# REQUEST FOR ADDITION OF NEW COURSE

**PROPOSED COURSE DESCRIPTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric &amp; No.</th>
<th>ENGL 2004</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Intro to Writing Creative Nonfiction</th>
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<tr>
<th>Short Title (≤ 19 characters)</th>
<th>INTWRITINGNONFIC</th>
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| Semester Hours of Credit | 3 |

| If combination course type, # hrs. of credit for | Lecture: | Lab(Sem)Rec: | 3 |

| Repeat Credit Max. (If repeatable): | credit hours | Graduate Credit? | Yes | X | No |

| Credit will not be given for this course and: | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Type (Indicate hours in the appropriate course type.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
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</table>

| Maximum enrollment per section: (use integer, e.g. 25 not 20-30) | 22 |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading System:</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Pass/Fail</th>
<th>Final Exam:</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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**(Attach justification if the proposed course will not hold a final exam during examination week)**

**Course Description:**

(Concise catalog statement exactly as you wish it to appear in the General Catalogue)

Writing creative nonfiction for workshop criticism; introduction to reading and crafting memoir, essays and literary journalism with focus on practice and techniques in form (academic, personal, and cultural), imaginative style and structure, tone, and persona.

**BUDGET IMPACT (IF ANSWER TO ANY QUESTION IS “YES”, ATTACH EXPLANATION.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If this course is approved, will additional staff be needed?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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| Will additional space, equipment, special library materials or other major expense be involved? | Yes | No | X |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Affairs Approval:</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Date)</td>
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**ATTACHMENTS (ATTACH THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR PROPOSAL)**

**JUSTIFICATION:** Justification must explain why this course is needed and how it fits into the curricula. Will the course duplicate other courses?

**Syllabus:** Including 14 week outline of the subject matter; titles of text, lab manual, and/or required readings; grading scale and criteria (For 4000-level, specify graduate student grading criteria if requirements differ for graduate and undergraduate students).

**APPROvals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Faculty Approval Date</th>
<th>5 December 2016</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Faculty Approval Date</th>
<th>2-15-17</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Department Chair Signature</th>
<th>2/17/17</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Dean Signature</th>
<th>(date)</th>
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| College Contact | E-mail | |
|-----------------|--------|
Justification for Intro to Writing Creative Nonfiction (ENGL 2004)

The Creative Writing Program in the English department is in the midst of trying to grow the creative nonfiction concentration so that it reaches equilibrium with the other genres in the program. This began in Spring 2016 with the reviving and renaming of ENGL 4001, Writing Creative Nonfiction. In order to continue the growth of the creative nonfiction genre, we need a lower level gateway class to move students toward the advanced 4001 course. Each of the other genres in the creative writing program include a 2000 level introductory course of this nature:

2005: Introduction to Writing Short Stories
2007: Introduction to Writing Poetry
2008: Introduction to Writing Drama
2009: Introduction to Writing Screenplays

Establishing ENGL 2004 as Introduction to Writing Creative Nonfiction will simply bring this genre into alignment with others. Furthermore, the English Department has lately noted that there are not enough lower level undergraduate courses being offered to continue growing the English major at a reasonable rate. 2004 is a course that, much like the other Intro to Writing courses listed above, can be taught by graduate students, allowing us to potentially offer sections each semester, perhaps even multiple sections per semester if the trend toward growth in creative nonfiction at LSU mirrors the kind of growth currently occurring at other universities.

ENGL 2004 will be a seminar/workshop. Students will spend approximately half of the semester reading and responding to important works of creative nonfiction, ranging from traditional essayists like Emerson and Thoreau, to literary journalists like Joan Didion and Zora Neale Hurston, to memoirists like Mary Karr, to contemporary essayists like David Foster Wallace and John D’Agata. Students will spend the other half of the semester writing and revising work, using the peer critique model of workshop common to most creative writing classes.

