Course Details

English 2268

Introductory Creative Nonfiction Writing

Term: TBD

3 Credit Hours

Synchronous Online

Course overview

Instructor

- Dr. Elizabeth Weiser
- Email Address: weiser.23@osu.edu
- Phone number: 740-366-9175
- Course Zoom Link: TBD
- Office Hours W & Th 11-12:30 in person, or anytime Tuesday I can meet on Zoom.
  - Feel free to simply stay on the Zoom call after class Tuesdays or else let me know you would like to schedule a meeting for another time.

Note: My preferred method of contact is email.

Course description

Being a writer means putting aside the time to sit and stare and think and listen and write: to make a mess over and over again, to figure out what exactly you want to do, how to tell the story the way you want to tell it, how it works, and what it needs. Life is messy, and creative nonfiction asks us

to shape that mess into meaningful, artful narrative without abandoning our responsibility to truth.

In **Introductory Creative Nonfiction Writing**, you will learn how to translate personal experience and research into effective pieces of writing. We will strive to define the term “creative nonfiction” by reading work across a broad spectrum of content and form, and you will learn how to read these pieces as a writer. How do we shape the narratives of our lives? Where do nonfiction writers begin to describe the essence of experience, or observation? Our primary focus in this class will be to hone your skills as writers and readers.

This introductory course is structured to help you establish the routine and process of writing. We will read a wide range of contemporary creative nonfiction and ask what those writers are doing at the level of craft. We will practice scene, voice, memory, place, character, research, reflection, structure, and experimental forms while also considering the ethical problems that arise when real people and experiences become material for art.

Because this is an online workshop, our community will be built deliberately. Each week has two connected parts: an instructor-led full-class Zoom meeting and a student writing-group meeting conducted during Thursday classtime or at a mutually agreed-upon alternative. Weekly low-stakes “Short Takes” give you space to experiment; peer feedback, instructor feedback, conferences, and revision help you develop selected experiments into finished creative nonfiction. As the semester moves into full-draft workshops, the small-group Short Take cycle gives way to whole-class workshop preparation and feedback.

General education goals and expected learning outcomes

This course is an approved course in the Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts category of the General Education curriculum.

Goals

1. Successful students will analyze, interpret, and evaluate major forms of human thought, cultures, and expression, and demonstrate capacities for aesthetic and culturally informed understanding.
2. Successful students will experience the arts and reflect on that experience critically and creatively.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1.1. Analyze and interpret significant works of visual, spatial, literary, and/or performing arts and design.

1.2. Describe and explain how cultures identify, evaluate, shape, and value works of literature, art, and design.

1.3. Evaluate how artistic ideas influence and shape human beliefs and the interactions between the arts and human perceptions and behavior.

1.4. Evaluate social and ethical implications in literature, visual and performing arts, and design.

2.1. Engage in informed observation and/or active participation within the visual, spatial, literary, or performing arts and design.

2.2. Critically reflect on and share their own experience of observing or engaging in the visual, spatial, literary, or performing arts and design.

Our class fulfills these outcomes through sustained reading, discussion, and production of creative nonfiction. Published essays provide significant literary works to analyze; the craft presentation and weekly class discussions develop a vocabulary for interpreting design; weekly Short Takes and longer essays require active participation in literary art; workshop requires students to describe and reflect on readers' experiences; and our recurring attention to truth, memory, research, and writing about real people foregrounds the social and ethical implications of creative nonfiction.

How this online course works

Mode of delivery

This course is “100%” online. There are two required sessions when you must be logged in to Carmen at a scheduled time.

