

COMPARATIVE MEDIA STUDIES/WRITING

Comparative Media Studies/Writing combines the study of contemporary media (film, television, games, social media, and digital interactive forms) with the study of creative and journalistic practices of producing these and other forms of modern fiction, poetry, film, and non-fiction prose. The section offers two undergraduate majors, one in Comparative Media Studies and another in Writing, as well as a Master of Science in Science Writing. The undergraduate curriculum seeks to encourage students to think across various forms of media and to learn about contemporary forms of media through the practices of creating and producing them. The graduate program teaches students how to interpret and explain science to the wider public, to place research and researchers within their social and historical contexts, and to create pieces that balance hard analysis with creativity and style.

The program in Comparative Media Studies/Writing is home to two centers that serve as key resources to the MIT community. The MIT Writing and Communication Center (WCC) (<https://cmsw.mit.edu/writing-and-communication-center>) offers free individual consultation on communication on an appointment or drop-in basis to all members of the MIT community, as well as other services. For more information about the WCC and other academic resources for students (<https://catalog.mit.edu/mit/resources>), see Academic Resources.

The Writing, Rhetoric, and Professional Communication (WRAP) (<http://cmsw.mit.edu/education/writing-across-the-curriculum>) program collaborates with faculty in every MIT department to provide integrated instruction on written, oral, and visual communication in the disciplines. WRAP faculty teach nearly every MIT undergraduate each year in communication-intensive subjects at all levels and collaborate with departments to develop discipline-specific communication instruction for graduate students in both for-credit and non-credit models. WRAP also designs and administers the incoming student writing assessments for both undergraduates (First-year Essay Exam) and graduate students (Graduate Writing Exam).

Undergraduate Study

Bachelor of Science in Comparative Media Studies (CMS)

The program leading to the Bachelor of Science in Comparative Media Studies (<https://catalog.mit.edu/degree-charts/comparative-media-studies-cms>) degree is designed to integrate the study of contemporary media (film, television, digital systems) with a broad historical understanding of older forms of human expression. The program embraces theoretical and interpretive principles drawn from the central humanistic disciplines of literary study, history, anthropology, art history, and film studies, but aims as well for a comparative synthesis that is responsive to the distinctive emerging media culture of the 21st century. Students explore the complexity

of the media environment by learning to think across media, to see beyond the boundaries imposed by older medium-specific approaches to the study of audio-visual and literary forms. The undergraduate program serves as preparation for advanced study in a range of scholarly and professional disciplines and also for careers in media or industry.

The comparative and cross-disciplinary nature of both the undergraduate and graduate programs is reflected by the extensive participation of faculty drawn from Art and Architecture; Anthropology; Global Languages; History; Literature; Music and Theater Arts; Philosophy; Science, Technology, and Society; Media Arts and Sciences; Political Science; and Urban Studies and Planning.

The SB in Comparative Media Studies requires 10 subjects. Majors are required to take CMS.100 Introduction to Media Studies, a Media Practice and Production subject, CMS.701 Current Debates in Media (CI-M), a second CI-M subject, and six electives. A pre-thesis tutorial (CMS.THT) and thesis (CMS.THU) may be substituted for one elective.

Bachelor of Science in Writing (Course 21W)

The writing major offers students the opportunity to study the craft, forms, and traditions of contemporary writing, journalism, and digital media. Some students explore writing as a means of artistic expression. Some learn how to write for a variety of media or to communicate the results of their science and technical work to broad audiences and members of their professions. Others work collaboratively within the evolving framework of digital media to become skillful in interactive and nonlinear forms of communication. All subjects in the major emphasize the development of the foundational skills, creative initiative, and critical sensibility necessary to become a good writer.

Subjects in the program's three areas of emphasis—creative writing, science writing, and nonfiction writing—are taught at both introductory and advanced levels. All subjects require extensive writing and revision. Student work is typically discussed in workshops and receives the written commentary of the instructor.

Joint Degree Programs in Comparative Media Studies

The joint undergraduate degree program in CMS (21E or 21S) requires eight CMS subjects, plus six subjects in an engineering or science major. Students are required to take CMS.100 Introduction to Media Studies, a Media Practice and Production subject, CMS.701 Current Debates in Media, and five CMS electives. A pre-thesis tutorial (CMS.THT) and thesis (CMS.THU) may be substituted for one CMS elective. Students must obtain approval for their CMS subject selection from their CMS faculty advisor, and approval for their engineering or science subjects from a faculty advisor in the relevant field. See joint degree programs (<https://catalog.mit.edu/schools/humanities-arts-social-sciences/humanities/#undergraduatetext>) under the Department of Humanities section.

Joint Degree Programs in Writing

The joint undergraduate degree program in 21W (21E or 21S) requires seven subjects in writing, a writing pre-thesis (21W.THT) and thesis (21W.THU), plus six subjects in an engineering or science major. Students must obtain approval for their writing subject selection from their writing faculty advisor, and approval for their engineering or science subjects from a faculty advisor in the relevant field. See joint degree programs (<https://catalog.mit.edu/schools/humanities-arts-social-sciences/humanities/#undergraduatetext>) under the Department of Humanities section.

Minor in Comparative Media Studies

The Comparative Media Studies minor requires six subjects: one introductory, one intermediate, one capstone, and three electives.

Introductory		
CMS.100	Introduction to Media Studies	12
Intermediate		
Select one of the following:		12
CMS.335[J]	Short Attention Span Documentary	
CMS.362	Civic Media Collaborative Design Studio	
CMS.400	Media Systems and Texts	
CMS.405	Visual Design	
CMS.407	Sound Studies	
CMS.590[J]	Design and Development of Games for Learning	
CMS.609[J]	The Word Made Digital	
CMS.614[J]	Critical Internet Studies	
CMS.627	Imagination, Computation, and Expression Studio	
CMS.628	Advanced Identity Representation	
CMS.633	Digital Humanities: Topics, Techniques, and Technologies	
CMS.634	Designing Interactions	
21W.752	Making Documentary: Audio, Video, and More	
Capstone		
CMS.701	Current Debates in Media	12
Electives		
Select three elective subjects ¹		36
Total Units		72

¹ Consult the list of CMS subjects (<https://catalog.mit.edu/subjects/cms>) offered by Comparative Media Studies/Writing.

Minor in Writing

The minor consists of six subjects arranged in two tiers of study as follows.

Tier I		
Select one of the following:		12
21W.011	Writing and Rhetoric: Rhetoric and Contemporary Issues	
21W.012	Writing and Rhetoric: Food for Thought	
21W.013	Writing and Rhetoric: Introduction to Contemporary Rhetoric	
21W.014	Writing and Rhetoric: Exploring Visual Media	
21W.015	Writing and Rhetoric: Writing about Sports	
21W.016	Writing and Rhetoric: Making Change	
21W.021	Writing and Experience: MIT Inside, Live	
21W.022	Writing and Experience: Reading and Writing Autobiography	
21W.031	Science Writing and New Media: Explorations in Communicating about Science and Technology	
21W.034	Science Writing and New Media: Perspectives on Medicine and Public Health	
21W.035	Science Writing and New Media: Elements of Science Writing for the Public	
21W.036	Science Writing and New Media: Writing and the Environment	
21W.041[J]	Writing About Literature	
21W.042[J]	Writing with Shakespeare	
21W.755	Writing and Reading Short Stories	
21W.756	Writing and Reading Poems	

Tier II		
Select five subjects within Writing ¹		60

Total Units		72
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¹ See the subject listing (<https://catalog.mit.edu/subjects/21w>) for information about available subjects.

Graduate Study

Master of Science in Science Writing

The one-year graduate program in Science Writing leads to a Master of Science in Science Writing, and it is aimed at students who wish to write about science and technology for general readers, in ordinary newsstand magazines and newspapers, in popular and semi-popular books, on the walls of museums, or on television or radio programs. Students may be graduates of undergraduate science, engineering, journalism, or writing programs; experienced

journalists and freelance writers; working scientists or engineers; historians of science and technology; or other scholars, including those already holding advanced degrees.

The program is built around an intensive year-long advanced science writing seminar. In addition, students choose one elective each semester, write a substantial thesis, observe in a lab, and complete an internship. Complete program information (<http://sciwrite.mit.edu>) is available on the website. The graduate program maintains links to MIT's Program in Science, Technology, and Society; and to the Knight Science Journalism Program. For more information, see the descriptions of the Science, Technology, and Society Program (<https://catalog.mit.edu/schools/humanities-arts-social-sciences/science-technology-society>) and Research and Study for more information about the Knight Science Journalism Program (<http://catalog.mit.edu/mit/research/knight-science-journalism-program>).

Inquiries

Further information on subjects and programs may be obtained from the Comparative Media Studies/Writing office (cmsw@mit.edu), Room 14N-338, 617-253-3599.

Faculty and Teaching Staff

Seth Mnookin, BA
Professor of Science Writing
Head, Comparative Media Studies/Writing Program

Professors

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Professor of Comparative Media Studies/Writing
Professor of Anthropology

Junot Díaz, MFA
Rudge (1948) and Nancy Allen Professor
Professor of Writing
(On leave)

D. Fox Harrell Jr, PhD
Professor of Digital Media
Member, Institute for Data, Systems, and Society

Eric Klopfer, PhD
Professor of Comparative Media Studies
Professor of Education
(On leave)

Helen Elaine Lee, JD
Professor of Fiction Writing

Thomas Levenson, BA
Professor of Science Writing

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(On leave, fall)

Edward Schiappa, PhD
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Professor of Comparative Media Studies/Writing

T. L. Taylor, PhD
Professor of Comparative Media Studies
Professor of Anthropology

Associate Professors

Vivek Bald, PhD
Associate Professor of Writing and Digital Media

Paloma Duong, PhD
Associate Professor of Media Studies and Latin American Studies

Marah Gubar, PhD
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(On leave)

Justin Reich, EdD
Associate Professor of Comparative Media Studies/Writing
(On leave)

Paul Roquet, PhD
Associate Professor of Media Studies and Japan Studies

Assistant Professors

Crystal Lee, PhD
Assistant Professor of Comparative Media Studies
Member, Institute for Data, Systems, and Society

Professors of the Practice

Alan Paige Lightman, PhD
Professor of the Practice of the Humanities

Senior Lecturers

Edward C. Barrett, PhD
Senior Lecturer in Writing

Lecturers

Fatin Abbas, PhD
Lecturer in Comparative Media Studies/Writing

Jane Abbott, MA
Lecturer in Comparative Media Studies/Writing

Atissa Banuazizi, MA
Lecturer in Comparative Media Studies/Writing

COMPARATIVE MEDIA STUDIES/WRITING

Caroline Beimford, MA
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Malcah Efron, PhD
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Christopher M. Featherman, PhD
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Elizabeth Fox, PhD
Lecturer in Comparative Media Studies/Writing

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Louise Harrison Lepera, MA
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Robert A. Irwin, PhD
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Research Staff

Research Scientists

Richard Eberhardt, BA
Research Scientist of Comparative Media Studies/Writing

Mikael Jakobsson, PhD
Research Scientist of Comparative Media Studies/Writing

Philip Tan, MS
Research Scientist of Comparative Media Studies/Writing

Sarah Wolozin, BA
Research Scientist of Comparative Media Studies/Writing

Professors Emeriti

Marcia Bartusiak, MS
Professor of the Practice Emerita in Comparative Media Studies/
Writing

Anita Desai, BA
John E. Burchard Professor Emerita of Humanities

Joe Haldeman, MFA
Adjunct Professor Emeritus of Fiction

Robert Kanigel, BS
Professor Emeritus of Science Writing

James G. Paradis, PhD
Robert M. Metcalfe Professor Emeritus of Writing

William C. Uricchio, PhD
Professor Emeritus of Comparative Media Studies

Undergraduate Subjects

CMS.100 Introduction to Media Studies

Prereq: None
U (Fall, Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Offers an overview of the social, cultural, political, and economic impact of mediated communication on modern culture. Combines critical discussions with experiments working with different media. Media covered include radio, television, film, the printed word, and digital technologies. Topics include the nature and function of media, core media institutions, and media in transition. Enrollment limited.

