ENGLISH 4381     FALL 2018

Instructor: Terence A. Dalrymple

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Office Hours: MW: 9:00-10:00 & 1:00-2:00; TR: 11:00-12:00 & 1:00-2:00; and by appointment

Course: English 4381—Creative Nonfiction and Creative Nonfiction Writing

Course Description: A study of the theory and accepted practices of creative nonfiction. Writing assignments may include both creative nonfiction and critical writing.

Prerequisites: Completion of freshman and sophomore requirements in English.

Purposes: This course is designed to introduce students to the practices of effective writing of creative nonfiction and to provide abundant study and practice of those principles at work.

Major Objectives: Students will make progress in the following areas:
--Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends) (IDEA #21)
--Developing creative capacities (Writing, inventing, designing, performing in art, music, drama, etc. (IDEA #26)
--Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing (IDEA #28)

Student Learning Outcomes: Students will be able to perform the following tasks effectively:
--Define major elements and practices of creative nonfiction;
--Use appropriate terminology to identify elements of individual creative nonfiction works;
--Discuss the effectiveness of specific works;
--Analyze the effects of literary approaches in specific works;
--Write effective, original, creative nonfiction.

Assessment Procedures: Student learning outcomes will be assessed via reading quizzes, writing exercises, student presentations, group and class discussions, the final essay, and the final exam.

Student Activities: Students’ major activities during the semester will include reading, listening to and taking notes on lecture material, discussing course material in class and group discussions, completing student presentations, completing the course portfolio, completing writing exercises and one final essay, and completing quizzes and exams.

Methodology and Activities: Reading, lecture, class discussion, group work, writing, quizzes, exams.

Evaluation Procedure: Course grades will be determined according to the assignment percentages:
Average of quizzes, daily grade, and other group and individual in-class work, and
presentations..........................................................30%
Average of Writing exercises and summaries and evaluations..............................30%
Final Essay (Final exam)..................................................................................30%
Course portfolio.............................................................................................10%
Grading Scale: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; 59 & below = F

Major Assignments and Deadlines:

--Reading assignments must be completed by class time on the date specified on the Daily assignments sheet.

--Quizzes over reading assignments will be given on the day the reading assignment is due.

--Writing exercises and summary & evaluations will be assigned by the professor well in advance of the due date; due dates are specified on the Daily Assignments sheet. Writing exercises must be typed, double-spaced, in 12 point type. Most exercise are 1-5 pages long.

--Student presentations will require each student to prepare and present to class commentary on essays students choose to read.

--The final essay (final exam) will be an original work of creative nonfiction, typed, doubled-spaced, in 12 point type; length must be between 6-10 pages. The due date is specified on the Daily Assignments sheet.

The portfolio will be a collection of all work completed during the semester.

Required Texts: Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction, eds., Lex Williford & Michael Martone

Tell It Slant; Brenda Miller and Suzanne Paola

*The professor will provide other reading material via Dropbox.

*Other required material: a Dropbox account; a three-ring binder.

NOTE: Students must bring textbooks or other reading material to class when that work is under discussion. Students who do not bring reading materials to class may be counted absent and receive a zero daily grade.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend every class meeting. They are expected to arrive on time and remain in class for the entire class period. Typically, the only valid reasons for missing class are illness, family emergency, and University business. Except in cases of emergency, doctor appointments should be scheduled for times other than class times. Students requesting make-up work or permission to submit late work must provide evidence of a valid reason for missing class. Students who know in advance that they will miss a class should consult with the professor in advance. Any student who accumulates six (6) absences will receive an F for the semester.

Students who are habitually late to class, habitually leave class early, or habitually leave and then return during class time will be counted absent for every two occurrences. If another professor regularly keeps the class late prior to this class, you should consult with that professor about leaving in time to attend this class. If you have
difficulty finding a parking place, you should adjust your schedule accordingly so that you can arrive to class on time. If you must regularly leave class to visit the restroom, you should consult a doctor.

Please note that I do not distinguish between “excused” and “unexcused” absences. An absence is non-attendance of any regularly scheduled class time. While I sincerely hope (as I’m sure you do) that you will not experience any extreme case of illness or family emergency, they do occasionally happen. Any student who must miss three weeks or more of classes for any reason should seriously consider withdrawing from the course.

Observances of Religious Holidays: A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to me prior to the absence. A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within what the instructor deems a reasonable time after the absence.

Honors Statement: Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is available on the web at http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf. Students caught cheating on a quiz or exam will receive a zero for that assignment; if caught a second time, they will fail the course. Students submitting plagiarized written assignments will receive an F for the course.

Common Courtesy: Students are expected to exhibit common courtesy toward their professor and their classmates at all times. A few guidelines for common courtesy follow:

--arrive on time and remain for the full class time
--if late arrival or early departure is unavoidable, sit near the door to avoid distracting others
--remain seated unless class assignment requires otherwise
--do not hold individual conversations unless directed to do so by the professor
--stay awake
--work on this course material only
--do not eat
--do not pop gum
--do not begin packing prior to the official end of class
--do not wear any sort of head phones
--prior to entering the classroom, turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices that might create a distraction.

--NOTE: Formal, professional studies have demonstrated that no matter how good we think we are at multi-tasking, activities such as texting during class lecture/discussion significantly diminish our attention to lecture/discussion material
and, therefore, our comprehension and understanding of that material. For your own sake, then, you may not use electronic equipment (e.g., head phones, cell phones, computers) in the classroom without the express permission of the teacher. Any student using such devices during class without the professor’s permission will be asked to leave the classroom and will be counted absent.