As with other workshops in the creative writing department, there will not be a final exam. In general, students revise their writing for a final portfolio submission and therefore a final exam period does not need to be scheduled for this class.
INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVE NONFICTION
* Sample syllabus

Our Course
At the core of nonfiction is the essay, a literary form that tries to mimic the movements of a mind as it lingers here, obsesses there, probes an old trauma, a new love, or a nagging fascination. In this course we will explore different forms of the essay, including reviews, memoirs, profiles, travelogues, journalism, and cultural criticism. By reading great examples of essays we will learn how published writers use style, structure, voice, and perspective to influence our reading experiences, and then we'll experiment writing our own essays in order to develop our skills on and off the page—from sharpening our observations of places, to developing strong characters, creating exciting dialogue, and finding precise and imaginative language to express the movements of our minds.

Course Goals
By the end of the semester, you will have:
- A portfolio of polished essays that explore different subjects and approaches
- A wealth of suggestions from our class to help you further revise your completed work
- A sharpened observational and analytical eye
- A wide-ranging sense of what is possible in the nonfiction genre
- Numerous models to help you in your work

Required Materials
- Readings on Moodle, printed for class discussion
- Folder for your portfolio

Reading
Reading deeply and widely—absorbing the sheer range of possibilities in nonfiction writing—is an immensely important part of becoming a better writer. As we read and discuss these essays, we're going to try to understand each essay from a writer's perspective. We're going to figure out how these essays work, based on their own internal artistic rules. Some of the questions we're going to ask, of the course readings and of the essays in our workshops: what is this essay about? What is it trying to do or express? How does it accomplish its goal? How would you describe the literary elements that comprise this essay (i.e. style, voice, imagery, metaphor, perspective, character, theme, etc.) and the structure that holds this essay together? What impresses you or gives you pause about this essay, in its overall composition or among its plethora of details? What lines and paragraphs sound beautiful and true to you, and what didn’t work for you? What is a technique or form that you would like to emulate or play with in your own work?
On the day that we are to discuss particular course readings, I expect you to bring in a printed copy of each essay, marked with your notes and comments—think of those notes as a conversation with the essay’s author. I want to be able to see that you are actively engaged with the reading, both in discussion and on paper; failure to bring in a printed and marked-up copy can negatively affect your participation grade.

Laptops are prohibited from this classroom, along with any other electronic devices.

**Writing**

**Essays:** I want you to explore, experiment, and take risks with your writing in this class. Throughout the semester you’ll have several opportunities to do so: you will write two major essays (6-10 pages long) and four shorter essays (two 3-4 page essays and two 1-2 page essays). Your essays will be due one week before your workshop dates, or as noted on the syllabus. For most of these essays, you’ll be given prompts to start you off, inspired from the reading in our course. You’ll be challenged to immerse yourself in a large-scale event and bring that experience to life on the page, or to play with form and surprise a reader’s traditional expectations. You’ll be asked to render a character from life in prose, and to craft an essay based on your observations of either an external subject or your own emotional terrain. You will also be asked, at the beginning and end of the semester, to think and write about why you write—what moves you, what inspires you, and what you hope to achieve.

**Revision:** Of the essays that you will write in this class (with the exception of the “Why I Write” essays), you may choose one for your final revision, which will be 6-12 pages long. You can expand a shorter essay to a longer length or choose a major essay; in either case you must put a substantial amount of work into your revision.

**Workshop**

A formal workshop is a roundtable discussion centered on a particular writer’s work. The writer remains quiet and attentive during the duration of his or her workshop, while we discuss what we admire about the essay, as well as our suggestions for revision. Our aim in holding a workshop is to provide a rich pool of insights that will aid the writer in his or her revision.

In this class we will gradually develop your workshop skills, by starting you off in small groups of three or four. This will give you an opportunity to get comfortable providing constructive feedback, to deeply engage in an open discussion about literary work, and to cultivate openness and generosity when you offer feedback and when you receive it. From these small groups, we will move on to the larger, formal workshops that involve the whole class.

