RHET 3130 Travel Writing (3 credit hours)
FALL 2017
The American University in Cairo
The Department of Rhetoric and Composition

Course information
- RHET 3130-1 TRAVEL WRITING
- WU 2 – 3:15 pm
- JAMEEL CP 112
- RHET 1010, 1020

Instructor information
- Kathleen Saville
- ksaville@aucegypt.edu
- HUSS, Rhetoric and Composition Department
- Office hours: W 1 - 2 pm

Course Description
In this course, students will become familiar with the genre of travel writing, the history, politics and economics of place, and how these influence culture. Through various readings, writings, and travel experiences, students will gain an understanding of themselves vis a vis the Other and develop an appreciation of how travel can transform the self. They will learn how to respond critically to travel narratives, identify credible sources to inform their writing, make original observations, and modify perspective to compose alternative texts.

Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to
- understand how the history, politics, and economics of place impact culture
- realize how culture, class, ideology, language, religion, race, and gender affect our perceptions of self and of the other
- read, analyze and evaluate a variety of travel writing texts
- identify an audience and purpose for writing
- understand how audience and purpose inform writing in terms of genre, tone and language
- identify credible sources of information to inform their travel and writing
- make original and insightful observations based on their experiences
- write, in a variety of genre, clear, coherent and well-informed travel essays
- utilize various rhetorical strategies, and techniques that make writing appealing to the audiences
- identify markets for sale and publication of travel writing essays
- approach a topic from different perspectives to produce alternate narratives
- revise drafts based on instructor and peer feedback
- critically review the drafts of their peers

Course Material
Students will be required to respond critically to the readings both in class discussion and weekly reading responses. Students will also be required to reflect critically about themselves, the texts, and concepts covered in class. These reading, writing, discussion and experiential activities will build towards the writing assignments that students will be required to complete over the course of the semester. The writing assignments, which are directly relevant to the readings, will require students to travel within their own cultural setting and write essays, which focus on place, people, plot or perspective. Some writing assignments
are multiple draft thus students will be involved in the writing process, drafting, peer reviewing, work-shopping and revising.

**Instructor’s Policies and Expectations**
All Writing Assignments must be typed, double-spaced; 1" margins, Times New Roman font, and list word count on top of document. Essays are due in class on date posted in assignment. **No** late essays will be accepted. **No** e-mail essays will be accepted.

**Suggested resource: The Writing Center**
The Writing Center is a resource that AUC provides to its students to help with their writing in any course. Check this web link for location and appointment information: http://www.aucegypt.edu/academics/resources/writecen/Pages/default.aspx.”

**Grades and Grading in this Course**

A. Available Grades in the Course (Note: D- and IP grades are not available in this course)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* "I" grades only available under very rare circumstances.

B. Assignments and Grade Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation: Attendance, keeping up with required readings, active participation, i.e. asking and answering questions relevant to the topics at hand. Participating in class discussion</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Written Responses (350 words each)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Changing perspectives (500 words)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Focus on Place (750 words)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Focus on People (750 words)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Writing Through the Senses (1000 words) – 2 drafts</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Final Writing Project (1000) 2 drafts</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL Points</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Explanation of Final Grades

The instructor will be available online after grades have been submitted to answer any questions.

For additional information about grading and to get answers to questions like
- How will I know at what level (or grade) I am performing during the semester?
- I’m having trouble completing all the work by the end of the semester. What options do I have?
- Can I appeal a specific assignment grade?
- Can I appeal the final course grade given to me by the faculty?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Grading.aspx
Attendance, Absences, and Tardiness
Students are highly encouraged to attend all classes, as regular class attendance can significantly help a student do better in the class. A student is not allowed to miss more than six classes without severe consequences, up to and including, failing the course. Also, missing more than 10 minutes of a class counts as half of an absence and missing more than 30 minutes of a class counts as a full absence.

There are many important additional guidelines related to this area. To read complete details and to get answers to questions like
- Who is responsible for keeping attendance?
- What happens if I miss a class? What happens if I exceed six absences?
- What is the policy on tardiness or missing part, but not all, of a class session?
- What happens if I have a medical excuse, family crisis, or extracurricular activity?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Attendance.aspx/FAQ

Academic Integrity
In accordance with the AUC’s efforts to promote a culture of academic integrity on campus, the Rhetoric and Composition Department strictly enforces the academic integrity principles found in AUC’s Code of Academic Integrity. Instructors are trained to ensure students are doing their own work; additionally, students must also use Turnitin.com for all drafts of major assignments. Violations of academic integrity can lead to serious consequences, including failing the course and having notes about violations added to your permanent transcript.

For further details about academic integrity and to get answers to questions such as
- How do I know what is legitimate borrowing from a source and what is plagiarism?
- How will the instructor know if I have copied my paper from the Internet, had the paper written by a professional writing service, or tried some other tricky thing?
- What are the consequences of violations of academic integrity?
- What is Turnitin.com and how do I use it?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Academic_Integrity.aspx

Dropping, Failing and Repeating Courses
While we hope that you complete and pass your RHET course, sometimes disruptions do happen, and students, at times, drop or fail RHET courses. There are a number of important policies that affect these situations.

