

**ENG305: Nonfiction Forms (3 credit hours)**

**Spring 2015**

**Thursday 9:00-11:30\***

**QC Complex 2204**

**Dr. Dan Malachuk**

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Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 11:30am-1:10pm

\* ON JAN 22, FEB 19, MAR 12, APR 9, & MAY 7 THIS COURSE WILL MEET FROM 9:30 - 12

**Catalog Description**

ENG 299 with a grade of C or better, or consent of instructor. Study of one or more of the forms of non-fiction writing such as autobiography, diary, essay, epistolary, or non-fiction movements such as the New Journalism or creative non-fiction.

**Course Objectives**

Focusing on American non-fiction writing about humans and nature from Thoreau's *Walden* to the present

**Assignments**

Final grades are determined solely by student performance on the assignments below. For more details about traditional writing assignments, see the "Guide to Writing Successful Papers" at the end of this syllabus. Details for non-traditional assignments are below; more details may be provided separately. Unless otherwise noted, all writing assignments should be double-spaced with 12-point font and submitted in hard copy in class.

- **Three Short Papers (75% total)** For each of the three units, students will write a five-page, five-source paper. Each paper should engage at least three sources from the unit reading plus an additional two sources from outside the course reading. Each paper should start with a clear claim and then provide well-structured analysis of evidence. In addition to the five pages, students should add a sixth page titled "Works Cited," following <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/> (and related pages). Please include URLs for online sources. Students are required to submit both a draft and a final version by the stated deadlines.
- **The Presentation (25% total)** Each student will present and lead discussion of one of the required readings; these presentations will be scheduled during the second class meeting. A successful presentation will exclude use of the projector and instead include only the following elements:
  - a) sufficient copies of a two-page (maximum) hand-out which includes (i) your name as well as the subject and date of your presentation, an outline of your overview, (ii) three discussion questions (minimum), (iii) three scholarly outside sources (minimum);
  - b) a ten-minute overview of the reading contextualized with reference to prior course readings, your historical research, and the listed outside sources;

- c) and ten minutes of facilitated discussion of the reading with reference to the discussion questions.

**The Presentation Prize** Students who prepare and present a version of any of their course papers at an instructor-approved event will receive a one-grade boost to their final grade: e.g., A- to A.

**The Draftless Drop** Students who do not bring a complete draft to class on the dates specified will be penalized with a two-grade demotion of their final grade for that paper: e.g., a final paper that receives an A will be demoted to a B+

**The Writing Center**

For all assignments, all students are always encouraged to make use of the WIU-QC Writing Center.

**Required Books**

These editions include important material not included in other editions; please use the ISBN numbers to make sure you have purchased the correct editions.

- Thoreau, *Walden, Civil Disobedience, and Other Writings, Third Edition* ISBN 0393930904
- Leopold, *A Sand Country Almanac* ISBN 019505928X
- Berry, *The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays of WB* ISBN 1593760078
- *At Home on This Earth* ISBN 1584651938

**Other Readings**

Readings not in the required books will either be emailed to students or are available online.

**Online Editions**

Online editions may *not* replace the required paper editions; however they may be very useful when researching and writing papers.

**Schedule**

No.	Date	Reading and Assignments
<b>Unit A: Thoreau and the Conservationist Imagination</b>		
A-1	01-22	<p><b>Joint Class 1: <i>Avatar</i> and Introductions</b></p> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Romantic topographies, review of syllabus, review of presentation dates (9:30-10:30)</li> <li>• Joint Class Discussion (10:30-12:00) (until 1:30 for ENG337 students)</li> </ul>

A-2	01-29	<p><b>Walden</b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> (5-143), especially “Where I Lived,” “Solitude,” “Visitors,” “The Bean-Field,” “Baker Farm”</li> <li>• Johnson, “Obscurity in <i>Walden</i>” (<i>Walden</i> 483-489)</li> <li>• Sattlemeyer, “The Remaking of <i>Walden</i>” (<i>Walden</i> 489-507)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment of presentation dates</li> </ul>
A-3	02-05	<p><b>Walden, cont.</b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoreau, <i>Walden</i> (143-224), especially “Higher Laws,” “The Pond in Winter,” “Spring,” and “Conclusion”</li> <li>• Matthiessen, “<i>Walden</i>: Craftsmanship v Technique” (<i>Walden</i> 433-441)</li> <li>• Marx, “<i>Walden’s</i> Transcendental Pastoral Design” (<i>Walden</i> 450-464)</li> <li>• Nightingale, “Auto-Hagiography”</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture: Thoreau and the Conservationist Imagination</li> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> <li>• Presentations</li> </ul>
	02-12	No class: Lincoln’s Birthday
A-4	02-19	<p><b>Joint Class 2: Thoreaus</b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thoreau, “Walking” (<i>Walden</i> 260-287)</li> <li>• Robinson, “The Actual World” (emailed link)</li> <li>• Robinson, <i>Fifty Degrees Below</i> [excerpt] (emailed)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit A Paper Workshop (9:30-10:30)</li> <li>• Joint Class Discussion (10:30-12:00) (until 1:30 for ENG337 students)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Unit A Paper Draft due</b></p>
<b>Unit B: The Conservationist Imagination in Modern Times</b>		

