

# ENGL 3103 Special Topics in Creative Writing:

## Food & Travel Writing Syllabus and Course Schedule

**Course:** ENGL 3103

**Time:** 12:30 - 1:50

**Place:** PY 102

**Email:** john.schulze@msutexas.edu

**Instructor:** Dr. John Schulze

**Office:** BW 212

**Office Phone:** (940) 397-6249

**Office Hours:** TR: 11:00 – 12:30; W: 11:00- 1:00, or by appointment.

*"It seems to me that our three basic needs, for food and security and love, are so mixed and mingled and entwined that we cannot straightly think of one without the others. So it happens that when I write of hunger, I am really writing about love and the hunger for it . . . and warmth and richness and fine reality of hunger satisfied . . . and it is all one."* --M.F.K. Fisher

*"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime."*

From *Innocence Abroad* by Mark Twain

### Course Description:

Students will experience a wide range of food and travel writing from blogs, magazine articles, personal essays, books, reviews, recipe-centered pieces, and social and cultural commentary. These readings will function as examples and as inspiration for students' own writings. This course will cover food writing during the first eight weeks, and travel writing during the final eight weeks. However, it is likely that crossover will occur, and that is fine.

**Food:** This course explores several approaches to food writing: a 'news' perspective, meditative, narrative, personal essay, and instructional. Our region is home to a network of food producers, from farmers to brewers to beekeepers to specialty processing shops. And if we add food providers, then restaurants, cooks, chefs, and home cooks, then students have ample opportunity to find a story to tell through the lens of food.

**Travel:** Just as food writing has its myriad approaches, so does travel writing. As Twain's quote suggests, we will explore travel writing with "Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things."

Through our collective efforts during the semester, each student should synthesize information creatively into a multimedia stories for publication around themes such as health, history, travel, ecology, family, animal welfare, social change, nutrition, home cooking, etc.

## Required Course Texts:

Babine, Karen. *The Allure of Elsewhere*:

Gornick, Vivian. *The Situation and the Story: The Art of Personal Narrative*, 2001.

Reading Packet posted on D2L

## Course Objectives

Students will-

- Hone competence in observation, description, analysis, and narrative.
- Develop and discern rhetorical and stylistic strategies that best suit particular arguments, situations, and audiences.
- Carry out individualized field observation and research.
- Generate story ideas through critical reading and personal experience.
- Communicate effectively through writing and multimedia storytelling.
- Develop an ability to critique others' writing constructively and work collaboratively
- Identify, frame, and analyze social and/or historical structures and institutions related to worldwide food production, processing, and distribution.
- Clearly articulate their perspectives regarding the tastes and flavors of foodstuffs, consumption habits, and global food system issues.

## Course Requirements:

### Creative Work:

This course will be divided into two sections: food and travel. Each student will submit two major pieces of writing to the workshop: one will be about food and the other about travel, though crossover is acceptable. After a student has had their piece workshopped, they will then revise it and present it to the class at the end of the course section. The form of the piece is up to the student, but an oral presentation about the piece is required.

### Workshop and Class Participation:

Your participation grade will be determined by how thoughtfully and constructively you respond to your peers' work, how engaged you are with the material, and how you contribute to discussion about course related activities. This includes reading all assigned material in preparation for class, completing all responses on time, and completing all shorter written assignments. As a habit, you will need to be as prepared to examine and reflect on all readings. In so doing, you will hone your reading skills as both a reader and writer.

## Course Policies:

The learning process in a workshop is tied not only to writing but also to the mutual commitment to improving each other's work. My hope is that the following course policies will encourage a strong sense of community:

- Assignments must be submitted on time--**no extensions**.
- In a workshop, your attendance and contributions are crucial. Attendance will be checked at every class meeting and only **three absences** will be allowed. (Upon your fourth absence & every absence thereafter, your final grade will be lowered by 5 points).