Staff

CMS.125[[J](#)] Liberalism, Toleration, and Freedom of Speech (New)

Same subject as [17.043\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#), [24.150\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#)
Prereq: None
Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered
Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)
3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject [24.150\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#).

A. Byrne, B. Skow

CMS.150[[J](#)] Black Matters: Introduction to Black Studies

Same subject as [24.912\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#), [21H.106\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#), [21L.008\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#), [21W.741\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#),
[WGS.190\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#)
Prereq: None
U (Spring)
3-0-9 units. HASS-A, HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject [24.912\[\[J\]\(#\)\]](#).

D. Wood, D. Harrell, M. DeGraff

CMS.300 Game Studies

Subject meets with CMS.841
Prereq: None
U (Fall)
3-3-6 units. HASS-H

Introduction to the interdisciplinary study of videogames as texts through an examination of their cultural, educational, and social functions in contemporary settings. Students play and analyze videogames while reading current research and theory from a variety of sources in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and industry. Assignments focus on game analysis in the context of the theories discussed in class. Includes regular reading, writing, and presentation exercises. No prior programming experience required. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

M. Jakobsson

CMS.301 Game Design Methods

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Provides an introduction to the process of designing games and playful experiences. Familiarizes students with concepts, methods, techniques and tools used in the design of a wide variety of games. Focuses on aspects of the process such as rapid prototyping, play testing, and design iteration using a player-centered approach. Students work in project groups where they engage with a series of confined exercises, practice communicating design ideas, and discuss their own and others work in a constructive manner. No prior programming experience required. Limited to 15.

*S. Verrilli***CMS.303 DJ History, Technique, and Technology**

Subject meets with CMS.803

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students explore a chosen contemporary or historical dance scene from around the world. Lectures examine the evolution of the craft and technologies of the DJ. Presents foundational practices of live DJ mixing; practice equipment is accessible to teams of students. Assignments include writing a report analyzing a book on DJ history or technique, producing a complete mix, and participation in an end-of-term performance. No prior experience is necessary, but students must sustain interest in some form of popular dance music, broadly defined. Graduate students complete additional assignments. Limited to 24.

*P. Tan***CMS.306 Making Comics and Sequential Art**

Subject meets with CMS.806

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Applied introduction to comics and sequential art production. Builds skills in how to develop storylines; develop and draw characters, panels, and backgrounds; prepare for print production; and comprehend the basics of sequential language, composition, and layout. Students engage with crucial personal and political issues at stake across a range of comics genres: superhero, biographical, and countercultural. Addresses not just how we create comics, but why we create comics. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 16.

*Staff***CMS.307 Critical Worldbuilding**

Subject meets with CMS.807

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

3-3-6 units. HASS-A

Studies the design and analysis of invented (or constructed) worlds for narrative media, such as television, films, comics, and literary texts. Provides the practical, historical and critical tools with which to understand the function and structure of imagined worlds. Examines world-building strategies in the various media and genres in order to develop a critical and creative repertoire. Participants create their own invented worlds. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 13.

*J. Diaz***CMS.309[[]] Transmedia Storytelling: Modern Science Fiction**

Same subject as 21W.763[[]]

Subject meets with CMS.809

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-2-7 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21W.763[[]].

*S. Lewitt***CMS.311[[]] Media in Weimar and Nazi Germany**

Same subject as 21G.055[[]]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

2-2-8 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Debates over national and media identity in Weimar and Nazi Germany. Production and use of media under extreme political and social conditions with a focus on films (such as *Nosferatu*, *Berlin, M*, and *Triumph des Willens*) and other media. Media approached as both texts and systems. Considers the legacy of the period, in terms of stylistic influence (e.g. film noir), techniques of persuasion, and media's relationship to social and economic conditions. Taught in English. Enrollment limited.

Staff

CMS.313 Silent Film

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units. HASS-H

Examines how the key elements of today's films - composition, continuity editing, lighting, narrative structure - were originally created. Studies the history of cinema, from its origins in the late 19th century to the transition to sound in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Students view a range of films (both mainstream and experimental) from all over the world, with a particular focus on US productions. Emphasis on how color, sound, and other developments paved the way for today's technological innovations. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.
H. Hendershot

CMS.314[J] Phantasmal Media: Computer-Based Art Theory and Practice

Same subject as 21W.753[J]

Subject meets with CMS.814

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Engages students in theory and practice of using computational techniques for developing expressive digital media works. Surveys approaches to understanding human imaginative processes, such as constructing concepts, metaphors, and narratives, and applies them to producing and understanding socially, culturally, and critically meaningful works in digital media. Readings engage a variety of theoretical perspectives from cognitive linguistics, literary and cultural theory, semiotics, digital media arts, and computer science. Students produce interactive narratives, games, and related forms of software art. Some programming and/or interactive web scripting experience (e.g., Flash, Javascript) is desirable. Students taking the graduate version complete a project requiring more in-depth theoretical engagement.
D. F. Harrell

CMS.315[J] Understanding Television

Same subject as 21L.432[J]

Subject meets with CMS.915

Prereq: One subject in Literature or Comparative Media Studies

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

See description under subject 21L.432[J].

*D. Thorburn***CMS.334[J] South Asian America: Transnational Media, Culture, and History**

Same subject as 21W.788[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 21W.788[J]. Limited to 18.

*V. Bald***CMS.335[J] Short Attention Span Documentary**

Same subject as 21W.790[J]

Subject meets with 21W.890

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21W.790[J]. Limited to 16.

*V. Bald***CMS.336[J] Social Justice and The Documentary Film**

Same subject as 21W.786[J]

Subject meets with CMS.836

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21W.786[J]. Limited to 18.

*V. Bald***CMS.337[J] Intersectionality, Neurodiversity, and Disability (New)**

Same subject as WGS.137[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

See description under subject WGS.137[J].

K. Ragusa

CMS.338 Innovation in Documentary: Technologies and Techniques

Subject meets with CMS.838

Prereq: CMS.100 or permission of instructor

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Discusses emerging technologies and techniques available to media-makers (e.g., location-based technologies, transmedia storytelling, crowdsourcing, and interactivity) and their implications on the film and television documentary. Studies the development of these tools and considers the many new directions in which they may take the genre. Includes screenings, meetings with documentary makers, and an experimental component in which students can explore new approaches to documentary production. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Staff

CMS.339 Virtual Reality and Immersive Media Production

Subject meets with CMS.839

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Provides an overview of historical developments and current innovations in virtual reality (e.g., gear, software, and storytelling techniques) and looks into new trends in augmented, mixed and holographic reality. Includes practical instruction and a step-by-step exploration of the fundamentals of virtual reality creation - from new visual languages and grammars, to storyboarding, scripting, sound design and editing, to new and innovative ways to capture, scan and reproduce 360-degree images. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

Staff

CMS.340 Immersive Media Studies

Subject meets with CMS.865

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Critical examination of the history, aesthetics, and politics of virtual reality and related media. Focuses on virtual space and embodiment; cultural reception and industry hype; accessibility, surveillance, and data privacy; and debates surrounding the use of immersive media in social, work, art, and entertainment contexts. Projects include experimentation with VR development tools and critical analysis of existing immersive works. Graduate version includes additional research. Enrollment limited to 15.

P. Roquet

CMS.341 Immersive Social Worlds

Subject meets with CMS.941

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Focuses on critical media sociology of immersive social worlds, from digital environments and avatar-based worlds to live action role-play (LARP) and theme parks. Draws on both historical and contemporary cases. Investigates key issues including communication and community; authorship and co-creativity; embodiment and identity; and ownership, governance, and management. Attention given to cultural and socio-technical nature of these environments and their ongoing construction within a broader media system. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited to 15.

T. L. Taylor

CMS.342[J] Designing Virtual Worlds

Same subject as 2.177[J]

Subject meets with 2.178[J], CMS.942[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

4-2-6 units

See description under subject 2.177[J].

K. Zolot

CMS.343[J] The Art and Science of Time Travel

Same subject as 2.984[J]

Prereq: 8.02 and 18.02

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

See description under subject 2.984[J]. Limited to 20.

S. Lloyd, M. Reilly

CMS.351[J] Digital Media in Japan and Korea

Same subject as 21G.067[J]
 Subject meets with 21G.597
 Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered
 Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines the social, cultural, and political stakes of digital culture in Japan and Korea. Focuses on digital media use (and abuse), including the internet, streaming and mobile media, gaming, robots, and augmented realities; the digital remediation of older media; and methods for the study of online life. By considering how digital media use has developed in each country and reshaped identity, politics, public space, and creative practice, students build a conceptual and critical vocabulary for the comparative study of algorithmic cultures. Taught in English.

P. Roquet

CMS.352[J] Cinema in Japan and Korea

Same subject as 21G.094[J]
 Subject meets with 21G.594
 Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered
 Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Focuses on landmark art cinema from both countries while providing a thorough introduction to film style. Each week examines a different component of film form, using the close analysis of specific films in their cultural and historical context. Explores the use of video essays as a form of critical analysis. Taught in English.

P. Roquet

CMS.353[J] The New Latin American Novel

Same subject as 21G.072[J]
 Prereq: None
 U (Fall)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Students read newly translated, recent fiction from Latin America and consider contemporary issues in, and approaches to, reading and writing literature in the 21st century. Debates the concept of contemporary in these texts and whether we can still talk about a Latin American novel. Reflects on issues of interpretation, authorship, gender, genre, media, ideology and theories of the novel, Latin American literary history, and translation. Authors may include César Aira, Mario Levrero, Samanta Schweblin, Yuri Herrera, Ena Lucía Portela, Valeria Luiselli, Roberto Bolaño, Marlon James, and J. P. Cuenca. Enrollment limited.

P. Duong

CMS.354[J] Japanese Media Cultures

Same subject as 21G.065[J]
 Subject meets with 21G.593
 Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Examines storytelling media in twentieth and twenty-first century Japan, situating emerging media aesthetics and practices alongside broader shifts in cultural and social life. Engages with pivotal works in a wide range of media including film, literature, anime, manga, and video games, as well as critical concepts in Japanese media studies. Taught in English. 21G.593 includes additional work in Japanese. Enrollment limited.

Consult P. Roquet

CMS.355[J] Latin America and the Global Sixties: Counterculture and Revolution

Same subject as 21G.070[J]
 Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered
 Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Close reading of political issues, cultural artifacts, and social actors of Latin America during and in the wake of the revolutionary 1960s. Examines how culture and politics addressed the need to conceptually organize a series of events that were equally momentous and confusing. Questions the established stereotypes and assumptions about Latin America and the sixties that are portrayed in its contemporary, often nostalgic, revivals. Focuses on the ideas that defined Latin America's participation in a global trend of political upheavals, emerging youth cultures, and demands for social justice. Taught in English. Enrollment limited.

P. Duong

CMS.356[J] Advertising and Media: Comparative Perspectives

Same subject as 21G.036[J]
 Subject meets with 21G.190, CMS.888
 Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 21G.036[J].

Staff

CMS.357[J] Creation of a Continent: Media Representations of Hispanic America, 1492 to present

Same subject as 21G.731[J], 21H.274[J]

Prereq: One intermediate Spanish subject or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Traces the creation of a new literature in Spanish to record and interpret New World experiences. Begins with excerpts from Columbus's diary and ends with writings on the late 19th-century Cuban and Puerto Rican independence movements. Pairs some of these pre-20th-century texts with more recent literary and film interpretations of the first 400 years of Hispanic American history. Conducted in Spanish.

*P. Duong***CMS.358[J] The Short Form: Literature and New Media Cultures in the Hispanic World**

Same subject as 21G.736[J]

Prereq: One intermediate subject in Spanish or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines the aesthetics of the brief form across a variety of media and genres in Latin America and Spain, from short stories and snapshots to newspapers and Twitter. Explores the history and social significance of four short genres in the Hispanic world: the short story, the crónica, the poem, and the song. Discusses the rich literary and critical tradition that relates narrative length and temporality to the prose and the lyric in Spanish speaking cultures. With an emphasis on the 20th- and 21st-century epistemologies of acceleration and the remediation of literary theories of brevity, analyzes the relationship between temporality, aesthetic form, and media technologies, and the way these topics have taken shape in the imagination of writers, artists, and audiences in historically specific and politically significant contexts. Taught in Spanish. Limited to 18.

