

## SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

### Colorado State University, Academic Partner

<b>Voyage:</b>	Spring 2023
<b>Discipline:</b>	English
<b>Course Number and Title:</b>	E 311C Intermediate Creative Writing: Nonfiction (Focus: Travel Writing)
<b>Division:</b>	Upper
<b>Faculty Name:</b>	Dr. Tobi Jacobi
<b>Semester Credit Hours:</b>	3

**Prerequisites:** One (1) lower-division college composition course AND one (1) lower-division beginner's creative writing course with a minimum grade of B- or one (1) lower-division newswriting course with a minimum grade of B- or permission of the instructor.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

In her poem, "The Summer Day," Mary Oliver provocatively asks, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" Travel writers often take up this challenge of composing and communicating observations of life lived. Our course will explore travel as concept, event, and emerging narrative through active writing and revision sessions. We will listen, improvise, and rethink the ways that our lived experiences in each port correspond with and differ from writers who attempted to capture each place before our arrival. We will move dynamically between reading widely across published travel texts (e.g. memoirs, essays, poems, films, podcasts, and photojournalism) and the craft of writing travel, real and imagined, into the narratives of our wild and precious lives. Projects will include a travel journal, short essays, and a final portfolios of polished writing based upon your experiences on our voyage as translated in narrative form.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Develop familiarity with the craft of travel writing and creative nonfiction, honing one's own writing process to produce the best work possible;
- Critically read with a sensitivity to language and an awareness of the forms and craft used by a diverse range of established travel writers.
- View the numerous destinations and cultures of the Semester at Sea experience through the lens of travel writing and nonfiction.
- Examine one's identity and cultural standpoint by writing about and reflecting upon the life experiences gained through global travel.
- Improve one's critical skills through examination of the work of one's peers and revision of one's own writing.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

AUTHOR: Carl Thompson  
TITLE: *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing*  
PUBLISHER: Routledge Publishing  
ISBN: 9780367365295  
DATE/EDITION: 2019, (paperback or ebook)

AUTHOR: Lavinia Spalding, Ed  
TITLE: *The Best Women's Travel Writing, Vol 12*  
PUBLISHER: Travelers' Tales  
ISBN: 978-1609521899  
DATE/EDITION: 2020 (volume 12) (paperback or ebook)

AUTHOR: Padma Lakshmi, ED  
TITLE: *The Best American Travel Writing 2021*  
PUBLISHER: Mariner Books  
ISBN: 978-0358361312  
DATE/EDITION: October 2021 (paperback or ebook)

AUTHOR: Johny Pitts  
TITLE: *Afropean: Notes from Black Europe*  
PUBLISHER: Penguin  
ISBN: 0141984724  
DATE/EDITION: 2019 (paperback or ebook)

A travel journal (notebook with at least 200 pages)

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

(Note that specific daily readings may be adjusted with our itinerary)

### Embarkation Day – January 5

1: Introduction to the study of travel writing; course syllabus, expectations and assignments. Bring books to class.  
Read in class Iyer's "The Shock of Arrivals" and "Why We Travel."

2: Introduction to souvenirs and postcards project; overview of theories and approaches to travel writing; field notes and writing India.  
Reading: introductions in Thompson, Spalding, and Lakshmi; Carey "Truth, Lies, and Travel Writing" and Bhattacharji "Indian Travel Writing" in Thompson.

3: Forms and techniques of travel writing; discussion of travel writing and truth.  
Reading due: Khair "India/South Asia" in Thompson and Robinson "Tracking A Ghost" and Subramanian "Frangipani" in Spalding.

4: Introduction of essay #1 (place-inspired writing);  
Reading due: Laderman "Guidebooks" and Edwards "Dark Tourism" in Thompson and Davis "Come and See" in Spalding.

5: Discussion of audience and context and writing;  
Reading due: Jarvis "Travel Writing: Reception and Readership" and Cardell/Douglas "Travel Blogs" in Thompson and Bishop "Stolen Tickets" in Spalding.

