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ENG 3061-710: Intermediate Nonfiction Writing

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Eastern Illinois University

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English 3061: Writing the Self: Exploring Academic Argumentation through Creative Nonfiction
Course Policy and Syllabus Summer 2022
Dr. Elizabeth Tacke
T/Th: 1:30-4:30, Danville

Course Description:

Creative non-fiction is having its moment. Contemporary writers are sharing their personal experiences through an astonishing array of forms: memoirs, lyric essays, prose poems, blogs, collages, found essays, braided narratives, listicles, hybrid forms, and flash essays. In this course, we will explore some of the following questions as we engage in both shared readings and our own writing and explorations of self:

- What is the role of the essay?
- What is the relationship between form and content in various writers' works? How can a writer's choice of form enhance their ability to convey content?
- What are the affordances and limitations of particular forms for telling different kinds of stories?
- In what ways can narratives about individual experience open up dialogue about larger social, cultural, and political issues? What can make it difficult to discern the broader significance of particular personal narratives?
- Whose experiences count as stories worth telling and hearing? Throughout U.S. history, what roles have race, gender, sexuality, class, (dis)ability, nationality, religion, and embodiment played in legitimizing or silencing various kinds of stories?
- What strategies do various authors use to craft the "I" of their narratives?
- What strategies do authors use to position themselves as insiders or outsiders when writing about communities or experiences?
- What ethical, political, conceptual, and craft-level challenges do various writers face in positioning themselves as qualified to speak about their subject matter?
- Why are we drawn to share stories about our personal experiences?

Learning Goals:

- To analyze the wide range of writing strategies and forms that individuals use to represent their experiences for various audiences
- To analyze the ways that personal experience can be used to address larger social, cultural, and political questions
- To critically reflect on your own experience (positionality) as you read and write nonfiction texts
- To interrogate and articulate some of your own experiences through creative nonfiction forms
- To develop key practices and examples of academic argumentation through the creative genres of nonfiction
- To develop an awareness of different rhetorical approaches in academic writing and to practice these approaches
- To produce writing that will enable you to ask genuine questions, engage thoughtfully and rigorously with a wide range of perspectives, and produce complex, analytic, well-supported writing that matters in different contexts
- To hone mechanics, attention to language and audience, style, and craft in your academic writing
- To offer constructive feedback about others' writing
- To develop flexible strategies for substantively revising and editing your own writing
- To develop strategies for self-assessment, goal-setting, and reflection on your process of writing

Required Texts:

Goldberg, Natalie. *Writing Down the Bones*, 2005.

Hernández, Daisy. *A Cup of Water Under My Bed*, 2015.

Miller, Brenda and Suzanne Paola. *Tell It Slant: Creating, Refining, and Publishing Creative Nonfiction, Second Edition*, 2012.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well*, 2006.

Most weekly readings will be pulled from the PDF packet provided to you at the beginning of the course.

Required Materials

Course texts, a composition notebook for class writings and notes, loose leaf paper for assignments to be turned in, pen.

Course Requirements:

Overall Grade Breakdown

Your grade will be based on your work in the following categories:

1. Writing Projects: (60% of overall grade)

- 1) Descriptive Essay + Reflective Letter
- 2) Close Reading Essay + Reflective Letter
- 3) Transformations Practice + Reflective Letter
- 4) Imitation/Intervention Personal Essay + Reflective Letter

Late Submission of Major Assignments:

Unless you notify me in advance about extenuating circumstances that will prevent you from submitting a project on time, I'll lower your grade for the assignment by one half letter for each day that it is late. For instance, if you submit a "B" project two days late, your grade will become a "C."

2. Peer Review and Writing Conferences (15% of overall grade)

You will be responsible for workshopping your major projects. You will receive points for each review session and its attending parts (peer letters or attending peer review graphic organizers, workshop participation, etc.).

3. Class Preparation and Participation (25% of overall grade)

The success of our course depends on each of you being prepared to participate. Please make sure to bring copies of all reading materials to class on the day that we'll be discussing them. Being prepared for class and discussion entails arriving on time with access to the reading materials and/or assignments. You will be graded for the following:

- **Commonplace Notebooks:** Weekly reading response journals that include: 1) commonplace entries/analysis and 2) response to reading questions as required. These will be checked periodically.
- **Short Responses:** You may have a few additional writing practices throughout the course. Use MLA citations as needed.
- **Participation and Attendance:** Points will be given on attendance, participation in class activities, and course preparation. Points may be deducted due to lack of participation, failure to be prepared with readings or other needed materials, and/or behavior that distracts from classroom activities. After four absences, a remediation plan will be required and students will be in danger of failing the course.

