

English 618B
Creative Nonfiction
223 Colson, Tuesdays, 7pm-9:50pm
Instructor: Katie Fallon
Office hours: by appointment, 333 Colson
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Course Texts

Published essays provided as PDFs or links

Creative nonfiction written by you and your classmates

Course Description

This workshop course will explore the exciting and diverse genre of creative nonfiction. Each student will have two essays workshopped by the class and the instructor. Additionally, you will read and discuss examples of contemporary nonfiction from recent editions of *Best American Essays*, *Best American Travel Writing*, and *Best American Science and Nature Writing*, and elsewhere.

We will also discuss (and attempt to answer) questions about publishing your creative nonfiction: Where should you submit your work? What about contests? What about publishing a book? Each student will be asked to introduce the class to a literary journal.

Course Requirements & Assignments

Three essays (and a revision of each): Over the course of the semester, each student will have three essays workshopped by the class and the instructor. Aim for at least ten pages but not more than twenty pages per essay (but if you think you'll need more than twenty pages, talk with me and we can probably make an exception). Essays should be double-spaced and typed using a normal 12-point font. List the word count on the first page (thirteen or fourteen pages usually equals about 5,000 words). An essay for workshop should be distributed to the class via email attachment **no later than the Saturday evening before the class in which it will be workshopped.**

Each student should plan on meeting with me individually in the week or two following his or her workshop (after all the comments sink in) to discuss a plan for revision. A revision of the first workshopped essay should be turned in to me around midterm; a revision of the second essay should be turned in before April 20, and a revision of the third by the last day of the semester.

Workshop responses: Please type a short (half-page) response to each essay submitted for workshop. Bring a copy for me as well as for the author. Try to begin each response by identifying the essay's strengths, then move on to suggestions for revision and questions about the piece.

Literary journal report: Each student will introduce the class to a literary journal friendly to creative nonfiction. The report should include basic information: who produces the journal (a university, an independent collective, etc.)? Who edits the journal, and what seems to be the editorial process (a slush pile read by students, an editorial board, etc.)? Do the editors seem to have a preference as far as style, topic, or subgenre? How many nonfiction pieces appear in a typical issue? Does the journal have a thematic or regional focus? When is the submission period? What are the submission requirements? What kinds of authors are published—famous people, new people, or both? In addition to an oral discussion of the journal, you should prepare a simple one-page handout for your classmates listing the above information. Also, if possible, bring a sample issue of the journal for us to flip or scroll through.

Course Policies:

- Attendance is mandatory (of course). If you must miss class due to an emergency, please contact me before the class that you will miss and make arrangements to turn in any assignments.
- If you need adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible.
- The core values of Social Justice at WVU will be upheld in this class. Students are responsible for reading and abiding by all plagiarism policies in the Student Handbook.
- And a final word about grading: your grade in this course will be determined by the quality of your essays, your thoughtful completion of the assignments, and your active participation in discussions and workshops. Obviously, missing classes, not doing the readings, and not completing assignments will adversely affect your grade.

Schedule

Subject to revision at any time

January 8:	Introductions. Sign up for workshop dates.
January 15:	Discuss readings Journal report Workshop
January 22:	Discuss readings Journal report Workshop
January 29:	Discuss readings Journal report Workshop
February 5:	Discuss readings Journal report Workshop
February 12:	Discuss readings Journal report Workshop (Cycle #2 begins)
February 19:	No Katie Fallon Discuss readings
February 26:	Discuss readings Journal report Workshop <i>Revisions of the first essay should be turned in to me by the end of this week.</i>
March 5:	Discuss readings Journal report Workshop
March 12:	SPRING BREAK
March 19:	Discuss readings Journal report Workshop

- March 26:** Discuss readings
Journal report
Workshop (Cycle #3 begins)
- April 2:** Discuss readings
Journal report
Workshop
- April 9:** Discuss readings
Journal report
Workshop
- April 16:** Discuss readings
Journal report
Workshop
Revisions of the second essay should be turned in to me by the end of this week.
- April 23:** Reading. Last day of class!
Revisions of the third essay should be turned in to me by the end of this week.