6: Discussion of image, representation, and responsibility in travel writing.  
Reading due: Kinsley "Travellers and Tourists," Loingsigh "African Travel Writing" and Franey "Sub-Saharan Africa" in Thompson.

7: Essay 1 draft due for peer workshop; Discussion of identity, authorship and travel writing.  
Reading due: Bird "Travel Writing and Gender" and Mahn "Travel Writing and Sexuality" in Thompson and Luckett "Single Woman Traveling Alone" and Kohn "Traveling Queer and Far" in Spalding.

8: Essay 1 due; Discussion of reading.  
Reading due: Iyer, "A place I have never been" and Fowler "Travel Writing and Ethics" in Thompson.

9: Discussion of oceans as destination.  
Reading Due: Stoclet "Can Travel become an Addiction" and Taub "Five Oceans, Five Deeps" in Lakshmi and Mentz "The Sea" in Thompson.

10: Discussion of visual and textual snapshots; Discussion of travel writing and the personal essay.  
Reading due: Graulund "Deserts" and Holmberg "The Middle East" in Thompson.

11: Discussion of reading and writing.  
Reading due: Cooke "Inner Journeys: Travel Writing as Life Writing" and Pfister "Postmodern Travel Writing" in Thompson.

12: Introduction to Field Class project and preparation for field class.  
Reading due: Galuten "Food, It turns out, has little to do with why I love to travel" in Lakshmi and Iyer "The Perfect Traveller."

13: Discussion of Cypress history and flash draft writing for field class and essay 2.  
Reading due: Topping "Travel Writing and Visual Culture" and Bohls "Picturesque Travel" in Thompson.

14: Discussion of reading and field class debrief. Drafting workshop. Field Class Project (essay 2) draft due.

15: Final Field Class project due. Prep for writing in next port country:  
Reading due: Roberts "Wingmom" and Lebow "A Bedtime Story" in Spalding and Hutton "Travel Writing in the Ancient Mediterranean" in Thompson.

16: Introduction to Essay 3 (personal essay). Discussion of review, critique, and ethics and Greek snapshots.

Reading due: Selections from Pitt and Lakshmi.

17: Brainstorming session on Essay 3 topics. Discussion of writing and review writing samples. Reading due: Thompson, “Travel Writing Now, 1950 to Present Day” and Bracewell “Europe” in Thompson and Mirosevich “Journey Proud” in Spalding.

18: Reading due: Selections from Pitt and Adiele “A Family Project” in Spalding, and “A Ride through Spain” by Truman Capote.

19: Essay 3 draft due; peer workshop; Writing.

Reading due: Laderman “Guidebooks” in Thompson, and selections from Pitt.

20: Essay 3 revision and style workshop.

Reading due: Selections from Pitt and Lakshmi and McCully “Save the Date” and Ammons “Convivenia” in Spalding.

21: Essay 3 final draft due. Ethics of representation discussion. Discussion of county’s snapshots.

Reading due: Selections from Pitt and Paramaditha “On the Complicated Questions about Writing about Travel” in Lakshmi.

22: Discussion of final portfolio projects. Discussion of reception and authorial feedback.

Reading due: Selections from Pitt and Lakshmi.

23: Portfolio workshop day; reflection on global snapshots project. Discussion of writing in last two port countries.

Reading due: Selections from Lakshmi and Spalding.

24: Discussion of Casablanca snapshots.

Final Portfolios due; discussion of visual snapshots; postcard exhibition.

25—FINAL CLASS: Travel writing presentations and final readings; course reflection; discussion of writing home

**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 23 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:** Our field class will offer a wide range of cultural, geographical and culinary interests for the global traveler. As we build upon your Semester at Sea writing experiences during the first few ports of the trip, our goals will be threefold:

- 1) to experience real-time travel writing through field notes, image capture, and short writing opportunities,
- 2) to explore various elements of travel writing content through shared visits to a cultural site, an outdoor site, and a culinary site, including notetaking, field observation, and a group interview, and
- 3) to grapple with the ethical complexities of making a place/experience/culture public through travel writing (e.g. *whose stories to make public? Whose landmarks? Which histories? Can the local community absorb and welcome the visibility that published travel writing creates?*).
- 4) to experience real-time travel writing through at least three short activities and to develop and revise one concept into a polished piece of travel writing (e.g. a walking tour or restaurant review essay, a feature piece highlighting a cultural tradition, a place-based feature story or interview, personal essay)

**Activities:** To explore and write these goals, we'll spend our time visiting one or two cultural sites such as local museums, taking a walking tour to hear stories of place and to experience an outdoor space such as a garden or art installation, and having lunch at a place that includes both time for writing and a sneak peek behind the scenes with some stories from the resident chef and their staff. We'll aim to have a local travel writer join us for our day of writing.

