

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Colorado State University, Academic Partner

Voyage:	Spring 2022
Discipline:	English
Course Number and Title:	E333 Critical Studies of Popular Texts (Focus: Self, Innovation, and First-Person Narratives)
Division:	Upper
Faculty Name:	Professor Brenda R Weber
Semester Credit Hours:	3

Prerequisites: none

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Charles Dickens starts *David Copperfield* (1850) with a sentence both beguiling and amusing, “Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether this station will be held by anyone else, these pages must show.” The resulting narrative is part novel, part memoir – an entirely fictionalized coming-of-age story predicated on Dickens’ own life but also a study of what it means to grow up, to develop a point of view, to become the masculine hero of one’s own life, often by enduring the pain and confusion that so often accompany the loss of innocence in the journey from childhood to adulthood, all organized around the concept of self.

In a similar vein, this course will engage in a critical study of narratives that center the self, primarily using published memoirs from each of the countries we visit but as also supplemented by the grass-roots production of TED (technology, education, design) talks that use personal narratives to articulate stories about inspiration and innovation. As a worldwide network, TED offers a perfect point of access to the many localities and countries we will visit, each articulating a vision predicated on a specific history, circumstance, and place that is filtered through the voice of memoir and turned into a mediated web of text.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives:

1. Learn about history, identity, and place by reading about the life stories and experiences of “normal” people
2. Develop an appreciation for the formal elements of memoir, including its patterns and variations
3. Practice critical thinking skills to sharpen observational and analytical modes of inquiry
4. Expand the personal voice by thinking through what it means to tell a story of self

REQUIRED BOOKS

AUTHOR: Madeline Miller
TITLE: *Circe*
PUBLISHER: Back Bay Books
ISBN: 0316556327
DATE/EDITION: 2020

AUTHOR: Michael Chabon and Ayelet Waldman
TITLE: *Kingdom of Olives and Ash*
PUBLISHER: Harper Perennial
ISBN: 0062431781
DATE/EDITION: 2019

AUTHOR: Sarah Novic
TITLE: *Girl at War*
PUBLISHER: Random House
ISBN: 9780812986396
DATE/EDITION: 2016

AUTHOR: Anthony Bourdain
TITLE: *World Travel, an Irreverent Guide*
PUBLISHER: Ecco
ISBN: 0062802798
DATE/EDITION: 2021

AUTHOR: Jose Saramago
TITLE: *Small Memories*
PUBLISHER: Houghton Mifflin
ISBN: 0151015082
DATE/EDITION: 2011

AUTHOR: Nicholas Rinaldi
TITLE: *The Jukebox Queen of Malta*
PUBLISHER: Simon & Schuster, 1999
ISBN: 0684856123
DATE/EDITION: 1999

AUTHOR: Rebekah Scott
TITLE: *A Furnace Full of God: A Holy Year on the Camino de Santiago*
PUBLISHER: Peaceable Publishing
ISBN: 098550322X
DATE/EDITION: 2019

AUTHOR: Fatima Mernissi

TITLE: *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood*
PUBLISHER: Perseus Books
ISBN: 0201489376
DATE/EDITION: 1995

AUTHOR: Tara Westover
TITLE: *Educated*
PUBLISHER: Random House
ISBN: 0399590501
DATE/EDITION: 2018

AUTHOR: Nina George
TITLE: *The Little French Bistro*
PUBLISHER: Ballantine
ISBN: 0451495594
DATE/EDITION: 2018

AUTHOR: Alison O'Reilly
TITLE: *My Name is Bridget: The Untold Story of Bridget Dolan and the Tuam
Mother and Baby Home*
PUBLISHER: Gill Books
ISBN: 0717180425
DATE/EDITION: 2018

AUTHOR: Judy Batalion
TITLE: *The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women's Resistance Fighters in Hitler's
Ghettos*
PUBLISHER: William Morrow
ISBN: 0062874217
DATE/EDITION: 2021

