English 350: Creative Nonfiction Dr. Wade Mahon

Spring 2016 Office: CCC 443

TR 3:35-4:50 Phone: x4327

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Office hrs. MW 11-12, TR 2-3, and by appt.

**Syllabus**

**Required Text**: *Creating Nonfiction,* Becky Bradway, Doug Hesse, 2009.

This course will focus on “creative nonfiction,” which might be just as accurately defined as “literary nonfiction.” We will work on strategies that will help you understand this type of writing in greater depth as well as develop your own skill in composing it with attention to voice, audience, and style. You will have the opportunity to explore your identity as a writer and the kind of writing styles you might use outside of a college setting. Reading assignments and classroom activities will be designed to help you expand your own versatility and confidence as a writer. Our goals this semester will be to

* learn from relevant texts that can serve as models of the kind of writing you would like to do,
* identify relevant topics worth writing about and construct thoughtful ways of addressing them,
* practice writing (in graded as well as ungraded assignments) in ways that will strengthen your nonfiction writing,
* devote particular attention to issues of style and voice as a way to reach these goals.

**Grades**: ● Papers: Three short (3pp.) papers—Imitation, Personal Essay, Research-based Essay,—and two longer (5+pp.) essays—Literary Essay, Literary Journalism. These will be designed to help you practice composing and polishing representative types of creative nonfiction.

● Participation:

- Daily reading assignments will be posted in the D2L Discussion section, and I expect you to complete all assigned readings and any accompanying homework before coming to class, since this material will provide a major focus of class discussion.

- Daily writing usually in the form of brief in-class exercises designed to help you apply concepts from the readings as well as general stylistic strategies that you can use in the papers you are writing.

- Writing workshops—at least once during the semester you will submit a draft of a paper you are working on for the whole class to read, critique, and discuss in class prior to the due date. Readers will be responsible for offering constructive feed back to students whose papers are being discussed.

- Doing the assigned readings, completing in-class writings, and participating in writing workshops will constitute the bulk of your participation grade. As you can see, consistent attendance is essential to receive a satisfactory grade in this area.

Your final grade will be computed as follows:

Papers 750 pts

Major papers (2), 210 pts each 420pts

Short papers (3), 110 pts each 330pts

Participation 250 pts

Draft for peer review (1), 40pts

Peer responses (8), 10pts each 80pts

Daily Writing (20), 4pts each 80pts

In-class participation 50pts

Total 1000 pts

# Guidelines For Papers

All papers must adhere to the following guidelines\*:

1. They must be typed and proofread with any errors neatly corrected.
2. Double-space and print on one side of the page only
3. Use 1” margins all around, use a 10- or 12-point regular (not **bold** or *italicized*) font, and number each page.
4. There is no need for a separate title page; however, you must use a creative title at the beginning of your paper.

\* Failure to follow these guidelines may result in a reduction of your paper’s final grade.

**Semester Calendar**

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| Jan. 26—Course Introduction  Jan. 28—Read ch. 1-2  Feb. 2—Read ch. 3  Feb. 4—Read ch. 6,  Feb. 9—Readings  Feb.11—Draft Workshop  Feb. 16—Imitation Paper  Feb. 18—Read ch. 4  Feb. 23—Read ch. 5  Feb. 25—Readings  Mar. 1—Draft Workshop  Mar. 3—Personal Essay  Mar. 8—Read ch. 7  Mar. 10—Draft Workshop  Mar. 15—Draft Workshop  Mar. 17—Draft Workshop  Mar. 22—SPRING BREAK  Mar. 24—SPRING BREAK | Mar. 29—**Paper #1 due: Literary Essay**  Mar. 31—Read ch. 8  Apr. 5—Read ch. 9  Apr. 7—Readings  Apr. 12—Draft Workshop  Apr. 14—Research-based Essay  Apr. 19—Readings  Apr. 21—Using primary sources  Apr. 26—Planning  Apr. 28—Readings  May 3—Research progress reports  May 5—Draft Workshop  May 7—Draft Workshop  May 9—Draft Workshop  May 17—**Paper #2 due: Literary Journalism**  5-7 p.m. |
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