

## Part 1: Provide Information

1. Proposer: Suzanne Nielsen, Associate Professor, Writing, Literature, and Language
2. Course Title: WRIT 356: Humor Writing
3. Course description: This course is a serious inquiry into what's funny, how to write that way and how to say something important in the process. Each writer will focus on developing an idea of serious purpose and conveying that purpose through the use of humor. All genres are welcome. This course may be repeated for credit.
4. Learning outcomes for WRIT 356:
  - Analyze readings of peer work, both orally and in writing.
  - Apply the elements of humor to include subgenres such as Satire, parody, monologue, dialogue, plot, voice and theme.
  - Employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.
  - Interpret and respond critically to works from various cultures in the arts and humanities.
  - Knowledge of mastering techniques for writing and revising humorous texts.
  - Locate, evaluate, and synthesize in a responsible manner material from diverse sources and points of view.
  - Participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.
  - Select appropriate communication choices for specific audiences.
  - Synthesize and apply subgenres within humor writing with clarity and distinction.
  - Use authority, point-of-view, and individual voice and style in writing and speaking.

## Part 2: Describe Fit with General Education

1. A minimum of two credits: This course is 4 credits

Not overly vocational or professional in nature: This course offers students concepts, techniques and approaches to humor writing, and can write short humorous pieces at a beginning to intermediate level.

2. Open to all students (not restricted to a major): Any student can take this course.
3. Without *overly limiting* prerequisites (e.g., Writ 231 is reasonable for upper division work): WRIT 251 is the only prerequisite.

## Part 3: Describe Fit with Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) Goal Area(s)

### Goal 6: The Humanities and Fine Arts

To expand students' knowledge of the human condition and human cultures, especially in relation to behavior, ideas, and values expressed in works of human imagination and thought. Through study in disciplines such as literature, philosophy, and the fine arts, students will engage in critical analysis, form aesthetic judgments, and develop an appreciation of the arts and humanities as fundamental to the health and survival of any society. Students should have experiences in both the arts and humanities.

#### Learning Outcomes

##### **6.1 Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.**

Writing Humor is a writing-intensive workshop. Drawing on student ideas and experiences, this course delves into the craft of subgenres of humor writing in a workshop setting.

Students read each other's work and explore the conventions of parody, satire, monologue, and dialogue by working and expanding on the essential elements of successful writing, and the distinction of the subgenres. Students demonstrate their authorial voices through discussion, writing, study, and modeling of the work of professional writers, as well as through writing exercises, reading assignments, and workshopping one another's pieces.

Students are familiarized to the comedy scene in the twin cities and beyond by sending works out for publication. This course may be repeated for credit.

##### **6.2 Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within a historical and social context.**

Humor writing is much harder than it appears. It takes courage to present work when the expectation is that the work is funny. A workshop is an intensive seminar in which we scrutinize, pore over, examine, read, re-read, discuss, and argue over various genres of humor writing. Writers know how hard it is to produce a piece of good writing. It is essential, and required, to acknowledge the work another writer has put into their piece. When reading and critiquing others' drafts, we learn through critique how to be of use to the writer's revision process. Being of use consists of respecting all work by identifying strengths of a piece, and by knowing what revision strategies to work on. We also must accept each piece on its own terms by not trying to change a writer's fundamental voice and/or subject matter. Finally, we learn to separate ourselves from our work; hard though it is at times, once you've written it and sent it out there, it belongs to the world.

##### **6. 3 Respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.**

One of the required assignments for WRIT 356 is to attend a comedy event wither face-to-face, or online, and write a critique essay focusing on the areas of humor addressed at the event. A creative

writing workshop such as humor writing can explore submissions that include, either overtly or indirectly, contemporary and emotional issues such as race, sexuality, social class, and political or religious beliefs. This may result in heated discussions and true disagreements. Students remain aware that disagreement does not mean that someone else is a morally bad person. We all want to be treated with respect and care, so listen thoughtfully to others' words by putting ourselves in their position. Listening is an important skill to cultivate. People are not abstract concepts; they're your fellow classmates. In addition, students interact with at least seven professional humorists over zoom meetings where they are able to ask questions and engage in dialogue with folx such as Tig Notaro, Al Franken, Jen Kober, Sarah Cooper, and many others. Metro's University Community Conduct Code in the Student Handbook contains good information. If you have a questions or concerns.

**6.4 Engage in the creative process or interpretive performance.**

Humor Writing introduces students to the elements of good writing to include beginnings, characterization, point of view, dialogue, plot and landscape within various subgenres. We learn to read our work aloud as an editing technique, and also as performance.

**6.5 Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.**

Required critiques can be both textual and verbal. Students learn to give feedback, but more importantly, be able to receive feedback for constructive re-vision.

## Part 4: Provide Ancillary Documents

Although it is not required, proposers are encouraged to attach a draft, prototype, or sample syllabus in order to show how the course might be organized. Alignment with goal learning outcomes should be clear in the course description and outcomes as well as ancillary documents.

Please see attached syllabus and course schedule.