- **Daily Work:** Daily work includes in-class writing, informal group work, and individual activities.

Weekly Writing Assignments

I may assign specific smaller writing assignments throughout the course depending on our needs as a class. However, you will also need to write weekly in your **Commonplace Books**.

Commonplace Books have been used for centuries by writers to process and share their reading and writing with others. You'll receive a notebook from me at the beginning of our class. Please set up your commonplace notebook so that you have one umbrella weekly entry (i.e., Entries for Week #1). For each class, you will need to complete entry requirements within that weekly umbrella:

- Record the date for each entry.
- Take note if you have any required weekly reading questions to respond to from the syllabus.
- Select passages from our readings that are between a few sentences and a few paragraphs long. Carefully **copy each passage that you choose in its entirety**. Please **include the author and page number** for every entry.

For at **least one entry per week** you'll also need to:

- Reflect on the significance of the passage you've copied out in a couple of paragraphs. Consider some of the questions below to help you engage with your selected passage:
 - Why did the passage stand out to you?
 - Which particular words, phrases, and/or sentences seem especially important, and why?
 - What seems important about the language, form, and/or structure of the passage?
 - What is the **rhetorical context** of the passage? For example, who is the author speaking to? What are the specific contexts that the writer is writing from? What specific choices did the author make to help reach their audience or purpose?
 - What specific writing strategies or forms did the author use that you might want to imitate? Why?
 - In what ways, if any, do you want to question, challenge, or complicate an idea that the author presented in the passage?
 - What other texts that we've read, topics we've discussed, or larger social issues might connect to this passage and your thinking about it?
 - How, if at all, does the passage connect to your personal experiences?

You need to bring your commonplace books to class each week as a starting point for our conversation. At times, I may ask you to share and discuss an entry of your choice with a classmate.

Commonplace Books will help you to keep track of useful passages, important themes, and your own arguments and ideas throughout the course. Writing weekly commonplace entries will also help build important critical skills. You'll learn to:

- develop your skills as an active, attentive, and effective close reader
- create an archive of important ideas from your reading
- create a dialogue among various authors and texts
- record your thinking over time
- formulate your own perspectives about different cultural ideas and topics in conversation with the assigned readings.

Major Writing Assignments

You will write a series of major assignments over the duration of this course. Included here are the currently scheduled assignments, although these may change slightly based on our class interests, time, and content.

Descriptive Essay

For this first formal assignment, you will write a shorter piece closely examining an object (noun) or action (verb). For example, you may write a descriptive, analytic essay about a seed, a quilt, a color, OR the act of gardening, cleaning out a drawer, writing in a notebook, standing in the rain, etc. Through this close reading, you will be asked to write through to the larger context or deeper meaning of your selected object or action. We'll discuss this assignment in greater detail and read essay examples before we begin drafting.

Close Reading Essay

For this assignment, I will ask you to offer a detailed analysis or "close reading" of selected passages from a selection of our assigned readings. The goal of this assignment is to analyze how the author's writing strategies affect the meaning and effectiveness of their writing. We'll discuss this assignment in greater detail as the term proceeds.

Transformations

For this assignment, I will ask you to choose an extended passage or section from one of our course readings and rewrite it in three different forms drawn from, or inspired by, other course readings. The goal of this assignment is for you to expand your writing toolbox by carefully analyzing and experimenting with a range of forms and strategies.

I will ask you to provide a detailed reflection about the changes that you have made and why you've made them.

Imitation/Intervention Personal Essay

For this assignment, I will ask you to: 1) choose a sub-genre of creative nonfiction that seems well-suited for entering a broader conversation, 2) select an example of that sub-genre that you particularly admire, and 3) create an original piece that imitates elements of craft or style from the example you've selected and allows you to contribute to, or intervene in, a contemporary dialogue or debate that matters to you. The goal of this assignment is for you to find an effective way to enter a broader conversation and to practice using techniques modeled in writing that you admire.