*P. Duong***CMS.359[J] Three Kingdoms: From History to Fiction, Comic, Film, and Game**

Same subject as 21G.042[J], 21H.352[J], 21L.492[J]

Subject meets with 21G.133

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 21G.042[J].

*E. Teng***CMS.360 Introduction to Civic Media**

Subject meets with CMS.860

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines civic media in comparative, transnational and historical perspectives. Introduces various theoretical tools, research approaches, and project design methods. Students engage with multimedia texts on concepts such as citizen journalism, transmedia activism, media justice, and civic, public, radical, and tactical media. Case studies explore civic media across platforms (print, radio, broadcast, internet), contexts (from local to global, present-day to historical), and use (dialogic, contentious, hacktivist). As a final project, students develop a case study or project proposal. Students taking the graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

*Staff***CMS.361 Networked Social Movements: Media and Mobilization**

Subject meets with CMS.861

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Provides an overview of social movement studies as a body of theoretical and empirical work, with an emphasis on understanding the relationship between social movements and the media. Explores multiple methods of social movement investigation, including textual and media analysis, surveys, interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and co-research. Covers recent innovations in social movement theory, as well as new data sources and tools for research and analysis. Includes short papers, a literature review, and a final research project. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 16.

Staff

CMS.362 Civic Media Collaborative Design Studio

Subject meets with CMS.862

Prereq: One subject in CMS or MAS

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Can be repeated for credit.

Project-based studio focusing on collaborative design of civic media provides a service-learning opportunity for students interested in working with community organizations. Multidisciplinary teams create civic media projects based on real-world community needs. Covers co-design methods and best practices to include the user community in iterative stages of project ideation, design, implementation, testing, and evaluation. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 16.

Staff

CMS.374[J] Transmedia Art, Extraction, and Environmental Justice

Same subject as 4.376[J]

Subject meets with CMS.877

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

2-3-7 units. HASS-A

Exploration of today's extractive economies and the role that artists, media-makers, and transmedia producers play in shaping public perception, individual choices, and movement-building towards sustainability. Traces the contingent geological, material, community, and toxic histories of extracted materials used throughout our built environment, as well as civic resistance and reform that could alter extraction practices. Scaffolded workshops with artists and media producers support students' production of creative documentary and other media projects. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Barry

CMS.375 Reading Climate Through Media

Subject meets with CMS.875

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Explores how climate is construed in the contemporary media in order to gain a better understanding of how views of climate change are shaped and received in the public sphere. Studies the pathways that take us from climate science to media content, from the big data of global scale to the particulars and narratives of the human experience. Surveys a variety of media forms--reports, articles, comics, videos, films, photography, poetry and fiction--that reflect on the contemporary human challenges of dealing with a changing natural environment of our own making. Emphasizes the role of media in shaping public opinion, both in the US and globally, and its influence on public (and voter) perceptions on which a vast body of regulation and funding for environmental management is based. Students work individually and in teams to produce a selection of the media forms studied. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

Staff

CMS.376 History of Media and Technology

Subject meets with CMS.876

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Surveys the interrelated histories of communications media and technological development, from the emergence of 19th-century forms of mass print media and telegraphy, to sound capture and image-based forms (e.g., film, radio, and television), to the shift from analog to digital cultures. Examines how new forms of communication exert social, political, and cultural influences in the global context. Explores how technological innovation and accelerating media affect social values and behaviors in the popular and global adoption of a media device. Includes two papers and a research project on aspects of media history. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Enrollment limited.

J. Paradis

CMS.400 Media Systems and Texts

Prereq: One subject in Comparative Media Studies or permission of instructor

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Explores theoretical, historical and critical approaches to the comparative study of media. Examines media from three perspectives: the historical evolution of particular media forms (media in transition); the migration of particular narratives across different media forms (trans-media texts); and the ways in which media texts and systems cross cultural and national boundaries (global crossings). Instruction and practice in written and oral communication provided.

P. Roquet

CMS.405 Visual Design

Prereq: 21L.011 or CMS.100

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines the process of making and sharing visual artifacts using a trans-cultural, trans-historical, constructionist approach. Explores the relationship between perceived reality and the narrative imagination, how an author's choice of medium and method constrains the work, how desire is integrated into the structure of a work, and how the cultural/economic opportunity for exhibition/distribution affects the realization of a work. Instruction and practice in written and oral communication provided. Limited to 20.

Staff

CMS.406[J] The Anthropology of Sound (New)

Same subject as 21A.505[J], STS.065[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

See description under subject 21A.505[J].

S. Helmreich

CMS.407 Sound Studies

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Explores the ways in which humans experience the realm of sound and how perceptions and technologies of sound emerge from cultural, economic, and historical worlds. Examines how environmental, linguistic, and musical sounds are construed cross-culturally. Describes the rise of telephony, architectural acoustics, and sound recording, and the globalized travel of these technologies. Addresses questions of ownership, property, authorship, and copyright in the age of digital file sharing. Particular focus on how the sound/noise boundary is imagined, created and modeled across diverse sociocultural and scientific contexts. Auditory examples--sound art, environmental recordings, music--will be provided and invited. Instruction and practice in written and oral communication provided. Limited to 20.

J. Picker

CMS.418[J] Gender in the Visual Arts (New)

Same subject as WGS.118[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject WGS.118[J].

Staff

CMS.481[J] Queer Cinema and Visual Culture (New)

Same subject as WGS.181[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject WGS.181[J].

Staff

CMS.524[J] Thinking on Your Feet: Dance as a Learning Science (New)

Same subject as STS.024[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Fall)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject STS.024[J]. Limited to 20 students.

J. S. Light

CMS.586[J] Introduction to Education: Looking Forward and Looking Back on Education

Same subject as 11.124[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-6-3 units. HASS-S; CI-H

One of two introductory subjects on teaching and learning science and mathematics in a variety of K-12 settings. Topics include education and media, education reform, the history of education, simulations, games, and the digital divide. Students gain practical experience through weekly visits to schools, classroom discussions, selected readings, and activities to develop a critical and broad understanding of past and current forces that shape the goals and processes of education, and explores the challenges and opportunities of teaching. Students work collaboratively and individually on papers, projects, and in-class presentations. Limited to 25.

*E. Klopfer***CMS.587[J] Introduction to Education: Understanding and Evaluating Education**

Same subject as 11.125[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-6-3 units. HASS-S; CI-H

One of two introductory subjects on teaching and learning science and mathematics in a variety of K-12 settings. Topics include student misconceptions, formative assessment, standards and standardized testing, multiple intelligences, and educational technology. Students gain practical experience through weekly visits to schools, classroom discussions, selected readings, and activities to develop a critical and broad understanding of past and current forces that shape the goals and processes of education, and explores the challenges and opportunities of teaching. Students work collaboratively and individually on papers, projects, and in-class presentations. Limited to 25.

*E. Klopfer***CMS.590[J] Design and Development of Games for Learning**

Same subject as 11.127[J]

Subject meets with 11.252[J], CMS.863[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-6-3 units. HASS-H

Immerses students in the process of building and testing their own digital and board games in order to better understand how we learn from games. Explores the design and use of games in the classroom in addition to research and development issues associated with computer-based (desktop and handheld) and non-computer-based media. In developing their own games, students examine what and how people learn from them (including field testing of products), as well as how games can be implemented in educational settings. All levels of computer experience welcome. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*E. Klopfer***CMS.591[J] Educational Theory and Practice I**

Same subject as 11.129[J]

Prereq: None. *Coreq: CMS.586[J]*

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Concentrates on core set of skills and knowledge necessary for teaching in secondary schools. Topics include classroom management, student behavior and motivation, curriculum design, educational reform, and the teaching profession. Classroom observation is a key component. Assignments include readings from educational literature, written reflections on classroom observations, practice teaching and constructing curriculum. The first of the three-course sequence necessary to complete the Teacher Education Program. Limited to 15; preference to juniors and seniors.

*G. Schwanbeck***CMS.592[J] Educational Theory and Practice II**

Same subject as 11.130[J]

Prereq: CMS.591[J]

U (IAP)

3-0-9 units

Concentrates on the theory and psychology associated with student learning. Topics include educational theory, educational psychology, and theories of learning. Students assume responsibility for full-time teaching of two or more classes at their designated school. Class sessions focus on debriefing and problem-solving. Second of a three-course sequence necessary to complete the Teacher Education Program.

G. Schwanbeck

CMS.593[J] Educational Theory and Practice III

Same subject as 11.131[J]

Prereq: CMS.592[J]

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Students continue their IAP student teaching through mid March. Topics include educational psychology, theories of learning, and using technology and evaluating its effectiveness to enhance student learning. Assignments include readings from educational literature, written reflections on student teaching, presentations on class topics and creating a project that supports student learning at the school where the MIT student is teaching. This is the third of the three-course sequence necessary to complete the Teacher Education Program.

G. Schwanbeck

CMS.594 Education Technology Studio

Subject meets with CMS.894

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Can be repeated for credit.

Uses media and technology to develop new forms of learning experiences for schools, workplace, and informal settings. Students participate in a range of projects that hone understanding and skills in learning science, instructional design, development, and evaluation. Topics vary but include developing new media and activities for massive open online courses, creating practice spaces for practitioners in the professions and humanities, and developing new approaches to assessment in complex learning environments. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if project content differs. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Reich

CMS.595 Learning, Media, and Technology

Subject meets with CMS.895

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Addresses new digital technologies that are transforming learning across the lifespan - from reading apps for toddlers, intelligent tutors for school children, and blended learning for college students, to MOOCs for adults and interest-based learning communities for hobbyists. Focuses on how these technologies shape people's lives and learning. Students explore how education technologies operate in complex social-technical systems, and acquire analytic tools and strategies that can be applied to other complex systems. They also refine their thinking about the opportunities, limits, and tradeoffs of educational technology. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Reich

CMS.603 Independent Study

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Opportunity for individual research in comparative media studies. Registration subject to prior arrangement for subject matter and supervision by a faculty member.

Staff

CMS.604 Independent Study

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Opportunity for individual research in comparative media studies. Registration subject to prior arrangement for subject matter and supervision by a faculty member.

Staff

CMS.605 Media Internship

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Part-time internships arranged in Boston and the wider Northeast for students wishing to develop professional experience in a media production organization or industry. Students work with a CMS faculty advisor to produce a white paper on a research topic of interest based on their intern experience. Students planning to take this subject must contact the instructor before the end of the preceding term.

*Staff***CMS.606 Media Internship**

Prereq: None

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Part-time internships arranged in Boston and the wider Northeast for students wishing to develop professional experience in a media production organization or industry. Students work with a CMS/W faculty advisor to produce a white paper on a research topic of interest based on their intern experience. Students planning to take this subject must contact the instructor before the end of the preceding term.

*Staff***CMS.609[J] The Word Made Digital**

Same subject as 21W.764[J]

Subject meets with CMS.846

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21W.764[J]. Limited to 18.

*N. Montfort***CMS.611[J] Creating Video Games**

Same subject as 6.4570[J]

Prereq: 6.100A or CMS.301

U (Fall)

3-3-6 units. HASS-A

Introduces students to the complexities of working in small, multidisciplinary teams to develop video games. Covers creative design and production methods, stressing design iteration and regular testing across all aspects of game development (design, visual arts, music, fiction, and programming). Assumes a familiarity with current video games, and the ability to discuss games critically. Previous experience in audio design, visual arts, or project management recommended. Limited to 36.

*P. Tan, S. Verrilli, R. Eberhardt***CMS.614[J] Critical Internet Studies**

Same subject as 21W.791[J], WGS.280[J]

Subject meets with IDS.405

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Focuses on the power dynamics in internet-related technologies (including social networking platforms, surveillance technology, entertainment technologies, and emerging media forms). Theories and readings focus on the cultural, social, economic, and political aspects of internet use and design, with a special attention to gender and race. Topics include: online communication and communities, algorithms and search engines, activism and online resistance, surveillance and privacy, content moderation and platform governance, and the spread of dis- and misinformation. Instruction and practice in written and oral communication provided. Students taking the graduate version complete additional readings and assignments.