AUTHOR: Stig Dagerman
TITLE: *A Burnt Child*
PUBLISHER: University of Minnesota Press
ISBN: 0816677999
DATE/EDITION: 2013

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Embarkation Day – January 5

- 1: Group Norms and Community Values
- 2: Miller, *Circe*
- 3: James Barton Steele, "What's So Ancient About Greek Mythology?"

https://www.ted.com/talks/james_barton_steel_what_s_so_ancient_about_greek_mythology

4. Chabon and Waldman, *Kingdom of Olives and Ash*
5. Julia Bacha, "Pay Attention to Nonviolence"
https://www.ted.com/talks/julia_bacha_pay_attention_to_nonviolence/transcript?language=en
6. Novic, *Girl at War*
7. Bourdain, *World Travel, an Irreverent Guide*
8. Rinaldi, *The Jukebox Queen of Malta*
9. Maltese Motivation via TED
<https://lovinmalta.com/sponsored/6-inspiring-maltese-tedx-talks-thatll-remind-you-to-never-stop-being-curious/>
10. Rebekah Scott, *A Furnace Full of God: A Holy Year on the Camino de Santiago*
11. David Whyte, "A Lyrical Bridge between Past, Present, and Future"
https://www.ted.com/talks/david_whyte_a_lyrical_bridge_between_past_present_and_future
12. Fatima Mernissi, *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood*
13. Shereen El Feki, "Let's Talk About Sex"
<https://blog.ted.com/lets-talk-about-sex-shereen-el-feki-at-tedglobal-2013/>
14. Tara Westover, *Educated*
15. *Educated*, continued
16. Midterm
17. Saramago, *Small Memories*
18. Chitra Stern, "Why Portugal is Trending"
https://www.ted.com/talks/chitra_stern_why_portugal_is_trending
19. George, *The Little French Bistro*
20. George, *The Little French Bistro*
21. Alison O'Reilly. *My Name is Bridget: The Untold Story of Bridget Dolan and the Tuam Mother and Baby Home*

22. Mark Pollack and Simone George, "A Love Letter to Realism in a Time of Grief."
https://www.ted.com/talks/mark_pollock_and_simone_george_a_love_letter_to_realism_in_a_time_of_grief

23. Batalion, *The Light of Days*

24. Dagerman, *A Burnt Child*

25. Final Exam

Disembarkation Day – April 20

FIELD WORK

Semester at Sea® field experiences allow for an unparalleled opportunity to compare, contrast, and synthesize the different cultures and countries encountered over the course of the voyage. In addition to the one field class, students will complete a Comparative Experiential Project that span multiple countries.

Field Class & Assignment

STUDENTS: Field Class proposals listed below are not finalized. Confirmed ports, dates, and times will be posted to the [Spring 22 Courses and Field Class page](#) when available.

Field Class attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field class.

Field Classes constitute 20% of the contact hours for each course.

Outcomes:

This class is highlighting the idea that we all have stories to tell, in varying ways. We will accentuate this idea through a field visit.

Types of Activities:

Students could visit an historic site that we take up in the class, tour an area that is featured prominently in the class, or visit with an NGO that is featured in the class.

Field Class Assessment:

Journal and reflection paper.

Comparative Experiential Project

The CEP is the required comparative assignment that span multiple countries. The Comparative Experiential Project constitutes at least 5% of the grade for each course.

If part of the guiding rationale of this course is that everyone has a story to tell, this exercise is meant to give your story shape and form. At the beginning of the voyage, each student will set a comparative task that in some way has personal resonance to their own lives. This

might be doing something in each port that has echoes to what you do at home (shopping, sports, learning, recreation), it might be identifying a museum and spending time there, it might simply be taking time for cultivated people watching. We will work to set up a list of questions to reflect on in each port and a second list of questions to think comparatively across places.