Full class meeting: Tuesdays, 9:35-10:55 am, live on Zoom

Weekly writing-group meeting, once per week Thursdays, 9:35-10:55 or scheduled with your group, completed by Fridays 11:59pm

Regular and substantive interaction in this online course

This course is not self-paced. Instructor-student interaction occurs on a predictable weekly schedule and is initiated and facilitated by the instructor. At a minimum, every student is guaranteed the following instructor contact:

- Weekly live instruction: the instructor leads the 80-minute class meeting each Wednesday, including craft instruction, discussion of assigned writing, guided writing exercises, breakout-room visits, and real-time questions and feedback.
- Weekly individualized feedback: in Weeks 1-9, the instructor checks and responds to each writing group’s submitted report. The instructor provides substantive written, audio, or video feedback on each of the three Revised Short Takes and on the Full Workshop Draft. These four feedback points are spaced across the semester so students can apply instructor guidance to later work.
- Instructor-facilitated Carmen interaction: each weekly module includes an instructor prompt or craft note, and the instructor makes substantive responses to the class discussion space each week, focusing on replies to questions and overall patterns that emerge in student work.
- One required individual Zoom conference after the full-class workshop, to discuss feedback and make a concrete revision plan for the final portfolio.
- Timely communication and evaluation: the instructor replies to course-related email within 24 hours Monday-Friday, records completion/evaluation of weekly engagement regularly in Carmen, and normally returns the Revised Short Takes and Full Workshop Draft with substantive feedback within seven days.

Pace of online activities

- Before the full-class meeting: complete the assigned reading and any short instructor craft note/video in the Carmen module; arrive with one passage, question, or craft observation to contribute.
- Full-class Zoom: discuss published CNF, learn and practice a craft technique, write together, and prepare for the week's writing or workshop work.
- During nine designated weeks: complete the week's Short Take or revision prompt and share it with your writing group. These are exploratory pieces, not nine polished essays. On a week when a Revised Short Take is due, that revision serves as the group's Short Take; there is no additional writing assignment.
- Writing-group meeting: during those nine designated weeks, meet with your standing group. Discuss each member's writing using the week's craft focus and workshop questions.
- Writing Group Record: after each of the nine meetings, the group submits one brief record naming who attended, identifying what was discussed, and noting one useful craft or revision insight for each member. The record documents the meeting without creating a separate substantial writing assignment.
- Full-class workshops: three per session, held during scheduled class times on Thursday mornings.
- Instructor evaluation: the instructor checks weekly engagement and Writing Group Records for completion and quality of participation. Substantive individualized instructor feedback is reserved for the three Revised Short Takes, the Full Workshop Draft, and the required conference so that feedback remains useful and manageable.

Credit hours and work expectations

This is a **3-credit-hour course**. According to Ohio State policy (go.osu.edu/credithours), students should expect around 9 hours of engagement with the class each week to receive a grade of (C) average. Actual hours spent will vary by student learning habits and the assignments each week.

Participation requirements

You may miss three sessions total (of either class or writing group) during the semester, for any reason. After three absences, and minus substantial mitigating circumstances, your grade will drop.

The weekly Zoom class is a required class meeting, not an optional recording. During the nine designated Short Take weeks, the writing-group meeting is also required and is documented by the group's Writing Group Record. During the full-class workshop weeks, required participation and peer feedback replaces the Short Take/group-record cycle. Because this course depends on conversation and reciprocal reading, attendance and engaged participation affect both your own learning and your classmates' experience.

Everyone must participate in workshops by offering feedback to each piece discussed. A workshop cannot work unless everyone is willing to invest careful attention in other writers' work. You cannot reasonably expect serious feedback from peers unless you offer them the same effort.

A note on content and confidentiality

Assigned readings and student writing may address difficult or sensitive material. You control what experiences you choose to write about, and you should not submit material you do not want classmates to read and discuss. Workshop critiques must focus on the writing rather than judging the writer's personal decisions. Work shared in our Zoom room or Carmen groups is confidential and may not be copied, posted, or shared outside the course without the author's permission.

Workshop guidelines

Poet Maggie Smith defines workshop as "an investigation of possibilities." We are not looking for what is "wrong" with a draft or trying to remake it according to our own taste. We enter workshop as invested, generous, close readers who ask what the piece seems to be trying to accomplish and what craft choices help or hinder that intention.

