**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Course Title: CWRT 2350-01: Techniques of Creative Non-Fiction**

**www.sfuadcnf.com**

**Course Time: Mondays 2-5:40 p.m.**

**Course Location: Benildus 100/101**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor: Julia Goldberg**

**Office Location: Benildus Hall, Room 219**

**Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 12:30-2 p.m. or by appointment**

**Email: julia.goldberg@santafeuniversity.edu**

**Please ensure you communicate with me through your SFUAD email account. Emails from other providers may be blocked and fail to make it through the interwebs.**

**TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS**

Required Books:

*Tell it Slant*, second edition. Miller, Brenda and Paola, Suzanne. McGraw-Hill.

*The Touchstone Anthology of Contemporary Creative Nonfiction, Williford and Martone*

*The Journalist and the Murderer* by Janet Malcolm

**WEBSITE**

This course is partially a paper-free class. Weekly assignments, as well as many of the supplementary readings, will be available on:

www.sfuadcnf.com

Please check the website each week to ensure you have the most current weekly assignments.

**HANDOUTS**

This class has numerous supplementary readings, most of which will be available on the class website. You are expected to keep up with all readings. Any changes to the readings will be announced in class and be available on the course website.

**EVENTS**

Mandatory attendance is required for Creative Writing students (there will be a sign-in sheet for attendance at the events).All CWL required event will include a sign-in sheet. Be sure to sign the sign-in sheet to receive credit for attendance. All events are held at 7 p.m. O’Shaughnessy Performance Space in Benildus.

Feb. 23: Kathleen Graber (poet):

March 29: Senior Reading

April 5: Senior Reading

April 12: James Reich and Matt Donovan book release/reading

April 19: Senior Reading

April 26: Senior Reading

May 3: Glyph reading & event

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course provides an overview of the strategies, history, and craft of creative nonfiction. In this course students will write and analyze various types of nonfiction, including, but not limited to, memoir, journalism, the personal essay. The focus will be on developing facility in various forms and mastering fundamental concepts of the genre, including voice, narrative distance, setting, research, structure, and dialogue.

This class will require significant reading and writing assignments, as well as attendance at CWL visiting writer and student readings.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of this course, students will:

\* Demonstrate critical examination of literary texts and analysis of craft technique in creative nonfiction

\* Gain reflective and critical sense of others’ work on their own creative process

\* Demonstrate public speaking skills in articulating analysis of craft

\* Engage in constructive critique and editorial feedback, using craft terminology

• Demonstrate active editing and revising of analytical and creative work

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

There will be four major creative nonfiction writing projects for this class:

• a memoir piece

• an arts criticism/arts journalism piece

• a personal/reported essay

• a lyric essay

• There also will be ongoing critical writing assignments as well as in-class creative writing assignments.

• There will be a mid-term craft analysis essay due based on readings in *The Touchstone Anthology*

• There will be a final paper on *The Journalist and the Murderer* by Janet Malcolm

**Typing/Format of Assignments**

• All assignments must be typed, and use the following guidelines:

• Please use the same font throughout the paper: either Times, Ariel or Courier, 12 point

• Leave a one-inch margin on both sides of the paper; justify the left side and leave the right ragged

• Double-space

• One space between words; one space between sentences

• Indent each paragraph with a tab or one-half inch

• Include a title page, double-spaced, with the assignment name, paper title, student name and date

• Follow style specifications for references, which will be discussed in class

• Obvious style exceptions will be made for lyrical essays and other non-comforming writing assignments.

**WRITING WORKSHOPS**

Workshops will be used for the four major creative nonfiction pieces due this semester.

Regarding the workshop environment: Class must be a non-judgmental place where writers can bring their work and ask for help toward improvement of their projects. Due to the nature of non-fiction writing, it is very important that writers feel confident that their work will not be discussed with anyone other than the members of this class. Critiques will be accomplished through the writing workshop critique sheets and in-class discussions. Your critiques of your classmates’ work are an important component of this class and your grade. Workshop materials must be submitted for critique when due in order to participate in the workshop. Workshops will not be rescheduled, and those who fail to participate will be penalized accordingly for mid-term and final grades.

Students are required to provide copies of their work for their workshop groups and for the instructor.

**CRITIQUE SHEETS**

Critique sheets will be distributed for use for evaluation of your peers’ work, and will require evaluation of classmates’ writing according to the craft principles that are the bedrock of this class. With both written and oral critiques, students should take care to objectively evaluate the work, and refrain from unproductive and subjective evaluations.

Copies required: one for the writer whose work has been critiqued; one for the instructor.

**CRITICAL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

The critical writing assignments are designed to apply your growing knowledge of the techniques of creative non-fiction to the course’s reading assignments.