I will ask you to annotate your original piece and to submit a reflective cover letter in which you discuss your process of writing the piece.

Self-Reflection Assignments

Deepening your self-awareness as a writer is one of the best ways to strengthen your writing skills. Throughout the semester, you will be required to reflect often. For each major assignment, you will submit a reflective cover letter that details what you learned, what worked, what is still in-progress, what you're proud of, what you hope to take into the next project, etc.

Notes on Effective Class Participation

Effective participation entails being an engaged reader. As you're reading materials for class, please adopt whatever strategies will enable you to stay alert and active as a reader. For textbook rental books, you should feel free to use scraps of paper as bookmarks with notes or keep notes in your journal. For the PDFs, please feel free to write directly on them. Annotations include:

- underlining or flagging important passages and key phrases
- writing key words at the top of various pages
- writing notes in the margins of pages or in a reading journal
- jotting down questions that you want to raise about the reading
- listing pages or specific passages that contain especially confusing or intriguing material.

Effective participation entails being an engaged listener and balanced contributor. If you tend to talk a lot in class, please try to leave room for other students to speak. If you tend to be quiet in class, please make an effort to add to our conversation. Participation can take many forms, including:

- offering a comment or reflection about the readings during class
- posing a question or responding to others' questions
- identifying a passage or section that you find difficult to understand
- sharing an insight from your writing assignment
- making links between our discussions and events in the wider world
- listening carefully and respectfully to other students' contributions.

Peer Review Workshops

Writing is a social process; both giving and receiving feedback about writing enables us to develop our abilities as writers. In this spirit, we will often read and provide feedback in this course. By identifying what is working and not working in each other's drafts, you will help each other to clarify and strengthen your arguments. Commenting on others' work is also one of the best ways to improve your own writing; identifying strengths and weaknesses in your peers' drafts will heighten your awareness of strengths and weaknesses in your own work.

We'll have a range of different kinds of workshops throughout the semester. Some will be informal and will require you to read a shorter piece of writing in class (a paragraph, driving questions, thesis statement, etc.) and provide feedback.

For workshops that focus on the formal writing assignments, I'll assign you to a particular peer review group and ask you to do the following:

- Share a complete draft of your assignment with your group members by the date and time specified in class. (*Note: Exactly how we do this will depend on access to resources.*)
- Before the workshop, read your group members' drafts and offer each group member feedback in the form of a letter. We'll practice providing useful feedback during class, and I'll distribute guidelines for writing each set of peer review letters. On the day we provide feedback in class, you'll need to bring your letters with you.

It is crucial that you attend class on days when peer review workshops are scheduled.

- If you miss a peer review workshop, you must arrange to receive feedback on your draft from a classmate and offer feedback in exchange.

Please provide a complete draft of your essay for peer review workshops and share it by the designated time.

- A draft is a work-in-progress, and you'll be substantially revising your drafts based on the feedback that you receive. However, your peers can only offer you helpful feedback if you give them a full-length draft in which you have done your best to meet the requirements of the assignment. Furthermore, your peers will need adequate time for carefully reading and responding to your work.

University, Course, and Instructor Policies

Grading Standard:

Please note that I will hold your work to high standards because I believe it is crucial that you learn to communicate your ideas clearly in writing. Developing your abilities as a writer will enable you to succeed in your remaining classes, in graduate or professional school, and in the workplace. Writing clearly and effectively is difficult, and always a work-in-progress. (Writing is never done, it's just due!) Despite this reality, I will evaluate your written work on the basis of how well the words on the page communicate your ideas. Be prepared to challenge yourself and engage in large-scale revisions. Receiving honest feedback will enable you to improve your writing and achieve greater success in your college and post-college career. You will need to perform work that is consistently above average in order to receive a grade of "B" or "A" in your major writing assignments.

Course Grade: Your grade in this course will be calculated using a straight point system and standard grading scale. Your final grade will be determined by the following breakdown and grading scale:

A = 90%-100%	D = 60%-69%
B = 80%-89%	F = 0%-59%
C = 70%-79%	

Rounding Final Grades: Because this university does not utilize a +/- system in grading, I will *only* consider rounding a letter grade up if it falls in a 1-point range, and I have seen the following from the student:

- All work has been turned in on time throughout the semester and demonstrates solid effort;
- The student has actively participated in all class sessions;
- The student has attended office hours (if applicable) and has maintained open communication with the professor and their peers.