**A Note on Printing/Copies:** You will need to bring copies of your essays to class in order for your peers to review your work. For your small group workshops, you will need 4-5 copies (one for me, one for you, and the rest for the group); for your major essays, you will need to bring copies for the entire class. If making these copies will cause undue financial hardship, let me know in advance. I can have copies made, but I will need at least 24 hours notice before your essay is due to the class.
Written Comments: As with your reading for this course, your written comments on your peers’ essays are part of the conversation you have with the author—and in this case, you know that the writer will be open to your ideas and suggestions. This is a reciprocal relationship: you’re expected to bring your energy and thoughtfulness to each workshop essay, just as your peers are expected to do for you.

At the end of each workshop you will return your peers’ essays to them, marked-up with your notes and comments. Once we start with major essays, you will write a 1-page Comment Letter for each essay, discussing what you admire, what you suggest, and how you interpreted the essay. Bring two copies to class: one for the essayist and one for me. Your notes and letters will form the foundation for discussion in our workshops.

Grading

In a class about exploration and experimentation, what is most significant for me is how hard you work to explore, grow, and develop as a writer and reader throughout the course. Genuine, solid efforts will be rewarded in this class, along with the risks you take and insight you bring to your work. Your grade for the class will break down as follows:

30 points: Participation (Class Discussion, Written Comments, Conference)
20 points: Minor Essays: Why I Write (1 page), Observation (3-4 pages) & Profile (3-4 pages)
15 points: Major Essay #1 (6 – 10 pages) Immersion or Experimental
15 points: Major Essay #2 (6 – 10 pages) Any topic/form that you choose
20 points: Final Revision (6 – 12 pages) and “Why I Write” Closing Statement

100 points, Total Possible

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<th>GRAADING SCALE:</th>
<th>100-97%</th>
<th>96-93%</th>
<th>92-90%</th>
<th>89-87%</th>
<th>86-83%</th>
<th>82-80%</th>
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<td>79-77%</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>76-73%</td>
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Portfolio Evaluation:

A: Excellent portfolios show initiative and sophistication that go beyond general expectations. The writing is well crafted and reflects a commitment to the creative process. The writer is capable of analyzing, reflecting and revising. The writer takes risks in service of the work.

B: Strong portfolios. The writing is well crafted and demonstrates that the writer is engaged with the creative process in ways that are above average. The writer demonstrates attempts to reflect on and analyze his or her writing, and can make some choices about revision. Risks are taken; some may be more successful and resonant than others, but they show an attempt to serve the work.

C: Adequate portfolios that meet basic requirements. The writer’s work could be stronger with
more engagement with the creative process. The writer has composed essays that reflect varying levels of success. There is some revision, but it’s superficial. Some risks might be taken, but they may not be in service to the work.

**D: Weak portfolios that fall below the basic requirements.** The writing produced is brief or not fully developed. The writing does not show an engagement with the creative process and does not reflect the writer’s potential.

**F: Unacceptable portfolios.** The writing exhibits fundamental problems that consistently go unaddressed or ignored. The work is frequently incomplete. Plagiarized work will be reported to the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability for review and possible disciplinary action.

A late assignment will receive a grade deduction at my discretion for each day it is late. If you are late to class on a day when an assignment is due, that assignment will also be considered late, and may be subject to a grade penalty. If you know ahead of time that you will be missing a class when an assignment is due, you must turn in that assignment to me before the start of class, either in person or in my mailbox in 310/308 EBP. Extensions may be available in rare cases; contact me far in advance of the deadline.

This is a three semester-hour class, which means you should expect to spend at least six hours per week preparing outside class (as defined by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences).

**Participation & Attendance**

This is a workshop and a discussion seminar; your class participation is important for your fellow classmates and a significant part of your grade. I’d like to see you deeply engaged in this course, and I know that there are many forms of participation. I place a lot of weight on the quality of your contributions, more so than quantity. If you are extremely shy, and anticipate having difficulty participating in discussion, please come and see me during office hours. This class is designed to ease you into the workshop discussion format, and to encourage you to push beyond your comfort zones, in writing and discussion. If you continue having difficulty with class discussion, we can talk about how you can participate and support your classmates through other means, above and beyond what I’ll expect of students in the written comments required for this course. On the other hand, if you are late, unprepared, or wholly unengaged, this will unfavorably affect your participation grade.