T. L. Taylor

CMS.615 Games for Social Change

Subject meets with CMS.815

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines how various movements have tried over time to create games that enable players to enact social change. Students collaborate in teams to design and prototype games for social change and civic engagement. In a workshop setting, teams develop games and showcase them at an end-of-term open house. Features guest speakers from academia and industry as well as the nonprofit sector and the gaming community. Readings explore principals of game design and the social history of games. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

S. Osterweil

CMS.616[J] Games and Culture

Same subject as 21W.768[J], WGS.125[J]

Subject meets with CMS.868

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Examines the social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of digital games. Topics include the culture of gameplay, gaming styles, communities, spectatorship and performance, gender and race within digital gaming, and the politics and economics of production processes, including co-creation and intellectual property. Students taking graduate version complete additional readings and assignments.

T. L. Taylor

CMS.618[J] Interactive Narrative

Same subject as 21L.489[J], 21W.765[J]

Subject meets with CMS.845

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21W.765[J].

N. Montfort

CMS.619[J] Gender and Media Studies

Same subject as WGS.111[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Fall)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject WGS.111[J].

Staff

CMS.621 Fans and Fan Cultures

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines media audiences - specifically, fans - and the subcultures that evolve around them. Examines the different historical, contemporary and transnational understandings of fans. Explores products of fan culture, i.e., clubs, fiction, "vids," activism, etc. Readings place these products within the context of various disciplines. Students consider the concept of the "aca-fan" and reflect on their own "fannish" practices. Requires several short papers. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

E. Schiappa

CMS.627 Imagination, Computation, and Expression Studio

Subject meets with CMS.827

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

Aims to help students invent and analyze new forms of computer-based art, gaming, social media, interactive narrative, and related technologies. Students participate in a range of new and ongoing projects that are designed to hone skills in research, development, design, and evaluation. Topics vary from year to year; examples include cognitive science and artificial intelligence-based approaches to the arts; social aspects of game design; computing for social empowerment; and game character, avatar, and online profile design. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

D. F. Harrell

CMS.628 Advanced Identity Representation

Subject meets with CMS.828
 Prereq: Permission of instructor
 Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered
 Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A
 Can be repeated for credit.

Studies and develops computational identity systems for games, social media, virtual worlds, and computer-based artwork. An interdisciplinary set of readings (cognitive science, computer science, art, and sociology) looks at both the underlying technology and the social/cultural aspects of identity. Includes topics such as developing improved characters, avatars, agents, social networking profiles, and online accounts. Engages students in on-going research projects. Explores how social categories are formed in digital media, including gender, class, and ethnicity, along with everyday social categories (such as those based on personality or shared media preferences). Experience required in one of the following: computer programming, graphic design, web development, interaction design, or social science research methods. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

D. F. Harrell

CMS.631 Data Storytelling Studio

Subject meets with CMS.831
 Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Explores visualization methodologies to conceive and represent systems and data, e.g., financial, media, economic, political, etc. Covers basic methods for research, cleaning, and analysis of datasets. Introduces creative methods of data presentation and storytelling. Considers the emotional, aesthetic, ethical, and practical effects of different presentation methods as well as how to develop metrics for assessing impact. Work centers on readings, visualization exercises, and a final project. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Staff

CMS.633 Digital Humanities: Topics, Techniques, and Technologies

Subject meets with CMS.833
 Prereq: None
 Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered
 Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)
 3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines theory and practice of using computational methods in the emerging field of digital humanities. Develops a critical understanding of key digital humanities concepts such as data representation, digital curation, information visualization, and user interaction through the study of contemporary research in conjunction with working on real-world projects for scholarly, educational, and public needs. Students create prototypes, write design papers, and conduct user studies. Some programming and design experience is helpful but not required. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Staff

CMS.634 Designing Interactions

Prereq: None
 U (Spring)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 3-3-6 units. HASS-E
 Can be repeated for credit.

Explores the future of mobile interactions and pervasive computing, taking into consideration design, technological, social and business aspects. Discusses theoretical works on human-computer interaction, mobile media and interaction design, and covers research and design methods. Students work in multidisciplinary teams and participate in user-centric design projects aimed to study, imagine and prototype concepts illustrating the future of mobile applications and ubiquitous computing. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Repeatable for credit with permission of instructor. Limited to 12.

F. Casalegno, T. Nagakura

CMS.635 Designing Active Archives

Subject meets with CMS.835

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Investigates the digital archive as an emerging platform for critical inquiry and creative engagement through analysis, conceptualization, and experimentation with user-oriented design. Readings provide theoretical, analytical, and practical perspectives on topics such as participatory digital culture, data curation, visualization, and the archive's role in activism. Students work throughout the term to develop a group project. Students taking graduate version complete additional readings and assignments.

Staff

CMS.636 Extending the Museum

Subject meets with CMS.855

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Investigates the museum as a participatory public space and rethinks visitor engagement and museum education in light of digital technologies, including extended reality (XR) technologies. Students develop concepts, models, and prototypes that integrate physical and digital spaces in novel ways in close collaboration with partners at local museums. Readings provide theoretical, critical, and analytical foundations for collaborative class projects. Students taking graduate version complete additional readings and assignments.

Staff

CMS.701 Current Debates in Media

Subject meets with CMS.901

Prereq: CMS.100

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Addresses important, current debates in media with in-depth discussion of popular perceptions and policy implications. Students use multiple perspectives to analyze texts emanating from these debates, and present their findings through discussions and reports. Explores emerging topics (e.g., piracy and IP regimes, net neutrality, media effects, social media and social change, and changing literacies) across media forms and from various historical, transcultural, and methodological perspectives. Examines the framing of these issues, their ethical and policy implications, and strategies for repositioning the debate. Instruction and practice in written and oral communication provided. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Staff

CMS.702 Qualitative Research Methods

Subject meets with CMS.802

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

Focuses on a number of qualitative social science methods including interviewing, participant observation, focus groups, cultural probes, and visual sociology. Primary emphasis on understanding and learning concrete techniques that can be evaluated and utilized in any given project. Data organization and analysis will be addressed. Several advanced critical thematics are also covered, including ethics, reciprocity, "studying up," and risk. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

T. L. Taylor

CMS.S60[J] Special Subject: Rap Theory and Practice

Same subject as 21L.S60[J]

Subject meets with CMS.S96

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

To gain a deeper understanding of rap, students engage in the full process of creating rap music, including composing lyrics, recording, performing, and creating an EP length album. Existing rap music is studied, selected lyrics are analyzed, and possible reasons for the structure and success of different songs are presented in case studies. Students analyze rap songs, reflect on their own weekly activities in writing and present their work in class by playing recordings, performing and responding to each other in workshop discussions. Licensed for Fall 2024 by the Committee on Curricula. Limited to 10.

W. Jaco

CMS.S61 Special Subject: Comparative Media Studies

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

CMS.S62 Special Subject: Comparative Media Studies

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

*Staff***CMS.S63 Special Subject: Comparative Media Studies**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

*Staff***CMS.THT Comparative Media Studies Pre-Thesis Tutorial**

Prereq: Permission of advisor

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

1-0-5 units

Student works with an advisor to define his/her thesis. By the end of the term, student must have a substantial outline and bibliography for thesis and must have selected a three-person thesis committee.

Advisor must approve outline and bibliography.

*Staff***CMS.THU Undergraduate Thesis in Comparative Media Studies**

Prereq: CMS.THT

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

The CMS Undergraduate Thesis is a substantial research project or comparable exercise. A written thesis ranges in length from 35 to 50 pages. Digital projects are assessed on the quality of research and argumentation, as well as presentation, and must include a substantial written component. Student gives an oral presentation of his/her thesis at the end of the term. Thesis is not required for CMS majors.

*Staff***CMS.UR Research in Comparative Media Studies**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

*Staff***CMS.URG Research in Comparative Media Studies**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

*Staff***Graduate Subjects****CMS.790 Media Theories and Methods I**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units

An advanced introduction to core theoretical and methodological issues in comparative media studies. Topics covered typically include the nature of theory, the gathering and evaluation of evidence, the relationship of media to reality, formal approaches to media analysis, the ethnographic documentation of media audiences, cultural hierarchy and taste, modes of production, models of readership and spectatorship.

*W. Uricchio***CMS.791 Media Theories and Methods II**

Prereq: CMS.790

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units

An advanced introduction to core theoretical and methodological issues in comparative media studies. Topics covered typically include globalization, propaganda and persuasion, social and political effects of media change, political economy and the institutional analysis of media ownership, online communities, privacy and intellectual property, and the role of news and information within democratic cultures.

H. Hendershot

CMS.796 Major Media Texts

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units

Intensive close study and analysis of historically significant media "texts" that have been considered landmarks or have sustained extensive critical and scholarly discussion. Such texts may include oral epic, story cycles, plays, novels, films, opera, television drama and digital works. Emphasizes close reading from a variety of contextual and aesthetic perspectives. Syllabus varies each year, and may be organized around works that have launched new modes and genres, works that reflect upon their own media practices, or on stories that migrate from one medium to another. At least one of the assigned texts is collaboratively taught, and visiting lectures and discussions are a regular feature of the subject.

*L. Parks***CMS.801 Media in Transition**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Centers on historical eras in which the form and function of media technologies were radically transformed. Includes consideration of the "Gutenberg Revolution," the rise of modern mass media, and the "digital revolution," among other case studies of media transformation and cultural change. Readings in cultural and social history and historiographic method.

*E. Schiappa***CMS.802 Qualitative Research Methods**

Subject meets with CMS.702

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Focuses on a number of qualitative social science methods including interviewing, participant observation, focus groups, cultural probes, and visual sociology. Primary emphasis on understanding and learning concrete techniques that can be evaluated and utilized in any given project. Data organization and analysis will be addressed. Several advanced critical thematics are also covered, including ethics, reciprocity, "studying up," and risk. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*T. L. Taylor***CMS.803 DJ History, Technique, and Technology**

Subject meets with CMS.303

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units

Students explore a chosen contemporary or historical dance scene from around the world. Lectures examine the evolution of the craft and technologies of the DJ. Presents foundational practices of live DJ mixing; practice equipment is accessible to teams of students. Assignments include writing a report analyzing a book on DJ history or technique, producing a complete mix, and participation in an end-of-term performance. No prior experience is necessary, but students must sustain interest in some form of popular dance music, broadly defined. Graduate students complete additional assignments. Limited to 24.

*P. Tan***CMS.806 Making Comics and Sequential Art**

Subject meets with CMS.306

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Applied introduction to comics and sequential art production. Builds skills in how to develop storylines; develop and draw characters, panels, and backgrounds; prepare for print production; and comprehend the basics of sequential language, composition, and layout. Students engage with crucial personal and political issues at stake across a range of comics genres: superhero, biographical, and countercultural. Addresses not just how we create comics, but why we create comics. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 16.

*Staff***CMS.807 Critical Worldbuilding**

Subject meets with CMS.307

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Fall)

3-3-6 units

Studies the design and analysis of invented (or constructed) worlds for narrative media, such as television, films, comics, and literary texts. Provides the practical, historical and critical tools with which to understand the function and structure of imagined worlds. Examines world-building strategies in the various media and genres in order to develop a critical and creative repertoire. Participants create their own invented worlds. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 13.