- Please silence all cell phones and electronic devices during class. If you're caught texting in class, you will be asked to leave and receive an absence for the day.
- Failure to follow directions on an assignment can result in a failing grade on the assignment.

## **How your final grade will be determined:**

Workshop drafts (2) -	20%
Short Writing assignments (4)	20%
Workshop and Class Participation -	20%
Revision of drafts (2) -	20%
<u>Presentations (2) -</u>	<u>20%</u>
Total –	100%

### **Letter-grades:**

- A = 90 - 100
- B = 80 - 89
- C = 70 - 79
- D = 60 - 69
- F = 59 or less

## **Formatting guidelines:**

I will only accept typed work that is printed on one side, double-spaced, uses a 12 pt. Times New Roman font, and has standard margins. Every assignment must have a title, your name, class and section, date, and my name, all in the upper left-hand corner. Assignments that are longer than one page are expected to have page numbers and title in the lower right hand corner beginning on the second page. All assignments that are printed out and are longer than one page must also be stapled in the upper left hand corner.

## **Workshops:**

All pieces must be submitted to the dropbox on D2L at least one class meeting prior the scheduled workshop date. All pieces must be typed and follow the prescribed format noted earlier in the syllabus. All class members (except the writer whose work is under consideration) will read and write a typed response to each submission. During the workshop, the writer whose work is under consideration will remain silent. After everyone has weighed in on the piece, the writer will have the opportunity to ask questions and/or make comments about their work.

## **Commenting on Your Peers' Work:**

As a member of the workshop, you will serve as Reader (by expressing your reaction and impression of your peers' work), Critic (by considering the overall success and quality of your peers' work) and Editor (by offering constructive criticism and suggestions for improving the written elements of your peers' work). For each workshopped piece of writing, please make comments in the margins and end comments meant to summarize your thoughts, concerns,

etc. A balanced approach is best: **what is working and what needs work**. Try to model your comments to sound like this: "the third stanza really feels like the beginning because this is where the emotional context for the poems lies. This is where I became emotionally involved..." These are pointed remarks and work to let the writer know what is working and why.

### **Academic Integrity/Intellectual Property/ Plagiarism Policy:**

Any student found submitting work other than his or her own will fail the course. There are no exceptions to this policy. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation (a parenthetical citation at the end and a listing in "Works Cited") whether you use that material in a quote, paraphrase, or summary. It is a theft of intellectual property and will not be tolerated, whether intentional or not.

### **Student Honor Creed**

"As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so."

As students at MSU, we recognize that any great society must be composed of empowered, responsible citizens. We also recognize universities play an important role in helping mold these responsible citizens. We believe students themselves play an important part in developing responsible citizenship by maintaining a community where integrity and honorable character are the norm, not the exception. Thus, we, the Students of Midwestern State University, resolve to uphold the honor of the University by affirming our commitment to complete academic honesty. We resolve not only to be honest but also to hold our peers accountable for complete honesty in all university matters. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any unauthorized material in examinations, or to present, as one's own, work or ideas which are not entirely one's own. We recognize that any instructor has the right to expect that all student work is honest, original work. We accept and acknowledge that responsibility for lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty fundamentally rests within each individual student. We expect of ourselves academic integrity, personal professionalism, and ethical character. We appreciate steps taken by University officials to protect the honor of the University against any who would disgrace the MSU student body by violating the spirit of this creed.

-- *Written and adopted by the 2002-2003 MSU Student Senate.*

### **No Use of Generative AI Permitted**

Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

### **Students with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that

provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services in Room 168 of the Clark Student Center, 397-4140.

### **Safe Zones Statement**

I consider this classroom to be a place where you will be treated with respect as a human being - regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Additionally, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided you can agree to disagree. It is my expectation that ALL students consider the classroom a safe environment.

