



ENG 333.02H (81067)—Advanced Writing: Non-Fiction (Honors)

“The Limits of Human Performance: Sports and Nature Writing”

Fall 2014
TR—2:00-3:15 pm
Room: HL 304

Instructor: (Christopher Gonzalez, PhD – Assistant Professor)

Office Location: Hall of Languages (HL) 225

Office Hours: MW 12:00-2:30 pm and by appointment

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COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks Required:

Halberstam, David, ed. *The Best American Sports Writing of the Century* (ISBN: 0395945143)

Krakauer, Jon. *Eiger Dreams*. (ISBN: 1599216108)

Muir, John. *John Muir: The Story of My Boyhood and Youth; My First Summer in the Sierra; The Mountains of California; Stickeen; Essays*. (ISBN: 1883011248)

(ENG 333 catalogue description): Hours: 3

Advanced Writing: Non-Fiction. Three semester hours. (1, 2; 3 or 4) This course provides an intensive study of the principles of nonfictional composition through the analysis of examples from classic and modern writings and practice in the application of those principles. Emphasis is placed on rhetorical organization and the techniques of expository writing. Students devote much time to writing and editing their own work. Prerequisites: Eng 1302 and sophomore standing.

Course Description

In ENG 333.02H, you will develop your ability to write expository and non-fiction compositions. You will identify an area of interest within the parameters of the course and will work to develop a final, polished expository piece that concerns some aspect of human achievement. To support this project, this section of ENG 333 will focus on non-fiction writings that concern pursuits of the human body and the human mind. By engaging with these selected writings, you will hone your rhetorical and compositional

skills as you improve strengths as a thinker and writer. Ultimately, the aim of this course is to further your development as an effective writer of nonfictional prose for a wide array of audiences. You will improve your ability to write for a variety of purposes and audiences; understand further the mechanism for writing effectively; become a better critic of other people's writing; and take the strategies learned in this class to the rest of your academic career and beyond.

The selected readings serve as guides for improving your writing skill set and to provide you with more tools for writing. You should make every effort to attend every class and read all assigned readings. You should also prepare for a heightened level of writing, as this is a course that focuses on your ability to write. Remember, this course emphasizes the nature of writing as a process, not just as a product of an interesting thought or even critical thinking. In order to facilitate this recursive nature of writing, the core of this class is the Final Portfolio, which will include several writing assignments and is a collection of many essays and writings that you will compose and revise throughout the semester. This component of the course is not something you can complete suddenly during the final few days of the course. Thus, to successfully complete this course, you should plan to engage regularly and productively in discussions; demonstrate knowledge and mastery of materials via class participation, reading responses, various writing assignments, a collaborative project, and successful completion of the portfolio at semester's end.

Course Objectives:

- Students will become familiar with the tools for effective rhetorical composition of expository and nonfiction writing.
- Students will demonstrate the skill of crafting an effective thesis.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate their mastery of effective rhetorical composition and critical writing as measured by a portfolio project.
- Students will demonstrate the skill of crafting an effective thesis as measured by the composition of a nonfiction essay that concerns the course topic.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the outcomes and objectives of this course and instructional units/modules. It is your responsibility to read closely and carefully the selections, and to prepare to engage with the material in the form of class discussion for every class meeting.

During the semester you will complete several major assignments designed to complement each other intellectually and conceptually. These assignments are:

Participation 10%

You are expected to participate in class on a regular basis. This portion of your grade is holistic, meaning that you must appear to be an engaged member of class throughout the semester. You can demonstrate engagement to the professor by asking relevant questions and productively commenting on any given day's topics/readings. Absences, distracting behavior, and other forms of disengagement will lead to a reduction in this aspect of your course grade.

Journal of Reflective Writing 10%

At the end of every week, you will respond to a topic of interest for that week (500 words). Responses should be quasi-formal and should strive to be both reflective and analytical. You are required to compose and keep your journal as part of your portfolio. You must have the appropriate number of journal responses during Portfolio checks. Think of the Journal as being a risk-free space to “think on the page” regarding certain topics of the week *that relate to your own development as a writer*.

Final Portfolio

80%

Your Final Portfolio is a collection of all of your writing for this class, from informal writings to final drafts of essays. In addition to your drafts, your portfolio must include:

- **Writing Introduction**—A brief, informal essay (3-4 pages) written at the beginning of the semester identifying your background and experiences in writing, discussing strengths and weaknesses you feel you have as a writer of non-fiction.
- **Responses to Readings**—You will respond to selected readings based on a specific aspect of the composition. For example, you may be asked to respond to an author’s use of voice or other rhetorical strategies. Each response should be approximately 1,000 words. You will be asked to compose no fewer than 5 but no more than 10 responses.
- **Proposal for Final Essay**—This proposal should be no more than one page (single-spaced) and should provide an overview of the final essay. In the proposal you should identify several venues for possible publication.
- **First Draft of Final Essay**—The draft is intended to be rough and will allow ample opportunity for peer review and constructive criticism.
- **Final Essay**—The final expository essay should be 8-10 pages.
- **Self-Assessment**—A final reflection essay of 2-3 pages that allows you to reflect on your writing development over the course of the semester. It provides the portfolio reader a sense of your personal journey through writing during the course.

