Dear Students:

Greetings. In a few short weeks, our group will be exploring Yellowstone National Park, researching its natural history, and reflecting upon our experiences through our writing. We hope that you are as excited about this upcoming adventure as we are.

To ensure that you are clear on our objectives and fully prepared for what we hope proves to be one of the most memorable experiences of your time at Casper College, read the attached syllabus carefully. The syllabus includes pre-course homework, a “what to bring” list, and student contact information for those who wish to carpool. Though the class does not officially start until 2 p.m. on Friday, May 27th, at the Skyline Guest Ranch outside of Cooke City, MT, please

1) make sure you have officially registered for all three classes,
2) purchase the course texts (Rebecca McClanahan’s Word Painting and Daniel Mathews’ Rocky Mountain Natural History) at the campus bookstore,
3) contact the instructors immediately if you have a known or suspected medical condition, a documented disability, or any dietary restrictions,
4) begin walking several miles a day to prep yourself and your boots for our first hike, and
5) complete the pre-class homework.

Yes, you do have considerable homework before the class meets. Get started on it right away to ensure that you are prepared for our first day together and to garner homework points.

The enclosed map offers directions to Cooke City, located just a few miles from the NE entrance to Yellowstone. You are asked to provide your own transportation to Cooke City and to carpool with fellow students if desired. While construction may occur on the stretch between Meeteetse and Cody, this remains a much quicker route than through the southern entrance to the park (the latter also requires the purchase of a park pass). To ensure that you make it to Cooke City by 2 p.m., leave Casper by 6 a.m., and pay careful attention to road signs from Cody. Each year, at least one student takes a wrong turn, so here are explicit directions once you reach Cody:

- when you enter downtown, just after the sharp left turn on WY 120, you want to turn right at the light (16th St.) to remain on WY 120
- shortly thereafter, a mere .4 miles, turn left to remain on WY 120
- 16 miles later, north of Cody, turn left onto Crandall Road (CR 7R0), also marked WY 296 in places
- stay on WY 296 until it ends at a T intersection for US 212
- turn left onto US 212 and travel another 13 miles to
  Skyline Guest Ranch, 31 Kersey Lake Road, Cooke City, MT
  406-838-2380
- if you enter the town of Cooke City, you missed the sign for Skyline

We look forward to our time together -- to a week of sharing not just Yellowstone’s wonderful backcountry but also our writing, our meals, and our lodging in the good company of fellow naturalists and writers. Have a safe trip to Cooke City, and we’ll see you soon.

Sincerely,

Terry Rasmussen and Dr. Will Robinson, Instructors
Yellowstone Experience Syllabus -- Summer 2016

ENGL 2055: Creative Writing in the Wild (3 cr)
BIOL 2110: Yellowstone Field Science (3 cr)
PEAC 2084: Outdoor Skills (1 cr)

All three courses must be taken concurrently.

Instructors:  Terry Rasmussen, PS 336, 268-2480 or 277-2761, trasmuss@caspercollege.edu
Dr. Will Robinson, LS 206, 268-2359 or 277-9246, wrobinson@caspercollege.edu

Class Schedule and Location: Students should arrive at the Skyline Guest Ranch just east of Cooke City, MT, before 2 p.m. on Friday, May 27th, the official start time for the class. Class concludes following a brief morning session on Sunday, June 5th. Students arrange their own transportation to and from Cooke City. Transportation for daily field trips will be provided.

The Yellowstone Experience: This multi-disciplinary, student-centered field trip encourages students to experience – through mind, body, and spirit – the backcountry of Yellowstone National Park and to write about those experiences. During moderately strenuous daily hikes, students gather journal observations and impressions with what Rebecca McClanahan calls the “naked” and the “imaginative” eye. The former involves accurately naming and engaging in research that informs; the latter involves sharing insight by exploiting the senses and applying the imagination. The field journal collects the raw material for verse and prose that falls into the nature writing genre, a genre that softens the boundaries between objective science and subjective art and, as Thomas Lyon explains, allows for “the rise of a new, subjective interpretation of the ‘hard’ facts.” This is a genre that “seeks to learn not just about nature,” but “to learn from nature,” as Roy Harton states, and, in so doing, to “communicate the wisdom of life,” which is why nature writing “always returns to the personal observations of the writer.” The course culminates in the submission of portfolio materials to the two instructors’ mailboxes in the main floor office of PS before noon on Thursday, July 21st.