Because we are discussing nonfiction, we will normally refer to the "I" in a piece as the narrator rather than treating the page as identical to the writer's whole self. This distinction helps us keep feedback focused on craft. The writer should spend most of the workshop listening and taking notes; at the end, the writer may ask clarifying questions. ***Confidentiality:***

Writing shared in this class is not to be shared, posted, or discussed outside the class without the author's permission.

1. **Reader experience**: In your comments, describe what you understood the piece to be doing, where your attention was strongest, what surprised you, and what lines or moments stayed with you. Go beyond "I liked it."
2. **Writer's questions**: Respond directly and specifically to the open-ended questions submitted with the draft.
3. **Possibilities**: Together, identify additional patterns, questions, places of productive confusion, or revision possibilities that have not yet been discussed.

During the full-workshop cycle, you will respond in writing to approximately half the class's drafts. Each response should usually be about 200-300 words and should reflect the three workshop experiences above. Submit your response in Carmen so the writer and instructor both have access. Focus on craft, reader experience, the writer's questions, and revision possibilities rather than sentence-level correction.

Course materials and technologies

Textbooks

Required

- Assigned readings will be provided as links or PDFs through Carmen. We will read contemporary creative nonfiction across a range of forms, voices, and subjects.
- *Brevity* (brevitymag.com), an online journal of short creative nonfiction, will provide additional models and student-selected examples.
- A writing notebook—paper or digital—for observation, ideas, and exercises is necessary. Material shared with classmates must be typed and accessible through Carmen.

Other fees or requirements

- Access to CarmenCanvas, Zoom, and Ohio State email is required. Weekly Carmen modules contain readings, instructor craft notes/videos, discussion prompts, writing prompts, and workshop materials.

Course technology

Technology support

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the Ohio State IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at it.osu.edu/help, and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

- Self-Service and Chat support: it.osu.edu/help
- Phone: 614-688-4357(HELP)
- Email: 8help@osu.edu
- TDD: 614-688-8743

Technology skills needed for this course

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen (go.osu.edu/canvasstudent)
- CarmenZoom virtual meetings (go.osu.edu/zoom-meetings)

Required Equipment

- Computer: current Mac (MacOs) or PC (Windows 10) with high-speed internet connection
- Webcam: built-in or external webcam, fully installed and tested
- Microphone: built-in laptop or tablet mic or external microphone
- Other: a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) to use for BuckeyePass authentication

Required software

- Microsoft Office 365: All Ohio State students are now eligible for free Microsoft Office 365. Full instructions for downloading and installation can be found at go.osu.edu/office365help.

Carmen Access

You will need to use BuckeyePass (buckeyepass.osu.edu) multi-factor authentication to access your courses in Carmen. To ensure that you are able to connect to Carmen at all times, it is recommended that you take the following steps:

- Register multiple devices in case something happens to your primary device. Visit the BuckeyePass website for more information: https://buckeyepass.osu.edu/
- Request passcodes to keep as a backup authentication option. When you see the Duo login screen on your computer, click **Enter a Passcode** and then click the **Text me new codes** button that appears. This will text you ten passcodes good for 365 days that can each be used once.
- Download the Duo Mobile application to all of your registered devices for the ability to generate one-time codes in the event that you lose cell, data, or Wi-Fi service

If none of these options will meet the needs of your situation, you can contact the IT Service Desk at 614-688-4357(HELP) and IT support staff will work out a solution with you.

Grading and instructor response

How your grade is calculated

Assignment	Weight	What it measures
Weekly class (and conference) participation (15)	15%	Preparation, engaged discussion, in-class writing
Weekly workshop engagement with prompts (Short Takes)	9%	Consistent writing practice, experimentation, peer exchange & feedback,

Assignment	Weight	What it measures
+ Writing Group Record (9)		reflection, and workshop citizenship
Craft term/depiction mini-presentation (1)	5%	Craft vocabulary and interpretation of CNF technique
Three revised **Short Takes** (3)	21%	Revision of selected weekly experiments into more purposeful brief essays
Full workshop **Draft** (1 - 2,000-4,000 words)	10%	Sustained application of CNF craft and preparation for substantial revision
Full workshop feedback (12)	15%	Thoughtful, helpful peer exchange
Final **Revised Portfolio** (3 short takes + final essay)	25%	Revision, reflection, and demonstration of growth across the semester

The course is graded on a 100-point percentage scale. 56% of your grade will be based on your (revised) production of texts, 44% on the process of your engagement with writing and reviewing. Grades and feedback will be available in Carmen, and you are always welcome to speak with me about your progress and standing in the course.

