

**CAMOSUN COLLEGE - COURSE OUTLINE - WINTER 2008
ENGLISH 152 (01)**

**CREATIVE WRITING: INTRODUCTION TO WRITING CREATIVE
NONFICTION**

Instructor: Christine Kirchner
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Office Hours: Mondays: 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
 Tuesdays: 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
 or by appointment.

Class Meets: Mondays and Wednesdays at 2:30 p.m. – 4:20 p.m. in WT 226.

Workload: 4 hrs. in class; 6 hrs. out of class per week.

Pre or Corequisite: English 150.

Course Description: This course offers students with strong writing ability an opportunity to explore and develop their skills and possible goals in writing major nonfiction forms, such as features, memoir, travel, personal essay, history, and social analysis.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of the course the students will have learned to

- analyse, at a beginner's level, what it means to write creative nonfiction.
- practice the writing process appropriate to creative nonfiction.
- produce essays and articles that go beyond facts and explore the world in a personal and creative way.
- write the truth in a style that is as accurate and informative as reportage, yet as personal, provocative, and dramatic as fiction.
- consider the role of the audience in the development of style and content.
- pay attention to readability and interest in the production of writing: to produce writing that is intended to be read by a general audience.
- Use effective research techniques including conducting penetrating interviews and using electronic research tools.

Texts: Required

Dinty W. Moore, *The Truth of the Matter*, 2007.

Jon Krakauer, *Into the Wild*, 1996.

English 152 Course Package.

Recommended

Muriel Harris and Joan Pilz, *Prentice Hall Canada Reference Guide to Grammar and Usage* or similar MLA guide.

Evaluation: each assignment will be preceded by *detailed* instructions:

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| 1. Memoir Essay (due on Mon., Jan. 28) | 15% |
| 2. Literary Journalism Essay (due on Mon., Feb. 18) | 15% |
| 3. The Personal Essay (due on Mon., Mar. 3) | 15% |
| 4. Book Review (due on Wed., Mar. 12) | 10% |
| 5. Query Letter (due on Wed., Apr. 2) | 5% |
| 6. Travel Article (due on Wed., Mar. 26) | 15% |
| 7. Author Readings (final due date = Mon., Apr. 7) | 3 X 5% = 15% |
| 8. Participation (class, writing workshops, attendance, etc.--ongoing) | 10% |

100%

Grading System:

A+	=	90-100%	B-	=	70-72%
A	=	85-89%	C+	=	65-69%
A-	=	80-84%	C	=	60-64%
B+	=	77-79%	D	=	50-59%
B	=	73-76%	F	=	Below 50%
			I	=	Incomplete

Students' Responsibilities:

1. Attend class regularly (phoning or relaying a message if unable to be present). Attendance will be recorded each class.
2. Contribute to class discussion; request assistance; and encourage and assist other students.
3. Read closely and critically all assigned readings from the text *before* class.
4. Complete all assignments *before* class (as they are due at the beginning of each class).
5. **All assignments must be completed for credit in this course. Failure to complete even one assignment will result in a failing grade in the course.**
6. Hand work in on time (at the beginning of class on the due date). Late submissions must be negotiated and will be penalized 5% per day, counting weekends, up to a maximum of five (5) weekdays, after which they will not be accepted.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of MLA documentation. Plagiarism is a violation of academic ethics which results in serious penalties; therefore, it is vital to give credit where credit is due. Use research/reference materials to support your ideas, not replace them, and make sure your documentation is accurate. For College policies regarding plagiarism, see Student Conduct Policy, "Academic Misconduct," in the Camosun Student Calendar.

Instructor's Responsibilities:

The instructor will adapt the course appropriately, function as a senior learner, share her own ideas and writing, stimulate and support the learning of others, give every opportunity for success, provide clear instructions and examples for assignments, comment helpfully, return work promptly, and treat students with respect, fairness, and honesty.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- Mon., Jan. 7** Course Introduction
The Art and Craft of Creative Nonfiction

* Author Reading Assignments: p. 124 (CP).
- Wed., Jan. 9** **READ:** pp. 3 - 7 Chapter One, “True Stories, Innovative Forms” in *The Truth of the Matter* (Moore)

Interviewing and Writing Exercise
- Mon., Jan. 14** **Unit I: Memoir**

READ: pp. 65 - 73 Chapter Seven, “The Memoir Essay” (Moore)

* Memoir Assignment: pp. 118 – 119 (CP).
- Wed., Jan. 16** **Unit I: Memoir, cont’d.**