**Conferences**

We’ll meet at least once during the semester to discuss the revision of one of your essays. This meeting will be mandatory for everyone; missed appointments can affect your grade. It will be up to you to schedule this meeting with me. We can discuss your ideas or plans for revision after you’ve heard thoughts from the class, or we can review a draft revision. This conference will be most helpful to you if we review the essay you choose for the final revision, but this is not necessary. Plan for at least 20 minutes to review. Beyond that, you are always welcome to drop by during office hours, or to set up an appointment to see me.

**Respect**

In our reading and in our writing for this class, we’ll be discussing real events and real lives—events and lives that fall somewhere within the profoundly vast range of experiences that comprise the human condition. In this class, we will have respect for that vastness, and we will
do our utmost to foster an open and supportive environment that will allow each writer to dig
deepen and take risks—in form or in subject—in the service of art.

When nonfiction writers take risks, potentially sensitive information can come to light; I expect
the members of our class to react with maturity, open-mindedness, and respect. Our class will
endeavor to create a safe space for sensitive material, and in so doing I ask that each of you
pledge to your fellow students that you will not discuss such sensitive information outside of our
classroom.

We will also treat each other, in our discussions and our interactions, with the utmost respect.
Not only are we obligated by the UI’s non-discrimination policy to treat our colleagues equally
and without regard to race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran
status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preference; we are also obligated by
our own consciences to treat one another with dignity.

**Plagiarism & Academic Honesty**

To plagiarize is to borrow another person’s words or ideas, in whole or in part, without giving
credit where credit is due. Whether it is intentionally or unintentionally done, plagiarism is a
serious offense. Plagiarism includes copying text or summarizing ideas without properly citing
your sources, and turning in another person’s work under your own name. You also may not self-
plagiarize—that is, recycle material from another class, activity, or publication. Plagiarism will
be reported to the Office of Student Accountability and Advocacy. Penalties may include failure
of an assignment, failure of the course, and removal from the university.
COURSE SCHEDULE
(Subject to Change)

WEEK ONE – Jan. 21, Jan. 23
Tues. January 21, 2014
- Introduction/Syllabus
- Handout: Terry Tempest Williams, “Why I Write”
Thurs. January 23, 2014

WEEK TWO – Jan. 28, Jan. 30
- Due: Why I Write (1-2 pages)
- Discuss: Eula Biss, “Time and Distance Overcome”; Lia Purpura, “Autopsy Report”; Geoff Dyer, “Joel Sternfeld’s Utopian Visions”

WEEK THREE – Feb. 4, Feb. 6
Tues. February 4, 2014 - Observing the Interior: The Foul Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart
- Discuss: Ryan Van Meter, “First”; Joan Didion, “Goodbye to All That”; Scott Russell Sanders, “Under the Influence”
Thurs. February 6, 2014 - Observing the Interior: Emotions at the Edge

WEEK FOUR – Feb. 11, Feb. 13
Tues. February 11, 2014 – Characters in Our Lives: Our Families, Our Histories, Ourselves
- Due: Observation Essay (3-4 pages; 6 copies)
Thurs. February 13, 2014 – The Profile Essay: Constructing the Other
- Discuss: Joan Didion, “Where the Kissing Never Stops”; Chris Jones, “The Things that Carried Him”
- EXTRA CREDIT: Undergraduate Q&A session with Bernard Cooper, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., 304 EBP (Gerber Lounge)

WEEK FIVE – Feb. 18, Feb. 20
Tues. Feb. 18, 2014
Conducting Interviews for your Profile Essay

Thurs. Feb. 20, 2014
Small Group Workshop: Observation Essay
- Due to each Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits

WEEK SIX – Feb. 25, Feb. 27
Tues. February 25, 2014
Small Group Workshop: Observation Essay
- Due to each Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits

