

English 273: Introduction to Creative Nonfiction

Time & Place: T r T H 1:30 to 1:00 Gruening 304 Instructor : David Crouse

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Office Hours T r T H 2:00 to 3:30 and by appointment

Course Description

Forms and techniques of nonfiction writing in memoir and the personal essay for beginning students; discussion of students' work in class and in individual conferences Prerequisite: English F 111 or permission of instructor.

Course Overview

Think of this class as a writing laboratory, a place to experiment and refine your work. The practice of creative nonfiction is an opportunity to explore the self in a way that fiction and even poetry cannot. This exploration is not a narcissistic one. The issues we will discuss in this course—the interplay between memory and imagination, the manner in which our pasts shape our presents, the importance of stories in our self-definition and in the definition of our culture—are essential.

Workshop Policy

Be sure that your essays are paginated, typed in a readable double space font, and that the page contains your full name, the name of the class, my name, and the name of the piece. Please submit your piece to the workshop, even if it's just a working title. I expect every member of the workshop to treat every other member with respect. This entails reading the stories under discussion with a sensitive and thorough eye, working hard at offering constructive criticism, and making sure your own essays are as polished as possible before submitting them to workshop.

Grading Policy

Papers and writing exercises will be evaluated on the following criteria:

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Statement of Disability Services

In coordination with the UA Office of Disabilities Services, reasonable accommodation will be provided for qualified students with disabilities. Please meet with me during the first week of class and we will make the necessary accommodations. Disability services can be reached at 474 r5655. Their website is located at <http://www.uaf.edu/disability/index.html>

First Class

Discussion of Syllabus and "Road Trips" from When You Are Engulfed in Flames

Week 1

January 27th

For Discussion Vivian Gornick's The Situation and the Story (pp. 1 – 85) and "Tell Me a Story" by Michael Ryan from The Business of Memory (pp. 132 – 140). Also, Ryan The Business of 140).

April 16th

Workshop of student essays

Week 13

April 21st

Discussion of Brothers & Keepers by John Edgar Wideman Part 1: Visits (pp. 1–54)

April 23rd

Discussion of Brothers & Keepers by John Edgar Wideman Part 2: Our Time (pp. 55–166)

Week 14

April 28th

Discussion of Brothers & Keepers by John Edgar Wideman Part 3: Doing Time (pp. 167–242)

April 30th

Revision workshop. Everybody should bring 5 copies of a revision of one essay they have completed this semester and be prepared to share it with other members of the class.

Week 15

Class Session TBA. We will decide as a class how to use this time. Final portfolios are due on May 6th by 5:00 in my hand or in my mailbox. No late portfolios will be accepted.