ENGL 6194

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No pleasure has any savor for me without communication.
--Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592)

Writing is the only thing that when I'm doing it
I don't think I should be doing something else.
--Gloria Steinem (1934 -  )

Pay attention. / Be astonished. / Tell about it.
--Mary Oliver (1935 -  )

The writing generates the writing.
--E. L. Doctorow (1931- July 21, 2015)

COURSE DESCRIPTION
An on-line graduate workshop in nonfiction writing.

COURSE GOALS
1. Experimentation with techniques involved in writing artistic nonfiction.
2. Refinement of skills involving ideas, research, shape, language, example, detail, and nuance.
3. Refinement of an individual vision and voice within a community of writers.

COURSE WORK INTENDED TO FULFILL COURSE GOALS
1. Refine writing ability and command of technique through drafts of three works of nonfiction—with substantial revision of the writer’s choice of one of these works.
2. Refine or develop research and reporting abilities.
3. Refine critical ability through written critiques and line editing of peers' drafts and through giving and receiving constructive criticism in workshop discussions.
4. Refine writerly reading skills through study of assigned reading selections.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Students will become more skillful creative writers.
2. Students will become more resourceful reporters and literary journalists.
3. Students will become better constructive critics of their own writing and the writing of their peers.
4. Students will become more knowledgeable of the genre and sub-genres of artistic or literary nonfiction and more astute readers of diverse work in the field.
READINGS
1. Library Reserve Readings and other selections posted on Moodle.

RECOMMENDED:
1. Supplemental materials posted on Moodle.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
(All assignments should be posted to the forums I that I will put on Moodle.)

Writing assignments: You are expected to submit four works of nonfiction (NF1, NF 2, NF 3, and NF 4 plus a revision of one of these), approximately 25 or so pages total, plus a revision of one of these.

NF 1 is a short, short work of nonfiction, preferably a page or two (less than 750 words). Models for such a work are in are in Dinty Moore’s on-line journal *Brevity* and in examples I will post.

Longer models of short nonfiction are in our *Nonfiction Readings* on Moodle by Ackerman, Cherry, Dubus, Maxwell, Weschler, and others.

You will decide for yourself what your subject and approach will be as well as the lengths of individual works (so long as your four drafts and revision total around 25-30 pages or so).

Research: There is one stipulation, however. At least one of the three works (NF 2, 3, or 4) should incorporate some kind of research. That is, you should gain and share knowledge in the process of writing the work, learning something you didn’t know beforehand, something necessary to the completion of the work. The research can be formal, involving print and/or electronic resources, or more physical in nature, involving field observation and practical investigation, legwork, interviewing, or a combination of some of these.

Revision: You are expected substantially to revise one of your four drafts. We will critique these revisions in our revision workshops toward the end of the semester.

Critiques: You are expected to give the work of your writing peers frank, constructive commentary. For your writing colleagues’ submissions NF 2, NF 3, NF 4, you should post a page or two of specific commentary, offering improvement suggestions if you can. Your critiques of NF 1 can be briefer.

Readings: You are expected to read an assigned or posted reading or readings each week and to participate in an on-line discussion of each of these.

Attendance and punctuality: I expect you to be present on-line each week and to turn in your work by the dates and deadlines specified on the Calendar below. If you should
have a problem with any of these deadlines or an emergency, please contact me about that as much in advance as possible. Unexcused absence during a week or an unexcused missed deadline will result in a lowering of your grade for the course.

**Accommodations:** It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to http://www.ods.uno.edu.

**Academic integrity:** Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further information. The Code is available online at http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu.

**Verification for Online Students:** To ensure academic integrity, all students enrolled in distance learning courses at the University of New Orleans may be required to verify their identity when completing exams or other high-stakes assignments. At the discretion of the faculty member teaching the course, verification may include on-campus proctored examinations, off-site or online proctored examinations, or other reasonable measures to ensure student identity. If students cannot attend an on-campus proctored exam, UNO partners with ProctorU, a live, online proctoring service that allows students to complete exams from any location using a computer, webcam, and reliable internet connection. Verification measures for this course are identified below and any fees associated are the responsibility of the student. Although we will not have exams in this writing workshop, you should be aware of this online policy.

**EVALUATION**
- Critiques and discussion of peers’ drafts and revisions (10%)
- Discussion of readings (10%)
- Writing exercises (10%)
- Quality of drafts of nonfiction 1, 2, 3, and 4—and a substantial revision of one of these (70%)

**CALENDAR OF NONFICTION SUBMISSIONS AND DUE DATES**

Week 1   Aug. 19-23   Profile self-introductions. Short readings of brief nonfiction.

Week 2   Aug. 22-30   NF 1 workshop (brief nonfiction): All.
Week 3  Aug. 31 – Sept. 6  NF 2 workshop:  Ellis and Abigail.  Reading.
Week 4  Sept. 7 – 13  NF 2 workshop:  Jennifer and Travis.  Reading.
Week 6  Sept. 21 – 27  NF 2 workshop:  Justin.  Writing exercise:  All.

Week 7  Sept. 28 – Oct. 4  NF 3 workshop:  Ellis and Abigail.  Reading.
Week 8  Oct. 5 – 11  NF 3 workshop:  Jennifer and Travis.  Reading.
Week 9  Oct. 12 – 18  NF 3 workshop:  Dylan and Nancy.  Reading.

Week 11  Oct. 26 – Nov. 1  NF 4 workshop:  Ellis and Abigail.  Reading.
Week 12  Nov. 2 – 8  NF 4 workshop:  Jennifer and Travis.  Reading.
Week 13  Nov. 9 – 15  NF 4 workshop:  Dylan and Nancy.  Reading.
Week 14  Nov. 16 – 22  NF workshop:  Justin.  Writing exercise:  All.

Week 15  Nov. 23 – 29  Revision workshop:  Ellis, Abigail, Jennifer, and Travis.
Week 16  Nov. 30 – Dec. 4  Revision workshop:  Dylan, Nancy, and Justin.