Grading

Students’ assignment and course grades will be determined by the following:

Participation	10%
Journal of Reflective Writing	10%
Final Portfolio	80%
Total:	100%

Scale used to compute final letter grades:

Percentage

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59-0

Technology

This course meets face to face (f2f). There is no requisite component to the course.

*There **may** be the opportunity for extra credit. As a rule, I do not accept late work.*

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

Academic Honesty Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Department of Literature and Languages do not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of **academic dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally-accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. “Academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another person and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. 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]). Cheating, including plagiarizing papers in whole or part, **will result in a grade of zero (0) on the assignment AND no credit for course participation** for the first offense and failure of the course for any subsequent offenses.

Attendance Policy

Attendance in this class equates to participation in the discussions and is important to the success of this class and to your development as a writer. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that you notify me of potential conflicts with course expectations. The expectation is that you will do more than simply show up for class. Your active participation, in the form of discussion questions and comments, is vital for success in this course. Deadline extensions and other allowances can often be accommodated before they are required, but this requires advance notice. Related to this, SEE ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Assignment Policy

Student work must be completed and submitted on time. All assignments should be turned in during the class period when they are due. Students who know they will miss class when an assignment is due must contact the instructor as soon as possible in advance of class to arrange for submission of the assignment.

All papers should conform to the MLA or Chicago style guidelines.

Late Work

I will not accept any assignment after its due date. Assignments submitted after the due date may receive a score of zero (0).

Drop a Course

A student may drop a course by logging into his/her myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled “Drop a class” from among the choices found under the myLeo section of the Web page.

Incompletes

Incompletes (grade of “X”) are granted only under rare and extraordinary circumstances.

Administrative Withdrawal

I reserve the right to drop a student from the course administratively for excessive absences or violations of student conduct codes.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

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

Gee Library

Room 132

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. It is next to impossible to explore ideas in a classroom setting if students and instructors do not feel safe or otherwise supported. I will not tolerate discrimination in all its forms. Likewise, rudeness has no place in any classroom, and I will ensure that my classroom remains a rudeness-free environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

Responsibility

You are responsible for understanding all of the material contained in this syllabus, as well as any announced changes to this syllabus. You are also responsible for understanding instructions and directives related to assignments, exams, and grades. This means visiting your professor during office hours if instructions and/or directives remain unclear. Unless you state otherwise, I will assume that you have understood what is expected of you in this class.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

The following course schedule is subject to revisions and other modifications as the instructor deems necessary for the course. Any changes to the course schedule will be announced on the course website in advance of the week in which the change will occur.

Fall 2014

Date	Agenda
Week 1	8/26

INTRODUCTION	• Introductions and syllabus overview
	8/28
	• <i>Eiger Dreams</i> , TBD
Week 2	9/2
ISSUES OF AUDIENCE	• <i>Eiger Dreams</i> , TBD
	9/4
	• <i>Eiger Dreams</i> , TBD
Week 3	9/9
HOW TO COMMENT	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	9/11
	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
Week 4	9/16
SENTENCE CHOICES	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	9/18
	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	• Portfolio Check #1
Week 5	9/23
PARAGRAPHING	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	9/25
	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
Week 6	9/30
TONE AND VOICE	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	10/2
	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
Week 7	10/7
STYLE	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	10/9
	• No Class Scheduled
Week 8	10/14
FACUAL MATERIAL	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	10/16
	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	• Portfolio Check #2
Week 9	10/21
IDEA DEVELOPMENT	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
	10/23
	• <i>The Best American Sports Writing of the Century</i> , TBD
Week 10	10/28
ORGANIZATION	• <i>John Muir</i> , TBD
	10/30
	• <i>John Muir</i> , TBD
Week 11	11/4
LOGIC AND REASON	• <i>John Muir</i> , TBD
	11/6
	• <i>John Muir</i> , TBD
Week 12	11/11
MECHANICS	• <i>John Muir</i> , TBD
	11/13
	• <i>John Muir</i> , TBD
Week 13	11/18
MECHANICS,	• <i>John Muir</i> , TBD

cont.	11/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>John Muir</i>, TBD
Week 14 REVISION	11/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Class Scheduled (Begin final push to Portfolio completion)
	11/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No Class Scheduled (Thanksgiving Break)
Week 15 REVISION	12/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peer Review
	12/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Due: Final Portfolio

THERE IS NO FINAL EXAM FOR THIS COURSE.