Fall 2009

English 383: Writing Your Life Story

Thursday 3:00-5:50pm, HUM 58

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**Course Objective:**

The objective of this course is to study the memoir and literary nonfiction genres. Students will look at various contemporary examples of the forms for structure and theme, and then write their own personal narratives for classroom discussion and review.

**Required Text/Materials:**

TBA

Copies of papers for workshopping purposes

**English 383 is a non-credit, non-unit course. Activities will include:**

**Writing Assignments:**

*Writing Exercises—*weekly writing exercises (both in-class and out-of-class) will be assigned. These exercises are short and varied, usually practicing the style and/or topic of a published work. These exercises may be used as a starting point for your own writing to be workshopped during the semester. At least five of these exercises will be revised for inclusion in the final portfolio of your written work.

*Prose—*two five page (minimum) original prose pieces of your own will be workshopped during the semester. Copies of these must be provided to each student one week prior to the workshop date. Revised pieces must be included in the final portfolio.

**Note:**

1. Keep all drafts of your writing. These will be required for your portfolio.
2. It is expected that all writing will be generally free of grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors.
3. Late papers are only accepted within one week after the due date.

**Reading Assignments:**

*Short published prose—*weekly published prose will be assigned and used as a catalyst for the weekly writing assignments.

TBA

**Attendance/Participation:**

Good attendance is vital in a workshop class such as this. Participation includes class discussion during workshops as well as assigned readings and general conversation about the nonfiction genre.

**Other course information:**

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the act of using another person’s words as your own. Please don’t bring this element into the classroom

**Accommodations:**Please inform me of any special circumstances you might have. If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including alternate media requests, please notify me immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.

**COURSE OUTCOMES FOR ENGLISH 383:**

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

1. Successfully participate in classroom discussion and workshop settings by:
2. using critical vocabulary essential for discussing either professional models or student efforts.
3. evaluating others’ manuscripts on the basis of intention and merit.
4. Successfully create a portfolio of written work that:
5. employs effective strategies for composing an essay.
6. exhibits evaluation and revision of their manuscripts on the basis of received criticism.

**A final, important note:** Your education is dependent upon you. Your instructors are resources and facilitators. It is you who is responsible for the learning that takes place.

“Ninety-nine percent of failures come from people who have the habit of making excuses.”

–George Washington Carver