B-1	02-26	<p><b>Selections from <i>At Home</i></b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anderson, “Introduction” (<i>At Home</i>)</li> <li>• <i>At Home</i> (13-100)</li>   <li>• Walls, “<i>Walden as Feminist Manifesto</i>” (<i>Walden</i> 521-527)</li> <li>• Johnson, “Tracking Nature’s Truth” [on Cooper] (emailed)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> <li>• Presentations</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Unit A Paper due</i></p>
B-2	03-05	<p><b>Leopold’s <i>A Sand County Almanac</i></b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finch, “Introduction” (<i>Sand County</i>)</li> <li>• <i>A Sand County Almanac</i> (3-92)</li>   <li>• Buell, “Thoreau and the Natural Environment” (<i>Walden</i> 527-543)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> <li>• Presentations</li> </ul>
B-3	03-12	<p><b>Joint Class 3: Preservation and Conservation</b></p> <p><u>Read/view for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cronon, “The Trouble with Wilderness” (emailed link)</li> <li>• <i>Beasts of the Southern Wild</i> (libraries, amazon)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> </ul>
	03-19	No class: Spring Break
B-4	03-26	<p><b>Selections from <i>At Home</i></b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>At Home</i> (101-213)</li>   <li>• Littenberg, “Gender and Genre” (emailed)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bolinder, “Appropriated Waters” [on Austin] (emailed)</li> <li>• Ross, “Animal Anthropology” [on Carrighar] (emailed)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> <li>• Presentations</li> </ul>
B-5	04-02	<p><b>Selections from <i>At Home</i></b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>At Home</i> (214-308)</li> <li>• Waldron, “Land as Consciousness” [on Silko]</li> <li>• Sanderson, “Linda Hasselstrom” (emailed)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture: Women and the Conservationist Imagination</li> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> <li>• Presentations</li> </ul>
B-6	04-09	<p><b>Joint Class 4: Ecofeminism</b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Ecofeminism” [from <i>Cambridge Intro Lit Environment</i>] (emailed)</li> <li>• Ursula K. Le Guin, “Paradises Lost”</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit B Paper Workshop (9:30-10:30)</li> <li>• Joint Class Discussion (10:30-12:00) (until 1:30 for ENG337 students)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><i>Unit B Paper Draft due</i></b></p>
<b>Unit C: A Contemporary Conservationist Imagination?</b>		
C-1	04-16	<p><b>Other Writings by Leopold and Selections from Berry, <i>The Art of the Commonplace</i></b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leopold, <i>Sketches</i> and <i>The Upshot</i> (95-226)</li> <li>• Wirzba, “Introduction,” <i>The Art</i> (vii-xx)</li> <li>• Berry, Part I, <i>The Art</i> (3-31)</li> <li>• Peters, “Introduction” (emailed)</li> <li>• Smith, “Greening Agrarianism” (emailed)</li> </ul>

		<p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> <li>• Presentations</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><i>Unit B Paper due</i></b></p>
C-2	04-23	<p><b>Selections from Berry, <i>The Art of the Commonplace</i></b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Berry, Parts II-III <i>The Art</i> (33-204)</li> <li>• Smith, “Tending Gardens” (emailed)</li> <li>• Kingsolver, “The Art of Buying Nothing” (emailed)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> <li>• Presentations</li> </ul>
C-3	04-30	<p><b>Selections from Berry, <i>The Art of the Commonplace</i></b></p> <p><u>Read for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Berry, Parts IV-V, <i>The Art</i> (205-327)</li> <li>• Carlson, “WB and the 20<sup>th</sup> c. Agrarian ‘Series’” (emailed)</li> </ul> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lecture: Leopold, Berry, and the Conservationist Imagination</li> <li>• Discussion of reading</li> <li>• Presentations</li> </ul>
C-4	05-07	<p><b>Joint Class 5: Apocalypse and Ignorance</b></p> <p><u>Read/view for class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Berry, “The Way of Ignorance” (emailed)</li> <li>• Berry, “It All Turns on Affection” (<a href="http://www.neh.gov/print/3971">http://www.neh.gov/print/3971</a>)</li> <li>• Berry, “The Handing Down,” “The Contrariness of the Mad Farmer,” “Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front,” “Requiem”</li> <li>• <i>The Road</i></li> <li>• [Thoreau, on “Useful Ignorance” in “Walking” (<i>Walden</i> 282-287)]</li> </ul>

