. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCCF-SHU 101W36 Perspectives on the Humanities: Speaking of Sickness (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This Perspectives on the Humanities course will explore narratives of illness and health, drawing upon works of literature and art to ask questions about the boundaries of the body, the relationship between the body and the self, and the role of social and cultural factors in shaping our perceptions of illness. How does the language used to talk about a disease affect our perception of those who have it? Are there aspects of being ill that cannot be captured in words? How might gender, race, and social status inform a patient's approach to healing? What happens when an individual's experience of being a patient or physician does not fit into traditional narratives about those roles? In discussing these questions and others like them, we will touch upon multiple academic fields, from history and anthropology to disability studies. Readings will encompass memoirs by patients and physicians, historical and contemporary case studies, and works of criticism related to narrative structure and the language of medicine. Key authors include Daniel Defoe, Susan Sontag, Audre Lorde, Elaine Scarry, and Arthur W. Frank. This course will build upon skills and concepts introduced in Writing as Inquiry, such as evaluative reading and writing techniques, rhetorical organization, and strategies for effective research. Primary writing assignments will be analytical essays, at least one of which will involve a research element. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCCF-SHU 101W37 Perspectives on the Humanities: Drinking the Kool-Aid and Other Cult Stories (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This course traces motifs and common narrative threads in the stories of those who are drawn into or victimized by cults. We will explore how real and fictional cults are depicted in literature and film, closely studying such works as Emma Cline's novel *The Girls*, Haruki Murakami's work of literary journalism *Underground*, *The Tokyo Gas Attack* and the Japanese *Psyche*, the Netflix docuseries *Wild Wild Country*, Ari Aster's folk horror film *Midsommar*, and the psychological thriller *Martha Marcy May Marlene*. Our critical analysis and interpretation of these works will be aided by interdisciplinary readings that will give us a better understanding of how cults function and explore the controversy of the "cult" label itself. As we delve into the stories of cults, we will examine perennial themes that distinguish these narratives such as the critique of mainstream society suggested by the cult's formation and ability to attract followers, the lure of living in a utopian community for those seeking emotional connection, the role of charismatic, authoritarian leaders who exploit their followers, the tensions between cult members and the dominant culture and what their conflicts reveal about each group's ideals and prejudices, and the extent to which cultish groups are tolerated or repressed by their local communities and governments. This course will extend writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry, focusing on critical theory, research, and academic writing and expression in the humanities. The primary assignments will be analytical essays. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCCF-SHU 101W38 Perspectives on the Humanities: Music is the Message (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

Music is the Message is an academic writing course that teaches critical research and writing skills using music to explore contexts including identity, place, and time. In a broad and intersectional sense, we will consider themes of gender, race, sexuality, politics, and protest in music from fixed space in time, imagined space, and diasporic space. For example, our unit on Afrofuturism presents a performance genre of fantastical empowerment for Black people, redefining Black history and futures on earth and beyond. To deepen our ability to personally reflect on the role of music in our lives and society, we will read academic and popular articles that critically examine musical artistry and performance to reveal the role of musicians and audience as active participants in historical activism and imagination. Additional units include Chinese pop, K-pop and gender; hip hop and sexuality; and jazz and cultural diplomacy. Course readings utilize the following research methods: discourse analysis, close reading, qualitative (e.g.: interview, participant observation, content analysis), journalistic, historical and ethnomusicology. This course will extend writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry, focusing on critical theory, research, and academic writing and expression in the humanities. The primary assignments will be analytical essays. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W39 Perspectives on the Humanities: Hearing the Moving Image (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This academic writing course will build critical reading, listening, and writing skills by exploring what makes sound and music so necessary to our engagement with moving images. Through writing about a wide range of media texts, including Hollywood and Chinese film, television, and animation, Triple-A and indie video games, we will pursue questions about power, the environment, technology, narrative, representation, and global identity. For instance, what does the urban soundscape in Ridley Scott and Vangelis's *Blade Runner* have to say about our fraught relationship with technology both now and in the future? By contrast, how do musical depictions in Peter Jackson and Howard Shore's *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy construct pre-industrial local cultures and what is natural? In addition, we will historicize and interrogate the Western gaze toward China in light of Edward Said's *Orientalism* by investigating how music and sound produce ideas about the "East," such as in Ang Lee and Tan Dun's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (####). We will also theorize how to read and write about K-, J-, and C-pop music videos especially for the performance of gender, sexuality, and global eclecticism. This course extends the intellectual, research, and writing skills introduced in *Writing as Inquiry* and requires no prior training in music performance or analysis. Throughout, students will pursue writing topics of their choice in a series of analytical essays demonstrating compelling arguments, nuanced readings of scenes, genres, and styles, an adroit use of rhetorical strategies for a variety of audiences, and the careful selection and framing of primary sources and scholarship. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 *Writing as Inquiry*. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W40 Perspectives on the Humanities: Writing the World (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

