

Oxford College of Emory University

English 185-10A: CRW and Life writing
Fall 2014
Language Hall 102; MWF 10:45-11:50

Dr. Jeff Galle
Office & hours: Seney 401;
T-F, 2:30-3:30; & by appt
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Required Texts*

Maya Angelou. *Mom and Me, and Mom*. Random House, 2013.
Brian Gottfried. *Greed to Green: The Transformation of an Industry and a Life*.
WorldBuild Pub, 2004.
Vladimir Nabokov. *Speak, Memory*. Vintage P, 1989.
Azar Nafisi. *Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books*. Random House,
2003.

* We may also use other sources for several creative nonfiction essays that we will use in class discussion as well.

Course Description

English 185-10A is a writing course in which you will undertake a number of writing projects of various lengths, purposes, and values. We will use the lens of the memoir as we read a series of essays/books in the genre of life writing with the purpose of studying the way that authors construct their own stories in order to better equip you to write your own creative nonfiction life writing essays.

This course in life writing possesses a number of features—the reading and class discussion facilitated by individual students of the texts mentioned above, a series of creative nonfiction essays that you will write in multiple drafts, a service learning project in which you will interview and write a key significant portrait of your interviewee, a research paper on a particular issue in life writing that is developed in conversation with me.

Each class is important because part of every class will involve student led class discussion and daily short quizzes over the reading for the day.

Course objectives and learning outcomes

The student who successfully completes this course will

1. Develop skill in oral and written expression. (IDEA objective #8)
2. Learn how to find and use research resources for answering questions or solving problems (IDEA objective #9)
3. Acquire an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers (IDEA objective #12)
4. Gain knowledge of the genres of life writing.
5. Gain knowledge of issues and decisions that writers make in writing versions of their own or another's life.

Information about Assignments

1. Daily quizzes and other short assignments on these readings will be required.
2. We will rotate (a signup sheet provided) the responsibility of leading/facilitating class discussion of readings (after the first two weeks).
3. Six essays (1100-2200 words; minimum 4pp, ds), most of them developed from working with the autobiographical experiences and/or the material generated from discussion of course materials. The essays will be written in the genre of creative nonfiction. One of these essays, the last one, will take the form of a reflection on your writing and your service work completed at the local institution where your service learning project takes place.
4. One formal paper (10 pages) requiring outside sources, MLA documentation, an in depth treatment of an issue, and some form of research presentation to the class. Topics to be decided 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

Participation/quizzes/facilitation	10%
5 'regular' essays*	50%
Essay 6 TPSL portrait essay	10%
Research Presentation and Paper**	20%
Final exam (including reflection)	10%

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

**The research presentation will provide an opportunity for each student to discuss in depth her or his work with the research process including some aspect of the memoir or life writing. 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. Be present, on time, and engaged in the class discussion. 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. The Office of Student Development for Community Service will work with our class to arrange the place and transportation for this important part of the course. (This work will provide the content for the TPSL portrait essay).
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 class day that an essay (or other work) is late, I will deduct a letter grade from that paper (or other work).
5. Ms. Sarah Bankston 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.
6. Student work submitted as part of this course may be reviewed by Oxford and Emory faculty/staff for the purposes of improving instruction and enhancing Emory education.

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.

ASSIGNMENTS

FRIDAY DUE DATES

August 27: Syllabus, introduction to course, impromptu writing

August 29: Introduction to the TPSL portion of class, Crystal McLaughlin

September 1: Labor Day Holiday

September 3: Angelou, 3-48

September 5: Angelou, 49-101 (Crystal McLaughlin)

September 8: Angelou, 102-150
 September 10: Angelou, 151- end
 September 12: Research Intro ESSAY 1

September 15: Nabokov, 9-56
 September 17: Nabokov, 57-106
 September 19: Nabokov, 107-150

September 22: Nabokov, 151-196
 September 24: Nabokov, 197-end
 September 26: Nafisi, 3-47

ESSAY 2

September 29: Nafisi, 48-91
 October 1: Nafisi, 91-137
 October 3: Nafisi, 137-189

October 6: Nafisi, 189-235
 October 8: Nafisi, 235-283
 October 10: Nafisi, 283-328
 ESSAY 3

October 13-14 Fall Break
 October 15: Nafisi, 328-end; Life Writing Issues: Research Day
 October 17: Life Writing Issues: Proposal

October 20: Peer Review: Proposals
 October 22: Peer Review: Proposals
 October 24: Finalizing Proposals

October 27: Gottfried, 3-35
 October 29: Gottfried, 36-75
 October 31: Gottfried, 75-118

ESSAY 4

November 3: Gottfried, 119-162
 November 5: Gottfried, 163-204
 November 7: Gottfried, 205-end

November 10: possible Research class day
 November 12: possible Research class day
 November 14: Oral presentations

November 17: Oral presentations
 November 19: Oral presentations
 November 21: Oral presentations

ESSAY 5

November 24: Oral presentations

November 26 – 28: Thanksgiving Recess
December 1: TPSL discussion, drafting Essay 6
December 3: TPSL discussion, Essay 6
December 5: Portraying the Life: biographical essays ESSAY 6 (TPSL)
December 8: Last day of MWF class: final exam prep: RESEARCH PAPER
December 10: Wednesday Reading Day

Final Exam: Our final exam is a discussion/essay test, and we will refine a list of possible questions during the last week of class. They will emerge from the discussion of life writing issues we have developed during the semester.

The Research Paper Project calendar: To be placed on Blackboard