Attendance:

Because our course foregrounds discussion, close engagement with the readings, and close engagement with each other's writing, attending class is crucial for your own success and for the success of the course. You may miss two class sessions without penalty. I will excuse your absence if you have documentation.¹ Your attendance will be taken daily and graded every few weeks. Once you have reached your limit of two unexcused absences, you will begin losing points for every class missed. If you miss class, please ask another student to share their notes and tell you about what you missed. Please make sure to arrive on time for class. Arriving late causes you to miss important material and is disruptive to others, therefore tardies will be deducted daily attendance points as well.

Office Hours (If Applicable):

I look forward to meeting with you individually during office hours. I cannot say it enough: Office hours give you one-on-one time with me to talk about your work and ideas. I am here for you! You should plan on signing up for one required office hours appointment over the term where we can talk about your assignments, issues that we've been discussing in class, any difficulties that you're having, and/or your future course plans.

¹ Please note that due to increased precautions with COVID-19, there will be some flexibility with the attendance policy. However, you should reach out to me (or your advisor) if you worry about illness or if you have an emergency, and we will work together to make sure you receive necessary content instruction and support. Please stay back from class if you are sick!

Plagiarism:

Building on others' words and ideas is an essential element of effective scholarship. However, using someone else's words, ideas, or work without proper attribution is plagiarism, and such an act is considered a serious ethical violation within the university community. In accordance with English Department and University policies, "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, represented as one's original work' (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to and including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the assigned essay, a grade of NC for the course, and file a report with the Judicial Affairs Office." If you complete an assignment for one course and then submit that same assignment as original work for a different course, you are also committing plagiarism.

The best argument against plagiarism is that you cheat yourself out of the education you are here to obtain when you copy someone else's work. If you believe that a specific instance in your writing/design might constitute plagiarism, please consult me prior to turning in the final draft. In short, students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct. Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

Accommodations for Disability and Chronic Illness:

Eastern Illinois University is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students, and I am committed to making learning as accessible as possible for all of my students. If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please let me know. I want you to know that you should feel free to talk about any particular needs that you have, and we can collaborate on a plan for your success. I will treat as private and confidential any information that you share.

Tentative Course Calendar

Note: This calendar is subject to change. Additional readings to support writing may be included depending on student need. Each week, you'll need to have read the assigned readings and completed any additional assignments by the meeting they are due.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES/TOPICS:	DUE:
Week #1: On Looking: Intro to Creative Nonfiction	
<p>Week 1, T May 17: Introductions and Course Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course orientation and overview • Developing norms for classroom discussion • Required materials & assignment scope • Commonplace notebooks • Defining creative nonfiction • Reading Like a Writer • In-class writing practices and processes <p>Assignments Handed Out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assignment #1: Descriptive Essay + Reflective Cover Letter (due May 31) 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PDF Packet read prior to class! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Introduction" and "A Braided Heart: Shaping the Lyric Essay" (Miller, Brenda) from <i>Tell it Slant</i> ○ Bunn, Mike, "How to Read Like a Writer" ○ Murray, Donald, "All Writing is Autobiography" ▪ In class: Syllabus <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Come prepared having considered the reading questions
<p>Week 1, Th May 19: Descriptive Writing and "Writing Through"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider where writers "begin" their writing • Using close descriptive writing to develop larger conversations and arguments • Showing vs. telling exercises • Reflecting on writing practices and building a writing identity <p>Come Prepared to Consider (Reading Questions for the Commonplace):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who are you as a writer? What works for you and what doesn't? Reflect on the smaller writing assignment for this week and thoughts from Goldberg and others in your response. 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Tell it Slant</i>, Chapter 1: "The Body of Memory" (pp. 3-16) and Chapter 9: "The Tradition of the Personal Essay" (pp. 89-195) ▪ <i>Writing Down the Bones</i>, "Composting" (pp. 15-17) and "A List of Topics for Writing Practice" (pp. 21-24) ▪ PDF: Hurd, Barbara, "Cocoons" ▪ PDF: Solnit, Rebecca, "Apricots," from <i>The Faraway Nearby</i> ▪ PDF: Thomas, Abigail, "How to Banish Melancholy" <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Week #1 Commonplace Entries due before class ▪ Commonplace Reading Questions ▪ Pick one "Try It" Exercise from <i>Tell it Slant</i> Chapter 1 OR Chapter #9 (or both!) to try out in your commonplace. Be prepared to share. (Note: Consider this as a potential start or form of freewriting for the Descriptive Essay!) ▪ Bring in some messy early pages of your Descriptive Essay
Week #2:	
<p>Week 2, T May 24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing through concrete details and descriptions • Showing vs. telling exercises • Reflecting on writing practices and building a writing identity • Practicing providing quality feedback and writer's workshop • Developing peer review letters 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PDF: Moore, Dinty W., "If Mr. Clean Had Been My Father" ▪ PDF: Purpura, Lia, "Autopsy Report" from <i>On Looking</i> ▪ PDF: Gay, Ross, Excerpts from <i>The Book of Delights</i> (Pick two short chapters to read from the selections in the PDF)

