

English 333.003—Honors Advanced Writing: Nonfiction Fall 2012
Dr. Bill Bolin
Office & Hours: HL 324, T 2:00p—5:00p, Th 2:00--4:00, and by appt.
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will allow you many opportunities to engage in nonfiction writing, including writing for both scholarly journals and popular magazines. The primary focus of the course will be on the history and structure of the "essay." You will learn strategies to create, organize, and deliver some sound, articulate essays even while you learn about some of the issues discussed in the academy and the world at large. In addition, you will submit one essay to a journal or magazine for possible publication. Two textbooks are required:

- Danticat, Edwidge, ed. *The Best American Essays 2011*. Boston: Mariner, 2011.
- Jacobs, A.J. *Drop Dead Healthy: One Man's Humble Quest for Bodily Perfection*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012. (The electronic version is fine, too.)

And, of course, any writer ought to have access to a thesaurus, a dictionary, and a guide to [APA](#) or [MLA](#) style. Also, you'll need to access the online version of this class. To do so, go to <http://eng333.wikidot.com/>

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will write essays and response papers that demonstrate an understanding of “The Essay.”
- Students will write essays that demonstrate the ability to use Standard American English.
- Students will prepare and submit one essay for possible publication to demonstrate knowledge of methods of publishing personal essays.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- to formulate articulate responses to the reading assignments and ensuing discussions
- to help you consider some of the important features of the essay, including voice and supporting evidence
- to help peers during various phases of the writing process
- to help you think of writing as sometimes a community project and other times a project done in isolation
- to challenge you to prepare your writing for the public
- to remind you that most writing requires an acute awareness of audience
- to help you learn to write the various academic discourses, including Standard American English.

TEXES

Students who plan to teach English, Spanish, or English as a Second Language in Texas public schools must pass the appropriate state certification tests. Contact Dr. Susan Stewart at [<Susan.Stewart@tamuc.edu>](mailto:Susan.Stewart@tamuc.edu) for details.

ASSIGNMENTS

Essays: You'll write four essays of 4-6 pages (typed, double-spaced) based on assigned reading and other sources. All of these essays will require research beyond the assigned reading and the proper attribution of external sources, and most will involve peer consultation as a class activity. Each of your four essays will be evaluated according to criteria outlined on each assignment sheet.

Response papers: In addition, you'll turn in seven responses (1-2 typed, double-spaced pages each) to some of the reading assignments or to your peers' essay drafts. These responses are not designed to test how well you've read the assigned material. Rather, they serve as opportunities for you to comment on one or two points in the reading, connecting those points to other reading and/or experiences. Each response paper will be evaluated according to the level of detail in your insightful commentary and sensible connections to other reading and/or experiences or observations.

Quizzes: You'll take five quizzes to test your comprehension of some of the reading. These quizzes will be at the beginning of the class period and cannot easily be made up. Be present and on time for them.

Reflective writing: Finally, you will do a number of in-class reflective writings. I will read these, but they are not for me to evaluate. They serve to raise your consciousness about some of your own strengths and weaknesses as a writer.

As a rule I do not accept late papers.

EVALUATION

Essays will be evaluated and returned with a grade. You may submit revisions of two of the first three essays for a possible increase of up to one letter grade for each revised essay. Response papers will be evaluated and returned with a grade, but they may not be revised for increased credit. Quizzes will have a set number of questions, with each answer counting a set number of points.

Assignment Values	Final Grade Ranges
Essays 80 pts (4 @ 20 pts. each) Response Papers 70 pts. (7 @ 10 pts. each) Quizzes 50 pts. (5 @ 10 pts. each)	A=180--200 B=160--179 C=140--159 D=120--139 F=0--119

I use the following as a guide in grading **essays** and **response papers**:

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| A (18,19 or 20; 9,10) = superlative | D (12,13; 6) = passing |
| B (16,17; 8) = impressive | F (10; 5) = failing |
| C (14,15; 7) = pretty good | 0 = no credit with no option to revise |

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is important for several reasons, but it is especially important for you to keep up with the assignments in this class. The tentative calendar below offers only the most general description of activities; more detail will be provided in class as the semester goes on. If you are absent the day an assignment is due, you must contact me and make satisfactory arrangements for turning in the assignment. In most cases, such arrangements will include your emailing the assignment to me as an attachment by the deadline. Failure to make *prior satisfactory* arrangements will result in your forfeiting the right to turn in that assignment. As per university policy, excessive absences (three weeks' worth) will result in your being dropped from the course.

PLAGIARISM/ACADEMIC DISHONESTY STATEMENT

Instructors in the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Instructors uphold and support the highest academic standards, and students are expected to do likewise. Penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion. (Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3]). Plagiarism on one assignment in this course will most likely lead to a failing grade for the course.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR

Aug. 28 Intro to class; reflective writing

Aug. 30 *Best*, Forward and Intro; Lecture on "The Essay"; assign Essay#1

Sept. 4 *Best*, Vannoy, p. 210; Hoagland article [on the wiki]; Lecture on essay pre-writing

Sept. 6 *Best*, Church, p. 25, Bender [on the wiki]; **RP1 due**

Sept. 11 *Best*, Hitchens, p. 85; *Best*, Butler, p. 12

Sept. 13 ; Find an article on "the essay" and be ready to discuss it; **RP2 (over your article, including citation) due**

Sept. 18 Peer consultation [rough draft due]; Lecture on essay beginnings and endings

Sept. 20 Essay #1 due, reflective writing; assign Essay#2

Sept. 25 *Best*, Berlinski, p. 5

Sept. 27 *Best*, Iyer, p. 90; **RP3 due**

Oct. 2. *Best*, Yaqub, p. 218; Lecture on diction and readability

Oct. 4. *Drop Dead Healthy*, chapters 1-6; **Quiz 1**

Oct. 9 *Best*, Crenshaw, p. 31

Oct. 11 Sedaris essay [on the wiki]; **RP4 due**

Oct. 16 Peer consultation [rough draft due]

Oct. 18 Essay#2 due; reflective writing; assign Essay# 3

Oct. 23 *Best*, Durham, p. 59

Oct. 25 *Drop Dead Healthy*, pp. chapters 7-12; **Quiz 2**

Oct. 30 *Best*, Lee, p. 126; **RP5 due**

Nov. 1 *Best*, Phillips, p. 141

Nov. 6 *Best*, Riederer, p. 165

Nov. 8 *Drop Dead Healthy*, chapters 13-18; **Quiz 3**; Lecture on revision and proofreading

Nov. 13 Peer consultation [rough draft due]; **RP6 due** [on your comments-separate assignment sheet is forthcoming]

Nov. 15 Essay#3 due; assign Essay#4

Nov. 20 *Drop Dead Healthy*, chapters 19-24; **Quiz 4**

Nov. 22 Thanksgiving

Nov. 27 Bauer article; Frank article [both on the wiki]; **RP7 due**; lecture on finding markets

Nov. 29 Lecture on preparing manuscripts for markets and preparing the final portfolio; *Drop Dead Healthy*, chapters 25-27

Dec. 4 Internet assignment on finding markets (class will not meet)

Dec. 6 Internet assignment on finding markets (class will not meet)

Dec. 13 @10:30 (Final Exam schedule) Final portfolio, including Essay #4, due; in-class writing (**Quiz 5**)

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Halladay Student Services Building

Room 303 A/D

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)