

Travel Writing 2219F Section: 001 Email: mchambe4@uwo.ca

Office: Room 1422 University College

Instructor: Melanie Chambers, virtual, Office hours: Mondays 10 am – 12; online appointment

Course description: from memoir, to insider advice to cultural observations, travel stories are a snapshot of a place through the eyes of a traveller. Students will communicate their travels --whether writing about their hometowns or exotic locales-- into engaging stories suitable for a variety of publications and online markets. Students will also create a mini guidebook and master the art of the review; as well, we'll discuss the evolution of the genre and ethical issues including differentiating advertising from editorial travel articles.

Texts: *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson

Recommended Texts: *On Writing Well*, by William Zinsser

There are four major assignments for this course.

Grades and Assignments:	Due Dates: (workshop/final)
1. Hometown assignment 25%	Oct 13 (first draft); Oct 23 Final
2. Travel Blogs 35%	Nov 2 (first draft); Nov 9 th Final
3. Feature pitches 5%	Nov 18 th – no editing
4. Feature 35%	Nov 27 (first draft); Dec 9 Final

*Discussion forums – see below for requirements

Peer editing: You will notice that every assignment requires a first draft, which will be used for in-class editing purposes. The first due date is when the peer edit draft is due. E. The purpose of this is to mimic the editor and writer relationship that exists in a 'real world' scenario. Editing and rewriting are critical to improving and sculpting a story for publication. As an editor, you will learn to critique and help shape fellow students' work and as a writer, you must get used to adopting and/or rejecting editing comments and concerns. This work will be done in-class; therefore, if you're absent, this will reflect on your participation mark.

Note: a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of 'make-up class' in another course will count as non-attendance, and will attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario shall not require a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student's other scheduled class times. If you are asked or 'required' to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is your choice; your absence will not be excused.

See also: '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholoff.pdf

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing

such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Prerequisites

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

The prerequisite for registration in this course is a) a final grade of 65 or more in one of Writing 2101, 2121, 2111, or 2131, or b) a final grade of 70 or more in Writing 1000F/G or Writing 1030F, or c) Special Permission of the department.

Attendance Policies

Discussion Forum Guidelines:

'The use of racist or any language that works against the values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will not be tolerated.'

Note that 'attendance' as defined in this section is mandatory in this course. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements as defined above for any week where there is Discussion will result in your earned final grade in this course being reduced by 3%. That penalty is cumulative to a maximum of five weeks. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements for five or more weeks where there is Discussion will result in your earned final grade being reduced by 15%

The Forum is available between **Monday 8 a.m. until Friday at 5 p.m.** Forum questions will be based on weekly lectures and readings.

Medical Accommodation Policy

Western has a comprehensive policy covering requests for accommodation by students who are not registered with Student Accessibility Services. All students should review

this policy here, under the heading ‘Accommodation for Illness – Undergraduate Students’, noting the procedures, restrictions, and notice requirements:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help

In Writing courses, students covered by this policy who are seeking academic consideration must proceed as follows.

Writing Studies’ Basic Policy: students seeking academic consideration **on medical or any other grounds** for any missed tests/exams, class attendance/participation components, or late or missed assignments must either initiate a Self-Reported Absence (**for a grade component worth up to 30% of their final grade, but excluding final exams scheduled during the exam period**) or apply in person to the Academic Counselling or Undergraduate office of their home Faculty and provide a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) or other supporting documentation as required in accordance with official Western policy (linked above).

Students seeking academic consideration **must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either:

- i. A Self-Reported Absence, or
- ii. Academic consideration supported by the Academic Counselling Office.

Exception: in Writing Studies courses, a student seeking academic accommodation **on non-medical grounds** for any missed in-class tests/exams, class attendance/participation components, or late or missed assignments **worth less than 10% of a final grade** *may* first consult directly with her or his instructor, who will – in his or her discretion – elect either to make a decision on the request directly or instruct the student to follow the procedures set out in **Writing Studies’ Basic Policy**.

Please note that individual instructors will **not under any circumstances** accept or read medical documentation directly offered by a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds or for related reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an ‘Attendance’ policy in the course). **All medical documentation must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling or Undergraduate office of a student’s home Faculty.

Students who are or who feel they should be covered under Student Accessibility Services should review Western policy here:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing

Please refer to the “Information for All Students in a Writing Course” for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that your instructor does not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean’s office of your home faculty.