I will ask that you keep a journal and write your reflections in it. This journal is yours and private, but I will also need to look at it from time to time. At the end of the semester, you will need to write and polish an 8-10-page paper that puts these reflections in relation to one another across at least four countries and that brings into consideration our course readings and conversations. This paper will require both peer-review and a final version.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

30% Comparative Experiential Project	
Compiling a Heuristic, Keeping a Port Journal	10%
Transnational Comparative Essay, Rough Draft	10%
Transnational Comparative Essay, Final essay	10%
10% Participation	
20% Midterm	
20% Final	
20% Field Class & Field Class Assignment	

GRADING SCALE

The following Grading Scale is utilized for student evaluation. Pass/Fail is not an option for Semester at Sea® coursework. Note that C-, D+ and D- grades are also not assigned on Semester at Sea® in accordance with the grading system at Colorado State University (the academic partner institution).

Pluses and minuses are awarded as follows on a 100% scale:

<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Satisfactory/Poor</u>	<u>Failing</u>
97-100%: A+	87-89%: B+	77-79%: C+	Less than 60%: F
93-96%: A	83-86%: B	70-76%: C	
90-92%: A-	80-82%: B-	60-69%: D	

ATTENDANCE/ENGAGEMENT IN THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Attendance in all Semester at Sea® classes, including the Field Class, is mandatory. Students must inform their instructors prior to any unanticipated absence and take the initiative to make up missed work in a timely fashion. Instructors must make reasonable efforts to enable students to make up work which must be accomplished under the instructor's supervision (e.g., examinations, laboratories). In the event of a conflict in regard to this policy, individuals may appeal using established CSU procedures.

CLASSROOM CLIMATE

Semester at Sea® is committed to the Voyage Community Values. Consequently, the classroom environment is founded on mutual respect, community, and an aim toward equity. The Voyage Community Values support the creation of a collaborative and vibrant community. Our community is the foundation of our learning, critical inquiry, and discovery. Each member of this course has a responsibility to uphold these values when engaging with one another.

With that, please review the following Voyage Community Values:

- **Well-Being:** We commit to the health, safety and well-being of ourselves, all members of our voyage community, *and* members of the communities we will visit.
- **Interconnectedness:** We understand our actions and attitudes have an impact locally and globally. We always seek to positively affect the planet and the people around us near and far.
- **Respect:** We honor the inherent dignity of *all people* with an abiding commitment to freedom of expression, scholarly discourse and the advancement of knowledge. We have the right to be treated, and the responsibility to treat others, with fairness and equity.
- **Inclusion:** We ensure inclusive environments that welcome, value, affirm and embrace *all people* within the shipboard community and in each country we visit.
- **Integrity:** We are honest and ethical in all of our interactions, including our academic work. We hold ourselves accountable for our actions.
- **Excellence:** We model the highest academic standards of preparation, inquiry and knowledge and consistently seek to understand complex issues and express informed opinions with courage and conviction.

LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

Semester at Sea® provides academic accommodations for students with diagnosed learning disabilities, in accordance with ADA guidelines. Students who will need accommodations in a class, should contact ISE to discuss their individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation.

A letter from students' home institutions verifying the accommodations received on their home campuses (dated within the last three years) is required before any accommodation is provided on the ship. Students must submit verification of accommodations to their Student Services advisor as soon as possible, but no later than two months prior to the voyage. More details can be found within the **Course Registration Packet**, as posted to the [Courses and Field Classes page](#) no later than one month prior to registration.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The foundation of a university is truth and knowledge, each of which relies in a fundamental manner upon academic integrity and is diminished significantly by academic misconduct. Academic integrity is conceptualized as doing and taking credit for one's own work. A pervasive attitude promoting academic integrity enhances the sense of community and adds value to the educational process. All within the University are affected by the cooperative commitment to academic integrity. All Semester at Sea[®] courses adhere to this Academic Integrity Policy and Student Conduct Code.

Depending on the nature of the assignment or exam, the faculty member may require a written declaration of the following honor pledge: "I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."

RESERVE BOOKS FOR THE LIBRARY

None

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

TED Talks, urls listed above

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

None