










Writing a Life: Biographies / Personal Narratives

ENG 103 (Section **XX**) – 3 Credits

Delivery Mode: **XX**

 DAY(s):	 TIME(s):	 MODE / ROOM / BLDG.
 INSTRUCTOR:	OFFICE HOURS AND LINKS:	 OFFICE LOCATION:
 PHONE:		 EMAIL:

Goodwin University works towards an inclusive learning environment where all members of the Goodwin community are treated with respect and dignity. We strive towards universally designed learning environments that are equitable and inclusive. We work to denounce discrimination of any form and maintain a collaborative community with an awareness of global perspectives on social justice.

Prerequisite/Co-Requisites: None

Course Description



Biographies, autobiographies, diaries, and personal narratives are all ways of telling the narrative of a life. In this course, students will examine how writers take a life lived and turn it into a story. They will read biographies, autobiographies, and biographical narratives. The focus will be on reading widely and on intense engagement with the texts. Students will have the opportunity to create book lists, book talks, and/or web pages to explore their interpretations of biographical materials.



Course Goal

Students will understand the memoir genre and know how to craft a story, from beginning to end, out of a real-life experience.



Required Text Located on Canvas

Baraka, A. (n.d.). Preface to a Twenty Volume Suicide Note.

Gregory, D. (n.d.). Shame. Hernandez, M. (2014, December 30). 9 Tips for Dealing with the Emotions When Writing a Memoir. In *Huffington Post*.

Hernandez, S. (2014). 9 tips for dealing with emotions when writing a memoir. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/9-tips-for-dealing-with-t_b_6070854

Larson, T. (2007). *The Memoir and the Memoirist: Reading and Writing Personal Narrative*. Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press.

Morrison, T. (1995). *Inventing the Truth*. Zinsser, W. (Ed.), *The Site of Memory* (pp. 183-200). New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin.

Nettles, J. (n.d.). *This Angel*. On That Girl [Online sound recording]. Olds, S. (1987, May). After Making Love in Winter. In Poetry Foundation. Show, Don't Tell (n.d.). In Daily Writing Tips.

Popova, M. (n.d.). Anaïs Nin on Abortion and Women's Reproductive Rights: A Prescient Lament from 1940. In *Brain Pickings*.

Riederer, R. (2010). Patient. *The Missouri Review*, Volume 33, Number 1, Spring 2010, pp. 152-166

Warner, B. (2022). How to write a memoir: 7 creative ways to tell a powerful story.
<https://thewritelife.com/how-to-write-a-memoir/>

Zousmer, S. (2009, November 3). 5 Ways to Start Your Memoir on the Right Foot. In *Writer's Digest*.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Methods

<i>Learning Outcomes</i>	<i>Assessment Methods</i>
Read and summarize works in the memoir genre	Discussion boards and reading quizzes
Explain elements of structure and style in selected memoirs	Discussion boards
Analyze elements of structure and style in selected memoirs	Evaluation of final draft of writing assignments
Compose an original memoir	Evaluation of final draft of writing assignment
Assess a writing process	Evaluation of drafts throughout course



Grading Policy

Your performance in this course is assessed using multiple, varied methods in the areas listed below and based on the expectations as described in the syllabus and outlined in assessment scoring guides or rubrics. If you do not understand the expectations, it is your responsibility to ask the instructor questions.

Discussions	25%
Module 1 Assignment 1 List of Topics	5%
Module 2 Memoir Assignment	15%
Module 3 Paragraph Scene Build	10%
Module 4 Essay	10%
Module 6 Paragraph Drafts	10%
Module 7 Final Memoir Paper	25%
Total:	100%

Grading Key:

93-100 = A	80-82 = B-	67-69 = D+
90-92 = A-	77-79 = C+	63-66 = D
87-89 = B+	73-76 = C	60-62 = D-
83-86 = B	70-72 = C-	Below 60 = F



Discussions (25%): Weekly discussion board threads will allow you to collaborate with classmates in an effort to share critical insight and ideas regarding the course's readings and lessons on writing.