**Participation**

Participation in class discussions and the workshop are mandatory, and will be evaluated as such for mid-term and final grades.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS/POLICIES**

**ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS**

100% class attendance is required and is critically important to faculty and your peers. More than 2 absences can result in a lowering of course grade, and in cases of consistent absences, a failing grade for the course. Tardiness is unacceptable and will also result in a lowering of your final grade. Bottom line: Attend every class in a timely manner.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Late work will be penalized 10 percent per day (with the “late clock” beginning at class time rather than the end of the day), and will only be accepted up to four days after the initial deadline.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones are explicitly prohibited in this classroom, and their use during class time will not be tolerated.

Students who own cellphones must leave their phones in the designated area at the start of class.

Any student who fails to do so and violates this policy will receive a single cellphone infraction warning. A second infraction will cause the student to be dismissed from the classroom for that class session and to receive both an unexcused absence as well as a reduction in the student's classroom participation grade.

Subsequent cellphone violations may result in a failing grades for course participation or, if the cell phone use does not cease, the removal of a student from the class and a resulting failing grade for the course.

**ACCOMMODATING SPECIAL NEEDS**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Santa Fe University of Art and Design makes every effort to provide appropriate accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students may receive these accommodations if they contact their professor and register with Charlie Miu, Disability Services, at 505-473-6713 ([charlie.miu@santafeuniversity.edu](mailto:charlie.miu@santafeuniversity.edu)).

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Santa Fe University of Art and Design values academic integrity. It is the policy of our university to foster creative and academic work that is both original and based on fundamental principles of academic integrity. If a student’s writing or other creative projects use the work of someone else, that use must be formally acknowledged. When taking information or quotes from other authors and incorporating that material into a writing assignment, students must acknowledge the source and authorship of the material they borrow by properly citing it using Modern Language Association (MLA) standards. Similarly, when students’ creative projects incorporate other artists’ ideas, or any visual, electronic, audio, or other creative content, they must acknowledge and give credit to those artists according to discipline-specific guidelines. It is the responsibility of the student to understand and adhere to this university policy, follow prescribed guidelines, and understand the consequences of violating the policy. Enrollment in this university assumes a commitment to upholding the principles of academic integrity. The complete policy on academic integrity, including penalties for violations of policy and processes for appeal, is available for review in the Student Handbook and Academic Catalog.

Written work in this class must be original; work written or submitted for previous classes or assignments may not be used in this course. Resubmitting work from other classes/ previous assignments is considered a form of plagiarism.

**EMERGENCY CLASS CANCELLATION**

If an emergency arises in which class must be cancelled, a note will be posted on the classroom door informing students of the cancellation and related information. If a cancellation notice is not posted, students are expected to remain in the classroom until dismissed by a college representative. In the event of severe weather, students should listen to local radio/television announcements for information or check the Santa Fe University website: www.santafeuniversity.edu If the college is open, students are expected to attend class.

**ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING SCALE**

**Memoir, including revisions: 100 points**

**Arts Criticism/Arts Journalism for SITE Santa Fe Gallery Guide: 100 points**

**Reported essay:, including revisions 100 points**

**Lyric Essay, including revisions: 100 points**

**Critical Response pieces: 100 points**

**Critiques and Workshops: 150 points**

**In-class writing and class discussions: 100 points**

**Mid-term paper: 100 points**

**Final paper: 150 points**

**Total Points for semester: 1,000 points**

**GRADING SCALE for ASSIGNMENTS**

**A: 91-100**

**B: 80-90**

**C: 70-79**

**D: 60-69**

**F: 59 OR BELOW**

**A 100% – 90: ( 900-1,000 points)**

**B 89% – 80% (800-899 points)**

**C 79% – 70% (700-799)**

**D 69% – 60% (600-699 points)**

**F Below 60% (599 and fewer points)**

**COURSE CALENDAR**

**All assignments are subject to change. Please consult the class website, SFUADCNF.COM regularly to ensure you have the current assignments.**

**January 25:**

Intro to Class & introductions

Outline of the projects for the semester

In-class writing exercise & reading out loud based on Joan Didion’s “Why I Write.”

**Feb. 1:**

Read for class: *Tell it Slant* : Read Intro, and Part 1 “Unearthing Your Material”, chapters, 1,2,3 & 6: Intro to Memoir

Read “Repeat After Me” by David Sedaris, Touchstone Anthology, page. 443; Read “The Love of My Life” by Cheryl Strayed, Touchstone, page. 500

Bring to class: an example of creative nonfiction written by someone else to read out loud. This should be just a few paragraphs; be prepared to discuss why you respond to this work. If you need ideas, the class website has numerous links to creative nonfiction examples

In-class writing and drafting for memoir piece

**February 8:**

**Read:**

*Tell it Slant*: Read Part 3, Honing Your Craft, Chapters: 13, 14, 15

Read [William Zinsser's "How to Write a Memoir."](http://theamericanscholar.org/how-to-write-a-memoir/" \l ".VBCRekJdW-0" \t "_blank)

Read ["Notes on Frey" by Daniel Nester](http://danielnester.com/2010/03/09/notes-on-frey-being-the-author%E2%80%99s-attempt-to-defend-a-memoirist-authenticity-in-the-age-of-made-up-dialogue-god-cocky-writers-and-crestfallen-critics-most-likely-disingenuous/" \t "_blank) (links on website)

Read Philip Lopate's lopate-yourself-as-character (download on website)

**Write:**

**First drafts of memoir pieces due in class**

Instructions about formatting and number of copies will be reviewed in class.