**Assessment** for this field class will include formal and informal writing. In the weeks that precede and follow the field class, we'll discuss note-taking, observational techniques, ethics, drafting, and final presentation of the project. We'll complete at least three writing sessions throughout the day and you'll select one of these to develop into your more formal project. Your project will include your field writings and notes, a polished piece of travel writing (6-8 pages), and a one-page reflection.

## Comparative Experiential Project: Snapshots and Postcards

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.

The CEP for our travel writing class is our snapshots and postcards project (20% of final grade). At each port, you will be gaining experiences, memories, and sometimes small tokens that represent your visit and the impact a city/nation/culture/people have on you. While you may also be keeping a travel journal to record your SAS trip, this project will focus your thinking on the visual/aural/textual experience of each port of call in relation to our study of travel writing and representation. This snapshots and postcards project will allow you to write various elements of travel (food, culture, people, geography, personal experience, and adventure/tourism).

At each port, you'll take mental and physical notes and create one snapshot that represents your time on land (we'll discuss our focus before and after each docking). Snapshots might be inspired by an interaction with local people, cultural traditions, food, architecture, the natural world and/or other engagements while in port. These brief pieces (about one page each) will invigorate class conversation and the ways we discuss the power of text and image to publicly report, influence, promote, and inspire readers of travel writing. You'll have an opportunity to collect and share at least 10 snapshots; snapshots will be evaluated based upon relevance and connection to course themes (and may inspire one of your longer essays). We'll also collect postcards as part of a ship-wide exhibition that will offer an opportunity to share our learning with the larger SAS community.

## METHODS OF EVALUATION

- 20% Souvenirs & Postcards Project (CEP)
- 15% Travel writing project #1
- 20% Writing Limassol Project (Field Class & Essay #2)
- 15% Travel writing project #3
- 10% Peer Workshops and Writing Process Work
- 20% Final Portfolio (introduction, revised essay, reflection)

## 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

This is a writing-intensive course, and our collective success depends upon your active participation in class discussions, collaborative activities, and timely drafting. We will be discussing texts (our own and others) and writing during each class session.

Attendance in all Semester at Sea® classes, including the Field Class, is mandatory. There are no excused absences. 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

Robin Hemley  
*A Field Guide for Immersion Writing*  
University of Georgia Press  
978-0820342559  
2012

James, O'Reilly, Larry Habegger, and Sean O'Reilly, Eds  
*The Best Travel Writing, volume 11*  
Traveler's Tales  
978-1609521172  
2016 (volume 11)

Robert Macfarlane, Ed  
*The Best American Travel Writing 2020*  
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing  
978-0358362036  
2020

## FILMS

None

## ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

Pico Iyer  
"The Perfect Traveller"  
World Hum  
2009  
<https://picoiyerjourneys.com/2009/10/28/the-perfect-traveler/>

Pico Iyer  
"Why We Travel"  
Salon, 2000  
<https://picoiyerjourneys.com/2000/03/18/why-we-travel/>

Pico Iyer  
"A Place I have never been"  
Amazon Short 2005  
<https://picoiyerjourneys.com/2005/10/01/a-place-ive-never-been/>

Pico Iyer  
"The Shock of Arrival"  
Conde Nast Traveler, 2009  
<https://picoiyerjourneys.com/2009/01/01/the-shock-of-arrival/>

Truman Capote  
"A Ride through Spain"  
New Yorker Magazine  
9/2/1950  
<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1950/09/02/a-ride-through-spain>