

Travel Writing



Summer 2021, Alternative Session 1
(Tuesday, June 1, 2021 - Friday, July 9, 2021)

Excluding the required book, information in this syllabus may be subject to change.
The most up-to-date syllabus will be in the course in HuskyCT.

Course and Instructor

Course Title: ENGL 2730W - Travel Writing
Format: Online
Prerequisites: ENGL 1007, 1010, 1011, or 2011

Professor Tom Deans
tom.deans@uconn.edu
860.617.9926
Office Hours in Collaborate Ultra Course Room:
Tuesdays 10-12, Thursdays 4-6, and by appt

Course Materials

While most course readings and media will be available in HuskyCT, **you should buy the one required book before the first day of class** (and please note that since this is a recently published graphic travelogue, you're unlikely to find it floating around free on the web). This book is available through the [UConn Bookstore](#) (or use the Purchase Textbooks tool in HuskyCT); books can be shipped ([fees apply](#)).

Required: *Americana (And the Act of Getting Over It)* by Luke Healy. Nobrow, 2019

Optional: *Keep It Real: Everything You Need to Know About Researching and Writing Creative Nonfiction* by Lee Gutkind. Norton, 2011. [not ordered through the bookstore, but it's easy to find online]

Course Description

Here's the catalog language: *Introduction to the craft of travel writing, with attention to the history, variety, and ethics of the genre. W and CA 1...* But you deserve more detail: Travel writing is both a report of an unfamiliar place and a revelation of the self. We will explore this vibrant genre of non-fiction by reading a range of travel writing, most of it contemporary; you will also compose original essays grounded in your experiences. You don't have to be journeying to exotic places during the course, but you do need to adopt the attitude of an explorer and storyteller, taking account of your travels (past or present) in either far-off or nearby locales--or in this strange year of covid-19, maybe even *in* your home. We will write 4 major essays: 2 critical analyses of published travel writing and 2 creative essays that report and reflect on your experiences. You will also select one of those essays to remix into another medium, such as a video, audio essay, illustrated narrative, or annotated map. All the essays will be composed in drafts, with peer review. Other requirements include posting to discussion boards, completing tests and quizzes, reviewing the drafts of others, and assembling a final portfolio. This is a compressed course, so the pace for both our reading and writing will be pretty fast!

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Analyze a representative sample of travel writing, focusing on rhetorical, literary, and stylistic features
2. Compare several different travel genres and their defining features.
3. Compose original travel writing in multiple modes.
4. Conduct research, including first-hand observation, interviews, and use of sources.
5. Debate moments of questionable ethics and appropriation in travel literature, as well as in your own drafts and those of peers.
6. Provide constructive feedback on drafts for fellow students.
7. Revise and edit using peer and instructor feedback.

Course Outline

[a detailed calendar will be available in HuskyCT in June]

Module 1: What Is Travel Writing?
 Module 2: Critical Analysis of Travel Literature
 Module 3: Exploring the Self

Module 4: Exploring a Public Issue
 Module 5: Exploring a Cultural Phenomenon
 Module 6: Remixing, Revising, Editing, Reflecting

Course Requirements and Grading

Course Components	Points	Weight
Discussion Board Contributions	250	25%
Tests, Quizzes & Assignments	200	20%
4 Major Essays (in drafts)	400	40%
Peer Review Effort/Quality & Conferences	50	5%
Portfolio (Including Remix Project & Cover Letter)	100	10%

Discussion Board Contributions: These will be our main way of interacting as a community of inquiry. These are more about showing your active mind at work than about showing off refined work; more about posing authentic questions about the reading than delivering packaged answers; more about moving the conversation forward than having the last word. Complete expectations for discussion board contributions are included in the course. Rubrics are also provided. Discussion posts after deadlines can earn up to half the points.

Tests, Quizzes & Small Assignments: The only major test will be for Module 1 because that unit does not include a major writing assignment, but quizzes and small assignments will be part of every module.

4 Major Essays: These are the heart of the course and each essay will run about 1000 words (which is 4-5 traditional manuscript pages). For each essay, you'll do a draft and peer review. *No essay will be accepted unless it is first circulated in draft during the peer review process.* Complete expectations for major essays are included in the course. Rubrics are also provided.