For further details about dropping, failing, and repeating and to get answers to questions such as
- I’m thinking about dropping my course. What should I do?
- What happens if I miss the drop deadline?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Dropping.aspx
**Special Needs, Concerns, or Additional Support**
The Department of Rhetoric and Composition provides practical support to all students in a fair and equitable manner. Students who have special needs or concerns about the class should talk to their instructors the first week of classes or as soon as possible. AUC complies with the American Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

For further details about special needs, concerns or additional support and to get answers to questions such as:
- I have a documented special need. What should I do?
- I feel that I will need some additional support. What should I do?
- I have a concern about the instructor or the course. What should I do?
- What does the writing center offer? How can the writing center help me?

Visit this link or scan this QR code.

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Special_Needs.aspx

**Research in RHET**
Research is highly valued at AUC, and students are encouraged to participate in research during their time at AUC, however, research, both on-campus and off-campus, MUST comply with a number of important policies and regulations for security, legal, and ethical reasons. Students who plan to do ANY on-campus research involving people (surveys, interviews, etc) or ANY off-campus research of any nature MUST receive approval PRIOR to starting their research. To begin this process a student should discuss their plans with their instructor as well as be familiar with the policies found at the link below.

For important information about the research process, ethical research, extracurricular research opportunities, and to get answers to questions like
- When I conduct a survey or an interview, can I collect data from subjects off-campus?
- Do I need any approvals if I collect data from subjects on-campus?
- What is the IRB and what is CAPMAS?
- What presentation or publication opportunities do I have?

Visit the following link or scan this QR code

http://schools.aucegypt.edu/academics/rhet/FAQ/Pages/Research.aspx

**Scope of this Syllabus and Contingency Plans**
This syllabus includes all written content, graphic displays, as well as the content referenced in the links/QR codes included in this document. Any student who continues in the course is expected to understand and abide by all policies, guidelines and schedules mentioned therein. However, in the event of the suspension of normal university classes, the initial plan is to continue with the course as long as there is internet accessibility in Egypt, but this may require adjustment to policies, guidelines, and schedules. Thus, in the case of the suspension of classes, please check your email and course website for details about how the course will continue.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th><strong>Focus on Self: Traveler versus Tourist</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Concepts to be Discussed | - What are the reasons people travel?  
- Are Iyer’s reasons for travel the same as yours? How do they differ?  
- What are the conflicts that Alden faces on his journey?  
- How do the traveler and the tourist differ?  
- How do the writers’ perspectives on travel related? |
| Assignments | **Readings:**  
| **Writing Response 1:** DUE: 9/17 | Reflect on the Self: write about the traveler and the tourist in you. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th><strong>Focus on Self continued: Travel and Transformation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Concepts to be Discussed | - How does each writer see himself or herself in relation to the other?  
- What observations do the writers make about how the place has changed time?  
- How does the writer perceive place differently at different times?  
- Why does the travel experience transform the self? |
| Assignments | **Readings:**  
1 |
| **Written Response 2:** DUE: 9/28 | Reflect on self: write about an encounter you have had with another culture, |
| **Writing Assignment 1:** DUE: 10/5 | Changing perspectives For this assignment, students will be required to change their perspective of a particular place through a local adventure. They will visit an area of Cairo they do not frequent, for example, the metro lines to El Marg, a ‘baladi’ ahwa, a zikr, a sobou (celebration of baby’s arrival) etc. Students will then write an essay of no less than 500 words, which details the experience and their reflections. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th><strong>Focus on Early Historical Travelers</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Concepts to be Discussed | - Compare the obstacles travelers faced in the past to those faced by travelers today.  
- What are the motivations for the modern day pilgrim? Do they bring a new perspective to the journey?  
- Compare the experience of Ibn Battuta to that of one of the modern day pilgrims. How and why do they differ? |
| **Readings:** | |
### Assignments

   READ Chapter The Mamluks. In Week 3 Folder on Blackboard  
2. [https://wanderlust.com/journal/wanderlusted-meet-the-modern-day-pilgrims/](https://wanderlust.com/journal/wanderlusted-meet-the-modern-day-pilgrims/)  
   READ the page by Helen Avery and choose one pilgrim to follow up on.  

**Video:**  
*Ibn Battuta: The Man Who Walked Across the World* (BBC series)  
Watch at least one of the 3 parts.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8xU2ukQKiY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8xU2ukQKiY)

**Writing Response 3: DUE: 10/15**  
Compare the experiences of two of the travelers

### Weeks 4 & 5

#### Concepts to be Discussed

Focus on Politics and History  
- How do the writers use past and present history in their writing?  
- What are the various ways in which an experience with colonialism / imperialism impacts culture  
- How can the lens of imperialism affect the perspective of a traveler?  
- How can well informed research reduce a travelers’ ethnocentric perspective?  
- How can well-informed research help a writer to avoid making mundane and cliché observations?  