### **Campus Carry**

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

### **Active Shooter**

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled *“Run. Hide. Fight.”* which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: [“Run. Hide. Fight.”](#)

## Course Schedule

(This schedule is subject to revision if needed)

### **Week 1**

1/20- Introductions and Syllabus Distribution

1/22- Introduction to food writing

**Read:** “Are You Really Savoring Your Apple? An Apple Meditation”

<https://www.oprah.com/spirit/apple-meditation>

“Storytelling” (RP)

### **Week 2**

1/27- **Read:** *The Situation and the Story*- pp. 1 -23

“The Limits of the Lunchbox Moment”

<https://www.eater.com/22239499/lunchbox-moment-pop-culture-tropes>

“Burrito King” and “Bu San” by Jonathand Gold

1/29- **Read:** *The Situation and the Story*- pp. 29 - 42

“Mother’s Hand Taste”

<https://thecommentable.eu/mothers-hand-taste/>

**Due:** Restaurant Review

### **Week 3**

2/3- **Read:** *The Situation and the Story*- pp. 42-58

*Taste: My Life Through Food* by Stanley Tucci Ch. 2 (21-47)(RP)

2/5- **Read:** *The Situation and the Story*- pp. 58-85

“Why Serious Bakers Have Mother Issues” by Andrea Strong (RP)

**Due:** Recipe

### **Week 4**

2/10- **Read:** “The Red Ashtray Rule” by Kirsten Iversen (RP)

“Table for One” by James Nolan (RP)

2/12- **Read:** “Where Food Comes From” by Anthony Bourdain

**View:** *Parts Unknown* Segment

**Due:** Workshop piece due in dropbox on D2L

## **Week 5- Workshop**

2/17-

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

2/19-

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Week 6- Workshop**

2/24-

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

2/26-

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## **Week 7-Presentations**

3/3-

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8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

3/5-

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6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 8-** Spring Break- No Class 3/10 & 3/12

## **Week 9**

3/17- **Read:** Literary Journalism: Chapter 3 in *Shadow Boxing* by Kristen Iversen (RP)  
*The Allure of Elsewhere* pp. xi-16 (Introduction and Chapter 1)

3/19- **Read:** *The Allure of Elsewhere* pp. 17- 38 (Chapter 2)  
**Due:** **Maps**

## **Week 10**

3/24- **Read:** *The Allure of Elsewhere* pp. 39-63 (Chapter 3)

3/26- **No Class; I'll be at the Elmer Kelton Writers Conference**

## **Week 11**

3/31- **Read:** *The Allure of Elsewhere* pp. 65-82 (Chapter 4)  
"Dear Nancy" from *A Cook's Tour* (RP)

4/2- **Easter Break- No Class**

## **Week 12**

4/7- **Read:** "Why We Travel" by Pico Iyer  
<https://picoiyerjourneys.com/why-we-travel/>  
"Top Ten Things to do in Ecuador" by Mayra Peralta  
<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/articles/top-things-to-do-in-ecuador>

**Due:** **Tree**

4/9-  
**Read:** "Three Chopsticks" by Calvin Trillian (RP)  
9 Creative Writing Tactics to Enrich Your Travel Writing by Priyanka Gupta  
<https://www.onmycanvas.com/creative-writing-about-travel/>

## Week 13

4/14- **Read:** "Death by Lobster Pad Thai" by Steve Almond  
"The Daily Special" by Ruth Reichl

11/6- **View:** Rick Steves Segment  
<https://youtu.be/X43S4QSetuM?si=sdGRUhkTNedlsJ4F>  
Interview with Travel Writer Heather Greenwood Davis  
<https://youtu.be/T2l8nRYUSmI?si=NNoYUf7rw6T5fpgI>  
**Due:** Workshop piece due in dropbox on D2L

## Week 14- Workshop

4/21-

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

4/23-

1. \_\_\_\_\_
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5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Week 15- Workshop

4/28-

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**4/29- LAST DAY TO DROP COURSE WITH "W" (WITHDRAWAL) GRADE**

4/30-

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

## Week 16- Presentations

5/5

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5/7-

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