ENG 366: CREATIVE NONFICTION WRITING
Fall 2014

Instructor  Lisa Norris
Office     L and L 404
Office Hrs  3:45-5:15 pm T, Th and by appointment
Office phone 509-963-1745—but email is better. I can’t
               check phone messages if I’m not on campus.
email: NorrisL@cwu.edu
**Note: You can expect an answer to email within 48 hrs (usually less)
Skype: I am profnorrisI. You will need to email
       me to set up a time for live chat.

Writing is an exploration. You start from nothing and learn as you go.
--E.L. Doctorow

Course Description

Introduction to Creative Nonfiction is a beginner’s class designed to give you
reading/writing experience in the genre of literary nonfiction. Discussions and exercises
will concentrate on how to use tools of the writer’s craft including setting,
characterization, images, sensory details, structure, voice, and point of view. You will
explore the ethics of nonfiction writing as well as a variety of subgenres including
memoir, lyric essay, and literary journalism. You will be writing constantly and revising
your work for a final portfolio. Our texts will include your work as well as the literary
nonfiction of published writers both online and in print. Since this is a five-credit course,
you can expect to work on this class for approximately 10-15 hours a week (5 “in class”
hours per week plus the standard 2-3 “homework” hours per week for each credit hour). I
look forward to getting to know you and reading your work!

Texts
Lex Williford and Michael Martone, Eds. Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary
ebook are fine)

ISBN 978-0-07-178178-7 (paperback or ebook are fine but be sure you get the SECOND
edition)

Computer Requirements
To succeed in this online course, obviously you need access to a computer and the
Internet. You also need to be able to read Word documents (.doc or .docx) and
PowerPoint slides and watch videos. QuickTime Player, which you can download for free,
is a good program for opening/viewing videos. You will also be taking tests online.
Note that the Canvas site offers a number of ways to get help. Explore them by clicking on the red Help button at the top right of the page. There are user guides, a live chat option, and a telephone number you can call for support.

**Personalizing Our Classroom**
When I teach online, I miss the three-dimensional world of your presence, so to compensate for that, I would like each of you to create a representative avatar on the Canvas site. Also, I will be asking you to introduce yourself—and video introductions are certainly welcome. Further, you will be doing a couple of audio-visual presentations that may allow us to see you and hear your voice. Due to the difficulty of scheduling us all into the same time and place, all our class work will be asynchronous.

**Assignments and Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Where to Submit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brevity essay/analysis OR Live Literary</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (7 @ 10 pts each)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises (7 @ 20 points each) + Reviews of</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers’ Exercises</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I” piece DRAFT &amp; FINAL</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30 (automatic 5 percent reduction if you don’t turn in the complete DRAFT on time)</td>
<td>Draft in Discussions Final to Instructor in Assignments and in Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Eye” piece DRAFT &amp; FINAL</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30 (automatic 5 percent reduction if you don’t turn in the complete DRAFT on time)</td>
<td>Draft in Discussions Final to Instructor in Assignments and in Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Reviews for DRAFTS</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AV performance of your work</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SEOI</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>If at least 70 percent</td>
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“On Time” Policy

Being well organized and meeting deadlines are essential to a working writer’s life, and you are a working writer for the duration of this class.

Note that the following MUST be on time, or they will not be accepted:

- **Quizzes** will always be open on Tuesday at noon and closed by Thursday at 11:59 pm. You will have two chances at each quiz, but you will have only 10 minutes to work each time. **You may not make up any quizzes.**

- **Drafts and Peer Reviews** must be on time in order for peer partners to have ample opportunities for revision before the final draft is due. **If you don’t turn in a complete draft on time meeting the minimum word count, you will receive no peer or instructor feedback, and your final draft will be docked 5 points out of the 30 it is worth.** Drafts and Peer Reviews are always due at 11:59 pm on the given due date.