Description of major course assignments

Assignment #1 Weekly class (and conference) participation

- **Description**
  - Come to the weekly Zoom meeting having completed the readings and module materials and be prepared to discuss them. Participation includes contributing to full-class and small-group discussion, completing guided in-class writing, engaging thoughtfully in workshop activities, and attending the required individual writing conference. This category rewards preparation and active engagement rather than the quality of a first draft.
  - **GE ELO connection:** By analyzing published and peer creative nonfiction, discussing how craft choices affect readers, and reflecting on their own writing during class and conference, students directly practice ELOs 1.1, 2.1, and 2.2.

Assignment #2 Craft term/depiction mini-presentation

- **Description**
  - Early in the semester, each student researches one CNF craft term and gives one informal 3-4 minute Zoom mini-presentation that defines or depicts the term and uses at least one example from published creative nonfiction. The class will build a shared vocabulary for later reading and workshop discussion.
  - **GE ELO connection:** By defining and applying a shared vocabulary for interpreting literary design, this assignment directly supports ELO 1.1 and contributes to ELO 1.2.
- **Academic integrity and collaboration guidelines**
  - Getting help from the instructor is allowed
  - Collaboration with others is not allowed until after the mini-presentation has been don
  - Use of AI is prohibited

Assignment #3 Weekly workshop engagement with prompts (short takes) + writing group record

- **Description**
  - Nine times during the first part of the semester, you will bring a Short Take or revision to your writing group and participate in an 80-minute workshop conversation. Most Short Takes will emerge from an in-class exercise or a focused craft prompt and may be fragmentary, exploratory, or unfinished. On weeks when a Revised Short Take is due, that revision takes the place of a new prompt. After each meeting, the group submits one brief Writing Group Record. These nine cycles are graded primarily for completion, genuine experimentation, useful peer exchange, and workshop citizenship—not for polish.
  - **GE ELO connection:** By producing creative work, discussing how it is experienced by readers, giving and receiving feedback, and identifying revision possibilities, these workshop cycles directly support ELOs 2.1 and 2.2 and reinforce ELO 1.1.
- **Academic integrity and collaboration guidelines**
  - Getting help from the instructor is allowed
  - Collaboration is allowed in class
  - Use of AI is prohibited

Assignment #4 Three revised short takes

- **Description**
  - Three times during the semester, choose a Short Take that seems worth pursuing and revise it into a more purposeful brief essay, normally about 750 words. Each revision should respond to peer discussion and your developing understanding of craft. The instructor provides substantive individualized feedback on each Revised Short Take; you will revise these pieces again for the final portfolio.
  - **GE ELO connection:** By making and explaining purposeful aesthetic choices in response to reading and feedback, the Revised Short Takes directly

support ELOs 2.1 and 2.2 while demonstrating the analysis and application emphasized in ELO 1.1.

- **Academic integrity and collaboration guidelines**
  - Getting instructor help is permitted
  - Collaboration is not allowed outside of class
  - Use of AI is prohibited

Assignment #5 Full workshop feedback

- **Description**
  - During the full-draft workshop portion of the semester, you will provide thoughtful written and oral feedback on approximately twelve classmates' workshop drafts. Responses should identify what the piece appears to be trying to accomplish, point to specific craft choices that are working, answer the writer's questions, and identify productive possibilities for revision. These responses are evaluated for specificity, usefulness, care, and engagement rather than copyediting. Unless otherwise announced, each response should be approximately 200-300 words.
  - **GE ELO connection:** By interpreting peers' literary choices, articulating reader experience, and considering the social and ethical implications of representing real people and events, full-workshop feedback directly supports ELOs 1.1, 1.4, and 2.2.
- **Academic integrity and collaboration guidelines**
  - Getting help from the instructor is allowed
  - Collaboration is allowed and encouraged in class
  - Use of AI is prohibited

Assignment #6 Full workshop draft

- **Description**
  - Later in the semester you will develop one 2,000-4,000 word piece of creative nonfiction for full workshop. Submit it in Word through Carmen with 2-3 open-ended questions identifying the feedback that would be most useful to you.