**Readings:**  

**Writing Assignment 2: DUE: 10/29**  
Focus on Place. For this assignment students will be required to change their perspective of a particular place through research. They will choose a place that they think they know and write a brief description of it. After conducting research the student will visit the place and then write a travel essay of no less than 750 words from a fresh perspective.

### Weeks 6 & 7

#### Concepts to be Discussed

Focus on People: Voices and Dialogues  
- How do we make contact with people of a certain community?  
- How do we identify good candidates for an interview?  
- How do we create a situation allows the candidate to reveal interesting information?  
- How do we suspend our own judgments to overcome bias?  
- Describing people and places through dialogue.

**Readings**  
2. Crocker, Bridgette. “Taking the Oars” In The Best Women’s Travel Writing: True Stories from Around the World edited by Lavinia Spalding (eBook available from AUC Library)
3. Dillon, Martin. “Jimmy the Natural” In The Best Travel Writing 2011: True Stories From Around the World. Edited by O'Reilly, James, Habegger, Larry, O'Reilly, Sean (eBook available from AUC Library)

Writing Response 4: DUE: 11/5
Think of a person you have met on your travels and write a short description. Refer to the readings 2 & 3 for examples of personal description.

Writing Assignment 3: DUE: 11/8
Writing about People For this assignment, students will be required to identify a candidate for a focused interview and write a travel essay of no less than 1000 words. Students can either interview a local craftsman, a member of a minority group in Egypt or someone they identify as unique or interesting (not a family member). For this assignment students will integrate the skills they have acquired in previous weeks including: conducting effective interviews, using information from interviews and dialogue in their writing, researching and using history in their writing, and attempting to overcome bias.

Week 8
Concepts to be Discussed
Focus on the Senses
- What is the importance of descriptive and physical detail in recreating a place, mood, etc.? □
- Descriptive vocabulary related to the sense □
- What is the role of humor in travel writing? □
- What rhetorical devices can a writer use to place the reader at the scene?

Readings:
2. McConahay, Mary Jo. “It's in the Sauce”. In The Best Travel Writing 2011: True Stories From Around the World. Edited by O'Reilly, James, Habegger, Larry, O'Reilly, Sean (eBook available from AUC Library)

Writing Response 5: DUE 11/19
Conjuring up the senses. For this entry, students can either:
a. write about a food that they detest, describing the food, texture, scent, color and details of why they feel that way about it.
b. Write about eating the same food in two different places or with different people describing the food, texture, scent, color and details of how the meal differed in the two contexts.

Weeks 9 & 10 & 11
Focus on Senses and Place: The Desert and Sea
Readings
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts to be Discussed</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hoath, Richard. &quot;Desolate Desert: Searching for Life in the Barren Gilf Kebir.&quot; Egypt Today Feb. 2005. <a href="http://www.egypttoday.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=7856">http://www.egypttoday.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=7856</a>. 2. Hahn, Jennifer, Solo Passage Through the Inner Passage Website: Chiles, Webb. <em>In the Present Sea</em>. Web. 19 Jan. 2014. <a href="http://www.inthepresentsea.com/the_actual_site/webbchiles.html">http://www.inthepresentsea.com/the_actual_site/webbchiles.html</a>. <strong>Writing Assignment 4: DUE: 11/26 (D1)</strong>, Students can choose to either write about the desert or another place as detailed below: For this assignment students will visit a place which stimulates their senses, such as the desert, the Camel Market, the Spice Bazaar or the Friday Market, and write a travel essay of no less than 1000 words. For this assignment students will demonstrate their ability to highlight sensory experiences by describing textures, scents, sounds and color.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Writing Assignment 5: Final Project DUE: 12/6 (D1), 12/14 (D2) |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| **Publishing Travel Writing: Egypt Today** |
|  • How do I slant my writing to the audience?  
  • What does the publisher look for in travel pieces?  


**Writing Assignment 5: Final Project DUE: 12/6 (D1), 12/14 (D2)**  
For their final assignment students will utilize the skills they have gained throughout the course of the semester to produce a travel essay of no less than 1000 words, which focuses on either place, people, plot or perspective. In preparation for this final writing project, students will identify possible audiences and topics for their writing. Students will research online and visit a local publication such as “Egypt Today” to discuss their ideas with editors.  

Students will be working independently on their final writing project and consulting with the instructor on their work and progress.  
**Week 11:** Students will conduct research on the place, people, plot or perspective they have chosen to pursue for their final writing project, they will plan for their visit, and begin brainstorming.  
**Week 12:** Students will be working on their projects and conference with instructor on their work and progress.  
**Week 13:** Students will submit their first drafts and conduct peer reviews online. Class sessions will involve discussions with peers and the instructor. Instructor will meet with students outside of class.  
**Week 14:** Student final drafts are due on the last day of class. |