ENG 4761-001: Advanced Creative Nonfiction

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Advanced Creative Nonfiction  Engl 4761-001  Fall 2004
Classroom: CH 3159  11-11:50  MWF
Prof: Martin Scott
Office: CH 3070
Phone: 581-6289 Office, 549-3522 Cell
Email: cfmts@eiu.edu
Office Hours: MWF 9-11, 2-3 and by appointment

Course Description:  Advanced practice in the writing and revising of creative nonfiction, with an emphasis on the development of the student’s individual style.

Course Objectives:  Students will develop advanced ability and a repertoire of artistic strategies in the writing of literary nonfiction prose.

Students will deepen their understanding of creative nonfiction and its subgenres through intensive readings of past and contemporary authors.

Students will develop critical reading skills through intensive study of classic and contemporary writings in the genre. Students will write a critical analysis of a classic essay.

Students will confront the various issues inherent in the practice of creative nonfiction, such as the tension between differing prose styles, the stance of personal voice and vision, and the importance of meditative/artistic approaches to experience.

Students will develop interpersonal skills and intellectual rigor through vigorous workshop participation.

Textbooks:  
Art of the Personal Essay. PE
The Next American Essay. NAE
The Situation and the Story.

Schedule of Assignments:

Aug.  23  Intro to Class
     25  PE Introduction, Seneca, Shonagon.
     27  PE Montaigne

     30  Situation.
Sept.  1  PE Lamb (165-172), Hazlitt (189-198), Beerbohm (237-9).
     3  PE Woolf and Benjamin.
6 Labor Day Holiday.
8 Conferences with Instructor.
10 Workshop.

13 Workshop.
15 “ “
17 “ “

20 Workshop
22 “ “
24 “ “

27 PE Cioran, Barthes, Ginzberg.
29 Thoreau.

Oct. 1 Fisher and McCarthy.

4 Hoagland and Dillard.
6 Lopate and Pemberton.
8 Fall Break.

11 Conferences with instructor.
13 Workshop Essay 2.
15 Workshop.

18 Workshop, All Week.
20
22

25 Workshop, All Week.
27
29

Nov. 1 NAE McPhee, Lopez, Sontag, Kincaid
3 Weinberger, Cha, Silk, Morasito
5 Carson, Mitchell, Trow

8 Goldbarth, Metcalf, Alexie
10 Griffin, Theroux, Davis
12 Sheilds, Koestenbaum, Lennon, Boully

15 Conferences with Instructor.
17 Workshop Essay 3
19 Workshop.

Nov. 22-26—Thanksgiving Recess.
Dec. 1
3
6 Workshop, all week.
8
10

Essay 3 due Dec. 14, 5 pm. in my box or office.

The instructor reserves the right to revise the syllabus as necessary.

Grade Percentages: Class Participation/Leadership 25% 3 Essays 25% each

Plagiarism: Here is the English Dept. policy—"Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one’s original work' (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

Attendance: Class attendance is mandatory and expected. Class participation is an essential part of the course and of your development as an educated, articulate person. Since class participation is contingent on attendance, more than 5 unexcused absences will lower your class participation grade to an F. As outlined in the student catalogue, I will consider an absence excused only for "reasons of illness, emergency, or university activity." If you are having a problem with lots of absences, please contact me by phone, email or in person in my office so we can discuss the matter. Also, please try to avoid being late—it is disturbing to the flow of class, and therefore a significant pattern of tardiness will lower your class participation grade.

Office hours: Please feel free to drop in to chat with me during my scheduled hours or to make an appointment for your convenience. I would especially be willing to look at rough drafts of essays or to field any questions you might have about assignments.

Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

Format for essays: Type or print out your essays on standard sized white paper. Double space. Use a 12 point font such as Times New Roman; use something plain. In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, type your name, instructor’s name, course/section and date. In the upper right-hand corner of the following pages, type your last name/page number (best accomplished through the header setting). Staple pages together before you come to class.