This globe-trotting course explores the politics of representation in English-language journalism and literature about the world outside of America. Drawing on both scholarly criticism and works of journalism and creative nonfiction, we will examine how American norms shape knowledge and literary production about the rest of the world. We will decenter the United States as the arbiter of the news media and publishing, comparing and contrasting works by American and non-American authors in and about 'Asia' and the 'Middle East.' Our travels will take us to countries such as China, Japan, India, Vietnam, Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, and Iran. We will not only look at the place from where an author writes, but also from where the audience reads. How does the adage of 'Write what you know' hold up when a writer does not occupy the dominant positionality in the Anglophone world? How might we apply these concepts to problematize the ways in which we think and write about China and Chineseness? Students will write in a variety of public-facing critical, creative, and journalistic genres, including an op-ed, satirical essay, book review, and a decolonizing profile of Shanghai. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 *Writing as Inquiry*. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W41 Perspectives on the Humanities: Digital Identities (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

Identity is often imagined as tied to the body—to the color of our skin, the sound of our accent, or the way that we inhabit gender. Yet in the digital domain, bodies become tenuous or even inexistent; writing—in text, sound, film, and hypertext—is everything. How then do individuals and communities use digital media to articulate their identities, tell their stories and imagine their futures? How do virtuality and multimedia transform identity formation, and what is the role of digital networks in creating new or reinforcing existing social groups? In this academic writing class, we will examine these and similar questions in digital fiction and nonfiction as we elaborate our research and analytical skills through the lens of theories of digital sociality, in-group formation, digital redlining, and algorithmic oppression. In so doing, we will sharpen our reading and writing skills across the various media of the digital: text, hypertext, image and sound. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 *Writing as Inquiry*. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCC-SHU 101W42 Perspectives on the Humanities: Nothing New Under the Sun? (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

Nothing New Under the Sun? is an academic writing course that teaches critical research, writing, and thinking skills through investigating the concept and value of the “new.” Famously, innovation was already declared dead thousands of years ago with Ecclesiastes’s ancient assertion, “There is nothing new under the sun.” In fact, across literary, media, cultural, and theological structures, from teen rom-coms based on Shakespeare’s plays to major world religions’ reinterpretation of common biblical source texts, we can see recycling in action. On the other hand, we also find challenges to this narrative of the “same old” in theories of postmodernism, or new methods of structuring society like communism or democracy. In a city like Shanghai, there are things all around us that strike us as novel, from technology to buildings to fresh ways of interacting with each other. Or are these, too, in the words of contemporary poet Eileen Myles, just “old things, re-released”? Searching through comparative examples in literature, film, visual art, music, architecture, and religion, we will exercise our writing and critical interpretation skills in our attempt to get to the bottom of questions including: What makes something “new,” and can it still be done? What is it about humans that causes us to revisit the same ideas or structures? And what is the value of chasing the “new,” at its heart? This course will extend writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry, focusing on critical theory, research, and academic writing and expression in the humanities. The primary assignments will be analytical essays and a digital expressions project. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCC-SHU 101W43 Perspectives on the Humanities: Attending to Attention - The Secret Method of the Liberal Arts (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