The instructor will provide substantive individualized feedback on this draft in addition to the feedback you receive from classmates.

- **GE ELO connection:** By creating a sustained literary work and making intentional choices about form, evidence, truth, and representation, the workshop draft directly supports ELOs 1.4 and 2.1.

Academic integrity and collaboration guidelines

- Getting help from the instructor is allowed
- Collaboration is allowed in class
- Use of AI is prohibited

Assignment #7 Final revised portfolio

Description

- The final portfolio includes: (1) your three Revised Short Takes, revised again as appropriate after instructor and peer feedback; (2) a substantially revised version of your 2,000-4,000 word Full Workshop Draft; and (3) a brief artist's statement/reflection explaining your most important revision decisions and what you have learned about your own creative nonfiction writing. The portfolio asks you to demonstrate growth rather than simply collect earlier submissions.
- **GE ELO connection:** By revising original creative work and critically reflecting on aesthetic choices, reader response, and ethical responsibilities, the Final Revised Portfolio directly supports ELOs 2.1 and 2.2 and demonstrates cumulative achievement of ELOs 1.1 and 1.4.

Academic integrity and collaboration guidelines

- Getting help from the instructor is allowed
- Use of AI is prohibited

GE alignment at a glance

Course activity / assignment	Primary GE ELOs
Published-reading discussions + Craft Term/Depiction Mini-Presentation	1.1, 1.2, 1.3
Truth/ethics discussions and writing	1.4
Nine Short Take/writing-group cycles + Full Workshop Draft	2.1 (with 1.1/1.4 as appropriate)
Writing-group discussion + Full Workshop Feedback	1.1, 1.4, 2.2
Revised Short Takes, individual conference, and Final Revised Portfolio reflection	2.2 (with 1.1 and 1.4)

Grading Scale

- 93-100: A
- 90-92: A–
- 87-89: B+
- 83-86: B
- 80-82: B–
- 77-79: C+
- 73-76: C
- 70-72: C–
- 67-69: D+
- 60-66: D
- Under 60: E

Academic policies

Note: the most recent versions of these syllabus statements are also available at:

https://ugeducation.osu.edu/academics/syllabus-policies-statements/standard-syllabus-statements

Academic integrity policy

See **Descriptions of major course assignments**, above, for my specific guidelines about collaboration and academic integrity in the context of this online class.

Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. Thus, The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct, so please review the Code of Student Conduct and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

If an instructor suspects that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, the instructor is obligated by University Rules to report those suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that a student violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the

misconduct could include a failing grade in the course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If students have questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, they should contact the instructor.

AI Policy

Unless a particular assignment explicitly says otherwise, the creative prose you submit for this course must be written by you. Generative AI may not compose, rewrite, or substantially revise your creative nonfiction or your peer responses. If we use AI in a specific class exercise, the permitted use and required disclosure will be stated in that assignment. When in doubt, ask before using it.

Religious accommodations

Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course. Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates

or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the Office of Civil Rights Compliance: https://civilrights.osu.edu/

Policy: Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances

Accessibility accommodations for students with disabilities

Requesting accommodations

The university strives to maintain a healthy and accessible environment to support student learning in and out of the classroom. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If you are ill and need to miss class, including if you are staying home and away from others while experiencing symptoms of a viral infection or fever, please let me know immediately. In cases where illness interacts with an underlying medical condition, please consult with Student Life Disability Services to request reasonable accommodations. You can connect with them at slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; or slds.osu.edu.

