

CALDERWOOD SEMINARS IN PUBLIC WRITING

Calderwood Seminars in Public Writing are advanced-level, writing-intensive courses that engage students in a review of their majors or areas of special interest. These seminars challenge students to integrate what they have learned in other courses and to communicate this knowledge to a broad audience.

Calderwood Seminars will rotate among departments and programs. Class size will remain small and enrollment, ordinarily, will be limited to juniors and seniors. The Seminars may fulfill major requirements.

The Calderwood Seminars in Public Writing are named after Stanford Calderwood, a patron of the arts and benefactor of Wellesley College. Throughout his career, Mr. Calderwood realized the value of written communication. To improve the capabilities of Wellesley College students as public writers, the Calderwood Charitable Foundation has provided generous support for this program.

Key elements for the Calderwood Seminars in Public Writing:

- Seminars targeted at juniors and seniors that draw on skills learned in prior courses and that empower a student's "voice" in her major field or area of study
- Seminars that offer a reflective overview of a major or area by covering topics central to the field or that explore a defining theme
- Seminars that emphasize public writing, rather than writing for a specialized and professional audience. Public writing—the ability to translate complex arguments and professional jargon to a broad audience—is a central feature of a liberal arts education
- Seminars that encourage a more collaborative experience, with students writing frequently and rewriting their work in response to comments by their professors and input from classmates

Calderwood Seminars in Public Writing Courses

AMST 355	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Critiquing American Popular Culture
BIOC 324/CHEM 324	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Advances in Chemical Biology
CAMS 327	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Public Writing on Film and TV
CPLT 359/FREN 359	Calderwood Seminar for Public Writing: Advocating for Other Cultures (in English)
ECON 335	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Economic Journalism
ENG 316	Calderwood Seminar: Dead Poetry Society
ES 399	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Environmental Synthesis and Communication

MATH 340	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Explaining Mathematics
MUS 301	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Music in Public
POL1 333	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Perspectives on American Politics
PSYC 343	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Psychology in the Public Interest
SOC 317	Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Crime and Justice in America

AMST 355 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Critiquing American Popular Culture (1.0)

What does *Riverdale* or Instagram say about American society and culture? Do self-publishing and e-books liberate literature or undermine it? How have networks like HBO, Netflix, or Amazon promoted or undercut LGBTQ civil rights or gay marriage? American Studies often focuses on the appraisal, interpretation, and critique of historical and contemporary popular culture. Designed for juniors and seniors, this seminar will explore how American Studies multidisciplinary perspectives can be adapted to reviews, critiques, opinion pieces, and other forms of journalistic, literary, and public writing. Students will consider a variety of historical and contemporary American cultural products, including television, film, books, literature, websites, exhibitions, performances, and consumer products, in order to enter the public conversation about the cultural meanings, political implications, and social content of such culture.

Instructor: Fisher
Prerequisite: AMST 101 or another AMST 100- or 200-level course
Distribution: SBA
Term(s): Fall

BIOC/CHEM 324 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Advances in Chemical Biology (1.0)

Many critical advances result from applying basic chemical principles and tools to biological systems. This approach has opened up exciting new areas of study, such as the biosynthesis of drug molecules and modern materials, the engineering of cells to incorporate "unnatural" biomolecules, and the development of improved methods to study processes in vivo. In this course, juniors and seniors will explore contemporary research breakthroughs in chemical biology through readings in the primary literature, invited lectures, interviewing researchers and developing independent research proposals. Students will analyze and interpret research findings through weekly writing assignments targeted towards broad audiences, such as research summaries for the scientific press, textbook sections, executive summaries and proposals accessible to non-specialists. Class sessions will be structured as workshops to analyze core chemical and biological concepts and provide structured critiques of writing assignments.

Instructor: Elmore
Prerequisite: CHEM 223/BIOC 223 or CHEM 227/BIOC 227
Cross-Listed as: CHEM 324

Distribution: NPS
Term(s): Spring

CAMS 327 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Public Writing on Film and TV (1.0)

This course will explore a wide range of writing on current film and television, thinking about the forms of contemporary discourse on the moving image and ways our own writing can join the conversation. We will read and write reviews, trend pieces, and star studies, bringing our specialized knowledge as moving image enthusiasts to bear on pieces intended to speak to and engage a broad reading public. Students will develop and present their writing in workshop discussions, and serve as editors to their peers. Readings from classic and contemporary writers on film and television will help us refine our sense of what makes writing on media illuminating, accessible, and compelling.