Thurs. February 27, 2014
- The Immersion Essay: Strangers in a Not-So-Strange Land
  - Discuss: John Jeremiah Sullivan, “Upon This Rock”; Hunter S. Thompson, “The Kentucky Derby is Decadent and Depraved”

WEEK SEVEN – Mar. 4, Mar. 6
Tues. March 4, 2014 – The Immersion Essay: Emerson’s Translucent Eyeball, ranging everywhere
  - Discuss: David Foster Wallace, “A Supposedly Fun Thing I’ll Never Do Again”; Annie Dillard, “Total Eclipse”

Thurs. March 6, 2014
  - No Class – Working Day!
    - For MAJOR ESSAY #1: Immersion or Experimental Essay (6-10 pages)
      - See handout for details

WEEK EIGHT – Mar. 11, Mar. 13
Tues. March 11, 2014 – Experimenting with Form: Essay Begets Form/Form Begets Essay
  - Due: Profile Essay (3-4 pages; 6 copies)

Thurs. March 13, 2014 - Experimenting with Form: Essay Begets Form/Form Begets Essay
  - Discuss: Dave Eggers, “Impressions”; Jenny Boully, “The Body”

WEEK NINE – Mar. 18, Mar. 20
Tues. March 18, 2014 – NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK
Thurs. March 20, 2014 – NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK

WEEK TEN – Mar. 25, Mar. 27
Tues. March 25, 2014 – Small Group Workshop: Profile Essay
  - Due to each Essayist: Hard copy of essay with your written comments/line-edits
    - Handouts from students – Major Essay #1

Thurs. March 27, 2014
- Small Group Workshop: Profile Essay
  - Due to each Essayist: Hard copy of essay with your written comments/line-edits
  - Handouts from students – Major Essay #1

WEEK ELEVEN – Apr. 1, Apr. 3
Tues. April 1, 2014
  - MAJOR ESSAY #1: IMMERSION/EXPERIMENTAL (6-10 pages)
  - Workshops: _________ and _________
  - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
  - Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits
  - Handouts from students – Major Essay #1
Thurs. April 3, 2014
   Workshops: ______ and ______
   - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
   - Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits
   - Handouts from students - Major Essay #1

WEEK TWELVE – Apr. 8, Apr. 10
Tues. April 8, 2014
   Workshops: ________ and __________
   - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
   - Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits
   - Handouts from students – Major Essay #1

Thurs. April 10, 2014
   Workshops: ________ and __________
   - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
   - Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits
   - Handouts from students – Major Essay #2

WEEK THIRTEEN – Apr. 15, Apr. 17
Tues. April 15, 2014
   Workshops: ________ and __________
   - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
   - Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits
   - Handouts from students – Major Essay #2

Thurs. April 17, 2014
   MAJOR ESSAY #2: OPEN TOPIC/FORM (6-10 pages)
   Workshops: ________ and __________
   - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
   - Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits
   - Handouts from students – Major Essay #2

WEEK FOURTEEN – Apr. 22, Apr. 24
Tues. April 22, 2014
   Workshops: ________ and __________
   - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
   - Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits
   - Handouts from students - Major Essay #2

Thurs. April 24, 2014
   Workshops: ________ and __________
   - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
   - Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits
   - Handouts from students - Major Essay #2

WEEK FIFTEEN – Apr. 29, May 1
Tues. April 29, 2014
   Workshops: ________ and __________
   - Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
- Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits

Thurs. May 1, 2014
- Workshops _________ and __________
- Due to the Essayist and to me: Comment Letter for each essay (1 page; 2 copies)
- Due to the Essayist: Hard copy of the essay with your written comments/line-edits

WEEK SIXTEEN – May 6, May 8

Tues. May 6, 2014
- In Class Review: Portfolios

Thurs. May 8, 2014
- Time to Celebrate!
- Due: Final Portfolio
  - Why I Write (Closing Statement, 1 – 2 pages)
  - Major Revision (6 – 12 pages)