A revolution is occurring in the ways we pay attention, demanding that we learn, unlearn, and relearn ways of attending across most aspects of contemporary life. To our aid, a liberal arts education trains students’ attention—liberally and liberatorily—to “cultivate and practice the kinds of attention that will make them intelligent observers, diligent critics, and thoughtful actors on the stage of human life” (Sullivan). This academic writing course teaches critical research and writing skills through exploring how different kinds of attention shape our various ways of knowing, thinking, and doing. Our inquiry-driven writing within the liberal arts tradition will organize our survey of various conceptions of attention and will aid our building of cutting-edge vocabularies for attention’s situational dynamics from the experienter’s point of view (e.g., the kind of attention you’re using while reading this). Guiding texts will span the humanities, sciences, arts, and the technological frontier, providing theories and case studies to help us ask: What are the means by which attention is formed in any given situation? How is attention constructed, structured, and variably reconfigured? Students will select situations of their interest where the type of attention used determines differences in outcomes. Writing and research assignments will scaffold the process of conducting attention analyses. The final essay culminates your work as a participant-researcher analyzing and creating modes of attention optimized for goals in a given situation. Ultimately, students will be learning two interrelated fundamental methodologies of the liberal arts: 1) the conventions of academic reading, writing, and researching, and 2) the foundational skills of attention that are implicit to all academic work, disciplinary knowledge, and social action. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCC-SHU 101W5 Perspectives on the Humanities: Stories of the End Times (4 Credits)*Typically offered occasionally*

In this course, we will explore the human apocalyptic imagination and its manifestations in sacred texts, in literature, and in film. We’ll read novels and watch films that portray apocalyptic devastation in methods both real and unreal. Texts may include excerpts from the sacred texts of religious traditions, McCarthy’s *The Road*, Liu’s *The Dark Forest*, Wells’s *The Time Machine*, and Kolbert’s *The Sixth Extinction*; films may include Honda’s *Gojira* and Park’s *Snowpiercer*, among others. We’ll consider the questions asked (and sometimes answered) by each story we examine: What are their visions of human nature, historical progress, the relationship between humans and divine? What explicit or implicit assertions do these stories make about gender, race, and class? How can the apocalyptic be used as a method of persuasion? What do our stories of the end tell us about how we live now? This course will extend writing skills and concepts learned in Writing as Inquiry, focusing on critical theory, research, and academic writing and expression in the humanities. The primary assignments will be analytical essays. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 101W9 Perspectives on the Humanities: Literature and Its Critics (4 Credits)*Typically offered Fall*

Although the concept of literature as we know it is fairly recent and originally culture-specific, the phenomenon of what we would today call literature is universal with a history that goes back perhaps to the beginning of human civilizations. What is literature? How is it traditionally conceived in the West as well as in China? What makes it controversial? How do we understand the repeated attacks and defenses or the lack thereof in a particular cultural tradition? What do we mean when we call a writer or work of literature great? What is the function of criticism in a modern society? This course will provide an opportunity for students to explore large questions such as those via a consideration, first, of the classical debates surrounding the nature and value of poetry, art, or theater raised by prominent Western thinkers and writers. We will then look to ancient China for possible, often implicit answers to these questions and challenges through a study of the first poetic anthology of China, the Shi jing, often translated as The Book of Songs. Finally, the course will introduce the modern notion of literature and help students understand it in relation to the changed conditions of modernity. Collectively, we will examine a major work of fiction as a test case whereby to rethink the question of the nature, value, and function of literature and criticism in a modern context. Students will build on the skills first introduced in Writing as Inquiry and practise modes of inquiry central to the humanities through class discussions, forum exchanges, and the writing of essays. Prerequisite: C or better in WRIT-SHU 101 or 102 Writing as Inquiry. Students cannot register for more than one section of PoH. Fulfillment: CORE PoH.

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No

- SB Crse Attr: NYU Shanghai: Perspectives on the Humanities

CCCF-SHU 130 Screening Childhood (4 Credits)*Typically offered occasionally*

Childhood is a persistent topic of countless films and other screen-based media products worldwide, with an intended audience not limited to children. The focus of this course is not children's films per se, but "childhood" in world cinema and in popular culture, discussed from an array of historical and theoretical perspectives. The concerns and topics of the course include: the intimate relationship between early cinema and childhood (and by extension, childhood and modernity); conceptions and representations of childhood in different cinematic (and cultural) traditions and historical periods; ideological critiques and other theoretical models in engaging screen and media portrayals of childhood, including feminism, gender and sexuality studies, postcolonial studies, and child studies. Weekly screenings will feature early actualities, silent narrative film, musical, documentary, animation, and more. Students are expected to actively take part in discussions and presentations, and complete a final research paper. Fulfillment: general elective

Grading: Ugrd Shanghai Graded**Repeatable for additional credit:** No