J. Diaz

CMS.809 Transmedia Storytelling: Modern Science Fiction

Subject meets with 21W.763[[]], CMS.309[[]]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Fall)

3-2-7 units

Explores transmedia storytelling by investigating how science fiction stories are told across different media, such as the short story, the novel, the screenplay, moving image, and games. Students consider issues of aesthetics, authorship, and genre, while also contextualizing discussion within the broader framework of the political issues raised by film, TV, and other kinds of science fiction texts. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

S. Lewitt

CMS.813 Silent Film

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units

Examines how the key elements of today's films - composition, continuity editing, lighting, narrative structure - were originally created. Studies the history of cinema, from its origins in the late 19th century to the transition to sound in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Students view a range of films (both mainstream and experimental) from all over the world, with a particular focus on US productions. Emphasis on how color, sound, and other developments paved the way for today's technological innovations. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

H. Hendershot

CMS.814 Phantasmal Media: Computer-Based Art Theory and Practice

Subject meets with 21W.753[[]], CMS.314[[]]

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Engages students in theory and practice of using computational techniques for developing expressive digital media works. Surveys approaches to understanding human imaginative processes, such as constructing concepts, metaphors, and narratives, and applies them to producing and understanding socially, culturally, and critically meaningful works in digital media. Readings engage a variety of theoretical perspectives from cognitive linguistics, literary and cultural theory, semiotics, digital media arts, and computer science. Students produce interactive narratives, games, and related forms of software art. Some programming and/or interactive web scripting experience (e.g., Flash, Javascript) is desirable. Students taking the graduate version complete a project requiring more in-depth theoretical engagement.

D. F. Harrell

CMS.815 Games for Social Change

Subject meets with CMS.615

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Students will collaborate in teams to design and prototype games for social change and civic engagement. Run as a workshop in which student teams develop their games and showcase them at a semester-end open house. Features guest speakers from academia and industry as well as the non-profit sector and the gaming community. Readings will explore principals of game design, and the social history of games. Graduate students will complete additional assignments.

S. Osterweil

CMS.821 Fans and Fan Cultures

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Examines media audiences - specifically, fans - and the subcultures that evolve around them. Examines the different historical, contemporary and transnational understandings of fans. Explores products of fan culture, i.e., clubs, fiction, "vids," activism, etc. Readings place these products within the context of various disciplines. Students consider the concept of the "aca-fan" and reflect on their own "fannish" practices. Requires several short papers. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

*Staff***CMS.827 Imagination, Computation, and Expression Studio**

Subject meets with CMS.627

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: G (Fall)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Aims to help students invent and analyze new forms of computer-based art, gaming, social media, interactive narrative, and related technologies. Students participate in a range of new and ongoing projects that are designed to hone skills in research, development, design, and evaluation. Topics vary from year to year; examples include cognitive science and artificial intelligence-based approaches to the arts; social aspects of game design; computing for social empowerment; and game character, avatar, and online profile design. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*D. F. Harrell***CMS.828 Advanced Identity Representation**

Subject meets with CMS.628

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Studies and develops computational identity systems for games, social media, virtual worlds, and computer-based artwork. An interdisciplinary set of readings (cognitive science, computer science, art, and sociology) looks at both the underlying technology and the social/cultural aspects of identity. Includes topics such as developing improved characters, avatars, agents, social networking profiles, and online accounts. Engages students in on-going research projects. Explores how social categories are formed in digital media, including gender, class, and ethnicity, along with everyday social categories (such as those based on personality or shared media preferences). Experience required in one of the following: computer programming, graphic design, web development, interaction design, or social science research methods. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*D. F. Harrell***CMS.830 Studies in Film**

Subject meets with 21L.706

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Intensive study of films from particular periods, genres, or directors, or films focusing on specific formal or theoretical problems. Previous topics include The Contemporary Horror Film, Film Remixes, Film Narrative, Heroic Cinema, and Color in Film. Students taking graduate version complete different assignments. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if content differs. Limited to 12.

P. Donaldson, E. Brinkema

CMS.831 Data Storytelling Studio

Subject meets with CMS.631

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Explores visualization methodologies to conceive and represent systems and data, e.g., financial, media, economic, political, etc. Covers basic methods for research, cleaning, and analysis of datasets. Introduces creative methods of data presentation and storytelling. Considers the emotional, aesthetic, ethical, and practical effects of different presentation methods as well as how to develop metrics for assessing impact. Work centers on readings, visualization exercises, and a final project. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Staff

CMS.833 Digital Humanities: Topics, Techniques, and Technologies

Subject meets with CMS.633

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Examines theory and practice of using computational methods in the emerging field of digital humanities. Develops an understanding of key digital humanities concepts such as data representation, digital archives, information visualization, and user interaction through the study of contemporary research in conjunction with working on real-world projects for scholarly, educational, and public needs. Students create prototypes, write design papers, and conduct user studies. Some programming and design experience is helpful but not required. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Staff

CMS.834 Designing Interactions

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Explores the future of mobile interactions and pervasive computing, taking into consideration design, technological, social and business aspects. Discusses theoretical works on human-computer interaction, mobile media and interaction design, and covers research and design methods. Students work in multidisciplinary teams and participate in user-centric design projects aimed to study, imagine and prototype concepts illustrating the future of mobile applications and ubiquitous computing. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Repeatable for credit with permission of instructor. Limited to 12.

F. Casalegno, T. Nagakura

CMS.835 Designing Active Archives

Subject meets with CMS.635

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Investigates the digital archive as an emerging platform for critical inquiry and creative engagement through analysis, conceptualization, and experimentation with user-oriented design. Readings provide theoretical, analytical, and practical perspectives on topics such as participatory digital culture, data curation, visualization, and the archive's role in activism. Students work throughout the term to develop a group project. Students taking graduate version complete additional readings and assignments.

Staff

CMS.836 Social Justice and The Documentary Film

Subject meets with 21W.786[[]], CMS.336[[]]

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Explores the history and current state of social-issue documentary. Examines how cultural and political upheaval and technological change have converged at different moments to bring about new waves of activist documentary film production. Particular focus on films and other non-fiction media of the present and recent past. Students screen and analyze a series of key films and work in groups to produce their own short documentary using digital video and computer-based editing. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

V. Bald

CMS.837 Film, Music, and Social Change: Intersections of Media and Society

Subject meets with 21W.787

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

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

CMS.838 Innovation in Documentary: Technologies and Techniques

Subject meets with CMS.338

Prereq: CMS.100 or permission of instructor

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Discusses emerging technologies and techniques available to media-makers (e.g., location-based technologies, transmedia storytelling, crowdsourcing, and interactivity) and their implications on the film and television documentary. Studies the development of these tools and considers the many new directions in which they may take the genre. Includes screenings, meetings with documentary makers, and an experimental component in which students can explore new approaches to documentary production. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Staff

CMS.839 Virtual Reality and Immersive Media Production

Subject meets with CMS.339

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Provides an overview of historical developments and current innovations in virtual reality (e.g., gear, software, and storytelling techniques) and looks into new trends in augmented, mixed and holographic reality. Includes practical instruction and a step-by-step exploration of the fundamentals of virtual reality creation - from new visual languages and grammars, to storyboarding, scripting, sound design and editing, to new and innovative ways to capture, scan and reproduce 360-degree images. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

Staff

CMS.840 Literature and Film

Subject meets with 21L.435

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Spring)

3-3-6 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Investigates relationships between the two media, including film adaptations as well as works linked by genre, topic, and style. Explores how artworks challenge and cross cultural, political, and aesthetic boundaries. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

K. Surkan

CMS.841 Game Studies

Subject meets with CMS.300

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

3-3-6 units

Introduction to the interdisciplinary study of videogames as texts through an examination of their cultural, educational, and social functions in contemporary settings. Students play and analyze videogames while reading current research and theory from a variety of sources in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and industry. Assignments focus on game analysis in the context of the theories discussed in class. Includes regular reading, writing, and presentation exercises. No prior programming experience required. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

M. Jakobsson

CMS.844 Exploratory Programming for the Arts and Humanities

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-1-8 units

Introduces programming through "free projects" in which students choose (or discover) the direction of their project through exploration. Covers the fundamentals of programming and how to develop a programming practice. Students complete analytical and generative projects, using different media. Examines how to think with computation, how computation and media interact, and how computation can be understood as a part of culture. No background in programming required. Limited to 18.

*N. Montfort***CMS.845 Interactive Narrative**

Subject meets with 21L.489[()], 21W.765[()], CMS.618[()]

Prereq: Permission of instructor

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

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. Graduate students complete additional assignments.

*N. Montfort***CMS.846 The Word Made Digital**

Subject meets with 21W.764[()], CMS.609[()]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Considers the many uses of text, language, and writing in creative digital media. Focuses on non-narrative uses of text, such as in information display, visual and lyrical settings, and human-legible computer code. Considers the use of text within the context of computing and different computing platforms. Draws on concepts and approaches from poetics, the material history of texts, and computer science. Assignments include individual and group writing projects, which involve reading and modifying computer programs. Previous programming experience and writing coursework helpful. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

*N. Montfort***CMS.848 Apocalyptic Storytelling**

Subject meets with 21W.748

Prereq: Permission of instructor

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Focuses on the critical making of apocalyptic, post-apocalyptic and dystopian stories across various narrative media. Considers the long history of Western apocalypticism as well as the uses and abuses of apocalypticism across time. Examines a wide variety of influential texts in order to enhance students' creative and theoretical repertoires. Students create their own apocalyptic stories and present on selected texts. Investigates conventions such as plague, zombies, nuclear destruction, robot uprising, alien invasion, environmental collapse, and supernatural calamities. Considers questions of race, gender, sexuality, colonialism, trauma, memory, witness, and genocide. Intended for students with prior creative writing experience. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 15.

*J. Diaz***CMS.855 Extending the Museum**

Subject meets with CMS.636

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Investigates the museum as a participatory public space and rethinks visitor engagement and museum education in light of digital technologies, including extended reality (XR) technologies. Students develop concepts, models, and prototypes that integrate physical and digital spaces in novel ways in close collaboration with partners at local museums. Readings provide theoretical, critical, and analytical foundations for collaborative class projects. Students taking graduate version complete additional readings and assignments.

Staff

CMS.860 Introduction to Civic Media

Subject meets with CMS.360

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Examines civic media in comparative, transnational and historical perspective. Introduces various theoretical tools, research approaches, and project design methods. Students engage with multimedia texts on concepts such as citizen journalism, transmedia activism, media justice, and civic, public, radical, and tactical media. Case studies explore civic media across platforms (print, radio, broadcast, internet), contexts (from local to global, present-day to historical), and use (dialogic, contentious, hacktivist). As a final project, students develop a case study or project proposal. Students taking the graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

Staff

CMS.861 Networked Social Movements: Media and Mobilization

Subject meets with CMS.361

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Provides an overview of social movement studies as a body of theoretical and empirical work, with an emphasis on understanding the relationship between social movements and the media. Explores multiple methods of social movement investigation, including textual and media analysis, surveys, interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and co-research. Covers recent innovations in social movement theory, as well as new data sources and tools for research and analysis. Includes short papers, a literature review, and a final research project. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 16.

Staff

CMS.862 Civic Media Collaborative Design Studio

Subject meets with CMS.362

Prereq: One subject in CMS or MAS

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Project-based studio focusing on collaborative design of civic media provides a service-learning opportunity for students interested in working with community organizations. Multidisciplinary teams create civic media projects based on real-world community needs. Covers co-design methods and best practices to include the user community in iterative stages of project ideation, design, implementation, testing, and evaluation. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 16.

Staff

CMS.863[*J*] Design and Development of Games for Learning

Same subject as 11.252[*J*]

Subject meets with 11.127[*J*], CMS.590[*J*]

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

3-6-3 units

Immerses students in the process of building and testing their own digital and board games in order to better understand how we learn from games. Explores the design and use of games in the classroom in addition to research and development issues associated with computer-based (desktop and handheld) and non-computer-based media. In developing their own games, students examine what and how people learn from them (including field testing of products), as well as how games can be implemented in educational settings. All levels of computer experience welcome. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

E. Klopfer

CMS.864 Game Design

Prereq: One subject in Comparative Media Studies or permission of instructor

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-3-6 units

Practical instruction in the design and analysis of non-digital games. Provides students the texts, tools, references, and historical context to analyze and compare game designs across a variety of genres. In teams, students design, develop, and thoroughly test their original games to better understand the interaction and evolution of game rules. Covers various genres and types of games, including sports, game shows, games of chance, card games, schoolyard games, board games, and role-playing games. Students taking the graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

P. Tan, R. Eberhardt

CMS.865 Immersive Media Studies

Subject meets with CMS.340

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Critical examination of the history, aesthetics, and politics of virtual reality and related media. Focuses on virtual space and embodiment; cultural reception and industry hype; accessibility, surveillance, and data privacy; and debates surrounding the use of immersive media in social, work, art, and entertainment contexts. Projects include experimentation with VR development tools and critical analysis of existing immersive works. Graduate version includes additional research. Enrollment limited to 15.

