

## **Winter 2010 Syllabus**

### **ENG 256-WN210: Personal Writing**

**S-036, Main Campus**

**TR 4:30 – 5:55 p.m.**

**Instructor:** Michael Somers

**Instructor Credentials:** M.A.-English/Writing (Northern Michigan University, 2003); B.A.-English (Albion College, 1997)

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**Office:** S-014

**Office Hours:** MW: 11:30 a.m.– 12:30 p.m.

TR: 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Or by appointment

#### **Required Texts:**

*Creating Nonfiction* by Becky Bradway and Doug Hesse

ISBN-13: 978-0-312-44706-9

Publisher: Bedford-St. Martin's

*Boy: Tales of Childhood* by Roald Dahl

ISBN: 978-0-14-241381-4

Publisher: Penguin

#### **Recommended:**

- Flash drive
- College-level dictionary and thesaurus
- Notebook of choice for in-class writings

## **Course Description**

Prerequisite: READING LEVEL 7, ENG 113 or permission of instructor. Requires students to draw on personal experiences and viewpoints to produce a range of writing, and read and respond to published works of creative non-fiction. Includes reading memoirs, autobiographies, journals, essays and other subjective literary forms. Emphasizes both generating and revising writing.

## **Outcomes and Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

### **Outcome 1: Generate personal writing, i.e. creative non-fiction.**

#### **Objectives**

- A. Write personally about a range of subject matter.
- B. Write creative non-fiction in a variety of forms, e.g. memoir, familiar essay, journal.
- C. Write personally using a range of devices, e.g. controlled imagery, focus statements, self-editing.

### **Outcome 2: Revise personal writing.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Rewrite effectively by using such devices as sharpening, combining sentence/paragraphs, developing a writing “voice”.
- B. Apply techniques of revising and editing to self-created writing as well as to the writing of others.

### **Outcome 3: Interact productively with classmates and instructor for the purpose of increasing writing skills.**

#### **Objectives:**

- A. Give and receive verbal and written responses to personal writing.
- B. Apply the concept that writing is both an individual and collaborative activity by generating and editing material that shows changes based on comments from others.

**Outcome 4: Interpret, analyze, and evaluate a range of creative non-fiction.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Identify elements of particular pieces of literary non-fiction, e.g. tone, point of view, imagery.
- B. Interpret individual works of non-fiction, e.g. memoir, essays, autobiographies.
- C. Evaluate creative non-fiction using both subjective and external standards.

**Outcome 5: Develop writing confidence.**

**Objectives:**

- A. Generate and revise a body of creative non-fiction.
- B. Use verbal and written feedback constructively.
- C. Evaluate progress in attitudes toward writing.

**Assignment Types and Point Values:**

- Varying points for evolving drafts of major projects.
- 50-100 points for polished drafts of major projects.
- Quizzes: Up to 20 points.
- Tests: Up to 50 points.
- Summary/Annotations: Up to five points each section.
- In-Depth Responses: Up to 10 points each.
- Discussion Questions (including Educator posts): up to 5 to 10 points each.
- Writer's Notebook: Five points per entry.
- Midterm and Final Portfolio: Variable points

**Grading Procedure:**

You begin the course with no points and must earn credit to achieve a passing grade

or better. The final number of points for the course will be dependent upon the number of assignments given. Delta utilizes a +/- system, which will be reflected in your final course grade.

I will utilize a variety of rubrics for grading assignments and projects.

### **Calculating Grades:**

The calculation of each assignment's grade is based on the denominator of a fraction representing the weight of the assignment. For example, a minor assignment may have a denominator of 10, and a major assignment a denominator of 250. The numerator that completes the fraction determines the percentage that results in the letter grade (example:  $200/250=80\%$ =low B or  $15/20=75\%$ =mid C).

The following is a sample model based on percentage of total points earned:

<b>% Points</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>% Points</b>	<b>Grade</b>
93-100	A	70 - 72	C-
90-92	A-	67 - 69	D+
87-89	B+	63 - 66	D
83-86	B	60 - 62	D-
80-82	B-	0 - 59	E
77-79	C+		
73-76	C		

I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE you to keep track of your assignments and points earned throughout the semester. KEEP ALL GRADED WORK UNTIL FINAL GRADES ARE ISSUED.

**Late Work: Only one allowed submission of late work** for essays/projects, **not** in-class writings, responses, quizzes, etc. Essays/projects accepted up to 24 hours late **via Educator only**, and for a 15% grade deduction on the final essay/project grade, and only if I receive prior notice before class begins on the due date.

