

Spring 1-15-2019

ENG 3061-001: Intermediate Nonfiction Writing

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ENGLISH 3061, Spring 2019
Intermediate Nonfiction Writing
T/TH 11:00 to 12:15
Coleman Hall 3159
Dr. Daiva Markelis/dmmarkelis@eiu.edu
Office: Coleman Hall 3375
Office Hours: M 9:30 to 1 1:30
T/TR 12:30 to 1:30 and by appointment

Purpose of the Course

This course is designed to introduce you to nonfiction as a genre of creating writing, to give you ample practice in writing various short nonfiction pieces, and to teach you to revise these pieces effectively.

Books and Materials

Writing Creative Nonfiction. Edited by Philip Gerard and Carolyn Forché
In Fact: The Best of Creative Nonfiction by Lee Gutkind

Requirements

1. Read the assigned material by the assigned date and participate in class discussions.
2. Write and workshop six essays on various topics. (Most of these will be short and quite fun.)
3. Critique the writing of classmates in a constructive manner, both orally and in writing.
4. Submit a portfolio of creative work at the end of the semester. The portfolio should include all assignments as well as any in-class writing exercises you choose to submit.

Grade Breakdown

Writing Portfolio: 60%

Attendance/Participation/Written Peer Critique: 30%

Participation in Lions in Winter/English Studies Conference/or extra essay 10%

Writing Portfolio

In creative writing courses, grading is a necessary evil. I have found through experience that a specific grade on every written piece of work sometimes discourages writers. Often they look at the grade and forgo the comments. Portfolios, where one grade is given at the end for your entire creative output, work to your advantage. You can rewrite as many times as you like; I will give you ample feedback on each piece and encourage you to make appointments to see me about your writing progress.

Part of your grade will be determined by how thoughtfully you incorporate the suggestions of others as well as how well you develop your own inner writing critic. Final drafts must also be free of grammatical and mechanical errors. Please visit the Writing Center if you need help with verb tense, sentence structure, comma use, etc.

Workshopping Procedure A large part of this course will be devoted to the workshop, a popular method of critiquing creative writing. This is how it works: You make a copy of your piece for every member of the class. You read your essay out loud. Class members have a few minutes to write down comments, questions, and suggestions for revision. Class members discuss strengths and weaknesses. (You remain silent.) At the end of discussion you respond to the critique and have the option of asking for more feedback on specific sections that the class may have overlooked. Feel free to take notes on what is said in order to help you revise. **Note: You must submit copies of your piece at least two days before your workshop. You may hand them out in a previous class or via email attachments to class members. We'll set up a listserv the first week of class. We may even try to submit them through D2L.**

Participation

Participation includes not only actively discussing the readings, but also making insightful and constructive comments on the writing of your peers. You must submit 2 typed paragraphs for every essay we workshop. **You may email these to the author, or you may attach them to your copy of the story after the workshop. You must also send the same typed critique to me. I must get the critique before the beginning of class. No exceptions. You may, of course, hand me the TYPED critiques during the class period. (We may discuss other methods and formats for critique.)**

Attendance

Many of the ideas used in your essays will be generated in class discussions or in-class writing, which is why it is very important that you come to each class session. I realize, however, that emergencies do occur. Excused absences are those outlined in the student catalogue: "illness, emergency, or university activity." Documentation is required for all excused absences. Unexcused absences are pretty much all others—oversleeping, hangovers, finishing papers for other classes, out-of-town trips "because I'm homesick." More than three unexcused absences may lower your attendance/participation grade to an E.

University Policies

(1) Academic integrity - Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>) Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

(2) Students with disabilities - If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Please stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 217-581-6583.

(3) The Student Success Center - Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- #1 T 01/08 Introduction to course/In-class writing
TH 01/10 Read *Why I Write* (page 6 in Creative Nonfiction, aka CNF)
Read handouts: *What is Creative Nonfiction* and *Irregular* by Barrie Jean Borich
Listing Exercise
- #2 T 01/15 Read *But Tell It Slant: From Poetry to Prose and Back Again* (page 8 in CNF)
Read *Researching Your Own Life* (45 in CNF)
Read Dillard essay (xi) in *In Fact*
- TH 01/17 Bring three typed copies of lists to share with classmates
Read definition handouts
- #3 T 01/22 The three lists due
In-class writing
TH 01/24 Read *The Woman Who Slept With One Eye Open* (182 in CNF) and also
Writing Personal Essays (38 in CNF)
- #4 T 01/29 Workshops on Essay 2
TH 01/31 Workshops on Essay 2
- #5 T 02/05 Workshops on Essay 2
TH 02/0 Read *The Comfortable Chair* (122 in CNF) and
What They Don't Tell You about Hurricanes (223 in CNF)
Also: Read *Being Brians* (163 in *In Fact*)
- #6 T 02/12 Bring in how-to paper (from magazines, internet, books) of your choice
TH 02/14 Workshops on Essay 3
- #7 T 02/19 Workshops on Essay 3
TH 02/21 Workshops on Essay 3
- #8 T 02/26 Read *In the Woods* (318 in *In Fact*) and *A Braided Heart* (14 in CNF)
- TH 02/28 Reading TBA
- #9 T 03/05 Workshops on Essay 4
TH 03/07 Workshops on Essay 4

SPRING BREAK

#10	T	03/19	Workshops on Essay 4
	TH	03/21	Readings and in-class reading
#11	T	03/26	Workshops
	TH	03/28	Workshops
#12	T	04/02	Workshops
	TH	04/04	Workshops
#13	T	04/09	In-class Writing
	TH	04/11	Read <i>An Album Quilt</i> (71 in In Fact) Read
#14	T	04/16	Workshops on Essay 6
	TH	04/18	Workshops on Essay 6
#15	T	04/23	Workshops on Essay 6
	TH	04/25	Publishing Your Work

NOTE: There is no final exam in this class