



## Cluster Composition Course Descriptions

Spring 2019

EN 1400 Composition

### **EN 1400 Composition Course Description** (applies to all sections)

Composition is an introduction to the occasions and standards of college writing. Students develop writing abilities through the study and practice of writing processes. Students explore flexible strategies for inventing, generating, drafting, reading, editing, sharing, and presenting their work. The study of ideas, evidence, organization, style, and convention is essential. Coursework stresses the importance of reading and writing for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communication. Students write for varied situations, in a variety of genres, and in response to personal experience, reading, research, argument, and demand. Students examine both the rhetorical and visual impact of the texts they produce. By the end of this course, students are better prepared for the writing they will do in college and beyond.

### **Descriptions by Section:**

#### **Writing in Psychology**

Jennifer Anderson (EN 1400.01 T 12:30-1:45 Blended)

Attention all Psychology Majors - Get PSYCHED about writing! This section will focus on the unique writing demands found within the psychology major. If you know two things for sure—you know you need to take Composition and you want to study psychology—you should take this class. We'll work on writing technically and succinctly while critically analyzing and presenting research related to Psychology. You will leave this course better prepared for writing in the Psychology major and beyond.

#### **The Art and Act of Teaching and Learning**

Carin Plante (EN 1400.02 TR 10-11:40, EN 1400.03 TR 12-1:50)

Whether you are interested in becoming a teacher or just want to explore issues around learning and education, this section is for you! We will dig into topics such as the learning environment, art of teaching, and crafting pedagogy and curriculum by reading, discussing, and writing about teaching and learning, as well as putting theory into practice. Writing styles will include narrative, analysis, argument, presentation, and

research. Come reflect on your experiences in the classroom, learn about theories of learning and teaching, and discuss the possibilities!

### **Ski Composition**

Elliott Gruner (EN 1400.04 F 9-10:50 Blended)

Learn to cross country ski. We'll divide our time between trail and classroom. Time on skis will give us something to write about—time in the classroom will give us the chance to write together. No experience necessary, but students enrolling in this section should be comfortable spending time outside in winter.

### **Death or Glory: Mountaineering & the Mindset of Risk**

Ethan Paquin (EN 1400.05 Online)

Mountain climbers have willingly embraced danger and discomfort for centuries. If climbing the highest peaks on earth is indeed a selfish and “useless” pursuit, as famed French mountaineer Lionel Terray once wrote, why is it a popular and romanticized sport? In a western world that ever values convenience and quick gratification, how is the pain and suffering associated with climbing seen as virtuous? How far would you be willing to go to “feel alive” or “test yourself”? In this online class, we'll read multiple nonfiction accounts of high-altitude exploits in the Andes, Himalayas, and Alaska; by so doing, students will gain insights into such questions, and work toward understanding the psyches of those who feel compelled to challenge our planet's most extreme landscapes.

### **Running Composition**

Peter Miller (EN 1400.07 TR 5-6:40)

Once derided as a modern-day fad, running has reclaimed its roots as one of the most transforming developments in human history. Credited with providing our evolutionary edge on the African savanna, today it bolsters the strength and resolve of millions worldwide who “go beyond.” This course will explore running’s scientific, commercial, and literary footprints as participants compose personal best blogs, dash off product and race reviews, and hit their stride with features and profiles. A Boston Marathon field trip is planned as a culminating project. The curriculum will include group runs; participants should have a strong interest in the subject but all athletic levels are welcome.

## **The Power of Story**

Sarah Parsons (EN 1400.08 MW 12-1:50, EN 1400.09 MW 2-3:50, EN 1400.10 MW 4-5:50)

In this section of Cluster Composition, you will be learning about the power of your own voice by focusing on various forms of the narrative essay. Your writing will center on telling your own story from a variety of perspectives. Working in collaboration with the Museum of the White Mountains, the Art Education Department, and the History Department your work will culminate in a three-part project documenting your story. Along with a personal narrative, you will create artifacts that represent who you are, and a presentation piece. The presentation and the artifacts will become pieces of an exhibition about the stories of first year students at PSU.

## **Writing and Subculture**

Rebecca Grant (EN 1400.13 MW 10-11:50 and EN 1400.14 MW 12-1:50)

The Amish, Hell's Angels, Hipsters, and Rodeo Queens! In this section of Composition, we will explore the ways subcultures contribute to our shared cultural experience. Students will read, write, and explore the influence and significance of subculture in relation to mainstream beliefs and ideals.

## **Writing and Sustainability**

Rebecca Grant (EN 1400.15 TR 10-11:50)

From pollinators to philosophers! In this section of Composition, we will explore issues related to environmental sustainability. Students will have the opportunity to consider the complex relationships between the economy, society, and the environment. Through reading and writing assignments, students will develop their understanding and pursue issues related to sustainability that are significant to them.

## **Exploring Bike Week**

Mark Flynn (EN 1400.17 TR 2-3:50 and EN 1400.18 TR 12-1:50)

Laconia Motorcycle Week themed Composition with Mark Flynn explores the history, scale, and phenomena that make up the oldest motorcycle rally in the world. By writing about themes such as freedom, rebellion, risk-taking, and belonging, this course will help students understand not just the event, but also the psyche of the participants who turn Laconia, New Hampshire into the biggest city in the state for one week every summer. Motorcycle enthusiasts range from outlaws to corporate executives, from teenagers to

senior citizens, and come from all parts of the world. Unravel some of the mystery of Motorcycle Week while improving your writing.

### **Think Local**

Meg Petersen (EN 1400.20 TR 10-11:50)

In this composition class, we will look at our relationship with place—this place—Plymouth, NH. What is the relationship between the town and the university? Why does it matter where you go to school? How can we think about the relationship in order to improve it for both sides? What can you learn about Plymouth which will make your time here richer and more beneficial? What connections can you make with people in the community? How can you make Plymouth your home?