- **Final Exam Quiz** (open Dec 3 at 11:59 pm, closes Dec 5 at 11:59 pm; you will have 20 mins for each of two attempts)

- **SEOI must be complete for possible credit by Tues. Dec 9 at noon.** If 70 percent of the class completes them by this date and time, everyone gets ½ percent credit added to the final grade. I cannot see your responses until after the grades are turned in, and I will never know who did or didn’t complete the SEOIs, but I can see what percent of the class responded to them.

I offer some mercy on other assignments. Given our short timeline, and the reality that life sometimes intrudes in unforeseen ways, I will grant everyone one free “mulligan”—that is, one opportunity only for ONE late submission, for the following assignments--always due by 11:59 pm on the given due date:

- **Discussions** (excluding those for the essay drafts)
- **Exercises**
- **Brevity or Lit Performance Response**
• AV Presentation
• FINAL (NOT drafts for peer review) version of “I”/Self essay.

To receive the “mulligan,” you must write me an email requesting it, with an explanation for the lateness of the submission. **NO LATE PAPERS WHATSOEVER WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 11:59 PM ON DEC. 5, THE LAST DAY OF CLASS.**

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**Grammar Skills**

Because students have completed Central’s English 101 and 102 (or the equivalent) or have transferred to CWU with AA degrees, grammar and usage are assumed as acquired basic skills. However, many students continue to experience problems with these skills, so some assignments are designed to help students work on them. Keep in mind that you may have lovely ideas, but bad sentences are like dirty windows—I can’t see the ideas through the grime of bad grammar.

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**The Learning Commons**

Tutors at the The Learning Commons are available to help you with your work. See the website for further details:

http://www.cwu.edu/learning-commons/

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**Revision Policy**

Revision is already built into the class plan. You will receive feedback as you go, rework, revise, and turn in a finished, polished product at the end of the quarter. Due to time constraints, no other revisions are allowed.

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**Diversity**

In my classroom, diversity is welcomed and celebrated. I will not tolerate any forms of prejudice or discrimination, including those based on age, color, disability, gender, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status. We are here to learn in a climate of civility and mutual respect.

*We all live with the objective of being happy; our lives are all different and yet the same.*—Anne Frank

To find out more about diversity, contact the Diversity Education Center at X1685 or see the website at:
Integrity

Academic Integrity is expected of you. See the Student Code of Conduct if you are uncertain about what behaviors are considered unethical. Your work in this class should be original, unless I give you permission to work with others. Plagiarism—presenting the words of others as if they’re your own—is unethical. I may assign an F to any test, quiz or paper you turn in as your own work that is, in fact, not your own work.

Integrity is doing the right thing, even if no one is watching.—C.S. Lewis

How to Communicate With Your Instructor and Classmates

There are four ways in which you can communicate with me and several ways in which you can communicate with other students in the class.

Communicating With Your Instructor

1. Through the “Questions” Forums in “Discussions.”
   a. The first line of your post should give an idea of what the question addresses.
   b. Before posting a question, please check existing forum threads to see whether your question has been previously addressed.
   c. Unless I tell you otherwise, I will check the forums for new posts Monday through Thursday at 5pm and will usually post responses within 24 hours on those days.

2. By email. You should only email me if you have something to convey of a personal or sensitive nature or if you have a question that is specific to your particular work. All other questions and comments should be posted to the appropriate forums so everyone can benefit. If you do email me, you can generally expect a response within 24 hours, but there will be times, especially on weekends, when the wait time might be longer.

3. Through the web conferencing tool Skype, I will be available for web conferencing. Please set up an appointment by email to be sure we connect. I am also happy to meet with you in my Ellensburg campus office.

4. By telephone. To talk to me by phone, you must schedule an appointment by email. If you would like me to call you asap, then in your email, please provide your telephone
Communicating With Your Peers

1. Through Discussions. You’ll introduce yourselves to me and to each other in Discussions. I highly recommend that you do your work offline, then cut and paste into the online boxes, because if you are working online and lose your connection, you lose your work.

2. Using Conversations on the Canvas site. The Conversations function allows students to email each other, their group, or the entire class.