P. Roquet

CMS.868 Games and Culture

Subject meets with 21W.768[()], CMS.616[()], WGS.125[()]

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Examines the social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of digital games. Topics include the culture of gameplay, gaming styles, communities, spectatorship and performance, gender and race within digital gaming, and the politics and economics of production processes, including co-creation and intellectual property. Students taking graduate version complete additional readings and assignments.

T. L. Taylor

CMS.871 Media in Cultural Context

Subject meets with 21L.715

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar uses case studies to examine specific media or media configurations and the larger social, cultural, economic, political, or technological contexts within which they operate. Organized around recurring themes in media history, as well as specific genres, movements, media, or historical moments. Previously taught topics include Gendered Genres: Horror and Maternal Melodramas; Comics, Cartoons, and Graphic Storytelling; and Exploring Children's Culture. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. Limited to 12.

M. Marks

CMS.875 Reading Climate Through Media

Subject meets with CMS.375

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Explores how climate is construed in the contemporary media in order to gain a better understanding of how views of climate change are shaped and received in the public sphere. Studies the pathways that take us from climate science to media content, from the big data of global scale to the particulars and narratives of the human experience. Surveys a variety of media forms--reports, articles, comics, videos, films, photography, poetry and fiction--that reflect on the contemporary human challenges of dealing with a changing natural environment of our own making. Emphasizes the role of media in shaping public opinion, both in the US and globally, and its influence on public (and voter) perceptions on which a vast body of regulation and funding for environmental management is based. Students work individually and in teams to produce a selection of the media forms studied. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 20.

Staff

CMS.876 History of Media and Technology

Subject meets with CMS.376

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Surveys the interrelated histories of communications media and technological development, from the emergence of 19th-century forms of mass print media and telegraphy, to sound capture and image-based forms (e.g., film, radio, and television), to the shift from analog to digital cultures. Examines how new forms of communication exert social, political, and cultural influences in the global context. Explores how technological innovation and accelerating media affect social values and behaviors in the popular and global adoption of a media device. Includes two papers and a research project on aspects of media history. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Paradis

CMS.877 Transmedia Art, Extraction, and Environmental Justice

Subject meets with 4.376[[]], CMS.374[[]]

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

2-3-7 units

Exploration of today's extractive economies and the role that artists, media-makers, and transmedia producers play in shaping public perception, individual choices, and movement-building towards sustainability. Traces the contingent geological, material, community, and toxic histories of extracted materials used throughout our built environment, as well as civic resistance and reform that could alter extraction practices. Scaffolded workshops with artists and media producers support students' production of creative documentary and other media projects. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Barry

CMS.888 Advertising and Media: Comparative Perspectives

Subject meets with 21G.036[[]], 21G.190, CMS.356[[]]

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Compares modern and contemporary advertising culture in China, the US, and other emerging markets. First half focuses on branding in the old media environment; second half introduces the changing practice of advertising in the new media environment. Topics include branding and positioning, media planning, social media campaigns, cause marketing 2.0, social TV, and mobility marketing. Required lab work includes interactive sessions in branding a team product for the US (or a European country) and China markets. Taught in English and requires no knowledge of Chinese. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Wang

CMS.894 Education Technology Studio

Subject meets with CMS.594

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Uses media and technology to develop new forms of learning experiences for schools, workplace, and informal settings. Students participate in a range of projects that hone understanding and skills in learning science, instructional design, development, and evaluation. Topics vary but include developing new media and activities for massive open online courses, creating practice spaces for practitioners in the professions and humanities, and developing new approaches to assessment in complex learning environments. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor if project content differs. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Reich

CMS.895 Learning, Media, and Technology

Subject meets with CMS.595

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Addresses new digital technologies that are transforming learning across the lifespan - from reading apps for toddlers, intelligent tutors for school children, and blended learning for college students, to MOOCs for adults and interest-based learning communities for hobbyists. Focuses on how these technologies shape people's lives and learning. Students explore how education technologies operate in complex social-technical systems, and acquire analytic tools and strategies that can be applied to other complex systems. They also refine their thinking about the opportunities, limits, and tradeoffs of educational technology. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

J. Reich

CMS.901 Current Debates in Media

Subject meets with CMS.701

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units

Addresses important, current debates in media with in-depth discussion of popular perceptions and policy implications. Students use multiple perspectives to analyze texts emanating from these debates, and present their findings through discussions and reports. Explores emerging topics (e.g., piracy and IP regimes, net neutrality, media effects, social media and social change, and changing literacies) across media forms and from various historical, transcultural, and methodological perspectives. Examines the framing of these issues, their ethical and policy implications, and strategies for repositioning the debate. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Staff

CMS.915 Understanding Television

Subject meets with 21L.432[J], CMS.315[J]

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

A cultural approach to television's evolution as a technology and system of representation. Considers television as a system of storytelling and mythmaking, and as a cultural practice studied from anthropological, literary, and cinematic perspectives. Focuses on prime-time commercial broadcasting, the medium's technological and economic history, and theoretical perspectives. Considerable television viewing and readings in media theory and cultural interpretation are required. Previously taught topics include American Television: A Cultural History. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

D. Thorburn

CMS.920 Popular Culture and Narrative

Subject meets with 21L.430

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Examines relationships between popular culture and art, focusing on problems of evaluation and audience, and the uses of different media within a broader social context. Typically treats a range of narrative and dramatic works as well as films. Previously taught topics include Elements of Style; Gender, Sexuality and Popular Narrative. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Approved for credit in Women's and Gender Studies when content meets the requirements for subjects in that program. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor.

Staff

CMS.925 Film Music

Subject meets with 21M.284

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units

Provides a conceptual foundation and methodology for the study of music created for various types of (mainly) narrative films, from the medium's origins in the early twentieth century to the present. Close attention to select influential scores by composers active in Hollywood from the 1940s to the 1990s (e.g., Max Steiner, Bernard Herrmann, Quincy Jones, John Williams, Philip Glass). Those works are juxtaposed with landmarks of alternative film and musical styles from other countries and centers of production. Subsidiary topics include the history and challenges of live musical accompaniment to silent films, and the evolution of recording and sound-editing technologies from the studio era to the global present. Students taking the graduate version complete different assignments. Some background in the study of film and/or music is desirable, but not a prerequisite.

M. Marks

CMS.941 Immersive Social Worlds

Subject meets with CMS.341

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Focuses on critical media sociology of immersive social worlds, from digital environments and avatar-based worlds to live action role-play (LARP) and theme parks. Draws on both historical and contemporary cases. Investigates key issues including communication and community; authorship and co-creativity; embodiment and identity; and ownership, governance, and management. Attention given to cultural and socio-technical nature of these environments and their ongoing construction within a broader media system. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

Taylor, T.L

CMS.942[*J*] Designing Virtual Worlds

Same subject as 2.178[*J*]

Subject meets with 2.177[*J*], CMS.342[*J*]

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

4-2-6 units

See description under subject 2.178[*J*].

K. Zolot

CMS.950 Workshop I

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

4-2-6 units

Provides an opportunity for direct project development experience and emphasizes intellectual growth as well as the acquisition of technical skills. Students attend regular meetings to present and critique their work and discuss its implications.

J. Paradis

CMS.990 Colloquium in Comparative Media

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

2-0-1 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Exposes students to the perspectives of scholars, activists, medi makers, policymakers, and industry leaders on cutting edge issues in media. Registered CMS graduate students only.

Staff

CMS.992 Portfolio in Comparative Media

Prereq: CMS.950 or permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Students work individually with an advisor to produce a portfolio project which combines technical skills and a substantial intellectual component.

Staff

CMS.993 Teaching in Comparative Media

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

For qualified graduate students interested in teaching. Offers experience in classroom and/or tutorial teaching under the supervision of a Comparative Media Studies faculty member.

Staff

CMS.994 Independent Study

Prereq: Permission of instructor
 G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)
 Units arranged [P/D/F]
 Can be repeated for credit.

Opportunity for individual research in comparative media studies.
 Registration subject to prior arrangement for subject matter and supervision by a faculty member.

Staff

CMS.995 Independent Study

Prereq: Permission of instructor
 G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)
 Units arranged
 Can be repeated for credit.

Opportunity for individual research in comparative media studies.
 Registration subject to prior arrangement for subject matter and supervision by a faculty member.

Staff

CMS.S96 Special Subject: Rap Theory and Practice

Subject meets with 21L.S60[J], CMS.S60[J]
 Prereq: None
 G (Spring)
 3-0-9 units

To gain a deeper understanding of rap, students engage in the full process of creating rap music, including composing lyrics, recording, performing and creating an EP length album. Existing rap music is studied, selected lyrics are analyzed and possible reasons for the structure and success of different songs are presented in case studies. Students analyze rap songs, reflect on their own weekly activities in writing and present their work in class by playing recordings, performing and responding to each other in workshop discussions. Licensed for Fall 2024 by the Committee on Graduate Programs. Limited to 10.

W. Jaco

CMS.S97 Special Subject: Comparative Media Studies

Prereq: Permission of instructor
 G (Spring)
 Units arranged
 Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

CMS.S98 Special Subject: Comparative Media Studies

Prereq: Permission of instructor
 G (Spring)
 Units arranged
 Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

CMS.S99 Special Subject: Comparative Media Studies

Prereq: Permission of instructor
 G (Spring)
 Units arranged
 Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

CMS.THG Master's Thesis

Prereq: Permission of advisor
 G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)
 Not offered regularly; consult department
 Units arranged
 Can be repeated for credit.

Completion of a graduate thesis, to be arranged with a faculty member, who becomes the thesis advisor. Required of all CMS students.

Staff

First-Year Writing Subjects

First-year writing subjects provide a foundation for future communication-intensive subjects, and also function as a starting point for concentrating, minoring, or majoring in Writing. While the topical focus of writing assignments varies across these subjects, all first-year writing subjects develop students' understanding of genre, audience, argument, discourse, source use, and writing process. All written work goes through stages of drafting, peer review, and revision. Because these subjects are limited to 15 students per section, students receive detailed feedback at all stages of the writing process, and have many opportunities for individual conferences with instructors. Active class participation and short oral presentations are required. Please note: Students can take no more than one subject in each category (e.g., 21W. 01x, 21W. 02x, 21W. 03x) for credit.

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

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.015, 21W.016

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 15.

*A. Walsh***21W.012 Writing and Rhetoric: Food for Thought**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.015, 21W.016

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 15.

*S. Carlisle***21W.013 Writing and Rhetoric: Introduction to Contemporary Rhetoric**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.014, 21W.015, 21W.016

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 15.

*L. Harrison-Lepera***21W.014 Writing and Rhetoric: Exploring Visual Media**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.015, 21W.016

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 (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.016

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 15.

A. Karatsolis

21W.016 Writing and Rhetoric: Making Change

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.011, 21W.012, 21W.013, 21W.014, 21W.015

Explores how we use rhetoric in text, visuals, and other modes to make meaning. Uses analysis, composition, and debate about rhetorical strategies to develop theoretical and empirical knowledge of how design choices shape our texts and our understanding of the world. Limited to 15.

J. Stickgold-Sarah

21W.021 Writing and Experience: MIT Inside, Live

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.022

Acting as participant-observers, students investigate MIT's history and culture through visits to the Institute's archives and museums, relevant readings, and depictions of MIT in popular culture. Students chronicle their experiences and insights through a variety of writing projects, culminating in the completion of a portfolio. Limited to 15.

J. Graziano

21W.022 Writing and Experience: Reading and Writing Autobiography

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.021

Draws on a range of autobiographical writing as examples for students to analyze. Students write essays that focus on their own experience, exploring topics such as intellectual growth and development, the childhood and high school years, life at MIT, the influence of place upon one's personality and character, and the role politics and religion play in one's life. Emphasizes clarity, specificity, and structure; investigates various modes of writing (narrative, analytical, expository) and their suitability for different purposes. Limited to 15.

