Course Description: In WR 423, we will explore the essay form by examining a number of essays and carefully detailing how authors construct strong essays using a wide variety of structures, styles, and points-of-view. Through examination, analysis, and imitation of these essays, students will develop their own essay strategies, adapting the essay form to specific content and disciplinary goals.

Course Outcomes:

Students will

• understand the formal elements of the essay;
• gain knowledge of structure, style, and point-of-view;
• compile a list of terms relevant to the craft of essay writing and understand how to apply these terms to analysis of essay writing, their own and other’s;
• practice and improve writing skills through drafting, peer editing, and responsive revision;
• edit and proofread for clarity, grace, and style;
• craft logical and ethical arguments in connection to rhetorical situations within a discourse community;
• effectively acknowledge, assess, and incorporate relevant arguments from other texts and document sources appropriately.

Required Text – available in UO Bookstore:


Grading and Requirements:

APP: 20% (attendance, preparation, participation, writing exercises, reading quizzes/responses, one conference after portfolio one or two to discuss your work)
4 Essay Portfolios – 20 % each; 80 % total (pre-writing, free-writing, drafts, outlines, revisions, bibliographies; writing exercises will be turned in with each portfolio)

Policies:

Plagiarism-free Zone: Do your own work. Cite sources appropriately when you use them.
Accommodation Zone: See me if you have a disability requiring accommodation.
Safety Zone: Please be respectful of the ideas of others, even if you disagree. It takes courage to speak in public, and everyone should feel safe when they do.
Tentative Schedule:

Readings:
Eula Biss, “The Pain Scale” (171)
Brian Doyle, “Joyas Voladoras” (273)

Unit Two – Weeks 4-6 – Cultures and Contact Zones
Readings:
Mary Louise Pratt, “Arts of the Contact Zone,” (485)
Gloria Anzaldúa, “Entering into the Serpent” (72); “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” (85)
Alberto Alvaro Ríos, “Translating Translation: Finding the Beginning” (506)
John Edgar Wideman, “Our Time” (657)

Unit Three – Weeks 7-10 – Histories
Readings:
Susan Griffin, “Our Secret” (335)
Edward Said, “States” (541)

Unit Four – Week 10 – Self-Study
Readings:
Your essays written during the term

NOTE:
1. Details for each unit will be discussed in class.
2. There will be no final exam in this class.

1a The Essay: Structure, Style, and POV; Introductions
1b Study of First Paragraphs (x3)
1c Study of Last Paragraphs (x3)

2a Biss
2b Biss
2c Doyle

3a Doyle
3b Rough Draft Workshop – typed rough draft due, 3-page minimum
3c Revision and Portfolio #1 Due; A Reading

4a Pratt
4b Pratt
4c Anzaldúa

5a Ríos
5b Wideman
5c Wideman

6a Wideman
6b Rough Draft Workshop – typed rough draft due, 3-page minimum
6c Revision and Portfolio #2 Due; A Reading