Netiquette

Below are some basic rules of Internet etiquette. Please follow these guidelines when posting to the forums

- Use common courtesy and good manners.
- Proper use of grammar, sentence structure, and correct spelling is encouraged.
- Adhere to the same standards as you would for written language.
- Remember whom your audience is when posting to discussion boards, sending emails, or participating in a chat room discussion. You should behave as if you were sitting in a traditional classroom. Remember: the online classroom setting is more formal than in public forums or personal chat groups you may have used.
- Be clear and concise. Explain your ideas entirely but get quickly to the point.
- Using all capitals is the equivalent of SHOUTING and considered RUDE.
- Avoid "flaming" or attacking someone for his or her point of view. Remember that many readers, including the instructor, will read it.
- Read over what you are going to send at least once, just as you would proof read a paper you submit. Remember: once you submit your work, discussion, or email, you cannot change what you have written.
- It is not acceptable for you to present work or ideas of others as your own. If you quote from a source, use quotation marks and provide the original author's name and the work from which the quotation is taken. Use your own understanding of the work, instead of direct quotes if possible, and give credit to the original author by citing name and source of idea.
- Do not use acronyms -- Example ROFL (rolling of the floor laughing). Not all readers will know the meanings of these.

Learning Outcomes and Assessments for Eng 366

Below you will find the learning outcomes for the traditional quarter-long in-class Eng 366. These outcomes are based on those approved by the university.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will identify and apply the conventions that govern creative nonfiction.</td>
<td>Students will read textbook chapters on creative nonfiction and be quizzed on their contents; they will also write at least two full-length creative nonfiction essays displaying what they've learned about its conventions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will learn to distinguish between varieties of creative nonfiction.</td>
<td>Students will read published essays which illustrate different types of creative nonfiction and be quizzed on their content. They will also do exercises modeling the various types of creative nonfiction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will learn about the overlapping elements common to poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction--e.g., setting, characterization, insight, lyricism, etc.</td>
<td>Students will read examples of published creative nonfiction that employs elements of fiction and poetry and be quizzed on the material; they will write two essays employing strategies common to both creative nonfiction and one of the other genres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will complete and submit a portfolio of revised work that demonstrates their repertoire of creative nonfiction writing skills.</td>
<td>Portfolios will be assessed on the degree to which they illustrate familiarity with specific knowledge and skills related to the writer's craft, and on the degree to which the writing has improved through the revision process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will learn to recognize the value of drafting, peer feedback and reflection as vital to the creative process.</td>
<td>Students will write peer reviews for each of their peers' longer writing assignments. In their portfolios, they will explain how they responded to peer critiques in revising their own work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will learn research strategies to generate and deepen their material.</td>
<td>Students will conduct an interview, do library research, immersion exercises, etc., to develop their essays.</td>
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NOTE: This schedule is subject to change depending on our mutual needs.

WEEK ONE

Weds, Sept. 24
- Read everything in the Course Overview Module: *Welcome Page, Course Policies, Course Schedule* (downloadable calendar), *Writing Exercises, Essay Assignments, Response to Brevity/Live Literary Performance, and Quiz Study Guides* (just skim the latter)
- Read “Introduction” in *Touchstone*
- Read “Where to Begin,’ “The Body of Memory” (Chpt 1) “The Particular Challenges of CNF” (Chpt 12) in *TIS*
- Read Exercise #1 assignment in Discussions and schedule time to interview a family member by Monday (in order to complete Exercise #1)

Thursday, Sept. 25
- Read “Writing the Family” (Chpt 2), “Using Research” (Chpt 8) in *TIS*
- Introductions and avatar due in Discussions by 11:59 pm. Create an avatar and introduce yourself as instructed in the Discussions forum labeled “Who I Am for Now.”