**Portfolios will not be accepted late**, and no late work accepted at all the last three weeks of class.

### **“But the computer...”: Why Blaming Technology Won’t Work in My Class:**

*The computer crashed... The printer ran out of ink... The lab computer can't read my disk... There was a virus...* Technical failures are not an excuse for late or missing work. Here's some advice to help avoid these and other frustrating situations:

- SAVE EVERYTHING to a flash drive/memory stick/CD.
- Use a program that campus computers can open; use the “Save As” option and save your document in multiple versions – such as “Word Document” (.doc) or “Rich Text Format” (.rtf).

- E-mail a copy of your work to your Delta account or another internet-based e-mail service – either as an attachment or in the body of the e-mail, or both. Some formatting may be lost in the body of the e-mail, but it’s better than nothing. This way, you can open your e-mail and get a copy of the work wherever you can access the Internet – on campus or off.

**DO NOT Email Me Copies of Your Work!**

I will not open attachments, as I am not willing to risk getting a virus. I will not accept e-mailed work as on time, nor is it my responsibility to expend the time/ink/paper to print the work. Make a peer contact in class and e-mail it to them to print out and turn in for you.

**Attendance and Tardies:** Attendance is crucial to success in this class. Four absences will result in your being dropped from the class. Timeliness is also expected; interrupting class by barging in late is rude and disruptive. Three tardies equal one absence.

Just so we’re clear, here: “I paid for this class. I can choose to attend or not attend. It’s my money.” Newsflash: You are not “buying” your education. If that were the case, you wouldn’t need to be here at all; you could just send in a check, and get a diploma in the mail. When you sign up for classes, you enter into an agreement that you will work to meet the requirements set forth in each class by each instructor, who, in turn, is meeting requirements set by the state and the college to assure that each person who “earns” a degree has achieved minimum standards. If anything, for every class you miss, you’re missing a piece of your education, a piece of your future. How much is that worth?

**Instructor Initiated Drop for Lack of Attendance:** Your English Division instructor will drop you from this course if you miss, for any reason, in excess of 2/15 of your classes for this course. For this particular course this semester, that means in excess of four class periods. This is an English Division policy.

**Class Conduct:** The expectation is attentive, civil, and respectful behavior toward the instructor, class members, and course materials, outcomes, and objectives at all times. This classroom is a safe environment to express ideas, but also an environment where ideas can be challenged vigorously without the person expressing them being attacked. The Delta College Student Code of Ethical Conduct is our guide. The link is: [www3.delta.edu/classes/StudCodeConduct.htm](http://www3.delta.edu/classes/StudCodeConduct.htm).

**Classroom Etiquette:** Certain behaviors are rude and take focus away from the class proceedings. A sampling of such behaviors is: Talking out of turn; passing notes; cell phones ringing/buzzing; checking cell phones in class; falling asleep; listening to a digital music device (i.e., iPod or similar); among other things.

**Cell Phones and Digital Music Devices:** Cell phones should be on Silent mode and put out of sight during class time. If you must answer your phone, leave the room before answering. No texting during class. Digital music devices should not be on

during class, and ear buds should be removed. Violations relate to professional conduct, and will result in zero points earned that day.

**Laptops, Cameras, Recording Devices:** None open and running during class, unless with permission from me to do so.

**Disruptive Students**\_(From the Delta College Catalog): Disruptive conduct taints the educational atmosphere and may endanger the safety of students and staff. Accordingly, when student conduct on campus creates a serious enough disruption such that the only reasonable solution is removal of the student, a faculty/staff member may temporarily suspend or permanently expel that student from class/campus.

This policy and accompanying procedures assumes that the faculty/staff has made every attempt to resolve this issue with the student through such informal methods as individual conferences and/or written messages. If these informal methods have not met with success, the following formal procedures will be implemented.

