

English 350: Creative Nonfiction
Spring 2022
TR 3:30-4:45
CCC 206

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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 Canvas 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 feedback 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	420 pts	
Short papers (3), 110 pts each	330 pts	
Participation		250 pts
Draft for peer review (1),	40 pts	
Peer responses (6), 10 pts each	60 pts	
Daily Writing (20), 2 pts each	40 pts	
In-class participation	60 pts	
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

Jan 25—Course Introduction
Jan 27—Read ch. 1-2; Swift, Selzer

Feb 1—Read ch. 3, Rauch, Solwitz
Feb 3—Read ch. 6, Wallace

Feb 8—Read essays by Kingston, Dillard
Feb 10—Imitation planning

Feb 15—Draft Workshop
Feb 17—Imitation Paper

Feb 22—Read ch. 4; Early
Feb 24—Read ch. 5; Eggers

Mar 1—Read essays by Conroy, Silko
Mar 3—Draft Workshop

Mar 8—Personal Essay
Mar 10—Read ch. 7; revision

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 essays Barnes and Didion

Apr 5—Read ch. 8; Kahn
Apr 7—Read ch. 9; Almond, Kiefer

Apr 12—Read essays Bahrapour and Gonzales
Apr 14—Essay planning

Apr 19—Post first paragraph of essay draft
Apr 21—Research-based Essay

Apr 26—Identify audience and publication
Apr 28—Article proposal

May 3—Readings (TBA)
May 5—Research progress reports

May 10—Draft Workshop
May 12—Draft Workshop

May 16—**Paper #2 due: Literary Journalism**
Mon., 10:15 – 12:15