

Oxford College of Emory University
English 185-8A: CRW and Life writing
Spring 2011
Seney 208; MWF 8:30-9:20

Dr. Jeff Galle
Office & hours: Seney 407;
M-F, 2:00-3:30; and appts.
jgalle@emory.edu; 4-4571

Required Texts

Mazur, Anne. *Going Where I'm Coming From: Memoirs of American Youth*
Roorbach, Bill. *Writing Life Stories: How to Make Memories Into Memoirs, Ideas Into Essays and Life Into Literature*
Saks, Elyn R. *The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness*
Taylor, Jill Bolte. *My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey*

Course Description

English 185 is a writing course, and the approach we will take is to gain a good deal of experience in two genres, autobiographical and biographical writing. Life writing includes both of these genres, as well as other genres like travel writing.

This course in life writing possesses several features—readings about the decisions that writers make in writing their own life story or the life of another person, discussion of the ethics involved in what to include and exclude, and readings from several acclaimed examples of life writing.

Course objectives and learning outcomes

The student who successfully completes this course will

1. Possess increased skill in writing relative to the criteria of the course rubric.
2. Gain knowledge of the genres of life writing.
3. Gain knowledge of issues and decisions that writers make in writing versions of their own or another's life.
4. Gain greater skill and knowledge of collaborative writing, facilitation of classroom discussion, and (in some instances) interviewing.

Assignments in General

1. Short assignments on these readings will frequently be done out of class and submitted through Blackboard.
2. Each student will have responsibility of leading/facilitating class discussion of readings (after the first two weeks).
3. Six essays (800-1200 words), most of them developed from working with the autobiographical experiences and/or the material generated from discussion of course materials. The essays will be primarily expository, but there may be elements of creative nonfiction as well. One of these essays, the last one, will take the form of reflections on your writing.
4. One formal paper (10 pages) requiring outside sources, MLA documentation, an in depth treatment of an issue, and some form of

- oral presentation of the findings to the class. Topics to be decided upon as we discuss the various issues raised by the course content.
5. A final exam with questions covering content of the course, including the genre of life writing, the bogus memoirs, and the issues related to the historical documents.

Grading of the Assignments and Assigned Weights of Each

Assignments/facilitation	10%	(1-pg assns; facilitation(s))
6 essays	65%	(essentially one ~ every two weeks)
Formal Paper	15%	(due last day of regular classes)
Final exam	10%	

****All assignments will be assigned a letter grade, and I will use + and – to enable students to have more precise feedback as the quality of each particular letter grade. Hence, on a 100 point scale, an A- would fall in the low 90s, and a B+ in the high 80s, for example. Using a 12-point scale, each letter grade with + or – has a value as well.**

Other Responsibilities and Related Matters

1. Attendance. Be present and on time. I take roll the first thing as class begins, and always mark as absent those who are not in the room. You may miss three class meetings, but I will deduct points (5 pts per absence) from your class participation grade after the third absence. Students who are late must assume responsibility to be certain the attendance record is changed to reflect their attendance.
2. Honor Code. We will discuss this important issue in class, and we will cover plagiarism at that time. But please be aware that your writing is to be your own, and any other person's writing must be acknowledged through citations in the proper form. Please consult the Oxford College Handbook if you have any questions regarding the Code or the Honors Council.
3. Late essays and other work. Work should be turned in on time so that I will be able to give you feedback on that assignment when the class is discussing the assignment. The longer period of time after we discuss an item that goes by, the less relevance and usefulness that assignment will have. For every day that an essay (or other work) is late, I will deduct a letter grade from that paper (or other work).
4. Ms. Mary Moser is our library support person, and she will be leading training sessions for you at different points in the semester. So attending these sessions during class time is required.

Readings, Assignments, Due dates

*Short assignments and facilitation of discussion are not placed on the calendar because those decisions will be made in class.

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

FRIDAY DUE DATES, BOLD

January 12, 14

Extemporaneous essay
Brief outline/info for course
Friday, go over extemporaneous essays with course rubric
Details of syllabus: essays, facilitation, research paper

January 17: Martin Luther King Holiday

January 19, 21:

Introduce Roorbach, first exercises
First essay topics

January 24, 26, **28**

ESSAY 1

Roorbach exercise & work w/ lead, summary, dialogue
Mazer: begin student led discussion; both days

Jan 31, February 2, 4

Roorbach exercise work
Mazer: continue successive chapters

February 7, 9, **11**

ESSAY 2

Roorbach exercises
Mazer: continue successive chapters

February 14, 16, 18

Roorbach exercises
Mazer: continue successive chapters

February 21, 23, 25

Roorbach exercises
Mazer: complete last chapters of anthology

Feb 28, March 2, **4**

ESSAY 3

Continue Roorbach as needed
Begin Taylor book: student led discussions

March 7, 9, 11: Spring Recess

March 14, 16, 18

	Roorbach as needed Taylor: successive chapters	
March 21, 23, 25		ESSAY 4
	Roorbach, as needed Introduce Saks and complete Taylor	
March 28, 30, April 1	Roorbach as needed Saks: successive chapters	
April 4, 6, 8		ESSAY 5
	Roorbach, as needed Saks: successive chapters	
April 11, 13, 15	Roorbach, as needed Saks: successive chapters	
April 18, 20, 22		ESSAY 6 (Reflective Essay)
	Complete research paper and reflective essay	
April 25 : last class for MWF April 27: Reading Day		RESEARCH PAPER DUE
May 3 (9:00 – 12:00)		Final Exam

NOTEW: We will also have two library research days during the semester. TBA once we know when they will be most useful.