

Unit outline for HSW113.8 Writing Creative Nonfiction

Name of unit
Writing Creative Nonfiction (HSW113.8)

Unit description
This unit broadens the writing skills and experience of graduate level students through a focus on the art of the personal essay. Students identify topics of interest and master techniques for writing effective creative nonfiction by developing their own style and approach to life writing. Students provide a critical summary of selected weekly readings and undertake wider reading to develop a critical appreciation of the historical development and technical requirements of the form. As well as undertaking in-class writing exercises, graduate students participate in weekly writing workshops to develop a number of personal essays that explore such styles as personal memoir, travel writing, contemplative and spiritual essays, humorous essays etc. Students are encouraged to develop their final essays for online or print publication.

SECTION 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION (CORE)

Administrative details

Associated higher education awards (for example, Bachelor, Diploma)	Duration (for example, one semester, full year)	Level (for example, introductory, intermediate, advanced level, 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year)	Unit coordinator
Graduate Certificate Graduate Diploma Masters	1 Semester	Intermediate	Dr James Cooper

Core or elective unit

Indicate if the unit is a:

core unit

elective unit

other (please specify below):

Unit weighting

Using the table below, indicate the credit point weighting of this unit and the credit point total for the course of study (for example, 10 credit points for the unit and 320 credit points for the course of study).

Unit credit points Example: 10 credit points	Total course credit points Example: 320 credit points
6	24 (Grad Cert) 48 (Grad Dip) 96 (Masters)

Student workload

Using the table below, indicate the expected student workload per week for this unit.

No. timetabled hours per week (1)	No. personal study hours per week (2)	Total workload hours per week (3)
3	6	9

(1) Total time spent per week at lectures, tutorials, clinical and other placements, etc.

(2) Total time students are expected to spend per week in studying, completing assignments, etc.

(3) Sum of (1) and (2) equals workload hours.

For those students requiring additional English language support, how many additional hours per week is it expected that they will undertake?

Additional English language support: 0 hours per week

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Are students required to have undertaken a prerequisite or co-requisite unit for this unit?

Yes No

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC DETAILS (CORE)

Learning outcomes for the unit
On successful completion of this unit students will be able to:
1. Work collaboratively to identify and discuss the literary techniques used by successful writers of creative nonfiction
2. Creatively apply advanced principles of effective creative composition and communication in their own life writing
3. Demonstrate detailed knowledge of a range of notable nonfiction writers, past and present, and critically discuss their work in terms of technique, style and purpose
4. Practice advanced critical and creative thinking and language skills to independently generate and evaluate their own life writing
5. Investigate and pursue avenues for publication of creative nonfiction

Topics included in the unit
Introduction – the origins of creative nonfiction
Finding ideas and getting inspired
Pursuing the Deeper Truth – the personal essayist as ‘accidental philosopher’
Who Are You Today? – finding your voice
Writing the Contemplative Essay
Structure & Craft in CNF
Writing Personal Memoir and Biography
The Travel Essay
The Lyric Essay
The Spiritual Essay
The Humorous Essay
Editing, proofreading and revision
Where and how to publish your nonfiction

Assessment tasks			
Type (1) (see examples noted below this table)	When assessed – year, session and week (for example, year 1, semester 1, week 1)	Weighting (% of total marks for unit)	Cross reference to learning outcomes
<p>Workshop Participation & Critical Reading Response</p> <p>Complete a critical Analysis Template for each of the set readings. Compile your critical responses to any 3 readings into a single document, approx 1500 in length (500 words per reading).</p>	Periodically and on-going	30%	1,3 & 4
<p>Eye to I Essay</p> <p>1500 words</p> <p>Write a short personal essay that incorporates research and reflection on a personal experience or topic of interest, intended for a wider audience.</p>	Week 8	30%	2 & 4
<p>Major Essay for Publication</p> <p>Approx. 2500 words</p> <p>Identify and share a publishing opportunity (journal/blog/competition/anthology etc.). Write and submit a personal essay specifically for your chosen forum. Include a rationale for how your tailored your essay for the context.</p>	Week 14	40%	2, 4 and 5

(1) Examples of types of assessment tasks include: assignments; examinations; group projects; online quizzes/tests; presentations; work-based projects; and reflective journals. Ensure that details of the types of assessment tasks are included such as specific topics, duration/length/word limit of assessment and any specific formats.

2.1 Prescribed and recommended reading

Provide below, in formal reference format, a list of the prescribed and recommended reading for the unit.

Required text

Moore, D. (2010). *Crafting the Personal Essay: A Guide for Writing and Publishing Creative Nonfiction*. Cincinnati OH: Writers' Digest Books.

Recommended texts

Epstein, J. (Ed.) (1997). *The Norton Book of Personal Essays*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.

Forché, C. & Gerard, P. (Eds.) (2001). *Writing Creative Nonfiction: Instruction and insights from the teachers of the Associated Writing Programs*. Cincinnati, OH: Story Press.

Gutkind, L. (2009). *Keep it Real: Everything you need to know about researching and writing creative nonfiction*. New York, NY: Norton.

Miller, B. & Paola, S. (2012). *Tell it Slant: Writing and Shaping Creative Nonfiction (2nd Ed)*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Prose, F. (2007). *Reading Like a Writer: A guide for people who love books and for those who want to write them*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial.

Tredinnick, M. (2006). *The Little Red Writing Book*. Sydney, NSW: University of NSW Press.

Zinsser, W. (Ed.) (1998). *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir*. New York, NY: Mariner Books.

Recommended journals and websites

www.litmags.com.au

www.textjournal.com.au

www.storiesoflife.net

www.creativenonfiction.org

www.creativenonfiction.org/brevity/

www.quotidiana.org

www.imagejournal.org

www.reliefjournal.com

www.ruminatemagazine.com