ENGL 2055 Catalog Description: Student-centered, weeklong field experience focuses on reading and writing imaginative prose and verse inspired by nature, specifically in Yellowstone National Park. Class is devoted to collecting journal observations on the trail, engaging in a variety of focused writing exercises, and discussing readings and each others’ writing.

BIOL 2110 Catalogue Description: Immersion in the ecology, natural history, and politics of Yellowstone National Park (YNP). It is aimed at educating students on scientific facts that may complement their writing. Concentration is on plant, animal and fungus identification, natural history, animal behavior and ecology. Political issues in the park – for example, snowmobile use, bison control, wolf restoration – are also discussed.

PEAC 2084 Catalogue Description: Introductory course conducted in a backcountry setting.

Yellowstone Experience Prerequisites: English 1010 and one semester of college biology or permission of instructors; alert senses; ability to hike moderate (5-12 mile) distances over uneven terrain; discipline to independently complete course requirements before and after class meets. Nonrefundable Course Fee: Nonrefundable course fee of $500 covers meals and lodging.

Medical Conditions: Anyone with a known or suspected medical condition must contact both instructors in person before class begins.

ADA Accommodations: Anyone with a known or suspected disability that may prevent the
fullest expression of abilities must contact both instructors before class meets. To request academic accommodations, students must first consult with the college’s Disability Services Counselor in the Gateway Building, Room 344, (307)268-2557, bhuu@caspercollege.edu. The Disability Services Counselor is responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting accommodations, determining eligibility for accommodations, and helping students request and use appropriate accommodations.

Outcomes:
- to identify and use appropriate terms applicable to verse, nonfiction, and science
- to produce poetry & nonfiction that demonstrate an understanding of the elements of each genre
- to constructively evaluate your own and others’ work

General Objectives:
- to view nature as a source of inspiration for “exploratory and reflective” writing
- to enhance our appreciation and understanding of the beauty of language and science
- to immerse ourselves in the range of literature that falls into the nature writing category
- to encourage writing that falls into the nature writing genre
- to recognize writing, reading, and discussion as interrelated activities

Specific Objectives:
- to record detailed journal observations (w/both “naked” and “imaginative” eye), research, understandings, and reflections, including responses to assigned readings
- to demonstrate knowledge & understanding in regard to the natural history, ecology, and politics of YNP
- to demonstrate the ability to write engaging & persuasive creative nonfiction that “fuses” art and science, that informs and enlightens, and that captures the elements of the nature writing genre (see SIR BELCH)
- to demonstrate originality and critical thinking in your writing
- to demonstrate close attention to expression (diction and syntax), meaningful revision, and editing
- to demonstrate the ability to smoothly synthesize and transition between literary, scientific, and philosophical discussions
- to carefully document all borrowed information that is not common knowledge, using MLA in-text documentation style
- to develop and submit on time a writing portfolio containing the required materials
- to demonstrate active participation in daily hikes, discussions, and writing activities
- to demonstrate responsible, safety-oriented backcountry preparedness
- to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of conservation
- to demonstrate a positive attitude and perseverance as well as a recognition of the value of teamwork when faced with physical challenges

Methods: Mini-lectures, discussions, and reading and writing activities.

Required Texts, Readings, and Materials
- Journal (spiral-leafed is best)
- attached pre-class readings
- “Trail Readings” and “Evening Readings” packets (distributed during class)
- items found on attached “What to Bring” list

Office Hours: The instructors will not keep office hours this summer and both have travel plans, but you can try to reach either by phone or email.
Last Date to Change to Audit Status or Withdraw from Class: Last day of class.