**Students’ Special Requirements:** Persons with disabilities that may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request such accommodations prior to any being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Student-Professor Communication:** Other than class time, you may consult with me in person during the office hours specified at the beginning of this syllabus or during another specified time on which we have agreed in advance. You may also contact me via e-mail or telephone. However, I neither check nor respond to telephone messages as regularly as I do e-mail messages. In addition, I do not check or respond to e-mail or phone messages after I have left my office for the day (usually between 4 and 5 p.m.).

**Please Note:** Your syllabus for this class lists class policies and deadlines for all major assignments. I distributed electronic copies to all students enrolled in this class at the beginning of the semester. The syllabus is also available in the class Dropbox folder. Please consult the syllabus before e-mailing or calling with questions that are answered there.

**Please Also Note:** A college education includes learning to communicate appropriately with individual audiences. To help you practice effective communication, I require that e-mails to me be designed and written appropriately for your purpose and audience. All e-mails must begin by addressing me (e.g., Dr. Dalrymple,); they must be written following the conventions of standard written English (e.g., complete sentences, capitalization where necessary, punctuation where necessary, correct spelling); they must end with your first and last name and the course and section number (unless the course and section # are included in the text of the message). **I will not respond to e-mails that do not follow these easy guidelines.**

**Student Success:** This course is designed so that all students with college-level skills in reading, writing, note-taking, and study skills can pass with a C or higher, so long as they complete all assignments on time, attend class regularly, and remain attentive during class time. More specifically, successful students will

--attend every class meeting on time and remain for the full time;
--regularly consult the syllabus for assignment deadlines and course policies;
--complete all reading assignments on time and bring reading materials to class;
--complete all writing assignments on time and submit them according to instructions;
--remain attentive during class and follow guidelines of common courtesy;
--take notes on class material, particularly on terminology discussed and on other major topics of discussion;
--review notes regularly;
--participate in class and group discussions;
--ask questions about material that remains unclear;
--begin writing assignments early to avoid turning in sub-par work.
Required Senior Portfolio: Candidates for the Bachelor of Arts in English are required to complete a portfolio to be eligible for graduation. Students may submit this portfolio after completing all major requirements or in the semester immediately prior to graduation. The portfolio grade will not affect GPA, but will be part of the student's record. For more information go to http://www.angelo.edu/dept/english_modern_languages/assessment.php.
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Daily assignments

*TIS=Tell It Slant

*Touchstone= Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction

T  8-28    Introduction to class; begin general discussion of creative nonfiction
R  8-30    Continue general discussion of creative nonfiction; in-class writing
T  9-4    Before class, read *TIS* Chapter 1 ("The Body of Memory") and Chapter 12 ("The Particular Challenge of Creative Nonfiction," pp. 145-153)
R  9-6    Before class, finish reading Chapter 12 (see above)
R  9-13    Before Class, read *TIS* Chapter 13 ("The Basics of Good Writing in Any Form"); discuss possible topics WP 1; after this class meeting, begin working on WP 1
T  9-18    Complete draft of WP 1 due in Dropbox before class
R  9-20    Final Draft of WP 1 due (one copy in Dropbox before class; a hard copy in class)

T  9-25    Before class, read *TIS* Chapter 2 ("Writing the Family") and Chapter 9 ("The Tradition of the Personal Essay", pp. 89-97)
R  9-27    TBA
R  10-4    Continue discussion; discuss WP 2 topics; after this class, begin working on WP2
T  10-9    Complete draft of WP 2 due in Dropbox before class
R  10-11   Final draft of WP 2 due (one copy in Dropbox before class; a hard copy in class); Rewind: discussion of previous reading and writing
T  10-16   Before class, read *TIS* Chapter 3 ("Taking Place": Writing the Physical World")
Discuss possible topics for WP 3; after this class meeting, start working on WP3
Before class, read *Touchstone*, "The Search for Marvin Gardens," pp. 370-80 & "Living Like Weasels," pp. 148-151; re-discuss and re-consider topics for WP 3

Before class, read *TIS* Chapter 14 ("The Writing Process and Revision"); opening page or two of WP 3 due in Dropbox before class

Complete draft of WP 3 due in Dropbox before class

Final draft of WP 3 due (one copy in Dropbox before class; a hard copy in class)

Before class, *TIS* Chapter 5 ("Writing in the Arts"); read "Book Wars" and "Bookless in Biak" (Provided by professor)

Before class read review of *Saigon Rock & Roll: Vietnamese Classic Tracks 1968–1974* & "Gender Bender" (Provided by professor); discuss possible topics for WP 4; after this class meeting, start working on WP 4

Opening page or two of WP 4 due in Dropbox before class

Final draft of WP 4 due (one copy in Dropbox before class; a hard copy in class)

Before class, read *TIS* Chapter 10 ("Playing with Form: The Lyric Essay and Mixed Media"); discuss Final Essay assignment; after this class, begin working on the final writing assignment

Before class, read two essays of your choice from *TIS* (do not read an essay previously assigned in this class); be prepared to discuss what you read

Thanksgiving HOLIDAY

Before class, read two essays of your choice from *TIS* (do not read an essay previously assigned in this class or an essay you read for 11-16); be prepared to discuss what you read; Q&A for Final Essay

Discuss summary and response assignment; Q&A about Final Essay; bring in-progress Final Essay to class

Summary and response assignment due Individual conferences

Review; bring in-progress Final Essay

Final Exam, 1:00-3:00 p.m.