Weekly lecture and readings

Week One	Syllabus/books/Introductions **ALL READINGS POSTED IN LECTURE TAB for each week.
Sept 9 - 18	LECTURE The difference between a traveller and a tourist What makes a good travel idea – the angle of your story Qualities of a good travel writer (travel journalist)
FORUM	1) Introduce yourself (reveal your speciality , if you have one when you travel- what you like to do/see). 2) Come up with two story ideas for one place you have visited -what is the angle? What is its hook?

	3) Comment on the readings: what does the information reveal about each place? Finally, what do you notice about the tone and style of each?
READING	Online 1) Cuba and Cycling 2) Polish Pierogies 3) Haida Gwaii 4) Italy and kids
Week Two Sept 21-25	LECTURE Creating a sense of place in travel writing.
FORUM	1) READ the story, <i>POOR SENSE OF PLACE</i> . How is this story lacking a sense of place? Provide examples or discuss general idea. 2) Considering sense of place, write a FIVE sentence paragraph about your hometown. Include TWO facts that you might find from the local tourism website or other source. Do not tell us what THEME you want to convey, instead, SHOW us a story and let us your audience decide what it means.
READING	1) Peru Kuelap 2) Zinsser – <i>On Writing</i> 3) <i>Poor Sense of Place</i>
Week Three Sept 28 - Oct 2	LECTURE - Writing first person – your hometown
FORUM	1) What are your impressions of Bryson as a writer, personality and narrator? 2) Read online forum samples and answer questions
READING	1) Chapter 1- 4. <i>A Walk in the Woods</i> - herein referred to as CHAPTERS 2) Online handouts - Forum work (one page)

<p>Week Four Oct 5-9</p>	<p>LECTURE</p> <p>Leads and story styles</p>
<p>FORUM</p>	<p>1) The lead sets the tone. Compare the story leads from our readings. What are the differences in tone and style? Length? What kinds of story styles are they?</p> <p>2) Find a lead from BBC – or another travel site. http://www.bbc.com/travel?referer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.bbc.com%2F Post it in the forum (cut and paste from the web site). Does it capture the essence of the story? Does it make you want to read more of the story? Comment on your fellow classmates’ leads.</p> <p>3) Bryson: How does Bryson integrate sense of place into his writing? Provide one example of how facts are integrated with his opinions and narrative.</p>
<p>READING</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. www.outsideonline.com/1965451/5-made-movies-destinations 2. Online: Hammam and Bali stories (2 stories--one page each) 3. Chapters 4-11
<p>Week Five Oct 13-16</p>	<p>(Thanksgiving Monday – no class Monday)</p> <p>LECTURE</p> <p>EDIT HOMETOWN</p>
<p>READING</p>	<p>Chapters 11-18</p>
<p>FORUM</p>	<p>1) Find one quote from Bryson this week, a quote from another speaker in the story: what does it reveal about the person? Why is it an effective quote?</p>
<p>Week Six Oct 19-23</p>	<p>LECTURE</p>

	Blogs, pretrip research and reviews *Oct 19 – hometown due
FORUM	1) As we finish reading <i>A Walk in the Woods</i> , what are some larger takeaways, or morals of his story, as it relates to travel, the environment and people?
READING	Chapter 18-to finish
Week Seven Oct 26-30	LECTURE Features
FORUM	1)What sense do you get from these two stories on Cuba? What sense of place details tell you about the economy, people, culture etc? 2) Do you have an idea of the place or even topic you'd like to explore? You don't need a hook, or angle, yet, just a sense of what you'd like to write about.
READING	1) http://www.worldhum.com/features/travel-stories/cuba-undistilled-20141220/ 2)Canadian Cycling, <i>Feminism in Cuba</i> (online) 3) https://www.wanderlust.co.uk/content/10-tips-for-writing-travel-articles/
BREAK!	Nov 2-8 Reading Week – no classes!
Week Eight	LECTURE EDIT blogs
FORUM READ	Check out online travel stories—what headlines struck you this week as relevant to the way we are travelling, our behaviours and the current Covid climate? Post the link and comment in the Forum.

Week Nine	LECTURE Markets and selling your ideas BLOGS DUE
FORUM	Find a potential market for your story. Does it have writer's guidelines? Reveal to us why this market is a good fit for your story.
READING	https://www.wanderlust.co.uk/content/morocco-atlantic-coast-journey/
Week 10	LECTURE Copyright and ethical issues related to travel writing
FORUM	
READING	1) https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/16/t-magazine/ethical-travel-reporting.html 2) http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20130501-the-risk-of-accepting-free-travel
Week 11/12	Workshop features
	Features Due – and the end!