EComp 313
Nonfiction Seminar

Spring 2015

Contact

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Overview

This section will work through the personal essay and into writing shaped by a desire to share knowledge, experiences, and observations with the purpose of effecting change, whether at a personal or global level in reflective, ethical, or political ways. To do this, we will focus on narrative technique, voice, and overall craft. We will engage in conversations about published writing and workshops of our own, original writing. In short, she purpose in our writing is to bridge the personal and the public, to use the techniques of inner reflection to evoke outer action, and above all to do this through the art and craft of telling stories.

Course Materials

Books & c.
Tell It Slant: Creating, Refining, and Publishing Creative Nonfiction
by Brenda Miller & Suzanne Paola
& Selected Readings

Other Materials
Regular access to Blackboard,
Sketchbook, Pen &/or pencil
a printer, & WUSTL email

Workshops

Drafts: Generally, drafts should be posted on Blackboard by 11:59 p.m. on the Thursday before the workshop date. Students need to print out, read, and comment on each of the scheduled drafts.

Research: Workshop II asks you to include research. Such research can come from interviews with family and friends, observations, library research, films, and/or other forms of media.

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Syllabus & Calendar

Policies

Attendance: Students can miss up to two classes without penalty. On the third absence, the final grade may drop by one-third of a letter per missed class. Tardiness may also result in a final grade deduction.

Electronics: Students responding to, consulting, or otherwise using such devices as cell phones, laptops, etc., for reasons unrelated to class will earn a tardy for each occurrence.

Food & drink: Please do not eat during class time. Exceptions to this rule include foods such as trail mix, cereal bars, etc. For coffee, water, etc., please use a well-secured container.

Assignment formats: Use your sketchbook for in-class and homework exercises. For workshop draft(s), letters, and the final portfolio, double space, use an 11- or 12-point serif font, and include page numbers.

Late Assignments: Unless arrangements are made prior to the due date, all late assignments are deducted one-third of a letter grade for each calendar day late.

Assignments

Participation Discussions & workshop critiques 20%
Mini-workshops (2) Draft: 2-3 pages 20%
Workshop I Draft: 3-6 pages 20%
Workshop II Draft: 5-8 pages (with research) 20%
Final Reading Revision: in-class reading & critique 20%

Grading standards

A A-range work is thoughtful in combining developed characters and scenes, along with a plot, an image, and/or an idea. It demonstrates an awareness of audience and strikes a balance between showing and telling. Attention to style is evident.

B B-range work shows a conscious attempt to develop a character, a scene, a plot, an image, and/or an idea. It may or may not demonstrate an awareness of audience, but it balances showing and telling. Attention to style is evident.

C C-range work attempts to develop a character, etc. It may not balance the craft of showing and telling, but it strives to include both techniques. It does not demonstrate an awareness of audience. Attention to style is lacking.

D D-range work attempts to develop a character, a scene, a plot, an image, or an idea. It does not balance the craft of showing and telling, nor is it aware of audience. Attention to style is absent.

F An F grade indicates that the work either does not meet the above standards or was not submitted.
Other points of interest

Blackboard
Assignments and other course-related materials will be posted on Blackboard, which can be accessed at bb.wustl.edu or through WebSTAC. Workshop drafts will be posted on Blackboard so that we can all print them out, read and comment on them, and bring them to class on the assigned workshop date.

Pass/Fail Option
Students enrolled under this option will need to receive at least a C on each assignment to receive credit for the course.

Cornerstone
Academic support in the form of tutoring, counseling, and disabilities, such as hearing, visual, orthopedic, learning, physical, and more—can be found at Cornerstone.
Phone: 314.935.4062.
Website: http://cornerstone.wustl.edu/

Writing Center
Free writing advice is available to all Washington University students and faculty. You may drop by the Writing Center, located on the main floor of Olin Library.
Phone: 314.935.4981.
Website: https://writingcenter.wustl.edu/

U. College Reading
At the end of the semester, the University College creative writing program hosts a reading. Writers are encouraged to participate in this reading. Date, time, and location will be announced.

Calendar
Assignment details are posted on Blackboard weekly. Note also that you will be posting comments, reflections, etc., on Blackboard on a weekly basis until Week 12.

Week 1 (1/12): Introductions / the genre & process
Week 2 (1/19): Dr. Martin Luther King Day / we do not meet
Week 3 (1/26): Showing: scene, summary, & details Mini-workshops
Week 5 (2/9): Revision I: developing the story Mini-workshops
Week 6 (2/16): Workshop I
Week 7 (2/23): Workshop I
Week 8 (3/2): Telling: the stories of others near and far
Week 9 (3/9): Spring Break / we do not meet
Week 10 (3/16): Forms: the portrait, the object, & the self Mini-workshops
Week 11 (3/23): Forms: the collage, the braid, & the mediation Mini-workshops
Week 12 (3/30): Revision II: shaping the story Mini-workshops
Week 13 (4/6): Publishing your writing / Workshop II
Week 14 (4/13): Workshop II
Week 15 (4/20): Workshop II
Week 16 (4/27): Final project: a reading

Syllabus and calendar are subject to change.