ENGL337: Personal Narrative Writing

Credit Hours: 3   Length of Course: 8 Weeks

Course

This course will focus on the expression of narrative writing as it relates to personal experiences. Students will examine the narrative essay, its different forms, and the ways in which the writer explores a personal experience and relates it to the human condition or the world at large. They will read narrative essays, write their own, and collaborate with others in writers workshop to revise and improve their essays and writing skills.

Instructor Information

Instructor Name:
Virtual Office Hours:
Email:
Phone:

Course Competencies (CC)

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

CC 1. Compare interpretations of well-known narrative essays to society and the universal human condition

CC 2. Describe the use of literary elements to emphasize the significance and meaning of a particular experience in narrative essays

CC 3. Write using storytelling elements, such as theme, voice, setting, style, and structure

CC 4. Compose narrative essays as part of a portfolio project

CC 5. Appraise each other's work in writers' workshops

Course Delivery Method

This is an online course. Students will be able to complete academic work in a flexible manner with course materials made available to students via the online learning management system. An instructor will facilitate weekly learning and support students throughout the 8-week course.

Course Resources

Required Course Textbook
Miller, Brenda, and Suzanne Paola. *Tell It Slant.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012.

Other Required Readings
This class includes other assigned reading/viewing materials outside of the main e-book (personal essays, films, and articles). These can be found in the Class Materials area of our classroom for each week.

Evaluation Procedures

Students will complete 8 discussion forums, 3 essays, and 1 final project (an ePortfolio) in the course.

Final grade will be calculated as follows:

Graded Items	Points	Weighted Percentage
8 discussion forums	100 points each	30%
3 essays	100 points each	45%
1 final project (writing portfolio)	100 points	25%
Final Course Grade		**100**

Forums, essays, and the final project will be graded according to rubrics. Below are the basic requirements, but please review rubrics in the Class Materials area of the online course shell to know what your instructor will specifically look for and grade in your work.

Forums:
Six of the eight forums will require an initial post of 250-words or more in response to the forum prompt. Do this by Thursday 11:55pm ET of the assigned week. Then complete 2 reply posts of 100-words or more to others in class. Please do these by Sunday 11:55pm ET of the assigned week.

The other two forums will be in a writers workshop format in which you'll post a rough draft of your essay for others to workshop and give suggestions for revision and improvement. You'll in turn workshop the essays of two other students.

Assignments:
Each essay should be 750- to 1,000-words and be formatted in MLA. The topic for each should be chosen from the textbook's "Try It" exercises. Preface each essay with a reflection letter to your instructor. Upload the essay as an attached file to the Assignments Submission area of the online course shell.

Final Project (portfolio):
The final project is a writing portfolio comprised of a cover page, table of contents, introduction, revised/polished copies of the 3 essays you've written in class, and a conclusion. You have the option of creating an electronic/online portfolio or a traditional typed up document uploaded to the Assignments Submissions area of the online classroom.

About Feedback:
Always read your instructor's feedback each week and apply what you've learned to the next assignments. Make a concerted effort to improve your work and show steady progress from week to week.

Course Outline

Week	Topic	Learning Objectives	Readings	Assignment
1	**The Personal Essay and Basics of Writing**	CC 1 CC 2 CC 3	Chapters 9 and 13 from *Tell It Slant* Personal essays and articles:	Week 1 Forum: Personal Essay Readings

			• ["Picturing the Personal Essay: A Visual Guide"](#) by Tim Bascom • ["Fourth State of Matter"](#) by Jo Ann Beard • ["Mickey Mantle Koan"](#) by David James Duncan • "The Drama Bug" by David Sedaris Listen to it here: [http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/23/drama-bug?act=1#play](#) Transcript (scroll down to and read Act One): [http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/23/transcript](#)	
2	**Memory and Family**	CC 2 CC 3 CC 4 CC 5	Chapters 1 and 2 from *Tell It Slant* Film: *10 Million Books: An Introduction to Farley Mowat* (access film via link in Lessons area for Week 2) Personal essays and articles: - [Excerpt from The Gastronomical Me](#) by M.F.K. Fisher - ["Buck-eye"](#) by Scott Russell Sanders - ["A Father, a Son and a Fighting Chance"](#) by Dominick Zarrillo - "Mother Tongue" by Amy Tan (access the PDF reading via link in Lessons area for Week 2) - Excerpt from Speak, Memory by Vladimir Nabakov (access the	Week 2 Forum: Film Discussion Essay 1

