Quarter: Spring 2017

Course Title: To Tell the Truth: An Introduction to Creative Nonfiction

Course Code: CNF 49
Instructor: Caroline Goodwin

Grade Options and Requirements:

• No Grade Requested (NGR)
  o This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.

• Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  o Students must attend at least 80% of class sessions and participate fully in the “workshop” section of the process.
  o Students must complete a piece of written work (to be discussed further in class).

• Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  o Students must attend at least 80% of class sessions, sessions and participate fully in the “workshop” section of the process.
  o Students must complete a piece of written work (to be discussed further in class).

*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: (subject to change)

Class 1: Introductions, getting started, why creative nonfiction?

Discussion: Course structure, your ideas & projects. How to set writing goals and follow through.

-in-class writing exercise and icebreakers. Workshop Signup.

For next week: Read Joan Didion’s “On Keeping a Notebook” noting concrete imagery, sensory experience and how Didion transitions between topics.
Read LaPlante Chapter 2.
WRITE your own list of 12 “Story Spark” life events and develop one into a scene. Bring 4 copies of your written scene to class next week.

**Class 2: The Central Role of The Image in all Vivid Writing**

Discussion: The five senses and how they translate to the page. What kind of Creative Nonfiction will you pursue?

-in-class writing exercise and small group discussion of your scenes.

For next week: Read David Sedaris “Repeat After Me” noting how the writer uses concrete detail to paint a larger picture. Read LaPlante Chapter 3.

WRITE another 750 words of your own creative nonfiction. Bring 4 copies to class next week.

**Class 3: Memory and Writing**

Discussion: Maps and mountaintops, how memories are enlivened by the image. What do you care about? How is your writing surprising you so far?

-in-class reading of your work in small groups. In-class Q&A about process and writing direction.

For next week: Read Cheryl Strayed “The Love of My Life” noting moments where sensory details are used and how this affects you as a reader. Read LaPlante Chapter Fourteen “Getting Beyond Facts to Truth”

Keep working on your project, with an eye towards what you will bring to workshop in the later weeks.

**Class 4: Fact and Truth in Creative Nonfiction**

Discussion: Noted moments in Strayed’s writing, any questions about LaPlante’s claims in her chapter on Creative Nonfiction

For next week: Read LaPlante Chapter 13 “Learning to Fail Better” up to p. 556 and Bernard Cooper “Burl’s”

**Class 5: Developing the Voice/Infusing your Writing with Personality**
Discussion: Berry and LaPlante -- any questions about the workshop process.

For Next week: Read student writing and make notes to give back to the writer. Work on your own writing.

**Class 6:** Workshop #1 -- Student writing, up to 20 pages each

Discussion: Student Writing

**Class 7:** Workshop #2 -- Student writing, up to 20 pages each

Discussion: Student Writing

**Class 8:** Workshop #3 -- Student writing, up to 20 pages each

Discussion: Student Writing

**Class 9:** Workshop #4 -- Student writing, up to 20 pages each

Discussion: Student Writing

**Class 10:** Workshop #5 -- Student writing, up to 20 pages each

Discussion: Student Writing/Future Plans/Sending your work out for consideration by publications.