1. The student will be verbally warned by the faculty or staff member the student's behavior is considered to be disruptive (describe the behavior to which the faculty/staff member is referring) and that if the student continues the behavior, s/he will be asked to leave the class/building.
2. If the student persists with the disruptive behavior, the faculty/staff member can then ask the student to leave the class or campus. At this time the faculty/staff must warn the student that failure to leave may result in police intervention. The faculty/staff must indicate whether the suspension is just for that day or if the student must appeal to the appropriate Division Chair to reenter the class. In other words, clarify for the student whether the suspension is temporary or permanent.
3. If after the previous verbal warnings the student continues to demonstrate disruptive behavior, the faculty/staff will summon the appropriate police agency who will have the option of arresting the student for criminal trespass, if necessary. The faculty/staff member's request for the student to leave provides the police agency with sufficient probable cause to effect an arrest.
4. If as a result of faculty/staff member's request for expulsion the student leaves the classroom/campus, the faculty/staff will notify their Division Chair or immediate supervisor in writing within 24 hours of the incident. The written report must include the student's identity and the behavior that was considered to be disruptive. Sufficient detail must be provided to allow the Chair/Supervisor to assess whether or not the policy was followed. Please note that the written report is only necessary when considering expulsion. Temporary suspension is handled informally by the faculty/staff member.

5. The Division Chair/Supervisor must immediately contact the student by phone, with a follow-up through registered mail, notifying them of the opportunity to explain the incident from the student's point of view. In addition, this notice will include the date by which the student must respond back to the Division Chair (or designee) or else forfeit their right to appeal the expulsion. Generally, the student will be given three class\* days to respond in person, by phone, or mail (postmarked). Within 24 hours of the conclusion of the meeting to review the suspension, the Chair/Supervisor will decide if the removal was justified or if the student should be reinstated. The Chair/Supervisor may find it necessary to consult with other College employees, students, or records for additional information upon which to base their decision. The Chair/Supervisor may support or deny the removal, or make other arrangements for the student.
6. The decision of the Chair/Supervisor will be conveyed to the student and the faculty/staff member who caused the removal as soon as possible, either in person or by phone. A written confirmation of the decision will be sent to both the staff member and the student within three class days. Within three class days of the receipt of the written decision, the student or the staff member may appeal in person, by phone, or in writing the decision to the appropriate Dean/Supervisor (identified in the written decision by the Chair); whose decision will be final.
7. It is important to emphasize that each step of the process should proceed as quickly as possible, while maintaining fairness and objectivity.

\*For the purpose of this policy, class days include only Monday-Friday when Delta College classes are in session.

**Plagiarism:** ☒ Plagiarism (misrepresenting the work of others as your own) is a serious offense and will result in an E for the project and possibly for the course. It could even lead to expulsion from the class and the college. For more information about Delta's policies, refer to the "Integrity of Academic Work" section in the "Students' Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct" section of the Delta College Catalog. The link is: <http://alpha.delta.edu/catalog/StudentsRights.asp>.

The English Division home page has information, as well:  
<http://www.delta.edu/english/plagiarism.html>.

If in doubt about plagiarism, please ask me for clarification. Note that I consider the submission of papers that you have previously written for another course to be plagiarism. Note, too, that taking any ideas or words from any source (including Internet sources) without proper citation is also plagiarism; to check for this, I use

various Internet-based tools, including Turnitin.com (which I also use as a teaching tool). In this class, we will use MLA citation methods.

**Accommodations:**

Delta College is committed to affording equal opportunity to students with disabilities by providing access to its programs, activities, and services. It is the responsibility of the student to make known, in a timely manner, the need for any accommodation or auxiliary aids. Please contact Disability Support Services department by calling 989.686.9322, or via e-mail at [disabilityservices@delta.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@delta.edu).

**Last Day to Withdraw:** The last day to withdraw with a grade of W, to apply for a grade of pass/no credit (P/NC), or to be withdrawn with a grade of WI is **by the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> week of the semester**. Please see me if you are having problems with this course. I will be happy to help you individually. Also, please consult with an academic advisor before you withdraw (D102, 686-9330, <http://www.delta.edu/ServicesforStudents/CounselingAdvisingandCareerServices.aspx>), and if you have or will ever have financial aid, you should also talk to the financial aid office before you drop the course (D101, 686-9080, <http://www.delta.edu/futurestudents/AdmissionsEnrollment/MoneyMatters/InformationAbout/TypesofFinancialAid.aspx>). If you stop coming after this date, you will receive an F instead of a W/WI at the end of the semester.

**Early Alert and Retention:** In an effort to ensure you have the supports necessary to be successful, Delta College has an Early Alert Referral Program. If I feel you could benefit from additional support outside of the classroom, I may make a referral.

**Syllabus Revision/Instructor Prerogative:**

The instructor retains the right to modify this syllabus and any of its terms as appropriate throughout the semester. This right, however, is limited to practical necessities (schedule, assignments, etc.) and legal or institutional requirements that supersede this syllabus as a contract. Students will be notified of any change.