		<p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit C Paper Workshop (9:30-10:30)</li> <li>• Joint Class Discussion (10:30-12:00) (until 1:30 for ENG337 students)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><i>Unit C Paper Draft due</i></b></p>
C-5	05-14	<p><b>Course Evaluation</b></p> <p><u>In class</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course evaluation</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><i>Unit C Paper due</i></b></p>

### WIU General Policies

*In accordance with the WIU Course Syllabus Policy ([www.wiu.edu/policies/syllabus.php](http://www.wiu.edu/policies/syllabus.php)), the following information is provided.*

#### Prerequisites/Corequisites

“It is the responsibility of the student to comply with the prerequisites/corequisites for a course that he/she plans to take. Instructors who place the appropriate information on the syllabus and emphasize it during the first three class periods may exclude a student from the class who does not meet the prerequisites/corequisites by sending a note to the student with a copy to the registrar within the first two weeks of the term.”

#### ADA Policies

“In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. For the instructor to provide the proper accommodation(s) you must obtain documentation of the need for an accommodation through Disability Resource Center (DRC) and provide it to the instructor. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the instructor's attention, as he/she is not legally permitted to inquire about such particular needs of students. Students who may require special assistance in emergency evacuations (i.e. fire, tornado, etc.) should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow in such an emergency. Contact Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 298-2512 for additional services.”

#### Counseling Services

“Confidential counseling services are available for WIU-QC students. Time management, stress management, balancing work and family, study skills, low self-esteem, relationship problems, depression, and anxiety are some examples of issues that students may address in personal counseling. Students may call 309/762-1988 to make an appointment with Counseling and Career Services.”

#### Student Rights and Responsibilities

The web address for student rights and responsibilities is <http://www.wiu.edu/provost/students.php>

## All General Academic and Student Services at WIU-QC

Please call 309/762-9080 for all general academic & student services assistance.

### Policies Specific to Dr. Malachuk's Courses

These policies establish guidelines for the successful conduct of class meetings and student completion of course assignments. If you have any questions or concerns about these policies, please discuss these directly with the instructor.

- **Evaluation.** All written work is evaluated according to three criteria: (1) clarity and interest of the thesis and structure, (2) use of evidence to support that thesis, and (3) clarity and accuracy of the writing. These criteria are always reviewed at the first class meeting. Please also see the section of the syllabus titled “A Short Guide to Writing Successful Papers” below. With the exception of assignments completed at the end of the semester, students will receive written comments on every assignment stated on the syllabus; these written comments will refer to these three criteria. Unless announced otherwise in class, assignments completed during the semester will be returned one week after they were submitted.
- **Grades.** All of the assignments stated on the syllabus will be awarded a grade, from F to A, including the + and - grades. To calculate the grade for the course, each of these assignment grades is first translated into a numeric grade from the traditional 100 point scale (where F = 0, D- = 62, D = 65, D+ = 68, C- = 72, C = 75, C+ = 78, B- = 82, B = 85, B+ = 88, A- = 92, A = 95, A+ = 100). Each assignment's numeric grade is then multiplied by the percentage worth of that grade: for example, a grade of A (95) on an assignment worth 10% (.1) is 9.5 total, while a grade of C+ (78) on an assignment worth 25% (.25) is 19.5 total. These totals are added together and then translated back into a final letter grade.
- **Lates.** Class will start and end as listed on STARS. Once class begins late students can enter the classroom only during the fifteen-minute break approximately one hour after the start. Late students attending the second half of class will receive one-half of an absence.
- **Absences.** Students who miss more than three class meetings total (including half-absences for lates) will normally fail the class. Students aware of unavoidable absences are asked to notify the instructor in advance.
- **Deadlines.** Unless stated otherwise in class, all assignments are due on the days listed on the schedule in this syllabus. After the stated deadline, there are *no* opportunities for revision for a new grade. Students should draft and revise their papers and seek feedback from the instructor during office hours.

