

Professor: Ann Marie Brown
Phone: 415.302.8207 (phone only – please do not text to this number)
E-mail: abrown@sierranevada.edu
Office: TBA
Office Hours: M/W 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (please make an appointment)
Class Meeting Time: M/W 2:30 to 3:45 pm.
Location: Patterson Hall 207
Prerequisites: Eng. 101

Course Description: This course introduces students to fundamentals of creative nonfiction, including style techniques such as structure, characterization, dialogue, and focus. Students will read and analyze a wide range of short works in this genre, including lyric or reflective essays, memoir, literary journalism, and travel narratives. Students will create a reader's response notebook and a writer's notebook, participate in in-class writing exercises, write their own creative nonfiction stories, and make one oral presentation.

Required Texts and Materials:

1. *In Short: A Collection of Brief Creative Nonfiction* edited by Judith Kitchen & Mary Paumier Jones
2. *The Truth of the Matter* by Dinty W. Moore
3. Laptop computer (one that meets the published SNC Laptop Requirements).
4. A spiral-bound notebook with at least 100 blank pages (minimum size is 6 x 8 inches)
Please bring this notebook to every class meeting.

Student Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Interpret, analyze, and evaluate works of creative nonfiction writing.
2. Write literary-style works of creative nonfiction.
3. Utilize sharp observation skills, think critically, and write descriptively but truthfully.
4. Understand what it takes to get a nonfiction story published either in print or on-line.

Methods of Assessing Student Outcomes: Student outcomes will be assessed using the following:

1. Written assignments (written nonfiction pieces, reader's responses, etc.)
2. Participation in class discussions on assigned readings
3. Participation in in-class writing exercises and peer review of classmates' work
4. Quality and quantity of both the writer's notebook and reader's response notebook

Instructional Strategies: This class will involve class discussions, in-class writing, peer editing, written work and revisions.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time: 3 tardies = 1 absence and 4 absences = a 10% deduction of final grade (i.e. a "B" becomes a "C"). Students who are absent 5 times or more (including accumulated tardies), will not pass this class. In every class period, points are awarded for in-class assignments and discussions. There are NO make-ups for these in-class points.

If you are absent, **work due on that day is still due.** It may be brought in by a classmate, but all work is due **when the class begins.** Some absences (cleared in advance) may be excused and will not adversely affect your grade. These include absences followed by a note from a medical facility identifying you were under medical care on that day, and absences resulting from attending school-related trips. ***It is the student's responsibility to see me to discuss the nature of the absen***

Students are responsible for all material covered during the course whether handed out in class, discussed in class, read as an assignment, or disseminated in any other way. If you are absent, make sure you check with your assigned partner(s) to find out what information you missed that day.

Reader's Responses: Each week you will be reading creative nonfiction stories and noting your responses, reactions, comments, and questions in the form of reader's response essays. Your reader's response essays will be graded on the depth and quality of your reading analysis (details to be discussed in class).

Writer's Notebook: Creative nonfiction writers cannot rely solely on electronic equipment such as laptop computers. They must keep a notebook and pen handy at all times to take notes on possible story ideas, overheard dialogue, observations, thoughts, questions, and expressions that may someday prove useful for a story. You will write in your notebook during almost every class meeting, but you should also write in it outside of class as often as possible. This might include, but is certainly not limited to, taking notes for your written assignments. If you completely fill 50 pages or more of your notebook with worthy fodder for writing creative nonfiction, you will receive an A on your Writer's Notebook.

Electronics policy: Turn off your cell phone, iPod and all other distracting devices in the classroom. If we are using computers during class, please refrain from activities not related to the lesson (i.e. Web surfing, Facebook, YouTube, etc.) Frequently I will ask you to turn off your laptop for the entire session and write using only pen and paper.

Grading Policy: Grades are based on the accumulation of points during the semester (total possible points = 1,000), distributed in the following ways:

- 25% Writer's Notebook (250 points for completely filling at least 50 pages)
- 25% Reader's Responses (250 points for depth and quality of reading analysis)
- 40% written assignments (500 points)
- 10% oral presentation (100 points)

Consequences for Violating the Faculty/Student Honor Code: SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC Catalog. Faculty are responsible for presenting the honor code and consequences for violating it to students at the start of their classes AND for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes CHEATING, PLAGIARISM, and FABRICATION and refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. Violations of the honor code become part of a student's academic record.

SNC's Disciplinary Sanctions for Honor Code Violations:

- 1st Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.
- 2nd Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.
- 3rd Offense: Student is expelled.

The SNC E-mail System: The SNC e-mail system is the official communication vehicle among students, faculty members and administrative staff and is designed to protect the confidentiality of student information as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Act (FERPA). Students

should check their college e-mail accounts daily during the school year. Students have a right to forward their SNC e-mail to another e-mail account (for example, @hotmail or @gmail). However, confidentiality of student information protected by FERPA cannot be guaranteed for SNC e-mail forwarded to an outside vendor. Having e-mail redirected does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to his or her SNC e-mail account.

Academic Accommodations: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If a student wishes to request an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831-1314 x7534, hconover@sierranevada.edu or go to the OASIS offices on the third floor of Prim Library within the first week of the semester.