Students’ Rights and Responsibilities: Students are expected to treat others in the class and their opinions with civility and respect, to avoid language or behavior that disrupts or dampens individual or classroom spirit. Please refer to the Casper College Student Conduct and Judicial Code (in the Casper College Catalog and Student Handbook) regarding your rights and responsibilities as a student. Cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off and out of sight in the van and on the trail, unless instructor permission has been granted.

Academic Dishonesty: Casper College demands intellectual honesty. Proven plagiarism or any form of dishonesty associated with the academic process can result in the offender failing the course in which the offense was committed or expulsion from school. See the Casper College Student Code of Conduct. Plagiarism is defined as failure to credit the source of borrowed information and/or ideas; failure to place another’s exact words within quotation marks; copying or buying someone else’s text and presenting it as your own; distorting or misrepresenting someone’s material or thoughts through a sloppy paraphrase or an incomplete context; inaccurately presenting a source’s name or bibliographic information. If you have doubts as to what constitutes plagiarism, see the instructors before you submit questionable material. Any evidence of plagiarism will result in failure of this class. Carefully review the in-text handling of sources for creative nonfiction (including nature writing) in the attached “Creative Nonfiction and Research Paper Documentation Guide.” Additional documentation style basics can be found at the Online Writing Lab at Purdue University: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/.

Official Means of Communication: Casper College faculty and staff will employ the student’s assigned Casper College email account as a primary method of communication. Students are responsible for checking their account regularly.

Chain of Command: If you have any problem with this class, first contact the instructors. If you are dissatisfied with the solution offered by the instructors, please take your problem through the appropriate chain of command, starting with the department heads, then the school deans, and lastly the vice president for academic affairs.

Weather Forecast: Spring weather in Yellowstone is highly unpredictable and subject to extremes. Early mornings will be cold, with temperatures near or below freezing. By mid-morning, we may find ourselves hiking in pleasant 70-degree weather. When afternoon mountain storms roll in, cold rain, hail, and snow are all possible. Therefore, dress in protective layers that can be easily donned and removed throughout the day. Also, we slosh through or ford creeks on many trails, so plan to get your feet wet. Stout, well-worn-in hiking boots are a must.

Instructor Disclaimer: Hiking in Yellowstone presents risks usually not present in the traditional classroom, given the presence of large animals (bison, moose, bear, etc.); the absence of man-made physical barriers designed to protect against the elements (lightning, snow, ultra-violet rays, etc.); and the natural obstacles strewn along the trail (downed trees, tree roots, or boulders poised to twist or break an ankle, etc.) In other words, you participate in this class at your own risk and we, your instructors, absolve ourselves of any and all responsibility should you hobble home in a leg cast; stumble into a boiling mud pot; become disoriented from a lightning strike or baseball-sized hail; suffer first degree sunburn or a buffalo goring, etc.
Field Journal: The journal is perhaps the most important feature of this class. “Journal,” derived from the Latin word “journie,” is a record of the day’s travels and of your intellectual and imaginative work. The journal is where you record, in an honest and informal fashion, all of your field notes, research, observations, inferences, impressions, reflections, questions, musings, sketches, and responses (to surroundings, readings, writing prompts, mini-lectures, discussions, and even each other.) In other words, your journal captures much of the raw material used to shape your course portfolio – which represents the majority of the course points. While the instructors will not ask to see your journal, we insist that you 1) carry it with you at all times in an easily retrievable spot, 2) note the date and location for each entry, and 3) guard it with your life.

Writing Prompts: Many of our daily writing prompts can be found in the Trail Packet or Evening Reading Packet. Recognize that not every prompt will inspire a poem or essay for every student, but, hopefully, many will. Feel free to borrow any prompt even if it hasn’t been assigned.