Intellectual diversity

Ohio State is committed to fostering a culture of open inquiry and intellectual diversity within the classroom. This course will cover a range of information and may include discussions or debates about controversial issues, beliefs, or policies. Any such discussions and debates are intended to support understanding of the approved curriculum and relevant course objectives rather than promote any specific point of view. Students will be assessed on principles applicable to the field of study and the content covered in the course. Preparing students for citizenship includes helping them develop critical thinking skills that will allow them to reach their own conclusions regarding complex or controversial matters.

Creating an environment free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct

The Ohio State University is committed to building and maintaining a community to reflect diversity and to improve opportunities for all. All Buckeyes have the right to be free from harassment, discrimination, and sexual misconduct. Ohio State does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, pregnancy (childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom), race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or protected veteran status, or any other bases under the law, in its activities, academic programs, admission, and employment. Members of the university community also have the right to be free from all forms of sexual misconduct: sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

To report harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation and/or seek confidential and non-confidential resources and supportive measures, contact the Civil Rights Compliance Office:

Online reporting form at http://civilrights.osu.edu/,

Call 614-247-5838 or TTY 614-688-8605,

Or Email civilrights@osu.edu

The university is committed to stopping sexual misconduct, preventing its recurrence, eliminating any hostile environment, and remedying its discriminatory effects. All university employees have reporting responsibilities to the Civil Rights Compliance Office to ensure the university can take appropriate action:

All university employees, except those exempted by legal privilege of confidentiality or expressly identified as a confidential reporter, have an obligation to report incidents of sexual assault immediately.

The following employees have an obligation to report all other forms of sexual misconduct as soon as practicable but at most within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member.

Copyright for instructional materials

The materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection and are only for the use of students officially enrolled in the course for the educational purposes associated with the course. Copyright law must be considered before copying, retaining, or disseminating materials outside of the course.

Your mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug

problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614-292-5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766 and 24 hour emergency help is also available 24/7 by dialing 988 to reach the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Course Schedule

Refer to our Carmen course page for up-to-date assignment due dates.

The calendar below establishes the regular pattern for this class. Specific readings may be adjusted to fit availability and class needs. Nine Short Take/writing-group cycles occur before the course shifts into full-draft workshop; on weeks when a Revised Short Take is due, that revision replaces a new prompt. The instructor will announce any calendar adjustment in Carmen.

Week	Focus	Instructor-led Zoom / Readings	Writing + Writing Group	GE ELO
1	What Is Creative Nonfiction? Truth, Fact, Memory	Zoom class: introductions, syllabus, defining CNF, truth vs. fact, guided earliest-memory / earliest-"unmemory" exercise. Read: "On a Grandma's House and the Unknowability of the Past"; "The Heart-Work: Writing About Trauma as a Subversive Act."	Short Take / Writing Group Cycle #1: one remembered scene, including a place where memory is uncertain. Group establishes meeting time and workshop norms; group submits Record #1.	1.4, 2.1, 2.2
2	The Personal Essay: Questions, Beginnings, Endings	Zoom: craft term/depiction mini-presentations and finding an essay's governing question. Read: "The Tradition of the Personal Essay"; Montaigne, "Of Smells"; Jenny Boully on beginnings/endings; Elissa Washuta on questions that animate an essay.	Short Take / Writing Group Cycle #2: begin from a question you cannot answer quickly; experiment with an opening. Group discusses what creates an invitation to keep reading; submit Record #2.	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2
3	The "I" as Narrator: Voice, Character, Likability	Zoom: narrator vs. author, voice, scene, characterization. Read: "On Likability"; Jaquira Díaz, "Girls, Monsters"; Randa Jarrar, "Biblioclast" (or equivalent).	Short Take / Writing Group Cycle #3: render yourself or another person as a character in one scene using action, detail, and voice rather than explanation; submit Record #3.	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2
4	Place as Character	Zoom: sensory detail, setting, place as more than backdrop. Read: Annie Dillard, "Living Like Weasels"; "The Georgian Military Road"; Melissa Febos, "Les Calanques" (or equivalent).	Short Take / Writing Group Cycle #4: write a place so specifically that it exerts pressure on the narrator or changes the meaning of an event; submit Record #4.	1.1, 2.1, 2.2