<p>Come Prepared to Consider (Reading Questions for the Commonplace):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pick 2-3 writing suggestions from the Goldberg text (<i>Writing Down the Bones</i>) that you'd like to consider in your ongoing writing and first round of peer review. What is most compelling about these writing suggestions to you and why? How will you incorporate them into your writing practice or suggest them to others? 2. Analyze two of the chapters you picked from Ross Gay's <i>The Book of Delights</i>. How does he use detail to bring his short delights to life? Identify a stylistic/craft choice you'd like to emulate in your own writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Writing Down the Bones</i>, "Man Eats Car" (pp. 36-38), "Original Detail" (pp. 45-46), and "The Power of Detail" (pp. 47-49) <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full Draft of Descriptive Essay due for Peer Review partners after class ▪ Commonplace Reading Questions
<p>Week 2, Th May 26: Peer Review Descriptive Essay + Intro to Close Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in Effective Peer Review • Intro to the Reflective Cover Letter • Working with final revisions (and understanding revising vs. editing) • Close reading practice with "The Weakness" by Toi Derricotte <p>Assignments Handed Out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assignment #2: Close Reading Essay + Reflective Cover Letter (due June 9) <p>Come Prepared to Consider (Reading Questions):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pick 2-3 writing suggestions from the Zinsser text (<i>On Writing Well</i>) that you'd like to consider for revision. What is most compelling about these writing suggestions to you and why? How will you incorporate them into your final draft? 2. What is Chamberlain's main claim about peer review? To what extent do you buy into that claim? How <i>should</i> we approach peer review? 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>On Writing Well</i>, Chapter 9: "The Lead and the Ending" (pp. 54-66) and Chapter 10: "Bits and Pieces" (pp. 67-91) ▪ PDF: Chamberlain, Jeremiah, "Workshop Is Not for You" ▪ Derricotte, Toi, "The Weakness" ▪ PDF: Sweeney, Meg, "The Art of Close Reading" ▪ Review PDF: Bunn Mike, "How to Read Like a Writer" <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peer Review Letters due for Descriptive Essay Peer Review Groups ▪ Commonplace Reading Questions ▪ Week #2 Commonplace Entries due before class
<p>Week #3:</p>	
<p>Week 3, T May 31: Practices with Close Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing a strong argument from a sustained close reading ▪ Engaging practices of close reading and "reading like a writer" ▪ Exploring specific uses of language, form, and craft (including literary devices) that authors use to create and sustain nuanced argumentation ▪ Paying attention to imagery, symbolism, diction, and other craft choices ▪ Developing driving questions ▪ Practicing close reading with Claudia Rankine 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PDF: Rankine, Claudia, "The Condition of Black Life is One of Mourning" ▪ Pick TWO of the following to read closely and annotate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PDF: Staples, Brent, "Black Men and Public Space" ○ PDF: Junod, Tom, "The State of the American Dog" ○ PDF: Biss, Eula, "Time and Distance Overcome" ○ PDF: Anzaldúa, Gloria, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review PDF: Sweeney, Meg, "The Art of Close Reading" ▪ Review PDF: Bunn Mike, "How to Read Like a Writer" <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final Draft of Descriptive Essay + Reflective Cover Letter due in class! ▪ In your commonplace, pick a small section (2-3 paragraphs max) from ONE of your selected essays (Staples, Junod, Biss, or Anzaldúa). Then, engage in the "Active Reading Stage" (Sweeney) of close reading by annotating on your hard copy. After close reading, take note of patterns and develop a driving question. Finally, write a 2-3 paragraph analysis of that section that works to build and support a debatable claim. (Be prepared to share for feedback in class!)
<p>Week 3, Th June 2: Close Reading Revisions + Mini Conferencing with Dr. Tacke</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a strong argument from a sustained close reading • Engaging practices of close reading and "reading like a writer" • Exploring specific uses of language, form, and craft (including literary devices) that authors use to create and sustain nuanced argumentation • Paying attention to imagery, symbolism, diction, and other craft choices • Developing driving questions <p>Come Prepared to Consider (Reading Questions for the Commonplace):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before class, consider 1-2 key practices, insights, or takeaways from Chapter 14 on revision practices, the writing process, etc. How might you apply these to your ongoing writing practice? • What is Zinsser saying about "unity" and how might you apply that idea to your ongoing close reading essay and revisions? 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>On Writing Well</i>, Chapter 8: "Unity" (pp. 49-53) ▪ <i>Tell it Slant</i>, Chapter 14: "The Writing Process and Revision" ▪ Other in-class revision supports TBD <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full Draft of Close Reading Essay due after class for Peer Review Partners ▪ Week #3 Commonplace Entries due before class ▪ Commonplace Reading Questions
Week #4:	
<p>Week 4, T June 7: Peer Review Close Reading Essay + Intro to Hybrid Styles of Writing & Translations Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploring how authors play with form and craft to impact meaning ▪ Exploring the roles creativity can play in conveying fact-based experiences and creating arguments ▪ "Trying on" different writing forms to find new avenues for writing voice and style 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Tell it Slant</i>, Chapter 13: "The Basics of Good Writing in Any Form" ▪ <i>Tell it Slant</i>, Chapter 10: "Playing with Form: The Lyric Essay and Mixed Media" ▪ PDF: Walker, Nicole, "The Braided Essay as Social Justice Action: Between the Lines" ▪ PDF: Moore, Dinty W., "Son of Mr. Green Jeans" ▪ PDF: Okrent, Arika, "The Listicle as Literary Form"