Daily Feedback: Take advantage of our limited time together and earn participation points by receiving daily one-on-one feedback from each instructor on a poem or essay in progress.

Singing for your Supper: Each evening before or during dinner, earn participation points by sharing an essay (an excerpt is fine) or a poem in progress, followed by a discussion of plans for the work’s future development.

Evening Readings: After dinner, you will be assigned homework in the Evening Readings Packet. After reading the material, respond to the text as well as any questions in your journal and experiment with any associated writing prompt.

Daily Participation and Preparedness: Health permitting, you are expected to actively and responsibly participate in each day’s hikes and other activities.

Portfolio: Aside from the preliminary homework and participation points, the portfolio constitutes the majority of the points possible for the Yellowstone Experience. Carefully review the portfolio requirements, evaluation criteria, and due date. Following our week in Yellowstone, work on portfolio materials daily to ensure individual submissions not only meet but exceed all of our expectations.

Audience for Portfolio Writing Assignments: Consider yourself the initial audience for your writing. (Engage, enlighten, surprise, and satisfy yourself -- first and foremost – before expecting to accomplish as much with readers.) The final audience – to consider during revision -- consists of the class, educated and inquisitive readers who should be happy with a semi-formal register.

Late Work: No late work accepted.

Policies at the Lodge:

- remove shoes at door
- backpack inventory check before breakfast at 6 a.m.
- van departure at 6:30 a.m.
- grab sack lunch on way out door
- evening quiet time selected by group
Policies on the Trail:

- although it is not necessary to be on someone else’s heels, stay within speaking distance of the hiker ahead of you at all times
- if you need to leave the trail to relieve yourself, *always* notify one of the instructors and *always* take another person with you
- in addition to your own, please pick up others’ traces of litter
- in areas where visibility or hearing is limited, make your presence known by talking/singing
- in all other areas, please respect your classmates by not speaking when they are journaling or engaged in reflection
- do not pick the wildflowers or collect any other souvenirs on the trail
- if you find yourself tiring or experience any physical discomfort or symptoms of concern, notify the instructors immediately
- never approach any large animal, always keep a safe distance, and promptly alert the rest of the class to the presence of any such animal
- if we encounter a bear (with or w/o a cub) or a moose (with a calf), regardless of whether we appear to have been noticed, we will move slowly and quietly out of the area
- in the highly unlikely event that we – a group of smelly, noisy humans – should surprise a bear on the trail, do not run, scream, or make eye contact
- in the even more unlikely event that a bear charges, remain stationary or very slowly drop to your knees and speak calmly, if at all, to let the bear know that we are what we are, mere humans, nothing more (know that most charges are bluffs in which the bear veers off at the last minute)
- in the extremely unlikely event that you are attacked, you may fight back with pepper spray, but do not attempt physical force; instead, play dead; lie flat with your stomach on the ground and your hands and arms covering your neck and head and do not move or look up until the bear has had plenty of time to leave the area
- avoid talk of our lives outside of Yellowstone, unless that talk relates to a writing project
- no activated cell phones, unless okayed by instructors

Student Carpool/Contact Info

Casey L. Beck ([casey.beck@my.caspercollege.edu](mailto:casey.beck@my.caspercollege.edu)), 307-247-4009
Aaron T. Clifford ([aaron.clifford@my.caspercollege.edu](mailto:aaron.clifford@my.caspercollege.edu)), 307-277-7953
Jasmine S. Hamilton ([jasmine.hamilton@my.caspercollege.edu](mailto:jasmine.hamilton@my.caspercollege.edu)), 307-797-6398
Crystal L. Hartford ([crystal.hartford@my.caspercollege.edu](mailto:crystal.hartford@my.caspercollege.edu)), 307-797-3890
Blair Jackett ([blair.jackett@my.caspercollege.edu](mailto:blair.jackett@my.caspercollege.edu)), 307-262-4366
Jayne E. Jacobs ([jayne.jacobs@my.caspercollege.edu](mailto:jayne.jacobs@my.caspercollege.edu)), 307-315-8125
David B. Kerr ([david.kerr@my.caspercollege.edu](mailto:david.kerr@my.caspercollege.edu)), 307-797-3488
Daniel C. Tolman ([daniel.tolman2@my.caspercollege.edu](mailto:daniel.tolman2@my.caspercollege.edu)) 307-221-1893

