

# EN3574: CREATIVE NON-FICTION WRITING

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## Effective Term

Semester A 2022/23

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

Creative Non-Fiction Writing

### Subject Code

EN - English

### Course Number

3574

### Academic Unit

English (EN)

### College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

Nil

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

Nil

### Exclusive Courses

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

This course aims to introduce students to the techniques of writing creative non-fiction. Students will study the various elements of the essay, memoir and feature article, including voice, analysis, setting, characterization, dialogue, description,

narration, exposition and explanation, research and veracity. The course will be taught in a ‘workshop’ format in which students will read and critique one another’s work.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

| CILOs | Weighting (if app.)  | DEC-A1 | DEC-A2 | DEC-A3 |
|-------|--|--------|--------|--------|
| 1     | Describe the elements and techniques of creative non-fiction including voice, analysis, setting, characterization, dialogue, description, narration, exposition and explanation, research and veracity, and identify these elements and techniques in creative non-fiction by published writers. | x      | x      |        |
| 2     | Evaluate and critique the creative non-fiction of others, pointing out strengths and weaknesses, giving reasoned arguments for their judgments and offering concrete suggestions for revision.   | x      | x      |        |
| 3     | Apply their knowledge of creative non-fiction to the writing and revising of their own essays.   | x      | x      | x      |

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

| TLAs | Brief Description  | CILO No.   | Hours/week (if applicable) |
|------|--|--|----------------------------|
| 1    | Reading representative works of creative non-fiction in English and analyzing and critiquing them in class discussions and in written assignments. | Using relevant concepts and terms, students will analyse and reflect upon an array of texts in small group and whole-class settings. | 1, 2, 3                    |
| 2    | Listening to lectures on the elements and techniques of writing creative non-fiction   | Students will actively engage with lecture materials by responding and discussing in various ways                                    | 1, 2, 3                    |
| 3    | Participating in in-class writing exercises designed to develop the mastery of specific techniques.  | Evaluating and critiquing the work of classmates and offering suggestions for improvement.   | 1, 2, 3                    |

|   |  |  |         |  |
|---|--|--|---------|--|
| 4 | Writing and revising a portfolio of essays | In small peer-review groups, students will read and respond to one another's writing as a way to reflect upon and develop various stages of the writing process. | 1, 2, 3 |  |
|---|--|--|---------|--|

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

|   | ATs   | CILO No. | Weighting (%) | Remarks |
|---|---|----------|---------------|---------|
| 1 | Class participation, especially in workshop sessions in which students are expected to present cogent arguments regarding their evaluation of classmates' work and offer concrete suggestions for revision. | 1, 2     | 20            |         |
| 2 | Portfolio of three essays each of which has undergone revision based on suggestions of the instructor and classmates.   | 3        | 60            |         |
| 3 | Written explication and critique of a published essay which describes and analyzes the various techniques used and the effectiveness of those techniques.   | 1, 2, 3  | 20            |         |

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

100

**Examination (%)**

0

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

1. Creative Nonfiction

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Writing demonstrates superior ability to combine the factual aspects of personal experience and research with creative work that applies elements of writing craft to meet the requirements of the specific form(s) and genres employed. This includes a clear focus on a central idea or incident; a seamless blending of facts and research into the writing; the ability to collapse time and storyline to the most urgent and necessary scenes as well as dialogue (if used) that serves the scenes dramatized; no excess language. Regardless of form, the prose must demonstrate a solid command of language, as well as a cadence suited to the chosen form and genre. With respect to genre, the writing must demonstrate a mastery of the traditions of the chosen genre or show innovation in a creative reworking or subversion of established traditions, which can be in terms of language or theme or elements of craft.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Writing demonstrates good ability to combine the factual aspects of personal experience and research with creative work that applies elements of writing craft to meet the requirements of the specific form(s) and genres employed.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Writing demonstrates average but competent ability to combine the factual aspects of personal experience and research with creative work that applies elements of writing craft to meet the requirements of the specific form(s) and genres employed

**Marginal (D)**

Writing demonstrates weak ability to combine the factual aspects of personal experience and research with creative work that applies elements of writing craft to meet the requirements of the specific form(s) and genres employed.