WEEK TWO

Monday, Sept. 29
- 2 peer responses due to “Introductions” due by 11:59 pm
- Read “The Basics of Good Writing in Any Form” (Chpt 13) in *TIS*
- Read “I” essay assignment under Course Overview (also downloadable in Files)
- Read “First” by Ryan Van Meter at: [http://www.gettysburgreview.com/selections/past_selections/details.dot?inode=cd246da4-60a8-45f2-862c-1ca80845a242&pageTitle=First&crumbTitle=First&author=Ryan Van Meter&story=true](http://www.gettysburgreview.com/selections/past_selections/details.dot?inode=cd246da4-60a8-45f2-862c-1ca80845a242&pageTitle=First&crumbTitle=First&author=Ryan Van Meter&story=true)
- See lecture for “First” posted under Files (“First” lecture)**Note that this may not be up until noon on 9/29**
- Read “Somehow Form a Family” (Tony Earley)

**Tuesday, Sept 30**
- Exercise 1 (writing memory/family) due on Discussions by 11:59 pm.
- Read Study Guide for Quiz #1 in Pages. Quiz #1 opens

**Wednesday, Oct. 1**
- Respond to 2 peer postings for Exercise 1 by 11:59 pm.

**Thursday, Oct. 2**
- Quiz #1 by 11:59 pm

**Friday, Oct 3**
- Read “Physical Evidence” (Kelly Grey Carlisle) and “Repeat After Me” (David Sedaris) in *Touchstone* ****************************

**WEEK THREE**

**Monday, Oct 6**
- Read “Taking Place” (Chpt 3) in TIS
- Read “A Small Place” (Jamaica Kincaid), and “Living Like Weasels” (Annie Dillard) in *Touchstone*

**Tuesday, Oct. 7**
- Read Study Guide for Quiz #2 in Pages. Quiz #2 opens by 11:59 pm
- Exercise #2 due on Discussions by 11:59 pm

**Wednesday Oct. 8**
- Respond to 2 peer postings for Exercise #2 due on Discussions by 11:59 pm (writing place and/or family)

**Thursday, Oct. 9**
- Quiz #2 by 11:59 pm

**Friday, Oct 10**
- Read “Playing With Form” (Chpt 10) and “A Braided Heart: Shaping the Lyric Essay” (Brenda Miller, pg. 243) in TIS
- Read “Son of Mr. Green Jeans” (Dinty Moore), “Leap” (Tony Earley) and “The Date” (Brenda Miller) in *Touchstone*

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**WEEK FOUR**

**Monday, Oct. 13**
• Read Chpt 15, “Sharing Your Work,” in TIS
• Read Chpt 14, “The Writing Process and Revision” in TIS

Tuesday, Oct. 14
• “I” DRAFT due on Discussions by 11:59 pm
• Read Study Guide for Quiz #3 in Pages. Quiz #3 opens at 11:59 pm

Weds, Oct 15
• NO CLASS, Faculty Development Day

Thursday, Oct. 16
• 2 Peer Reviews due for “I” DRAFT on Discussions by 11:59 pm
• Quiz #3 closes at 11:59 pm

Friday, Oct. 17
• Read “Eye” essay assignment
• Read “Writing the Larger World” (Chpt 7) in TIS
• Read “High Tide in Tucson” (Barbara Kingsolver) and “Shitdiggers, Mudflats, and the Worm Men of Maine” (Bill Roorbach) in Touchstone

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WEEK FIVE
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Monday, Oct. 20
• Read “Consider the Lobster” (David Foster Wallace) in Touchstone

Tuesday, Oct. 21
• Read Study Guide for Quiz #4. Quiz #4 opens at 11:59 pm

Wednesday, Oct. 22
• Exercise #3 due on Discussions by 11:59 pm (the larger world and form)

Thursday, Oct. 23
• Read Study Guide for Quiz #4 in Pages. Quiz #4 due by 11:59 pm
• Two peer postings for Exercise #3 due on Discussions by 11:59 pm
• 7:30 pm Visiting Writer Adrianne Kalfoupoulou reads creative nonfiction in The Wildcat Shop

Friday, Oct. 24
• FINAL draft of “I” draft due by 11:59 pm
• Read “Gathering the Threads of History” (Chpt 6) in TIS
• Read “Gathering the Threads of History” lecture in Pages
• Read “World on a Hilltop” (Adam Hochschild) in Touchstone