Module 1 List of Topics (5%): Prepare an annotated list of topics.



Module 2 Memoir (15%): Create a working memoir.



Module 3 Paragraph Scene Build (10%): Create three paragraphs that capture a specific scene.



Module 4 Essay (10%): Create a structured essay.



Module 6 Paragraphs Draft (10%): Complete a working draft of your final memoir introduction.



Module 7 Final Memoir Paper (25%): Submit your final memoir piece.



Coursework Expectations

This section of the syllabus contains a listing with brief descriptions of the assessment methods for this course. They are designed to align with the student-learning outcomes and provide you with varied ways to demonstrate mastery of the course content. ***Additional instructions and related scoring guides or rubrics are posted to Canvas.***

Course Requirements: This is a different kind of writing class. Writing thoughtfully, showing insight, and writing often are all key to success. Where it differs is that you will be writing about yourselves in a subjective manner, as opposed to the objectivity of traditional academic writing. What this means is you need to be willing to be open and honest and go well beneath your surface to find and write about things that will have meaning to you and others. Your experiences and, thus, your writing will be unique. This is an exciting opportunity to grow both as writers and as people.

The Course Outline / Class Schedule contains due dates.

Course Outline*

Module	Topics	Readings	Activity	Assessment
1 Due Date:	Beginning the Journey – Integrity and Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larson 1-20 Warner https://thewritelife.com/how-to-write-a-memoir/ Career Influence Chart 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch Henry Miller and Anais Nin videos Participate in discussion Read all assigned readings Complete Week One assignment 	Module 1 Writing Assignment – Annotated List of Topics due Discussion due
2 Due Date:	Construction and the Outward Influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zousmer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View lecture on the writing process Participate in discussion Read all assigned readings Complete memoir assignment Complete McCourt video clip assignment View The Art of Memoir on YouTube 	Module 2 Writing Assignment – Memoir due Discussion due
3 Due Date:	Show don't Tell -- Building a Scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharon Olds' Poem: "After Making Love in Winter" (as part of this week's discussion) View presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned readings Participation in unit discussion based on Olds' poem and video. Complete unit two assignment. Watch video interview with Sharon Olds. Review graphic on use of sense 	Module 3 Writing Assignment – three paragraphs capturing a scene due Discussion due
4 Due Date:	Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larsen, 21-32 Riederer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in class discussion Watch video interview Write analysis of Riederer's essay on the discussion board 	Module 4 Essay due Discussion due

Module	Topics	Readings	Activity	Assessment
5 Due Date:	Getting Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toni Morrison. "The Site of Memory" (link) Review the graphics on personal and formal writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> View Junot Diaz video Weekly Readings Write intro to final paper draft View lecture on Narrative structure Write critique of Toni Morrison essay 	<p>Module 5 Draft of Intro paragraph due</p> <p>There are two separately graded discussions for MODULE 5: 5-1 Discussion Board Analysis of Reading – due XX</p> <p>5-2 Graphic organizer First post due on XX</p> <p>All three Discussion Board posts due XX</p>
6 Due Date:	From Self-Indulgence to Polished Memoir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Baraka "Preface..." Gregory "Shame" Hernandez "9 Tips for Dealing with Emotions..." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in week's discussion Read assigned readings Watch YouTube video on Visual Memoir Complete week's written assignment 	<p>Module 6 Writing Assignment – Final memoir due XX</p> <p>Discussions –</p> <p>There are two separately graded discussions for MODULE 6 with the following due dates: First post due XX</p> <p>All three posts due XX</p>
7 Due Date:	Reflection and Breaking Boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Anaïs Nin on Abortion and Women's Reproductive Rights: A Prescient Lament from 1940" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in class discussion 	<p>Module 7</p> <p>NOTE: This module runs for THREE DAYS total:</p> <p>Discussion due First post due XX</p> <p>All three posts due XX</p>
8 – Catch Up Week Due Date:	None	None	None	None – meet with your professor if needed.