**Failure (F)**

Writing lacks competent ability to combine the factual aspects of personal experience and research with creative work that applies elements of writing craft to meet the requirements of the specific form(s) and genres employed.

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**Assessment Task**

2. Class Participation

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Contributions to class discussions and workshop demonstrate a thorough and careful reading of the piece under discussion, the ability to insightfully apply knowledge of the craft of fiction in identifying strengths and weaknesses, and useful comments and suggestions for the author. The contribution is expressed in a clear, detailed, tactful and professional manner.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Contributions to class discussions and workshop demonstrate a careful reading of the piece under discussion, the ability to adequately apply knowledge of the craft of fiction in identifying strengths and weaknesses, and useful comments and suggestions for the author. The contribution is expressed in a clear, detailed, tactful and professional manner.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Contributions to class discussions and workshop demonstrate an adequate though not always careful reading of the piece under discussion, the ability apply knowledge of the craft of fiction in identifying some strengths and weaknesses, and moderately useful comments and suggestions for the author.

**Marginal (D)**

Contributions to class discussions and workshop demonstrate cursory or incomplete reading of the piece under discussion, and the ability apply some knowledge of the craft of fiction in identifying some strengths and weaknesses, though these may not be accurate, insightful or helpful.

**Failure (F)**

Contributions to class discussions and workshop demonstrate little understanding of the piece under discussion, and little ability apply knowledge of the craft of fiction in identifying strengths and weaknesses. The contribution may be expressed in an unclear or unprofessional manner.

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**Assessment Task**

3. Poetry Explication/ Critique

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

The critique demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the elements, techniques and traditions of creative non-fiction and the ability to apply this knowledge in identifying and evaluating features in the piece. The analysis is insightful, convincingly argued and clearly expressed.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The critique demonstrates good knowledge of the elements, techniques and traditions of creative non-fiction and the ability to apply this knowledge in identifying and evaluating features in the piece. The analysis is relatively insightful, convincingly argued and clearly expressed.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

The critique demonstrates some knowledge of the elements, techniques and traditions of creative non-fiction and the ability to apply this knowledge in identifying and evaluating some relevant features in the piece. There may be some problems with the way the argument is presented or the quality of the language.

**Marginal (D)**

The critique demonstrates little knowledge of the elements, techniques and traditions of creative non-fiction and little ability to apply this knowledge in identifying and evaluating some relevant features in the piece. There may be major problems with the way the argument is presented or the quality of the language.

**Failure (F)**

The critique demonstrates no knowledge of the elements, techniques and traditions of creative non-fiction and no ability to apply this knowledge in any useful way. There may serious problems with structure, grammar or usage.

## Part III Other Information

**Keyword Syllabus**

Genres of creative non-fiction  
 Research and interviewing techniques  
 The writing and revision process  
 Dramatization  
 Diaries  
 Autobiography and memoir  
 Travel writing  
 Meditative essays  
 Cultural criticism  
 Reportage  
 Biography and profiles

**Reading List****Compulsory Readings**

| Title |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Gerard, P. (2001) Writing creative non-fiction. Story Press. |

**Additional Readings**

| Title |  |
|-------|--|
| 1     | Atwan, R. (2007) The best American essays. Wadsworth Publishing.   |
| 2     | Gutkind, L. (2004) In fact: The best of creative non-fiction. Norton.  |
| 3     | Kramer, M. and Call, W. (2007) Telling true stories: An non-fiction writer' s guide. Plume.                  |
| 4     | Lopate, P. (1997) The art of the personal essay: An anthology from the classical era to the present. Anchor. |
| 5     | Reese Cheney, T. (2000) Writing creative non-fiction. Fiction techniques for crafting                        |