Course Title: Fast-Draft Your Way to a Complete Memoir
Course Code: CNF 55
Instructor: Rachael Herron

Grade Options and Requirements:
- No Grade Requested (NGR)
  This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided
- Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  All assignments will be graded on a completed / not completed basis
  - Attendance 30%
  - Writing Assignments 30%
  - Reading Assignments 10%
  - Life Outline 10%
  - In-class Peer Feedback 20%
- Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  A passing grade (for “Credit”) = at least 70% of expectations accomplished

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Tentative Weekly Outline:

Week 1: Sept 28
Introductions
Discussion/history of memoir (vs autobiography)
Types of memoir
Choosing a narrative arc that fits your life (two sentence life summary)
Discussion of first assignment: Your Life Outline, first 75 pp in Mary Karr, The Art of Memoir

Week 2: Oct 5
Discussion about life outline, student sharing (optional)
Writing fast – how to get out of your inner editor’s way
Update two-sentence life summary
Timed writing: On topics, one sentence, build to paragraph
Assignment: Write first chapter on first point in life outline (each essay will be expected to be approx. 1000-2000 words in length – this is a rough draft only, very quickly written. We focus on getting down the bare bones rather than achieving perfect, polished prose).
Read: second 75 pp in Karr

**Week 3: Oct 12**
Discussion: Memory and truth, how to trust and how to test
Discuss reading
Student workshop, (3 students, all students will have this opportunity during the course)
Assignment: Write next chapter on next point in outline, finish Karr

**Week 4: Oct 19**
Discussion: Using memoir as therapy, acceptable?
Discuss reading
Student workshop, (3 students, all students will have this opportunity during the course)
Assignment: Write next chapter on next point in outline, first 75 pp of Meredith Maran’s *Why We Write About Ourselves*

**Week 5: Oct 26**
Discussion: The roles in our lives and how they shape memoir arc
Discuss reading
Student workshop, (3 students, all students will have this opportunity during the course)
Assignment: Write next chapter on next point in outline, second 75 pp of Maran

**Week 6: Nov 2**
Discussion: Lean into the pain, expand the difficult
Discuss reading
Student workshop, (3 students, all students will have this opportunity during the course)
Assignment: Write next chapter on next point in outline, finish Maran

**Week 7: Nov 9**
Discussion: Using visceral language
Discuss reading
Student workshop, (3 students, all students will have this opportunity during the course)
Assignment: Write next chapter on next point in outline, first 75 pp of Hope Jahren’s *Lab Girl*

**Week 8: Nov 16**
Discussion: How to build organic conflict that leads to satisfying resolution
Discuss reading
Student workshop, (3 students, all students will have this opportunity during the course)
Assignment: Write next chapter on next point in outline, second 75 pp of Jahren

Week 9: Nov 30
Discussion: Using shame in memoir
Discuss reading
Student workshop, (3 students, all students will have this opportunity during the course)
Assignment: Write next chapter on next point in outline, finish Jahren

Week 10: Dec 7
Discuss reading
Student workshop, (3 students, all students will have this opportunity during the course)
Where now? Charting the future, taking the bare bones and fleshing them out