****This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.***



Class Policies



Class Meetings: Arrive on time and be prepared for class with materials (e.g., pen, paper, laptop, textbook, assignments). Please refer to the course outline for schedule of meeting dates and holidays. Regular attendance and participation in class is expected. If you expect to be absent or late for a class meeting, email me **before** the beginning of class. If you need to leave class early, speak with me **before** the class session.



Late Arrival/Registration

This course began on **XX** date. Participating in the course is vital to the learning process. If you arrive in the course after this date, your instructor recommends that you:

- Understand that required course assignments **cannot** be waived due to late arrival
- Thoroughly read and review the Timely Submission of Coursework Policy on this syllabus
- Meet with your instructor as soon as possible to discuss the course assignments and due dates



Canvas: Canvas contains class materials such as PowerPoints, worksheets, media, and links for submitting assignments. Be sure to **check Canvas often** to stay up to date on announcements, new course materials, and other important information. **All assignments must be submitted on Canvas.**



Academic Integrity: Goodwin University values the principles of academic integrity. This means that our class expects students to think critically, to share original ideas, and to be honest with respect to their intellectual efforts. Submission of work for academic credit must be original to this class, and it must be the student's own work. Goodwin University courses document sources in accordance with APA 7th ed. It is the responsibility of each student to become familiar with what constitutes academic dishonesty and to avoid all forms of cheating and plagiarism. If you have questions about the university's Academic Integrity Policy or about what constitutes academic dishonesty, ask your instructor.



Timely Submission of Coursework: Balancing workload and meeting deadlines are an integral of the

university experience and professional careers. All work in this course is due by **XX**. Assignment due dates are listed in the Course Outline and on Canvas, so be sure to make note of them and create a schedule of reminders to ensure assignments are submitted on time. Any assignments not submitted by the specified due date will result in a grade of "0" (zero) for that assignment, and a grade of "0" will be entered in the Canvas gradebook. This practice provides you with real-time information on your grade for the course and maintains the integrity of the gradebook. Because due dates are listed in this syllabus, the need for extensions should be extremely rare. Should you have a need to request an extension, email me by **XX** the week the assignment is due. Write Request for an Extension in the subject line of your email and explain to me your plan for completing your work. There is no need to share the reason for your request. You will have **XX** to complete this work. In addition, please note that **XX** extensions are possible in this course.



Laptops and Tablets: Laptops and tablets are welcome in the classroom for academic purposes.



Cell Phones: As a courtesy to your classmates and the instructor, please set cell phones to vibrate. If you must take or make a call, please step out of the classroom to do so.



Course Decorum: We will create a positive environment in the classroom. There is an expectation of respect and professionalism (i.e., demonstrate respect for instructors, peers, and self, participate in classroom activities, and follow course and college policies).



Communication and E-mail: Students are expected to communicate in a professional manner (i.e., verbal, written, and electronic). I will send course updates and announcements through Canvas so please **check your Goodwin e-mail account regularly.**



APA Style: This course follows APA style format for all written assignments. All written assignments must be produced using software that is compatible with Canvas. Assessment of written assignments will include use of APA format, writing, grammar, quotations, and references. Academic Writer is also available at <https://goodwin.libguides.com/academicwriter> to help with APA formatting.



Expectations for Written Work: The following are basic expectations for all written work:

1. One-inch margin for all sides of the page (e.g., top, bottom, left, and right side of the page).
2. The font is 12 point.
3. The paper is double spaced.
4. The first page of the paper includes:
 - ✓ Your full name
 - ✓ The date of submission

Goodwin University Policies and Services

This course adheres to all policies outlined in the Goodwin University catalog.

General academic policies of Goodwin University may be found on the college web site at and in the college catalog at

<http://www.goodwin.edu/academics/catalogs.asp>.

Student services information may be found on the Goodwin University website at

<https://www.goodwin.edu/student-affairs/> and <http://www.goodwin.edu/library/>.