Remix Project: For this, you will take an essay you have already written and reframe it in another medium/format/genre, such as a podcast/audio essay, annotated map, video, or blog post. Complete expectations are included in Module 6.

Grading: To pass this course, you must pass its formal/revised editing component. That is, if you do not get a passing grade for the formal essays and

remix, you cannot pass the course, even if you earn more than 600 points. This pass/fail criterion, which applies to all UConn W courses, supercedes the grading scale below.

Peer Review Effort/Quality: Since we're trying to build a community of writers, reading and responding to the drafts of others is a vital part of the course. Sometimes you will do this asynchronously in written comments and sometimes synchronously by video conference. The 2 conferences with your professor are also folded into this point total.

Portfolio Revision and Cover Letter: While you will be revising and throughout the course, in this unit you will revisit, revise, extend, and edit all that writing. This includes editing exercises and a substantial cover letter that reflects on the whole of your work. Complete instructions are in Module 6.

Grading Scale

Grade	Letter Grade	GPA
930-1000	A	4.0
900-929	A-	3.7
870-899	B+	3.3
830-869	B	3.0
800-829	B-	2.7
770-799	C+	2.3
730-769	C	2.0
700-729	C-	1.7
670-699	D+	1.3
630-669	D	1.0
600-629	D-	0.7
<600	F	0.0

Due Dates: All course due dates are identified in the calendar of readings and assignments that will be available in HuskyCT before the first class. Deadlines are based on Eastern Time; if you are in a different time zone, please adjust your submittal times accordingly. *The instructor reserves the right to change due dates as the semester progresses--all changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.*

Late policy: Essays submitted after the deadline lose 5%, with an additional 5% for each 24-hour period thereafter. For any *one* paper during the term (you choose it), you can get a grace period of 24-hours with no penalty. Tests and quizzes must be completed by the announced deadlines and cannot be made up. If you are experiencing any extenuating circumstances or personal crises, please contact me as soon as possible.

Feedback and Grades

I will make every effort to provide feedback and grades within a few days. To keep track of your performance in the course, check out My Grades in HuskyCT.

Weekly Time Commitment

You should expect to dedicate **21-28 hours a week** to this course. This expectation is based on the various course activities, assignments, and assessments and the University of Connecticut's policy regarding credit hours. More information related to hours per week per credit can be accessed at the [Online Student website](#).

Student Authentication and Verification

The University of Connecticut is required to verify the identity of students who participate in online courses and to establish that students who register in an online course are the same students who participate in and complete the course activities and assessments and receive academic credit. Verification and authentication of student identity in this course will include:

1. Secure access to the learning management system using your unique UConn NetID and password.
2. Brief video conference during the first or second week of the course with ID check
3. Synchronous peer review at least 2 times during the semester
4. An individual video conference during the final week (during this session we will discuss your portfolio)

Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important [standards, policies and resources](#), which include:

- The Student Code
 - Academic Integrity
 - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
- Copyrighted Materials
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

Students with Disabilities

The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, ***please let me know as soon as possible so that we can discuss options.***

Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020 or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>. Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government." (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from [Blackboard's website](#))

Software/Technical Requirements (with Accessibility and Privacy Information)

The software/technical requirements for this course include:

- HuskyCT/Blackboard ([HuskyCT/ Blackboard Accessibility Statement](#), [HuskyCT/ Blackboard Privacy Policy](#))
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) ([Adobe Reader Accessibility Statement](#), [Adobe Reader Privacy Policy](#))
- Google Apps ([Google Apps Accessibility](#), [Google for Education Privacy Policy](#))
- Microsoft Office (free to UConn students through uconn.onthehub.com) ([Microsoft Accessibility Statement](#), [Microsoft Privacy Statement](#))
- Dedicated access to high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps (4 Mbps or higher is recommended).
- Webcam.

For information on managing your privacy at the University of Connecticut, visit the [University's Privacy page](#).

Please note: This course has **not** been designed for use with mobile devices.

Help

[Technical and Academic Help](#) provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course is completely facilitated online using the learning management platform, [HuskyCT](#). If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through the [Help Center](#). You also have [24x7 Course Support](#) including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.
- Access and use the interactive video platform Collaborate (this is in HuskyCT) for required peer review, two required individual conferences, and optional office hours

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](#) page for more information.

Evaluation of the Course

Students will have the opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.