WRT 118hm Colloquium: Topics in Writing-No, Seriously...What's So Funny? Writing about Humor (4 Credits)
Nietzsche called maturity the rediscovered seriousness of a child at play. What is the meaning of comedy in light of this “seriousness of the child at play?” Why do we laugh, at what and in what way? How do we distinguish silly comedy from serious comedy? This course examines such questions on comic platforms including film, music, videos, short stories and cartoons. We explore the “structure” of the comic moment as viewer or listener encounters surprise, transgression or enchantment, especially in 20th-century comedy, and the affectivity of the comic encounter from pure “clowning” to savage social commentary. Enrollment limited to 15. WI
Fall, Spring, Variable

WRT 118f Colloquium in Writing: Liberating the Future (4 Credits)
In the era of rapid climate change, global migration, enormous income disparities driven by capitalism's greed for profit and a pandemic that disproportionately affects Black, Brown and low-income people, the future has become an urgent concern. Although media reports can feel apocalyptic, this concern has also inspired visions of a world free from capitalism, police and injustice. This course delves into innovative, liberating responses to this moment of crisis, including Black feminist lessons from marine mammals and Indigenous peoples’ restorative responses to climate change. Our readings foreground African American, Indigenous and LGBTQ+ voices in various nonfiction genres. Enrollment limited to 15. WI
Fall, Spring, Variable

WRT 118gl Colloquium: Topics in Writing-Language and Gender (4 Credits)
How people speak -- the words they choose, the way they structure their sentences, the pitch of their voices, even their gender while speaking -- is constantly judged by those around them. Examining the interaction of gender and language leads to questions, such as how does gender shape the way people use language, how does gender affect others’ perceptions of speech (both written and verbal), what variation occurs across cultures with regards to gender and language? This course uses the topic of language and gender to expand upon and improve rhetorical and writing skills. Enrollment limited to 15. WI
Fall, Spring, Variable
WRT 135oi/ ENG 135oi Topics: Introduction to Writing Creative Nonfiction-Outside-In: Finding Story Through Shape (4 Credits)
In this course, students will explore various ways that nonfiction writing can begin with structure—in borrowed forms, as research containers, and with deeper structural choices—with reading serving to expand our ideas for the possibility of our own work. This course is also an introduction to the tools and frameworks of the writing class, offering new approaches to generating and refining creative work, and building creative community. Prerequisite: One WI course. Enrollment limited to 16. (E)

Fall, Spring, Variable

WRT 135pt/ ENG 135pt Topics: Introduction to Writing Creative Nonfiction-Writing about Travel, Place and Time (4 Credits)
Writing and reading assignments in this creative nonfiction course will draw from the linked themes of place and travel. You don’t have to be a seasoned traveler to join the course; you can write about any place at all, including home. We’ll also use the Smith campus and Northampton to create travel narratives, and will often work with images and creative walking exercises (“performance writing”) in our assignments. You should be prepared to write frequently in class and out, read well, participate in class discussion, and be ready to explore your world with new eyes. Prerequisite: One WI course. Enrollment limited to 16.

Spring, Variable

WRT 135wp/ ENG 135wp Topics: Introduction to Writing Creative Nonfiction-Writing in Words and Pictures (4 Credits)
In the 20th century, as literacy rates rose, images disappeared from literature. Pictures were relegated to children’s books; only words were fit for adults. But the situation is changing. The internet and new printing technologies have allowed serious stories to again be told with words and images. This course examines creative nonfiction in graphic novels, hybrid and artist's books, art labels, zines, digital platforms and more. Students need not be an artist to take this class! Students create word-image memoirs and research-based essays using photos, photocopies, digital images and hand-drawn art. This is a writing course with a visual twist. Prerequisite: One WI course. Enrollment limited to 16.

Fall, Spring, Variable

WRT 135ws/ ENG 135ws Topics: Introduction to Writing Creative Nonfiction-Writing about the Senses (4 Credits)
Offered as ENG 135ws and WRT 135ws. Sight, sound, touch, smell, taste: Everything humans know is reached through their senses. Humans share a world filtered through a million sensibilities - finding the words to convey what is heard, seen, smelled, tasted and felt is one of the most fundamental skills a writer can develop. In this class, students hone their descriptive powers to go beyond the obvious and uncover language that delights and surprises. Students learn to use one sense to write about another, combine them in powerful metaphors and explore how senses shape the narratives that drive us. Prerequisite: One WI course. Enrollment limited to 16.

Fall, Spring, Variable

WRT 136/ ENG 136 Journalism: Principles and Practice (4 Credits)
Offered as WRT 136 and ENG 136. In this intellectually rigorous writing class, students will learn how to craft compelling "true stories," using the journalist’s tools. They will research, report, write, revise, source, and share their work—and, through interviewing subjects firsthand, understand how other people see the world. We will consider multiple styles and mediums of journalism, including digital storytelling. Students should focus their attention and effort on academic exposition and argumentation before learning other forms of writing. Prerequisite: One WI course. Enrollment limited to 16.

Fall, Spring, Variable

WRT 145 Process, Prose and Pedagogy (1 Credit)
This class will help students become effective peer writing tutors. They will explore the theoretical and practical relationships among writing, learning and thinking by reading in the fields of composition studies, rhetoric, literacy studies, cognitive psychology and education. After completing the course, they will have gained the skills necessary for helping others with writing: they will learn to draw on pedagogical techniques; become aware of the diverse ways in which other students write, learn and think; and have a broader understanding of the conventions and expectations for writing in a range of disciplines. S/U only. Instructor permission required.

Fall

WRT 291 Colloquium: Lakes Writing Workshop (4 Credits)
Topics Course. An intermediate-level workshop in which writers develop their skills through intensive reading, writing, revising, and critique. Topic changes annually. Emphasis on narrative writing, broadly defined to include a variety of genres, depending on the interests of the current holder of the Lakes writing residency. Enrollment limited to 12. (L)

Fall, Spring, Variable

WRT 291wb Topics: Lakes Writing Workshop- Writing, Because (4 Credits)
The world we inhabit is volatile, contingent, unsettled. Many of the hegemonic certitudes and convictions we took for granted (or were resigned to accept) have been overturned or are under erasure. In the wake of such radical change, how do we process and write the present? How can we create vivid documents of contemporary life that will resonate across cultural, spatial and temporal limits? Participants will engage these questions in a series of think pieces and conversations organized around essays by paradigmatic and heterodox writers. A selection of these writers will also give talks either in person, or via Zoom. Enrollment limited to 12. Instructor permission required. (L)