Instructor: Shetley
Prerequisite: CAMS 202 or permission of the instructor
Distribution: ARS
Term(s): Spring

CPLT 359 - Calderwood Seminar for Public Writing: Advocating for Other Cultures (in English) (1.0)

Your local school board is considering eliminating foreign language instruction at the high school. You think it's a bad idea. How will you make your voice heard? This seminar will explore writing that challenges language majors to rethink and repurpose their academic knowledge, shaping it to contribute to public debates. Such writing may include op-eds and letters to the editor; book, film and music reviews; blogs; and interviews with notables in the field. Students will write weekly and revise their work in response to comments from the instructor and their peers. The presence of majors in different languages will introduce students to the assumptions, perspectives and approaches of other cultures, with the goal of helping participants become advocates for a wider, more inclusive cultural literacy.

Instructor: Lydgate (French)
Prerequisite: At least two courses at the advanced 200 level or the 300 level in the major department.
Cross-Listed as: FREN 359
Distribution: LL
Term(s): Spring

Open to junior and senior majors in the foreign language departments and related programs, and in Classical Studies and Comparative Literature, and by permission of the instructor.

ECON 335 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Economic Journalism (1.0)

Students will combine their knowledge of economics, including macro, micro, and econometrics, with their skills at exposition, in order to address current economic issues in a journalistic format. Students will conduct independent research to produce weekly articles. Assignments may include coverage of economic addresses, book reviews, recent journal articles, and interviews with academic economists. Class sessions will be organized as workshops devoted to critiquing the economic content of student work.

Instructor: Sichel
Prerequisite: ECON 201, ECON 202, and ECON 203.
Distribution: SBA
Term(s): Spring

ENG 316 - Calderwood Seminar: Dead Poetry Society (1.0)

This Calderwood seminar will show that there is no such thing as dead poetry. In a series of weekly writing and editing exercises ranging from movie reviews to op-eds, we will explore the many ways that the great poetry of centuries past speaks directly to modern experience. We will be taught both by the poets themselves (whose eloquence will rub off on us) and each other, as each student will pick a "beat" (for example, women poets of the Renaissance) that she will become expert at explaining to a lay audience. By the end of the semester, not only will you be able to persuade a newspaper reader that blank verse matters as much as Twitter; you will also learn how to articulate the value of your English major to a prospective employer--and how to transmit your excitement about the latest discoveries in your field to friends and parents.

Instructor: Lynch

Prerequisite: At least two courses in the English Dept. at the 200 level or above.

Distribution: LL

Term(s): Fall

ES 399 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Environmental Synthesis and Communication (1.0)

Tax carbon? Label genetically modified crops? Ban endocrine disruptors? In this course, an interdisciplinary capstone experience for the ES major, we will engage with such questions and related environmental sustainability issues as public writers. Students will choose one environmental issue, which will be the focus of their environmental "beat" during the semester. They will draw on an interdisciplinary toolset from environmental studies to analyze and communicate the scientific, economic, political, and ethical dimensions of pressing policy issues. Students will conduct independent research to produce weekly articles, such as op-eds, blog posts, press releases, book reviews, policy memos, and interviews with environmental professionals. Class sessions will be organized as writing workshops focused on the interdisciplinary analysis and content of student work.

Instructor: Turner

Prerequisite: A declared major in environmental studies and completion of six courses that count toward the ES major, or permission of instructor. This course is only open to juniors and seniors.

Distribution: None

Term(s): Fall

FREN 359 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Advocating for Other Cultures (in English) (1.0)

Your local school board is considering eliminating foreign language instruction at the high school. You think it's a bad idea. How will you make your voice heard? This seminar will explore writing that challenges language majors to rethink and repurpose their academic knowledge, shaping it to contribute to public debates. Such writing may include op-eds and letters to the editor; book, film and music reviews; blogs; and interviews with notables in the field. Students will write weekly and revise their work in response to comments from the instructor and their peers. The presence of majors in different languages will introduce students to the assumptions, perspectives and approaches of other cultures, with the goal of helping participants become advocates for a wider, more inclusive cultural literacy.

Instructor: Lydgate

Prerequisite: At least two courses at the advanced 200 level or the 300 level in the major department.