<p>Assignments Handed Out: Assignment #3: Translations Project + Reflective Cover letter (due June 16)</p> <p>Come Prepared to Consider (Reading Questions for the Commonplace):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is Zinsser saying about “unity” and how might you apply that idea to your ongoing close reading essay? Keep track of a few different styles of hybrid writing. How do different forms affect the meaning authors are trying to convey? Cite specific examples. Consider passages you might want to emulate. 	<p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Review Letters due for Close Reading Essay Peer Review Groups In your commonplace, pick one of the styles of writing you read about and/or read for today, and mimic a small portion on a topic of your choosing. (For example, what might be good content or a question to explore in a listicle form? A braided essay?). Then, reflect on the process. How did it feel trying on a different style of writing? What worked? What didn’t? Commonplace Reading Questions
<p>Week 4, Th June 9: Working on Translations Project + Informal Peer Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring how authors play with form and craft to impact meaning Exploring the roles creativity can play in conveying fact-based experiences and creating arguments “Trying on” different writing forms to find new avenues for writing voice and style <p>Assignments Handed Out: Assignment #4: Final Writing Project + Reflective Cover Letter (due June 30, proposal due June 16)</p>	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDF: Fletcher, Harrison Candelaria, “White” PDF: Washuta, Elissa, “Note” from <i>My Body is a Book of Rules</i> PDF: Betts, Reginald Dwayne, “Ghazal” (pp. 1-2) and “In Missouri” + “Notes” (pp. 74-80 & 91) from <i>Felon: Poems</i> PDF: Mailhot, Terese Marie, “Indian Condition” from <i>Heart Berries: A Memoir</i> <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Draft of Close Reading Essay + Reflective Cover Letter due in class! Week #4 Commonplace Entries due before class In your commonplace, develop a short “found poem,” using only words or phrases from official signage around Danville Correctional. Play with form, order, and style, but any and all words must exist somewhere in the facility on an official sign. In your commonplace, <i>again</i> pick one of the styles of writing you read about and/or read for today, and mimic a small portion on a topic of your choosing. (For example, how might you develop a found-poem or write an argument (counterstory) through an existing genre or form? Then, reflect on the process. How did it feel trying on a different style of writing? What worked? What didn’t?
<p>Week #5:</p>	
<p>Week 5, T June 14: NO IN-PERSON CLASS</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informally exchange your translations project and reflection with 1-2 people. No need to write formal peer review letters this time, but find time to chat about your process and your product. What revisions might you make? How is form affecting meaning in new ways? Consider starting the readings for Thursday. <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on your translations project, due Thursday in class + your reflective cover letter! 	