### **Gender and Pop Culture**

Kristin Stelmok (EN 1400.22 TR 10-11:50 and EN 1400.24 TR 2-3:50)

Are you interested in feminism, social media, and Netflix? Do you ever wonder about the social and cultural impacts of Disney films, music videos, and the #MeToo movement? If you're curious about how popular culture shapes our understanding of masculinity, femininity, and ourselves, you may be interested in this section of Composition. Students will practice thinking critically and writing in various forms, including blogs, social media posts, and more traditional essays. An open mind is the only prerequisite.

### **Mountaineering Composition**

Kristin Stelmok (EN 1400.23 MW 12-1:50)

Students in this section of Composition will develop their writing skills through exploration of the White Mountains and the literature of mountaineering. If you're interested in the complex relationships between mountains and the people who love them, this class is for you. Students in this section are required to attend a winter hiking trip on the weekend of March 2-3. All equipment will be provided, but students should be prepared to endure strenuous exercise and potentially extreme weather conditions. For more information, contact instructor Kristin Stelmok (kmstelmok1@plymouth.edu).

### **Writing and Youth Movements: How Young People Change the World**

Suzanne Weil (EN 1400.25 TR 10-11:50 and EN 1400.26 TR 12-1:50)

Young people have been at the forefront of every modern social justice movement from Civil Rights and antiwar protests to environmental protection and indigenous rights. Learn about the power of these movements and find your own power to create the change you want to see in the world in this writing class. Learn about the power of the written word through research and practice. Interview activists about their work and journalists about their reporting of protests. Collaborate with students studying information

technology to create blogs. Read protest literature, and write research essays, persuasive essays and personal narratives while you find your place as an agent of social change.

### **Worldbuilding in the 21st Century**

Nathan Theriault (EN 1400.27 MF 2-3:40)

From Middle-Earth to Azeroth this composition section will discover how writers build worlds filled with hobbits, goblins, zombies, wizards, ghosts and more! Students will explore the history of worldbuilding while reading some of the greatest stories ever told. Analyze your favorite film, RPG'S, books, and many other mediums that sparks your passion. Embark on a writing journey towards a new understanding of the world and how what we create influences everything around us.

### **Swim, Bike, Run... Write!**

Hugo Ventura (EN 1400.28 MW 7-8:50)

Are you a Swimmer, Biker or Runner? Or maybe all three? This Composition class seeks to ground the writing process in practicing and reflecting on these three disciplines. Our time will be spent in the pool, on the bike, on the track, and ultimately in the classroom writing and discussing our experiences. You will develop writing skills while also practicing and observing the sport of triathlon. What do these disciplines have to teach us beyond the physical? No special athletic abilities required. Only an open mind and a willingness to actively perform and train for all three of these disciplines—as well as to observe, write and learn about the culture of this modern, unique sport!

### **Exploring Video Games**

Marc Gonzalez (EN 1400.29 MF 8-9:40)

Video games have moved from the fringes to the mainstream of our culture. This shift has generated controversy about violent video games, video-game addiction, and games' effect on human relationships. In this section of composition, we will explore the art, history and culture of video games through the prism of writing. We will learn to think critically about the games we play and the ways they are written. We will explore the universe of gaming, including researched historical games, fantasy world building, and multiplayer online games. No gaming experience necessary.

## **The Power of Pets**

Christine Carpenter (EN 1400.31 TR 4-5:50)

“Dogs do speak, but only to those who know how to listen.” – Orhan Pamuk

In this Composition class, we will examine the often revered relationship between humans and pets. We will discover how cultures worldwide view, and care for pets. We will investigate the role and impact of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the American Kennel Club, the New Hampshire Humane Society, and local veterinary hospitals. Student inquiry will include: rules for pets on campus, pet therapy, emotional support animals, and holistic and conventional pet care. Through reading and writing assignments, students will develop a deeper understanding about the human and pet connection.

## **Rocket Composition**

Michael Thompson (EN 1400.32 MW 5-6:50)

Students will design, build, launch, track, and (of course) write about their own rocket project. 3D lab and hands-on work will be part of the experience. What does it take to fly what we build? Why would we want to? Science writing, other non-fiction, and film adaptations, such as *October Sky*, will be among our texts.

## **Composition: With Clay in Mind**

Suzanne Weil (EN 1400.33 TR 4-5:50)

*“I learn through my hands and my eyes and my skin what I could never learn through my brain. I develop a sense of life, of the world of earth, air, fire, and water.” Centering by MC Richards*

Like pottery, writing exacts earnest demands of us. In this composition class, you will struggle to gather clay into the center of your wheels and experience into the center of your pages. You will create beauty, meaning, and function using elemental materials; clay and words. You will examine and revise your work with a critical eye and willingness to throw pieces in the slop bucket. In this composition class, use pottery as muse and metaphor for writing. Spend time in the ceramics studio and the classroom learning to make pots and writing. No prior pottery skills required.

## **Writing, Culture, and Food**

Siham Karkaah (EN 1400.34 MW 2-3:50)

Food, an exciting subject and always a great conversation! In many international cultures, food is not only viewed as nourishment, but it is also a social experience. In this section of Composition, we will explore the ways that food contributes to our cultural backgrounds. Students will read, write, experience and investigate how the preparation and sharing of food shape local and international cultures. Join us prepared with an appetite to eat and write since we will visit restaurants, cook food, and try new cuisines.

### **Standard Composition Sections:**

Angela Ricciardi (EN 1400.06 Online)

Elizabeth Ahl (EN 1400.11 MW 12-1:50)

Joseph Mealey (EN 1400.16 MW 2-3:50)