L. Harrison Lepera, N. Jackson, S. Carlisle, S. Carlisle, L. Harrison Lepera, A. Walsh

21W.031 Science Writing and New Media: Explorations in Communicating about Science and Technology

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.034, 21W.035, 21W.036

Examines principles of good writing, focusing on those associated with scientific and technical writing. Considers the effects of new media as an avenue for communicating about science. Students discuss scientific articles and essays and work in small groups to critique each other's writing. Assignments include a critical review, a science essay for the general public, and a research or service project proposal. Students choose topics that reflect their background and interests. Formal and informal presentations and group discussions develop oral communication skills. Limited to 15.

J. Melvold

21W.034 Science Writing and New Media: Perspectives on Medicine and Public Health

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.035, 21W.036

Public health topics, such as AIDS, asthma, malaria control, obesity, and sleep deprivation, provide a unifying focus as students explore diverse modes of science writing. Readings include essays by such writers as Atul Gawande, Danielle Ofri, Jerome Groopman, and William Carlos Williams, as well as peer-reviewed journal articles. Assignments include a critical review, a scientific literature review, a brochure suitable for general distribution, an autobiographical narrative, a resume, a job application letter, and oral presentations. Limited to 18.

C. Taft

21W.035 Science Writing and New Media: Elements of Science Writing for the Public

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.034, 21W.036

Introduces ways of communicating scientific information meaningfully to public audiences, and teaches features that distinguish science writing for the public from scientific writing aimed at experts. Discussions analyze various forms of popular science communication to identify rhetorical strategies that engage and educate readers of varying backgrounds and identities. Students write about topics they are genuinely interested in related to science, medicine, technology, and/or engineering. Assignments incorporate primary and secondary background research, drafting, presentations, peer review, and revision. Limited to 15.

*A. Carleton, E. Kallestinova, J. Berezin***21W.036 Science Writing and New Media: Writing and the Environment**

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.031, 21W.034, 21W.035

Develops written and oral communication skills through the study and practice of environmental science writing. Covers a wide range of genres, including such standard forms as the scientific literature review. Students adapt the content of their papers and oral presentations to the distinctive needs of specific audiences. Assignments provide thematic coherence and a basis for independent student research. Limited to 15.

*C. Taft***21W.041[J] Writing About Literature**

Same subject as 21L.000[J]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Fall, Spring)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

See description under subject 21L.000[J]. Enrollment limited.

*W. Kelley, I. Lipkowitz***21W.042[J] Writing with Shakespeare**

Same subject as 21L.010[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

See description under subject 21L.010[J].

*D. Henderson***21W.051 Emotional Intelligence and Team Communication (New)**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Examines the role of emotional intelligence in both our individual lives and our collaborations. Considers a broad range of topics and communication strategies, including self-awareness, listening, trust, habit formation, conflict, negotiation, and constructive dialogue. High-quality writing and video presentations serve as the focus for the class discussion and as models for student essays and presentations. Students produce both individual and collaborative work. Limited to 15.

*J. Abbott***English Language Studies (ELS)****21W.217 Workshop in Strategies for Effective Teaching (ELS)**

Prereq: None

G (IAP; partial term)

Not offered regularly; consult department

1-0-2 units

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.218

A mini-module for international teaching assistants. Covers special problems in teaching when English is a second language and the US a second culture. Videotaping of practice sessions for feedback. Individualized programs to meet different needs. Graduate TAs have priority. Limited to 18.

*A. C. Kemp***21W.218 Workshop in Strategies for Effective Teaching (ELS)**

Prereq: None

U (IAP; partial term)

Not offered regularly; consult department

1-0-2 units

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.217

A mini-module for international teaching assistants. Covers special problems in teaching when English is a second language and the US a second culture. Videotaping of practice sessions for feedback. Individualized programs to meet different needs. Limited to 18.

A. C. Kemp

21W.219 Foundations of Academic and Professional Writing (ELS)

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.220

Writing module for high-intermediate ELS students who wish to review and practice accurate grammar, effective sentence and paragraph structure, punctuation, and word choice. Short weekly writing assignments with extensive editing required. Meets with 21W.220 when offered concurrently. Limited to 18.

*E. Grunwald***21W.220 Foundations of Academic and Professional Writing (ELS)**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.219

Writing module for high intermediate ELS students who wish to review and practice accurate grammar, effective sentence and paragraph structure, punctuation, and word choice. Short weekly writing assignments with extensive editing required. Meets with 21W.219 when offered concurrently. Limited to 18.

*E. Grunwald***21W.221 Communicating in American Culture (ELS)**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

Designed for international students who wish to refine their academic communication skills through the study of mainstream American culture. Using a variety of materials in different media, students explore how the country's history, geography, institutions, traditions and values have shaped contemporary communication styles and responses to critical events in the world. Students examine and practice principles of effective communication in genres common to the humanities and social sciences. Explores how discourse practices vary within and across cultures. Assignments include an educational memoir, project proposal, annotated bibliography, research-based cultural analysis of a current event of choice, and presentation. Limited to 18.

*E. Grunwald***21W.222 Expository Writing for Bilingual Students**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-HW

Can be repeated for credit.

Formulating, organizing, and presenting ideas clearly in writing. Reviews basic principles of rhetoric. Focuses on development of a topic, thesis, choice of appropriate vocabulary, and sentence structure to achieve purpose. Develops idiomatic prose style. Gives attention to grammar and vocabulary usage. Special focus on strengthening skills of bilingual students. Intended to be taken during the student's first year at MIT. Priority given to students recommended for 21W.222 based on summer FEE results. Limited to 15; undergraduates only.

*E. Grunwald, A. C. Kemp***21W.223 Listening, Speaking, and Pronunciation (ELS)**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.224

Designed for high intermediate ELS students who need to develop better listening comprehension and oral skills. Involves short speaking and listening assignments with extensive exercises in accurate comprehension, pronunciation, stress and intonation, and expression of ideas. Includes frequent video- and audio-recording for analysis and feedback. Meets with 21W.224 when offered concurrently. Limited to 18 per section.

*A. Kemp, E. Grunwald***21W.224 Listening, Speaking, and Pronunciation (ELS)**

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.223

Designed for high-intermediate ELS students who need to develop better listening comprehension and oral skills. Involves short speaking and listening assignments with extensive exercises in accurate comprehension, pronunciation, stress and intonation, and expression of ideas. Includes frequent video- and audio-recording for analysis and feedback. Meets with 21W.223 when offered concurrently. Limited to 18 per section.

E. Grunwald

21W.225 Advanced Workshop in Writing for Science and Engineering (ELS)

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.226

Analysis and practice of various forms of scientific and technical writing, from memos to journal articles. Strategies for conveying technical information to specialist and non-specialist audiences. The goal of the workshop is to develop effective writing skills for academic and professional contexts. Models, materials, topics, and assignments vary from term to term. Meets with 21W.226 when offered concurrently. Limited to 18 per section.

E. Grunwald

21W.226 Advanced Workshop in Writing for Science and Engineering (ELS)

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.225

Analysis and practice of various forms of scientific and technical writing, from memos to journal articles. Strategies for conveying technical information to specialist and non-specialist audiences. The goal of the workshop is to develop effective writing skills for academic and professional contexts. Models, materials, topics, and assignments vary from term to term. Meets with 21W.225 when offered concurrently. Limited to 18 per section.

E. Grunwald, A. C. Kemp

21W.227 Advanced Workshop in Writing for Social Sciences and Architecture (ELS)

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.228

Focuses on techniques, format, and prose used in academic and professional life. Emphasis on writing required in fields such as economics, political science, and architecture. Short assignments include business letters, memos, and proposals that lead toward a written term project. Methods designed to accommodate those whose first language is not English. Develops effective writing skills for academic and professional contexts. Models, materials, topics, and assignments vary from term to term. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor. Limited to 18 per section.

A. C. Kemp

21W.228 Advanced Workshop in Writing for Social Sciences and Architecture (ELS)

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.227

Focuses on techniques, format, and prose used in academic and professional life. Emphasis on writing required in fields such as economics, political science, and architecture. Short assignments include business letters, memos, and proposals that lead toward a written term project. Methods designed to accommodate those whose first language is not English. Develops effective writing skills for academic and professional contexts. Models, materials, topics and assignments vary from term to term. May be repeated for credit with permission of instructor. Limited to 18.

A. C. Kemp

21W.232 Advanced Speaking and Critical Listening Skills (ELS)

Prereq: None

G (Fall, Spring)

3-3-6 units

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.233

For advanced students who wish to build confidence and skills in spoken English. Focuses on the appropriate oral presentation of material in a variety of professional contexts: group discussions, classroom explanations and interactions, and theses/research proposals. Valuable for those who intend to teach or lecture in English. Includes frequent video- and audio-recording for analysis and feedback. Develops effective speaking and listening skills for academic and professional contexts. Models, materials, topics and assignments vary from term to term. May be repeated for credit with permission of the instructor. Meets with 21W.233 when offered concurrently. Limited to 15 per section.

A. C. Kemp

21W.233 Advanced Speaking and Critical Listening Skills (ELS)

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-3-6 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit. Credit cannot also be received for 21W.232

For advanced students who wish to build confidence and skills in spoken English. Focuses on the appropriate oral presentation of material in a variety of professional contexts: group discussions, classroom explanations and interactions, and theses/research proposals. Valuable for those who intend to teach or lecture in English. Includes frequent video- and audio-recording for analysis and feedback. Develops effective speaking and listening skills for academic and professional contexts. Models, materials, topics and assignments vary from term to term. May be repeated for credit with permission of the instructor. Meets with 21W.232 when offered concurrently. Limited to 15 per section.

*A. C. Kemp***21W.237 MIT Out Loud: Public Speaking for Bilingual Students**

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Can be repeated for credit.

Develops oral communication skills for bilingual students through the lens of the MIT experience. Speaking assignments in informative and persuasive speech forms draw on examples of popular culture and MIT touchstones, such as "alternative" campus tours, interviews, MIT 100K pitches, and TED talks. Explores the role of voice and body language through improvisation and impromptus. Focuses on spoken accuracy and vocabulary through oral exercises designed for bilingual students. Frequent video-recording will be used for self-evaluation. Limited to 15.

*A. C. Kemp***21W.240 Imagining English: Creative Writing for Bilingual Students**

Prereq: 21W.222 or other CI-H/CI-HW subject

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Instruction for bilingual students in writing short stories and poems in English. Involves the study of craft, revision, and creativity, as well as close reading of important works by American, British, and non-native writers' writing in English. Analyzes "the limits of English" through group discussions of student writing to distinguish linguistic freshness from grammatical incorrectness, with review of relevant rules. Includes academic and non-academic vocabulary building, a formal writing process, literary analysis essays, short translations to and from students' native languages, and the workshopping (peer reviewing) of creative work. Limited to 18.

*E. Grunwald***Undergraduate Subjects****21W.725[J] Gender, Myth, and Magic (New)**

Same subject as WGS.255[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject WGS.255[J].

*K. Ragusa***21W.729[J] Engineering Communication in Context**

Same subject as ES.729[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-1-8 units. HASS-E; CI-H

See description under subject ES.729[J]. Limited to 18; preference to ESG students.

*D. Custer***21W.733[J] Debating About Society and Engineering**

Same subject as 10.07[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-6 units. HASS-H

See description under subject 10.07[J]. Limited to 18.

E. Schiappa, B. L. Trout

21W.735 Writing and Reading the Essay

Prereq: Writing sample and permission of instructor

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. 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.738[] Intersectional Feminist Memoir

Same subject as 21L.438[], WGS.238[]

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Fall, Spring)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

See description under subject WGS.238[].

K. Ragusa

21W.740 Writing Autobiography and Biography

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Writing an autobiography is a vehicle for improving one's style while studying the nuances of the language. Literary works are read with an emphasis on different forms of autobiography. 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 24.912[], 21H.106[], 21L.008[], CMS.150[],

WGS.190[]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A, HASS-H; CI-H

See description under subject 24.912[].