- Electronic Devices. So that class meetings are as productive as possible, students are asked to turn off all electronic devices except for laptops (for notes only) and e-readers (for course texts only). Phones may be left on buzz; students should leave the room for emergency calls.
- Email. Students are welcome to email the instructor with questions or concerns about the course. Emails received during work hours (weekdays, 9-5) will usually be answered same day. Evening and weekend emails will be answered the next workday. Students should use their @wiu.edu accounts. For feedback on drafts, students should approach the instructor in class or during scheduled office hours.
- Plagiarism. Students must cite properly all sources that are directly quoted, paraphrased, or reworded; unless directed otherwise, students should use the MLA documentation system. For more information on what constitutes plagiarism and academic integrity generally, please see WIU's Student Academic Integrity Policy: <http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php>

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### **A Short Guide to Writing Successful Papers** **Dr. Malachuk**

When evaluating traditional papers, I consider three criteria: (1) clarity and interest of the thesis and structure, (2) use of evidence to support that thesis, and (3) clarity and accuracy of the writing. This guide provides additional information about each of the criterion and introduces the terminology I tend to use when talking with students about their papers.

#### **1. Thesis and Structure**

- *The Thesis (or claim, argument)*. An interesting thesis is one about which reasonable people can disagree. The thesis should also be provable in the assigned number of pages for the paper. The thesis should above all be clearly stated; the success of the paper's structure depends on it.
- *The Thesis Paragraph*. The thesis should normally be clearly stated in the first paragraph, or "thesis paragraph." That thesis paragraph should also normally suggest to the reader the organization of the paper: i.e., provide a "blueprint" for the structure of the paper. For this reason, this paragraph is the most heavily revised throughout the writing process: the thesis paragraph may come first, but it is often finished last.
- *The Body Paragraphs*. Each body paragraph should make one "step" in the proof of your thesis. The step that each paragraph makes should be stated in the first sentence of the paragraph, or "topic sentence" or "transition sentence." The topic/transition sentence is your best opportunity to remind readers where they are in relation to the thesis, and where they are in the course of the argument.
- *The Counter-Argument*. Some papers can simply prove a thesis without reference to a counter-argument, usually because the thesis is so surprising that there is no imaginable counter-argument. In such cases, it is enough work to articulate and prove this surprising thesis. Generally, however, students will argue a thesis that is more contentious than surprising, and in these cases it is helpful to underscore this contentiousness by arguing not only the thesis but the counter-argument, too. Given its importance to your paper, that counter-argument should normally be articulated in the thesis paragraph along with the thesis (as part of the blueprint); one or more of the body paragraphs should be dedicated to elaborating that counter-argument. The counter-argument is an essential step (or steps) in your argument.

- *The Paper.* One way to test the basic clarity of the thesis and structure in your fully drafted paper is to read only the thesis paragraph and first sentence of each body paragraph. The paper is well-structured if you can follow the basic argument of your paper by reading only these parts of the paper.

## 2. Use of Evidence

A paper that has an interesting thesis and that is clearly structured will nevertheless be unsuccessful if it does not also provide evidence to prove that thesis.

- *How Much Evidence and in What Form? Consider the Paper's Length.* The length of the paper can help you to determine how much evidence to provide, and how to provide it. Certainly each body paragraph normally includes some evidence: that (and moving the argument forward one step) is the purpose of a body paragraph. In a short paper, the evidence is usually provided in the form of paraphrase and short quotation. In a longer paper, there is more room to cite several lines of evidence at a time in indented or "block" form.
- *How Much Evidence and in What Form? Establishing Authority through Integration.* Students also need to establish and maintain an authoritative voice throughout their papers, and the good use of the right amount of evidence is crucial to accomplishing this. The evidence should never be so much that the student's voice is lost: this is your paper, not the authors of the texts under analysis. So students should take care to "integrate" evidence into their papers. By integration I mean first of all that the evidence is efficiently cited so as not to disrupt the argumentative voice that you are trying to cultivate. This may mean making use of brackets and ellipses (i.e., [ ] and . . . ) to edit the quotation to fit into the flow of your own sentences. But, by integration I also mean that the evidence is persuasively interpreted to support the particular claim you are trying to make.

## 3. Clarity and Accuracy of the Writing

- *Clarity.* Clarity is the most important virtue for writers in my classes. Clarity is not the same as simplicity. Taking into consideration the paper length and the students' ability to support that argument with a clear structure and persuasive use of evidence, I will always encourage students to pursue the most sophisticated, nuanced argument possible. At the sentence level, clear writing requires making the right vocabulary choices, cleverly manipulating sentence structure, and using punctuation properly. At the paragraph level, clear writing requires making use of a consistent vocabulary to develop your thesis and structure.
- *Sentence-level accuracy.* The most common reasons students fail to fulfill this criterion are fragmented sentences, run-on sentences, incorrect punctuation, and poor word choice.
- *Style.* Students are encouraged to develop their own style when writing for my classes, including the use of irony, occasional informality, humor, complex vocabulary, and so forth. That said, the question "am I being clear?" should always be foremost in your considerations when writing and revising papers for my classes.
- *MLA Formatting and Citation.* Students are required to use MLA Formatting and Citation for all written work. Guidelines are available online.