- Work on developing your final project proposal. Remember that this final project *can* mimic any style and/or be a continuation of a former assignment (except for the Close Reading Essay), BUT, it must be your own story or argument. So, while you can draw on the styles or craft choices from the transformations project, you can't copy the content, as it is adapted from an existing author's work.

Week 5, Th June 16: Writing the Self into Academic Arguments

- Entering a scholarly conversation
- Drawing on personal narrative to develop arguments
- Developing driving questions
- Considering audience: identifying interlocutors; imagining yourself as a participant in a broader conversation or debate
- Exploring exigency and authorial intent
- Paying attention to form, symbolism, word choice, and other figurative devices

Come Prepared to Consider (Reading Questions for the Commonplace):

1. How do the authors for today's readings draw on personal narrative to develop driving questions about identity, place, language, relationships, family, etc.?
2. How do authors play with form, tone, or other craft structures to develop layers of meaning? Cite specific examples you might want to emulate.

Readings:

- Hernández, Daisy, "Before Love, Memory" from *A Cup of Water Under My Bed*
- PDF: Trethewey, Natasha, "Cycle" from *Beyond Katrina: A Meditation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast*
- PDF: Sedaris, David, "Repeat After Me"

Written Assignments:

- **Final Draft of Translations Project + Reflective Letter due in class!**
- **Final Writing Project Proposal due in class!**
- Week #5 Commonplace Entries due before class
- Commonplace Reading Questions

Week #6:

Week 6, T June 21: Writing the Self into Academic Arguments

- Entering a scholarly conversation
- Drawing on personal narrative to develop arguments
- Developing driving questions
- Considering audience: identifying interlocutors; imagining yourself as a participant in a broader conversation or debate
- Exploring exigency and authorial intent
- Paying attention to form, symbolism, word choice, and other figurative devices

Come Prepared to Consider (Reading Questions for the Commonplace):

1. How is Leslie Jamison writing through concrete events, objects, interactions, etc. to develop larger driving questions? Pick one specific essay: What is she arguing? How? Why? To who? For what reason? How is her use of creative nonfiction an effective vehicle for that message? (Consider this in the context of Lopate's discussion of the essay as a form for exploration or argument!)

Readings:

- PDF: Lopate, Phillip, "The Essay: Exploration or Argument?" from *To Show and to Tell* (pp. 107-111)
- Pick two of the following to read and closely annotate:
 - PDF: Jamison, Leslie, "Devil's Bait"
 - PDF: Jamison, Leslie, "In Defense of Saccharin(e)"
 - PDF: Jamison, Leslie, "Pain Tours (I)"
 - PDF: Jamison, Leslie, "Fog Count"

Written Assignments:

- Bring a few messy draft pages of your final project to class for informal peer review and work.
- Commonplace Reading Questions

<p>Week 6, Th June 23: Writing Support and Work Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engaging substantive revision ▪ Honing mechanics, attention to language and audience, style, and craft in academic and creative nonfiction writing 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TBD based on writing needs <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full Draft of Final Writing Project due after class for Peer Review Partners ▪ FINAL Week #6 Commonplace Entries due before class
Week #7:	
<p>Week 7, T June 28: Peer Review Final Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging in Effective Peer Review • Working with final revisions (and understanding revising vs. editing) 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ TBD based on writing needs <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peer Review Letters due for Final Writing Project Peer Review Groups
<p>Week 7, Th June 30: Final Reflections and Sharing Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing Final Projects • Reflecting on Class Themes and Learning 	<p>Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None! <p>Written Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final Writing Project Due in class + Reflective Cover Letter