Note: This schedule provides a general plan for this course. You will be advised of any changes, if necessary.

Date		ALL READINGS ARE DUE ON MONDAYS
Week 2 Jan. 27 & 29	SUB-GENRE #1: Lyric or Reflective Essays: <i>Where the Public and Private Meet</i>	Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 3-28 (writing prompts on 28)
	Honoring the Nonfiction Contract Using Fiction Techniques to Write True Stories Truth vs. Fact: Humans as Unreliable Witnesses	Reading: <i>In Short</i> 34-36, 39-43, 48-54, 57-59
Week 3 Feb. 3 & 5	Finding & Focusing Your Story What Makes a Good Subject? The Magic of “Show, Don’t Tell” The Power of Description: Illuminating Details	Reading: <i>In Short</i> 65-67, 68-71, 79-82, 87-89 Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 84-92 The Personal Essay (writing prompts on 91-92)
Week 4 Feb. 10 & 12	Anatomy of a Nonfiction Story: Beginning, Middle, Ending, and Transitions Structure: Placing the Facts & Unfolding the Story Launching a Narrative Arc	Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 29-41 (writing prompts on 40-41) Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 189-199
Week 5 Feb. 19 ONLY (Feb. 17 is Presidents Day Holiday)	SUB-GENRE #2: Literary or “New” Journalism: <i>Much More Than the 5 Ws</i>	Assignment #1 due Wed. Feb. 19 Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 74-82 The Literary Journalism Essay (writing prompts on 82-83)
	Breathing Life Into Your Story: Dialogue, Characters Writing about Real People: Hearing Our Subjects’ Voices	Reading: handouts provided Assignment: take notes on dialogue/conversations you start or overhear
Week 6 Feb. 24 ONLY (Feb. 26 is AWP Seattle)	Who Is Your Narrator? Point of View Author as Character? Sometimes it <i>IS</i> about you Revealing Character in Words and Actions	Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 54-62 (writing prompts on 62) Reading: handouts provided
Week 7 March 3 & 5	Writing the Gutter: How to Not Tell a Story Revising & Self-Editing Identify with the Reader It’s all About the Verb (and maybe the noun)	Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 42-53 (writing prompts on 52-53) Reading: <i>In Short</i> 168-171, 175-177, 178-182, 185-190
Week 8 Mar. 10 & 12 MIDTERMS	Facts, Truth, and Style: Being Nuts for Accuracy Timeliness of Facts Dialogue vs. Quotations: Fiction vs. Fact	Assignment #2 due Wed. March 12 Reading: <i>In Short</i> 203-205, 206-209, 210-214, 215-218 Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 93-99 Revision and Narrative Structure (writing prompts on 99)
Week of Mar. 17-21	SPRING BREAK!!	SPRING BREAK!!
Week 9 Mar. 24 & 26	SUB-GENRE #3: Memoir: <i>Mining Our Own Lives for Stories</i>	Reading: <i>In Short</i> 115-119, 120-122, 125-127, 128-130
	Engaging Your Reader (or How Not to Bore) Makin Navel-Gazing Universal Building Dramatic Sentences	Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 65-73 The Memoir Essay (writing prompts on 72-73)
Week 10	Point of View	Reading: <i>In Short</i> 98-99, 104-106, 107-109,

Mar. 31 & Apr. 2	Details Matter: Tuning in to Details Finding the Unique in the Ordinary	110-114 Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i>
Week 11 Apr. 7 & 9	Inner and Outer Journeys Weaving Story and Idea	Reading: <i>In Short</i> 138-141, 149-151, 152-156, 162-164 Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i>
Week 12 Apr. 14 & 16	SUB-GENRE #4: Writing about Place/Travel Narratives	Assignment #3 due Wed. 4/16 Reading: <i>In Short</i> 229-232, 233-236, 241-243, 251-252 Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 211-219
	Writing about natural & human history Shunning the travel brochure cliches	
Week 13 Apr. 21 & 23	What It Takes to Be a Writer The Glamorous Life? (NOT) Getting Published in Magazines Digital Opps: Blogging & Writing for Web Zines	Reading: <i>In Short</i> 253-258, 261-263, 264-267, 270-274 Reading: <i>Truth of the Matter</i> 189-199
Week 14 Apr. 28 & 30	Promoting Yourself as a Writer Developing a Niche: What Makes You Special? Zeroing in on Likely Markets Query Letters & Proposals	**REVISE ONE OF YOUR MAJOR PIECES FOR ORAL PRESENTATION **WRITER'S NOTEBOOK DUE
Week 15 May 5 ONLY (dead day Wed.)	In-class Presentations Last Day to Turn in Any Late Assignments	Assignment #4 due Mon. May 5 In-class Oral Presentations (Read Your Best Work Aloud in Class)
FINALS May 9-14	FINAL EXAM DATE TBD	

The Mission Statement:

Sierra Nevada College graduates will be educated to be scholars of and contributors to a sustainable world. Sierra Nevada College combines the liberal arts and professional preparedness through an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasizes entrepreneurial thinking and environmental, social, economic and educational sustainability.

The Core Themes:

Liberal Arts • Professional Preparedness • Entrepreneurial Thinking • Sustainability