

College Writing Seminar

Suzanne Hegland's sections:

This College Writing course focuses on the roots and nature of creativity through close readings of various artists, scholars, and your own experiences. We begin with a consideration of the roles innate talent, deliberate practice, favorable environment, and simple luck play in creative “success.” During the second half of the semester we will consider the connection between personality traits, mental health, and creativity. Some see a biological link between creativity and mental instability, while others believe that most creative people share similar upbringing and personality traits. Still others believe that creators and innovators are “disruptors” who are highly attuned to the tensions between conventional wisdom and their own observations. Over the course of the semester you will develop your own thesis about which factors are the most important in contributing to and supporting the creative personality, using an artist or innovator of your choosing as a lens, grounding your argument in the scholarly conversation about the roots and nature of creativity and how these ideas have changed over time.

Tracy Strauss's sections:

This section of College Writing studies the ways written profiles and other forms of meta-discourse (including television talk shows, YouTube videos, websites, and media interviews) portray modern women in government, music, television, and the world of comedy. Using a feminist lens, we closely examine the language society uses to define what it means to be successful, how messages about self-concept are conveyed and influenced through fact versus bias, and the importance (and effects) of presenting ourselves in genuine ways to the world.