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WEEK SIX
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Monday, Oct. 27
- Revisit “Leap” (Tony Earley) and read “Flyers” (Lisa Norris) online in *Shenandoah* literary magazine at: http://shenandoahliterary.org/61/flyers/

Tuesday, Oct. 28
- Read Study Guide for Quiz #5 in Pages. Quiz #5 opens by 11:59 pm
- Exercise #4 due on Discussions by 11:59 pm (gathering history)

Wednesday, Oct. 29
- Two peer postings for Exercise #4 due on Discussions by 11:59 pm

Thursday, Oct. 30
- Quiz #5 due at 11:59 pm

Friday, Oct. 31
- Read “Writing the Arts” (Chpt 5) in TIS and “Return to Sender” (Mark Doty) in *Touchstone*

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WEEK SEVEN
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Monday, Nov. 3
- Read “The Essayist is Sorry for Your Loss” (Sarah Levine) in *Touchstone*

Tuesday, Nov. 4
- Read Study Guide for Quiz #6 in Pages. Quiz #6 opens by 11:59 pm

Wednesday, Nov. 5
- Quiz 6 is open
- 7:30 pm Visiting poet and essayist Debra Marquart reads in The Wildcat Shop

Thursday, Nov. 6
- Quiz #6 closes by 11:59 pm
- Brevity 5 due by 11:59 pm

Friday, Nov 7
- Read “Writing Online” (Chpt 11) in TIS

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WEEK EIGHT
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Monday, Nov. 10
- Read ONLINE work TBA (see Announcements)
• Live Performance (Marquart) OR Brevity response due (see “Responding to Live Performance OR BREVITY” Assignment)

Tuesday, Nov 11
• NO CLASS, Veterans Day

Wednesday, Nov 12
• Exercise #5 due by 11:59 pm (Online forms)

Thursday, Nov 13
• Two peer postings for Exercise #5 due by 11:59 pm

Friday, Nov 14
• Read lecture on Pages “Making Sense of Violence”
• Read “Small Rooms in Time” (Ted Kooser) in Touchstone

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WEEK NINE
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Monday, Nov. 17
• Read “The Fourth State of Matter” (Jo Anne Beard) and “This is Not Who We Are” (Naomi Shihab Nye) in Touchstone

Tuesday, Nov. 18
• Read Study Guide for Quiz #7 in Pages. Quiz #7 opens by 11:59 pm
• Exercise #6 due by 11:59 pm (writing about violence)

Wednesday, Nov. 19
• Two peer postings for Exercise #6 due by 11:59 pm

Thursday, Nov. 20
• Quiz #7 closes by 11:59 pm

Friday, Nov. 21
• Read “Celibate Passion” (Katherine Norris (no relation!)) in Touchstone

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WEEK TEN
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Monday, Nov 24
• Exercise 7 due by 11:59 pm (writing about unromantic love)
• Read “The Love of My Life” (Cheryl Strayed) and “Interstellar” (Rebecca McClanahan) in Touchstone

Tuesday, Nov 25
• Exercise 7 responses due by 11:59 pm (unromantic love)
Wednesday Nov 26-Friday Nov 27
  • NO CLASS, Thanksgiving Break

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WEEK ELEVEN

Monday, Dec 1
  • “Eye” DRAFT due by 11:59 pm

Tuesday, Dec 2
  • 2 Peer Reviews due for “Eye” DRAFT by 11:59 pm

Wednesday, Dec 3
  • Work on “Eye” DRAFT revisions and AV performance

Thursday, Dec 4
  • 3-5 minute AV performance of your work due on Discussions by midnight.

Friday, Dec 5
  • “Publishing Your Work” (Chpt 16) in TIS
  • “Eye” FINAL due at 11:59 pm

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EXAM WEEK

Monday, Dec 8
  • Final quiz OPENS at noon and is due by 11:59 pm

Tuesday, Dec 9
SE0ls due by noon for credit (If 70 percent of the class completes them by this date and time, everyone gets ½ percent credit added to the final grade. I cannot see your responses until after the grades are turned in, and I will never know who did or didn’t complete the SE0ls, but I can see what percent of the class responded to them.)