READ: pp. 286 - 91 “Memoir? Fiction? Where's the Line?” by Mimi Schwartz (Moore)

The “Blocks Exercise”
- Mon., Jan. 21** **Unit I: Memoir, cont'd.**

READ: pp. 24 – 29 “I Told You When I Came I Was a Stranger”
by Susan Musgrave (CP)
- Wed., Jan. 23** **Memoir Workshop**
- Mon., Jan. 28** ***Memoir Essay is due (15%) at the beginning of the class.***

Unit 2: Literary Journalism

READ: pp. 8 - 18 Chapter Two, “What Makes Nonfiction Creative?”
(Moore)
pp. 103 - 104 “Alive” by Laurie Lynn Drummond
(Moore)

* Literary Journalism Assignment: pp. 118 – 119 (CP).
- Wed., Jan. 30** **Unit 2: Literary Journalism, cont'd.**

READ: pp. 74 – 83 Chapter Eight, “The Literary Journalism Essay”
(Moore)
p. 31 “Nothing's sacred at Safeco” by Jack Knox (CP)
- Mon., Feb. 4** **Unit 2: Literary Journalism, cont'd.**

READ: pp. 21 – 28 Chapter Three, “Building Blocks of Creative Nonfiction: Detail and Description” (Moore)

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Wed., Feb. 6 Unit 2: Literary Journalism, cont'd.

READ: pp. 29- 41 Chapter Four “Building Blocks of Creative Nonfiction: Characterization and Scene” (Moore)

Mon., Feb. 11 Unit 2: Literary Journalism, cont'd.

READ: pp. 276 - 278 “Making the Truth Believable” by Tracy Kidder (Moore)
pp. 32 - 39 “The Incident” by Lee Gutkind (CP)

Wed., Feb. 13 Literary Journalism Workshop

Mon., Feb. 18 *Literary Journalism Essay is due (15%) at the beginning of class.*

Unit 3: The Personal Essay

READ: pp. 84 - 92 Chapter Nine, “The Personal Essay” (Moore)
pp. 41- 44 “The Hero(ine)’s Journey” by Janet Greidanus (CP)

* The Personal Essay Assignment: pp. 118 – 119 (CP).

Wed., Feb. 20 Unit 3: The Personal Essay, cont'd.

READ: pp. 42- 51 Chapter Five “Building Blocks of Creative Nonfiction: Distinctive Voice and Intimate Point of View” (Moore)

Mon., Feb. 25 Unit 3: The Personal Essay, cont'd.

READ: pp. 54 – 62 Chapter Six “Building Blocks of Creative Nonfiction: Discovery” (Moore)

Wed., Feb. 27 The Personal Essay Workshop

Mon., Mar. 3 *The Personal Essay is due (15%) at the beginning of class.*

Unit 4: The Creative Nonfiction Novel and The Book Review

READ: *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer
pp. 125-127 “Not everybody's a critic” by Richard Schickel (CP)

* The Book Review Assignment: pp. 122 – 123 (CP).

Wed., Mar. 5 Unit 5: Travel Writing

READ: pp. 46- 48 “Breaking into Travel Writing” by Peat O' Neil (CP)
pp. 49 - 58 “Types of Travel Articles” (CP)
pp. 59 – 112 Examples of Travel Articles (CP)

* The Travel Article Assignment: pp. 118 – 119 (CP).

Mon., Mar. 10 **Unit 5: Travel Writing, cont'd.**

Wed., Mar. 12 *Book Review is due (10%) at the beginning of class.*

Unit 5: Travel Writing, cont'd.

READ: pp. 113 - 114 “Travel Like A Travel Writer” (CP)
pp. 115 - 116 “The Travel Journal” (CP)

Mon., Mar. 17 **Unit 5: Travel Writing, cont'd.**

READ: pp. 263 – 275 “Seeing” by Annie Dillard (Moore)

Wed., Mar. 19 **Travel Article Workshop**

Mon., Mar. 24 *EASTER MONDAY. COLLEGE CLOSED.*

Wed., Mar. 26 *Travel Writing Article (15%) is due at the beginning of class.*

* The Query Letter Assignment: pp. 120 – 121 (CP).

Mon., Mar. 31 **READ:** pp. 93 – 99 Chapter Ten “Revision and Narrative Structure” (Moore)

Wed., Apr. 2 *Query Letter is due (5%) at the beginning of class.*

Mon., Apr. 7 *Author Reading Assignments (15%) are due at the beginning of class.*

Wed., Apr. 9 **FINAL CLASS WRAP UP.**