

	<b>School of Liberal Arts</b>
	<b>CRWR 242</b>
	<b>Creative Nonfiction Workshop</b>
	<b>Term: Winter, 2025</b> <b>Number of Credits: 3</b>
<b>Course Outline</b>	

**INSTRUCTOR:** Jamella Hagen  
**E-MAIL:** [jhagen@yukonu.ca](mailto:jhagen@yukonu.ca) **PHONE:** 867-689-1200 (cell)  
**OFFICE HOURS:** by appointment  
**DATES:** January 7 – April 8  
**CLASS:** Face-to-face Synchronous (Room)  
**TIME:** Tuesdays 5:30-8:20

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

### **Calendar Course Description**

This seminar-style course introduces students to the writing of memoir, autobiography, biography, and other types of personal narratives.

### **Detailed Course Description**

“if I know anything, it is that “here” is a trick of the light” –Billy-Rae Belcourt

This course introduces the writing of creative nonfiction. We will explore a number of subgenres of nonfiction writing, including memoir/autobiography, biography/profile, personal essay, and literary journalism. The course will include selected readings by contemporary writers, short lectures and discussions of the writing craft, in-class writing exercises, and workshop discussions of students’ own creative pieces. Our readings will include work by writers with a range of voices and styles, including Indigenous writers, Northern writers, BIPOC writers, and LGBTQ2S+ writers. In addition to reading and writing, we will also briefly touch on publishing and developing portfolios for future study, but the emphasis will be on students’ current writing projects. Regular attendance and commitment to deadlines are essential in this course, but topics are open and creative exploration is our focus.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Prerequisite(s): English 100 or 101, or Creative Writing 201, 202, 241, or 243, or permission of the instructor.

## **EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY**

Receiving institutions determine course transferability. Find further information at: <https://www.yukonu.ca/admissions/transfer-credit>

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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

## **COURSE FORMAT**

### **Weekly breakdown of instructional hours**

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

- write original creative nonfiction;
- provide feedback on nonfiction narratives from an editorial perspective;
- revise creative nonfiction as part of an editorial process;
- analyze literature from a writer's perspective and describe the effects of authorial choices such as narrative structure, syntax, and point of view.

### **Delivery format**

Students will attend class in-person once a week on Tuesdays from 5:30-8:20pm. In addition, students can expect to spend about 6 hours per week outside of class time on reading and writing assignments. It is important to note that the time required will vary by individual.

Classes will feature writing exercises, short lectures, discussions of course readings, and workshops of student writing. During writing workshops, the instructor will facilitate discussion of students' written assignments. The aim will be to recognize the strengths and possibilities of the piece under discussion, and to offer suggestions for revision. All editorial feedback should be generous and specific, and should be provided in support of both the writer and the piece of writing under discussion.

## **EVALUATION**

### **Attendance and Participation**

Active participation in this course is fundamental to developing a constructive, creative environment and achieving course learning outcomes. For this reason, class participation in the form of contributions to in-class discussion is worth 20% of the course grade.

### **Assignments**

This course includes three major writing assignments, as well as weekly in-class writing exercises. Assignments will normally be discussed in class one week after they are handed in. As class discussion is frequently based on students' work, all assignments must be completed and submitted by the due date.

### **Readings**

Reading is integral to the writing process, and this course incorporates a variety of assigned readings by professional writers. In addition, students will be expected to read the work of their fellow students and provide constructive written feedback. All assigned readings and written critiques must be completed before their scheduled discussions.

## Final Portfolio

There will be no final examination in this course. Instead, students will submit an end-of-term portfolio consisting of the three required writing assignments, two of which must be revisions. Revisions will be based on in-class discussion and written comments.

<b>Writing Assignments</b>	
Assignment 1: Memoir/Personal Essay/Literary Journalism (800-1500 words)	25%
Assignment 2: Memoir/Personal Essay/Literary Journalism (1500 – 5,000 words): (1500-5000 words for prose, lyric essays can be shorter if partially in poetry/prose poetry)	
<b>Portfolio</b>	55%
Revisions of Assignment 1 and Assignment 2	
Open Assignment: You will submit one new piece of writing in your portfolio (800-5000 words)	
Class participation	20%
Total	100%

## COURSE WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Refer to the YukonU website for important dates.

## TEXTBOOKS & LEARNING MATERIALS

All readings and class resources will be posted on Moodle.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to contribute toward a positive and supportive environment and are required to conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Academic misconduct includes all forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, fraud, deceit, using the work of others without their permission, aiding other students in committing academic offences, misrepresenting academic

assignments prepared by others as one's own, or any other forms of academic dishonesty including falsification of any information on any Yukon University document.