D. Wood, D. Harrell, M. DeGraff

21W.742[] Writing about Race

Same subject as WGS.231[]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-H

The issue of race and racial identity have preoccupied 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, Carmit 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

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-E

Explores the memoir genre with particular attention to the relationships between form and content, fact and truth, self and community, art and "healing," coming to voice and breaking silence. Readings include works by Nick Flynn, Meena Alexander, Art Spiegelman, James McBride, Ruth Ozeki, and Cheryl Strayed, with a focus on the ways in which these writers make meaning out of specific events or moments in their own lives as a way of engaging with larger questions of family, race, history, loss, and survivorship. Drawing on lessons taken from these works, students write a short memoir of their own. Limited to 18.

K. Ragusa

21W.744 The Art of Comic Book Writing

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students create short scripts and full-length comic book narratives across a variety of genres, while analyzing a wide range of comics (corporate and independent, print and web). Focuses on scripts; drawing skills not required, but illustrations or storyboards are welcome. Special attention to questions of gender, race, ethnicity, and sexuality in both critical and creative work. Limited to 13.

M. Liu

21W.745 Advanced Essay Workshop

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. 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 essay 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 units. HASS-H; CI-H

For students with a special interest in learning how to make forceful arguments in oral and written form. Studies the forms and structures of argumentation, including organization of ideas, awareness of audience, methods of persuasion, evidence, factual vs. emotional argument, figures of speech, and historical forms and uses of arguments. Limited to 18 per section.

S. Strang, A. Karatsolis

21W.748 Apocalyptic Storytelling

Subject meets with CMS.848

Prereq: Permission of instructor

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Focuses on the critical making of apocalyptic, post-apocalyptic and dystopian stories across various narrative media. Considers the long history of Western apocalypticism as well as the uses and abuses of apocalypticism across time. Examines a wide variety of influential texts in order to enhance students' creative and theoretical repertoires. Students create their own apocalyptic stories and present on selected texts. Investigates conventions such as plague, zombies, nuclear destruction, robot uprising, alien invasion, environmental collapse, and supernatural calamities. Considers questions of race, gender, sexuality, colonialism, trauma, memory, witness, and genocide. Intended for students with prior creative writing experience. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 15.

J. Diaz

21W.750 Experimental Writing

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. 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.752 Making Documentary: Audio, Video, and More

Prereq: 21A.550[[]], 21W.786[[]], or permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-6-3 units. HASS-A

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.824

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 semester-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.753[[]] Phantasmal Media: Computer-Based Art Theory and Practice**

Same subject as CMS.314[[]]

Subject meets with CMS.814

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject CMS.314[[]].

*D. F. Harrell***21W.754[[]] Playwriting Fundamentals**

Same subject as 21T.150[[]]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21T.150[[]].

*K. Urban***21W.755 Writing and Reading Short Stories**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. 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' writing and on assigned works in their historical and social contexts. Limited to 15 per section.

*S. Lewitt, M. Nathan***21W.756 Writing and Reading Poems**

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. 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 (Spring)

3-0-9 units. 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.

*J. Diaz***21W.758 Genre Fiction Workshop**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Students read texts in genres such as fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, noir, and horror, typically focusing on one genre exclusively in a given semester. Formats may include short stories, novels, films, TV shows and other narrative media. Considers genre protocols and how to write within the restrictions and freedoms associated with each genre. Students write fiction within a genre (or "between" genres) for roundtable workshopping. Intended for students with prior creative writing experience. Limited to 15.

S. Lewitt

21W.759 Writing Science Fiction

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. 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.

*S. Lewitt***21W.762 Poetry Workshop**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. 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.

*E. Barrett***21W.763[J] Transmedia Storytelling: Modern Science Fiction**

Same subject as CMS.309[J]

Subject meets with CMS.809

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-2-7 units. HASS-A

Explores transmedia storytelling by investigating how science fiction stories are told across different media, such as the short story, the novel, the screenplay, moving image, and games. Students consider issues of aesthetics, authorship, and genre, while also contextualizing discussion within the broader framework of the political issues raised by film, TV, and other kinds of science fiction texts. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments.

*S. Lewitt***21W.764[J] The Word Made Digital**

Same subject as CMS.609[J]

Subject meets with CMS.846

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Spring)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. 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 through practice. This involves reading and modifying computer programs; therefore previous programming experience, although not required, will be helpful. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

*N. Montfort***21W.765[J] Interactive Narrative**

Same subject as 21L.489[J], CMS.618[J]

Subject meets with CMS.845

Prereq: None

Acad Year 2024-2025: Not offered

Acad Year 2025-2026: U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. 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.766 Writing Fantasy**

Prereq: One subject in Writing or permission of instructor

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Explores the popularity and structure of Fantasy as a genre in films, games, and literature. Students read articles and novels and write exercises and stories in the genre. Intended for students with prior creative writing experience. Limited to 10.

S. Lewitt

21W.768[J] Games and Culture

Same subject as CMS.616[J], WGS.125[J]

Subject meets with CMS.868

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

See description under subject CMS.616[J].

T. L. Taylor

21W.770 Advanced Fiction Workshop

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. 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. Limited to 15.

Staff

21W.771 Advanced Poetry Workshop

Prereq: Permission of instructor

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. 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

21W.773 Writing Longer Fiction

Prereq: A fiction workshop or permission of instructor

Acad Year 2024-2025: U (Fall)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units. 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. Limited to 15.

Staff

21W.774[J] Playwriting Methods

Same subject as 21T.250[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21T.250[J]. Enrollment limited.

K. Urban

21W.775 Writing about Nature and Environmental Issues

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-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.

C. Taft

21W.776[J] Screenwriting

Same subject as 21T.251[J]

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

See description under subject 21T.251[J]. Enrollment limited.

K. Urban

21W.777 Science Writing in Contemporary Society

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. 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.

*T. Levenson***21W.778 Science Journalism**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H; CI-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***21W.780[JJ] Writing the Full-Length Play**

Same subject as 21T.350[JJ]

Subject meets with 21T.550

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Can be repeated for credit.

See description under subject 21T.350[JJ]. Limited to 10.

*K. Urban***21W.781[JJ] Race, Place, and Modernity in the Americas**

Same subject as 21L.592[JJ], WGS.247[JJ]

Prereq: None

U (IAP)

3-3-3 units. HASS-E

See description under subject WGS.247[JJ]. Enrollment limited to 20.

Application required.

*J. Terrones***21W.786[JJ] Social Justice and The Documentary Film**

Same subject as CMS.336[JJ]

Subject meets with CMS.836

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-A

Explores the history and current state of social-issue documentary. Examines how cultural and political upheaval and technological change have converged at different moments to bring about new waves of activist documentary film production. Particular focus on films and other non-fiction media of the present and recent past. Students screen and analyze a series of key films and work in groups to produce their own short documentary using digital video and computer-based editing. Students taking graduate version complete additional assignments. Limited to 18.

*V. Bald***21W.787 Film, Music, and Social Change: Intersections of Media and Society**

Subject meets with CMS.837

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

Not offered regularly; consult department

3-0-9 units. 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.788[J] South Asian America: Transnational Media, Culture, and History

Same subject as CMS.334[J]

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-H

Examines the history of South Asian immigration, sojourning, 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 tapes, and the internet. Students analyze and discuss scholarly writings, archival documents, memoirs, fiction, blogs and films, and write papers drawing on course materials, lectures, and discussions. Limited to 18.

*V. Bald***21W.790[J] Short Attention Span Documentary**

Same subject as CMS.335[J]

Subject meets with 21W.890

Prereq: None

U (Fall)

3-0-9 units. 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 16.

*V. Bald***21W.791[J] Critical Internet Studies**

Same subject as CMS.614[J], WGS.280[J]

Subject meets with IDS.405

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

3-0-9 units. HASS-S

See description under subject CMS.614[J].

*T. L. Taylor***21W.792 Science Writing Internship**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, Spring, Summer)

0-12-0 units

Can be repeated for credit.

Students developing professional writing and publishing skills in part-time internships with Boston area media companies can apply to receive credit. Students planning to take this subject must contact the instructor by the end of November (if they are applying for spring semester) or the end of May (if they are applying for the fall semester).

*Staff***21W.794 Graduate Technical Writing Workshop**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (IAP)

1-0-2 units

Designed to improve the student's ability to communicate technical information. Covers central communication concepts and techniques, including audience, discourse, and genre analysis; strategies for effectively managing, integrating, and documenting information from sources; and methods of structuring information for coherence and credibility. Assignments include an abstract, a literature review, and an oral presentation; students provide feedback to each other. Limited to graduate engineering students based on results of the Graduate Writing Exam.

*Staff***21W.798, 21W.799 Independent Study in Writing**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, 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. 21W.798 is P/D/F.

Staff

Graduate Subjects

21W.820[J] Writing: Science, Technology, and Society

Same subject as STS.477[J]

Prereq: 21H.991

Acad Year 2024-2025: G (Spring)

Acad Year 2025-2026: Not offered

3-0-9 units

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.822 Science Writing Thesis Development and Workshop

Prereq: None. *Coreq: 21W.THG*

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

Develops abilities to produce long-form pieces of science-based journalism, with a focus on constructing multiple narratives, source building and interview techniques, rewriting and working with editors. Students also hone their ability to shape their classmates' work.

T. Levenson

21W.823 Lab Experience for Science Writers

Prereq: 21W.825

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

0-2-1 units

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.824 Making Documentary: Audio, Video, and More

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, Spring)

3-6-3 units

Credit cannot also be received for 21W.752

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 semester-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. Limited to 7.

T. Levenson

21W.825 Advanced Science Writing Seminar I

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall)

6-0-18 units

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 formidable material and write about it for ordinary readers. Topics include the tools of research, conceived in its broadest sense—including interviewing, websites, archives, scientific journal articles; science journalism, including culture of the newsroom and magazine-style journalism; science essays. Considerable attention to science writing's audiences, markets, and publics and the special requirements of each.

Staff

21W.826 Advanced Science Writing Seminar II

Prereq: 21W.825 or permission of instructor

G (Spring)

3-0-9 units

Topics include research for writers, science journalism, 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 imaginative science writing that employs traditionally fictive devices in nonfiction, including scene-setting 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.790[J], CMS.335[J]

Prereq: None

G (Fall)

3-0-9 units

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 16.

R. Adams

21W.892 Science Writing Internship

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

0-12-0 units

Field placements tailored to the individual backgrounds of the students enrolled, involving varying degrees of faculty participation and supervision.

Graduate Program Faculty

21W.898 Graduate Independent Study in Writing

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Opportunity for advanced independent study of writing under regular supervision by a faculty member. Projects require prior approval, as well as a written proposal and a final report.

Consult Staff

21W.899 Graduate Independent Study in Writing

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Opportunity for advanced independent study of writing under regular supervision by a faculty member. Projects require prior approval, as well as a written proposal and a final report.

Consult Staff

21W.S60 Special Subject: Writing

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

21W.S61 Special Subject: Writing

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

21W.S62 Special Subject: Writing

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

21W.S63 Special Subject: Writing

Prereq: None

U (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

21W.S96 Special Subject: Writing

Prereq: None

G (Spring; partial term)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

Staff

21W.S97 Special Subject: Writing

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

*Staff***21W.S98 Special Subject: Writing**

Prereq: None

G (Spring)

Not offered regularly; consult department

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Seminar or lecture on a topic that is not covered in the regular curriculum.

*Staff***21W.THT Writing Pre-Thesis Tutorial**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Definition of and early stage work on a thesis project leading to 21W.THU. Taken during the first term of a student's two-term commitment to the thesis project. Student works closely with an individual faculty tutor. Required of all students pursuing a full major in Course 21W. Joint majors register for 21.THT.

*Staff***21W.THU Writing Program Thesis**

Prereq: 21W.THT

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

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.THU.

*Staff***21W.THG Graduate Thesis**

Prereq: Permission of instructor

G (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

3-0-9 units

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.

*T. Levenson***21W.UR Research in Writing**

Prereq: None

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged [P/D/F]

Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

*Staff***21W.URG Research in Writing**

U (Fall, IAP, Spring, Summer)

Units arranged

Can be repeated for credit.

Individual participation in an ongoing research project. For students in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

Staff