Remember this is a first draft! You are not expected to be finished, **but aim for at least two full pages of typed writing.**

**In class:**

Intro to Critique Process and Critique Sheets

Formation of Critique Groups for Memoir Pieces

**Feb. 15:**

**First Workshop:**

Bring two copies of your critique sheets for each member of your group: one for the writer, and one for Julia. These count toward your grade in this class.

We will have an in-class critical writing assignment in response to issues of memoir based on the readings so far this semester.

**Feb. 22**

Revised and final memoir pieces due in class.

Small-group discussions of revisions

Reading out-loud (bring a short (two to three minute excerpt of your final piece to read, either hard copy or on computer)

Preview of personal reported essay assignment/in-class writing assignment

**Read for class:**

*Tell it Slant:* Read Part 1, Chapters 6, “Gathering the Threads of History,” Chapter 7, “Writing the Larger World,” Chapter 8, “Using Research to Expand Your Perspective” and David Foster Wallace, “Consider the Lobster” (Touchstone, p. 525)

**Feb. 29:**

**Read**: “The Devil’s Bait” by Leslie Jamison (link on class website)

**Read**: “Fourth State of Matter” by Joann Beard (Touchstone Anthology, page 1)

Come to class prepared to discuss the elements of each piece, including: structure, voice, and reportage

**Assignment**: Bring ideas, outline and potential list of sources for personal essay; in-class writing time

**March 7:**

• Mid-term paper due in class or by email to instructor

• Each of you will give a short (five to 10 minute) presentation on your mid-term, which also will be explained prior to class.

Criteria for mid-term paper will be provided separately in class, but all critical work this semester should focus on reading non-fiction critically and assessing the authors’ uses of various craft techniques as discussed throughout the semester.

• First drafts of personal essay assignment due in class for critique groups and instructor; discussion by each student of his or her topic with a short excerpt read out loud.

In-class writing assignment will focus on developing further your first drafts

**March 14:**

**Spring break/no class**

**March 21:**

**In class**: Reported personal essay workshop; critiques due in class for Julia and critique group members

**Read for class:** “Autopsy Report” by Lia Purpura (Touchstone Anthology, p. 405) and “Watching the Animals” by Richard Rhodes, (Touchstone, page 411).

**March 28:**

**Read** in Tell It Slant: “Chapter 5, Writing the Arts”

**Read**: “Inventing Peace” by Lawrence Weschler (handout); read Pultizer prize winners in criticism (specific links on the class website)

In-class arts writing assignment

Final revised personal/reported essay due in class

**April 4:**

Class visit by Joanne Lefrak, director of education and engagement at SITE Santa Fe

**Read:** SITE materials as provided prior to class

Prepare at least one class for Joanne as part of her visit and in-class participation/discussion

**April 11:**

**Class Field trip to SITE Santa Fe.** We will leave as a group from class. Please bring: writing materials to take notes.

**April 18:**

Bring first drafts of SITE Santa Fe pieces; criteria will be discussed prior to class. You will not have full-class workshops but will instead have peer-to-peer and instruction review.

We will also begin working on the Lyric Essay

**Read**: *Tell it Slan*t: Read chapter 10. “Lyric Essay”; additional materials on the lyric essay will be made available on the website and as handouts, including:

**Read**: (links on class website):

• “On the Lyric Essay” by Ben Marcus

• “Seneca Review debuts The Lyric Essay”

**Read:** “The Pain Scale” by Eula Biss (Touchstone, p. 28)

**Read: “Mr. Plimpton’s Revenge” by Dinty Moore (google maps essay on website)**

**Read:** (website download) “Michael Martone’s Leftover Water” by Patrick Madden (Normal School)

**April 25:**

First draft lyric essays due in class for critique groups and instructor; In-class critical writing and discussion regarding the lyric essay and the pieces read previously on the topic

**May 2:**

Workshop of Lyric essays

Lecture and seminar discussion of *The Journalist and the Murderer/* journalism ethics/Jeffrey MacDonald/Joe McGinnis lawsuit in advance of final paper

**May 9:** finals week. Final papers are due no later than 5 p.m.