Please refer to Academic Regulations & Procedures for further details about academic standing and student rights and responsibilities.

## ACCESSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

Yukon University is committed to providing a positive, supportive, and barrier-free academic environment for all its students. Students experiencing barriers to full participation due to a visible or hidden disability (including hearing, vision, mobility, learning disability, mental health, chronic or temporary medical condition), should contact [Accessibility Services](#) for resources or to arrange academic accommodations: [access@yukonu.ca](mailto:access@yukonu.ca).

## TOPIC OUTLINE

\*Note that instructor will make changes to this schedule based on class needs and emergent learning.

Week / Module	Readings and Assignments
<b>1. Situating Ourselves as Creative Nonfiction Writers (Jan. 7)</b> What is a creative writing class? What can a creative writing class be? What is creative nonfiction?	<b>Introductory writing exercise</b>
<b>2. Toward a Writing Community and a Writing Practice (Jan. 14)</b> <b>Co-creating a class philosophy</b> <b>Discussion: Generative AI in creative work</b>	Readings: Introduction to <i>Who We Are</i> , Murray Sinclair Selection from <i>Bluets</i> , Maggie Nelson "There's No Recipe for Growing Up," Scaachi Koul "I lost my dad to cancer 3 years ago. A Yukon hunting trip helped me know him better," Erin Neufeld
<b>3. Introduction to the Workshop (Jan. 21)</b>	Readings: <i>Critical Response Process</i> , Liz Lerman Excerpt from <i>Craft in the Real World</i> , Mathew Salesses Excerpt from <i>Imaginative Writing</i> , Janet Burroway Excerpt from <i>The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop</i> , Felicia-Rose Chavez <b>Workshops (Assignment 1)</b>
<b>4. Introduction to Publishing, Pitches, and Query Letters (Jan. 28)</b>	Readings: Globe and Mail First Person Selections Selection from <i>The Knowing</i> , Tanya Talaga "Me Talk Pretty One Day," David Sedaris Nieman Storyboard's The Pitch The Open Notebook Pitch Database <b>Workshops (Assignment 1)</b>
<b>5. Craft Focus: Scenes (Feb. 4)</b>	Readings: Ivan Coyote, Excerpt from <i>Care Of</i> , Tim O'Brien, Excerpt from <i>The Things They Carried</i> <b>Workshops (Assignment 1)</b>

<b>6. Memoir, Personal Essay, Lyric Essay, Literary Journalism (Feb. 11...possible Zoom class)</b>	Readings: James Baldwin, "Notes of a Native Son," Yiyun Li, Excerpt from <i>Dear Friend From My Life I Write to You in Your Life</i> , Joan Didion, "Goodbye to All That" <b>Workshops (Assignment 1)</b>
<b>7. Reading Week—No Classes Feb. 17-21</b>	
<b>8. Craft Focus: Character (Feb. 25)</b>	Readings: River Halen, Excerpt from <i>Dream Rooms</i> , Eva Holland, "EVT Will Save Millions of Lives from Stroke. Eventually" <b>Workshops: Assignment 2</b>
<b>9. Craft Focus: Language, Style, Syntax (March 4)</b>	Readings: Laurence (Lori) Fox, "Learning Together," Kate Harris, Excerpt from <i>Lands of Lost Borders</i> <b>Workshops: Assignment 2</b>
<b>10. Craft Focus: Description (March 11)</b>	Readings: Preview of Northern Stories writers <b>Workshops: Assignment 2</b>
<b>11. Craft Focus: Beginnings, Endings, Transitions (March 18)</b>	Readings: Preview of Northern Stories writers <b>Workshops: Assignment 2</b>
<b>12. Craft Focus: Possible Northern Stories Literary Reading with Local Writers/Storytellers (March 25)</b>	
<b>13. Craft Focus: Development and Revision (April 1)</b>	<b>Workshops: Assignment 2</b> Craft Reading: Janet Burroway, "Play it Again, Sam: Revision"
<b>14. Final Class: Readings, Celebration of Your Work! (April 8)</b>	<b>Final Portfolio Due Tuesday, April 8, 2025</b> (in class or on Moodle)