Cross-Listed as: CPLT 359

Distribution: LL

Term(s): Spring

Open to junior and senior majors in the foreign language departments and related programs, and in Classical Studies and Comparative Literature, and by permission of the instructor.

MATH 340 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Explaining Mathematics (1.0)

In this course, students will leverage their prior mathematical knowledge to communicate complex mathematical ideas to audiences ranging from the general public to other mathematicians. Each week, students will research a new topic and produce a piece of writing explaining this topic in a specific context. Assignments may include research abstracts, book reviews, interviews with mathematicians, newspaper articles, and technical documentation. Class time will be devoted to discussing the mathematical content behind each assignment as well as workshopping students' writing. This course will give students the opportunity to ground (and expand on) the mathematics they have learned and make connections across the discipline. Moreover, this course's unique format will help students develop their research and independent learning skills.

Instructor: Lange

Prerequisite: One of MATH 302 or MATH 305 and a second proof-based course beyond MATH 206.

Distribution: MM

Term(s): Spring

MUS 301 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Music in Public (1.0)

This course will challenge students to think critically about music, and writing about music, in the public sphere. We will explore the relationship between our specialized knowledge as music students and our experiences as day-to-day consumers of music. The core material of the course will be a series of writing and editing exercises for an imagined audience of non-specialists, including reviews of concerts and recordings, interviews with prominent musicians, and discussions of controversial issues in academic music. The course is intended for juniors and seniors who will address diverse issues, such as how to write about the experience of live performances or how to assess music as a kind of social activism. By translating the technical vocabulary of academic music into a language accessible to non-specialists, students will be challenged to hear and to think musically in new and unanticipated ways.

Instructor: Fontijn

Prerequisite: MUS 100

Distribution: ARS

Term(s): Spring

POL1 333 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Perspectives on American Politics (1.0)

This course will teach students to effectively communicate to the public political science research on American politics. This will require students to step back from the details of their coursework to examine how political science has shaped their understandings of political phenomena. How are the perspectives of political scientists different from those of practitioners and the public? How can these perspectives contribute to public debates on politics? Through a series of writing assignments--for example Op-eds, book reviews and interviews--students will learn how to translate expert knowledge and perspectives into everyday language,

but perhaps even more importantly, how to draw on that knowledge to address the concerns of citizens about the political world.

Instructor: Burke

Prerequisite: POL1 200 or the equivalent and by permission of the instructor. Enrollment is limited; interested students must fill out a seminar application available on the political science department website homepage.

Distribution: SBA

Term(s): Fall

PSYC 343 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Psychology in the Public Interest (1.0)

The primary goal of this course is to develop skills for communicating complex and technical information about human psychology and a psychological perspective to nonexperts. Students will learn to communicate psychological theories (as well as the empirical evidence and methods that support them) to the public through a set of varied writing assignments. These assignments will require students to take a step back from the details of their course work in psychology to think about how the major has shaped their understanding of human biological and social processes. Assignments may include interviews of research psychologists, observations of behavior, book reviews, evaluation of journal articles, and coverage of public talks related to psychological topics. Class sessions will be conducted as workshops devoted to analyzing and critiquing the presentation of psychological information in expository writing.

Instructor: Gleason

Prerequisite: Open to junior and senior psychology majors who have taken two 200-level courses, excluding PSYC 205, PSYC 250, and PSYC 299, or permission of the instructor.

Distribution: SBA

Term(s): Fall

SOC 317 - Calderwood Seminar in Public Writing: Crime and Justice in America (1.0)

Each day the news is filled with stories about the U.S. criminal justice system. We are told that communities don't trust the police and that police don't believe citizens understand their work. Prosecutors yield too much power, and judges can't serve justice because of overly restrictive sentencing guidelines. Mass incarceration has devastated families and neighborhoods, and its economic impact on state and local budgets has become too great. Research by sociologists, criminologists and socio-legal scholars has supported, challenged or qualified these and other claims about the criminal justice system. Students will engage these debates by writing reviews, opinion pieces and other forms of public writing drawing on social science research on crime and justice in the U.S.

Instructor: Cuba

Prerequisite: Two 200-level courses in the social sciences. Open only to juniors and seniors. Not open to students who have taken SOC/WRIT 307.

Distribution: SBA

Term(s): Spring