			PDF reading via link in Lessons area for Week 2) - "The Night the Bed Fell" by James Thurber	
3	**Physical World and Spirituality**	CC 1 CC 2 CC 3	Chapters 3, 4, and 12 from *Tell It Slant* Personal essays and articles: - Excerpt from Travels with Charley by John Steinbeck - "Shooting an Elephant" by George Orwell (access the PDF reading via link in Lessons area for Week 3) - "How To Tell a True War Story" by Tim O'Brien - "The Invisible Made Visible" by David Rakoff http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldqjM7x6NhE (watch author reading) http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/464/transcript (transcript - scroll down to "Act 3. Stiff as a Board, Light as a Feather") - "Death of the Moth" by Virginia Woolf - "NPR: What are the Limits of Literary License?" (listen to podcast or read transcript)	Week 3 Forum: Challenges in Writing About Real Life
4	**The Writing Process, Revision, and the Writers Workshop**	CC 2 CC 3 CC 4 CC 5	Chapters 14 and 15 from *Tell It Slant* No readings outside of *Tell It Slant* this week.	Week 4 Forum: Writers Workshop Essay 2

| 5 | **The Arts and History** | CC 1
CC 2
CC 3 | Chapters 5 and 6 from *Tell It Slant*

Personal essays and articles:
- "Hazing of Swans" by Suzanne Paola (in the back of the *Tell It Slant* e-book, "Sample Essays" section)
- "Leaves from the Mental Portfolio of a Eur-asian" by Sui Sin Far
- "Mister Lytle: An Essay" by John Jeremiah Sullivan
- "A Short Essay on Being" by Jenny Boully
- "A Letter to My Children" by Earl Hammer
- "A Giant Step" by Henry Louis Gates
- "She: Portrait of the Essay as a Warm Body" by Cynthia Ozick | Week 5 Forum: Use of Storytelling Elements |
| 6 | **Lyric and Media** | CC 2
CC 3
CC 4
CC 5 | Chapters 10 and 11 from *Tell It Slant*

Personal essays and articles:
- "Pine Point" by the Goggles: Paul Shoebridge and Michael Simons (interactive online essay)
- "My Body: A Wunderkammer" by Shelley Jackson (hypertext essay, click on "Begin" on the far right of the screen)
- "Mr. Plimpton's Revenge: A Google Map Essay" by Dinty Moore (hypertext essay) | Week 6 Forum: New Forms of the Personal Essay

Essay 3 |

			- ["She Felt Like Cheering"](#) by Molly Wizenberg (blog post)	
7	**The World and Research**	CC 1 CC 2 CC 3 CC 4	Chapters 7 and 8 from *Tell It Slant* Personal essays and articles: - "The Knife" by Richard Selzer (access the PDF reading via link in Lessons area for Week 7) - "Clan of One-Breasted Women" by Terry Tempest Williams (access the PDF reading via link in Lessons area for Week 7) - ["Paper Wasps"](#) by Lee Martin	Week 7 Forum: The World and Research
8	**Publishing and the Writing Portfolio**	CC 1 CC 2 CC 3 CC 4 CC 5	Chapter 16 from *Tell It Slant* No readings outside of *Tell It Slant* this week.	Week 8 Forum: Writers Workshop Final Project (Writing Portfolio)

Policies

Please see the Student Handbook to reference all University policies including:
Drop/Withdrawal Policy
Plagiarism Policy
Extension Process and Policy
Disability Accommodations

Writing Expectations
Students are expected to have the background in grammar and mechanics necessary to complete the course. Please see the rubrics for detailed information regarding writing evaluation.

Citation and Reference Style
Please follow the MLA Format as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to the University. Assignments completed in a narrative essay or composition format must follow the citation style cited in the MLA Format.

Late Assignments
Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, I

understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.

Netiquette
Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate – both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and "flaming." Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper "Netiquette" must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Forum of others.

- **Humor Note:** Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add "emoticons" to help alert your readers: ;-), :), ☺

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Your instructor will also manually run forum posts through Turnitin.com every week. He or she has the right to regrade assignments during the course if suspicion of plagiarism or any other misleading events present themselves.