

English 350: Creative Nonfiction
Spring 2023
MW 3:30-4:45
CCC 206

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Office hrs. TR 11-12, MW 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 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. (4 points ea.)
- 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. Attendance: 4 points per day.

Your final grade will be computed as follows:

Papers		700 pts
Major papers (2), 200 pts each	400 pts	
Short papers (3), 100 pts each	300 pts	
Participation		300 pts
Draft Workshops	100 pts	
Daily Writing	80 pts	
Attendance	120 pts	
Total		1000 pts

Guidelines For Papers

All papers must adhere to the following guidelines*:

1. They must be typed, double-spaced, and proofread with any errors neatly corrected.
2. Use 1" margins all around, use a 10- or 12-point regular (not **bold** or *italicized*) font, and number each page.
3. There is no need for a separate title page for most assignments; 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 23—Course Introduction	Mar 27— Paper #1 due: Literary Essay (200 pts)
Jan 25—Read ch. 1-2; Swift, Selzer	Mar 29—Read essays Barnes and Didion
Jan 30—Read ch. 3, Rauch, Solwitz	Apr 3—Read ch. 8; Kahn
Feb 1—Read ch. 6, Wallace	Apr 5—Read ch. 9; Almond, Kiefer
Feb 6—Read essays by Kingston, Dillard	Apr 10—Read essays Bahrapour and Gonzales
Feb 8—Imitation planning	Apr 12—Essay planning
Feb 13—Draft Workshop (10 pts)	Apr 17—Draft workshop (10 pts)
Feb 15— <u>Imitation Paper</u> (100 pts)	Apr 19— <u>Research-based Essay</u> (100 pts)
Feb 20—Read ch. 4; Early	Apr 24—Identify audience and publication
Feb 22—Read ch. 5; Eggers	Apr 26—Article proposal
Feb 27—Read essays by Conroy, Silko	May 1—Readings (TBA)
Mar 1—Draft Workshop (10 pts)	May 3—Research progress reports
Mar 6— <u>Personal Essay</u> (100 pts)	[May 5—Undergraduate Research Symposium]
Mar 8—Read ch. 7; revision	May 8—Draft Workshop (10 or 40 pts)
Mar 13—Draft Workshop (10 or 40 pts)	May 10—Draft Workshop (10 or 40 pts)
Mar 15—Draft Workshop (10 or 40 pts)	May 17— Paper #2 due: Literary Journalism
Mar 20—SPRING BREAK	(200 pts)
Mar 22—SPRING BREAK	Wed., 2:45-4:45