

Oxford College of Emory University
English 185-9C: CRW and Life writing
Fall 2011
East Village (Beta); MWF 9:35-10:25

Dr. Jeff Galle
Office & hours: Seney 407;
M-F, 2:00-3:30; & by appt
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Required Texts*

Clayton, Susan and Susan Opatow, eds. Identity and the Natural Environment: The Psychological Significance of Nature.

Dumas, Firoozeh. Funny in Farsi: A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America.

Gottfried, David. Greed to Green: The Transformation of an Industry and a Life

Hoopes, Laura M. Breaking Through the Spiral Ceiling: American Woman Becomes DNA Scientist

*We will also use the internet to select several creative nonfiction essays that we will use in class discussion as well.

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. We will rotate the 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 a reflection on your writing and your service work completed at Washington Street.
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 issue of sustainability, and the issues related to service learning.

Grading of the Assignments and Assigned Weights of Each

Assignments/facilitation	10%	(1-pg assns; facilitation; participation)
5 'regular' essays*	50%	(essentially one ~ every two weeks)
Oral presentation**	10%	
Formal Paper	20%	(due last day of regular classes)
Final exam	10%	

*Essay 6 is a required and very important Reflective Essay which is ungraded but should reflect your decisions and growth as a writer and your work in service.

**The oral presentation will provide an opportunity for each student to discuss in depth her or his work with some aspect of the memoir or life writing. It may involve the research project, the service learning project, or one or more of the personal essays. This assignment is open-ended for the reason that we have a wide array of assignments in this class. A rubric will be available for guidance in putting the presentation together.

Grading

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. Service Learning duties. Students will arrange to tutor at Washington Street Center at least 6 times during the semester. Arrangements will be made through Kim David in the Office of Student Development for Community Service. (This work may provide the topic for one of the personal essays as well).
4. 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).
5. 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, Major 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

August 24:	Course overview, syllabus, impromptu paper	
26:	Review rubric applied to impromptu papers; issues of the memoir	
29:	Dumas' <i>Funny in Farsi</i>	
31:	Dumas' <i>Funny in Farsi</i>	
September 2:	Dumas' <i>Funny in Farsi</i>	
	September 5: Labor Day Holiday	
7:	Dumas' <i>Funny in Farsi</i>	
9	Dumas' <i>Funny in Farsi</i>	ESSAY 1 DUE
12:	Dumas' <i>Funny in Farsi</i>	
14:	Hoopes' <i>Breaking Through the Spiral Ceiling</i>	
16:	Hoopes' <i>Breaking Through the Spiral Ceiling</i>	
19:	Hoopes' <i>Breaking Through the Spiral Ceiling</i>	
21:	Hoopes' <i>Breaking Through the Spiral Ceiling</i>	
23:	Gottfried's <i>Greed to Green</i>	ESSAY 2 DUE
26:	Gottfried's <i>Greed to Green</i>	
28:	Gottfried's <i>Greed to Green</i>	

30:	Gottfried's <i>Greed to Green</i>	
October 3:	Gottfried's <i>Greed to Green</i>	
5:	Gottfried's <i>Greed to Green</i>	
7:	Gottfried's <i>Greed to Green</i>	
10-11	Midsemester Break	
12:	Clayton, ed. <i>Identity and the Natural Environment</i>	
14	Clayton, ed. <i>Identity and the Natural Environment</i>	
ESSAY 3 DUE		
17:	Clayton, ed. <i>Identity and the Natural Environment</i>	
19:	Clayton, ed. <i>Identity and the Natural Environment</i>	
21:	Clayton, ed. <i>Identity and the Natural Environment</i>	
24:	Self-selected memoir essays: creative nonfiction	
26:	Self-selected memoir essays: creative nonfiction	
28:	Self-selected memoir essays: creative nonfiction	
ESSAY 4 DUE		
31:	Research paper and oral presentations	
November 2	Research paper and oral presentations	
4	Research paper and oral presentations	
7	Research paper and oral presentations	
9	Research paper and oral presentations	
11	Research paper and oral presentations	
ESSAY 5 DUE		
14:	Research paper and oral presentations	
16:	Research paper and oral presentations	
18:	Research paper and oral presentations	
21:	Drafting reflective essay: Essay 6	
23-25	Thanksgiving recess	
28:	Discussion of rubric and final draft Essay 6	ESSAY 6 DUE
30:	Issues in Memoir writing: final exam prep	
December 2:	Issues in Memoir writing: final exam prep	
5:	(last class)	RESEARCH PAPER DUE
7	Reading Day	
December 8-14	Final Exams week	