Week	Focus	Instructor-led Zoom / Readings	Writing + Writing Group	GE ELO
5	Revision + Mini-Workshop	Zoom: how to give usable feedback; revision at the level of scene, focus, structure, and language; mini-workshop demonstration.	**Revised Short Take #1 due**. It serves as Writing Group Cycle #5—no additional prompt. Groups discuss revised pieces and submit Record #5. Instructor provides substantive individual feedback.	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
6	Scene, Summary, Character, Dialogue	Zoom: deciding when to dramatize, summarize, compress, or quote. Read short models emphasizing scene/dialogue.	Short Take / Writing Group Cycle #6: reconstruct a conversation or encounter, balancing scene with selective summary; submit Record #6.	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2
7	Writing Beyond the Self: Research and the Larger World	Read a research-inflected essay such as “The Fourth State of Matter” and a craft piece on incorporating research. Zoom: interviewing, factual research, “your story” and “the world’s story.”	Short Take / Writing Group Cycle #7: add one researched fact, document, interview fragment, or outside source to a personal subject; include a source note and submit Record #7.	1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1
8	Playing with Form: Hermit Crab and Braided Essays	Zoom: form as argument, container, and discovery method. Read: Brenda Miller, “We Regret to Inform You”; a braided/hermit-crab model; Lidia Yuknavitch, “Woven” (or equivalent).	**Revised Short Take #2 due**, using or deliberately considering an alternative form. It serves as Writing Group Cycle #8—no additional prompt. Submit Record #8. Instructor provides substantive individual feedback.	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2
9	Lyric Essay, Association, and Experiment	Zoom: image, juxtaposition, white space, associative logic, productive uncertainty. Read lyric/fragmentary examples and Ander Monson, “Essay as Hack” (or equivalent).	Short Take / Writing Group Cycle #9: lyric, fragment, collage, or other associative experiment; submit Record #9. This completes the nine required Short Take/group cycles.	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2

Week	Focus	Instructor-led Zoom / Readings	Writing + Writing Group	GE ELO
10	Spring Break	No required class	**Revised Short Take #3 due at end of Break**; begin or extend the Full Workshop Draft. Instructor provides substantive individual feedback on Revised Short Take #3.	1.4, 2.1, 2.2
11	Full-Draft Workshop Cycle I	Zoom: workshop practice and craft clinic—structure, stakes, scene/reflection balance. Instructor facilitates discussion and models useful response.	First scheduled **Full Workshop Drafts**. Classmates submit assigned full-workshop feedback; writers receive peer responses and instructor feedback. Other students continue drafting/revising their own long essay.	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
12	Full-Draft Workshop Cycle II	Zoom: **Full Workshop Drafts** plus craft clinic focused on openings, endings, and narrative movement.	Next scheduled **Full Workshop Drafts**. Assigned classmates submit full-workshop feedback; writers begin identifying a revision plan.	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
13	Full-Draft Workshop Cycle III	Zoom: **Full Workshop Drafts** plus craft clinic focused on voice, research, and managing multiple strands.	Next scheduled **Full Workshop Drafts** and assigned peer feedback. Required individual conference window begins for students whose drafts have been workshopped.	1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
14	Full-Draft Workshop Cycle IV + Revision Conferences	Zoom: **Full Workshop Drafts** and discussion of what substantial revision looks like; students compare before/after passages and revision choices. Conferences continue.	Final scheduled **Full Workshop Drafts** and peer feedback. Each student completes the required individual conference with the instructor and leaves with a concrete portfolio revision plan. Conferences finish.	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2
15	The Writing Life: Reflection, Revision, What Next?	Zoom: sharing discoveries, publication/continuing-writing resources, final guided reflection, and course synthesis.	Portfolio revision exchange and final reflection. **Final Revised Portfolio** (three Short Takes + final essay + brief reflection) due during finals period.	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2