PRELIMINARY HOMEWORK to be completed BEFORE class meets:

I. Complete the “Learning Communities Start of Class Survey” by sharing a thoughtful, typewritten response to these two questions:
   1) Why did you sign up for this learning community?
   2) What are your personal expectations or goals as a member of this learning community?
II. Read and annotate chapters 1-5 in McClanahan’s *Word Painting*. Prepare two typed outlines (one for you and one for the instructors) addressing the following:

- **Chapter 1 – What is Description?** Identify and define the three parts of the “story-telling tripod.” Also, identify the four ways to write effective description.
- **Chapter 2 – The Eye of the Beholder.** How does McClanahan distinguish between the “naked eye” and the “imaginative eye”? What six classifications does she make in regard to the latter?
- **Chapter 3 – From Eye to Word: The Description.** Prepare a list of what to do and what not to do in regard to descriptive writing.
- **Chapter 4 – The Nose and Mouth and Hand and Ear of the Beholder.** What advice does McClanahan offer in regard to how to incorporate all of the senses in descriptive writing?
- **Chapter 5 – Figuratively Speaking: A “Perception of Resemblances.”** Begin by sharing McClanahan’s definition of (and distinctions between) figurative language, metaphor, and simile. Throughout this chapter, McClanahan offers generous advice in regard to what does or does not contribute to an effective metaphor. List do’s and don’ts in this regard. Why does McClanahan make a distinction between “fancy” and imagination? Aside from metaphor and simile, identify and define other common figures of speech.

(Plan to finish reading chapters 6-9 in McClanahan after the trip to YNP.)

III. Consider how McClanahan’s advice connects to the nature writing genre. Nature writing often begins with descriptions of the natural world (out there), but the best nature writing ultimately shifts its attention to the internal landscape of the observer (within), thereby facilitating what McClanahan identifies as “one of our duties as writers”: “to become surprised, to land in a different place from where we planned – a more difficult, provocative place.” To reach this “more difficult” place that truly surprises, we must be willing to honestly identify and explore the conflicts (or tensions) that arise. To assist in thinking about the elements of the nature writing genre, please memorize the acrostic SIR BELCH as a mnemonic tool:

- **S** is for sensory description (the “naked” eye)
- **I** is for the “imaginative” eye (reflectively re-visions)
- **R** is for research (into the next three letters & any other interesting and relevant subjects)
- **B** is for biology (e.g., behavior, ecology, evolution)
- **E** is for etymology (origin/history of words, including root words within genus & species)
- **L** is for literature (memorable passages from prose, verse, folklore, mythology, etc.)
- **C** is for conflict (internal – as well as external)
- **H** is for honesty

IV. Read “Buckeye” by Scott Russell Sanders and “The Same River Twice” by David Quammen. As you read, see if you can identify the elements of SIR BELCH at work. Also, note how Sanders’ essay illustrates a fluid, free-association approach to organization, given how the piece evolves from a discussion of a buckeye, to the author’s father and his carpentry skills, to the Ohio woods and its many species of trees, to the author’s growing love for the earth, to his grief over an earth marred and a father lost, to his move and subsequent return to his native woods, and finally to a spiritual reunion with his father. As for Quammen’s essay, note how the author seamlessly juxtaposes three seemingly disparate subjects into one unified and coherent essay: a philosophical discussion of Heraclitus, a scientific discussion of *Pteronarctys californica*, and a personal discussion of his friendship with two people.
V. In your journal, freewrite about a specific experience, place, or person that has been instrumental in influencing your view towards or your relationship with the natural world. Freewriting is honest, uncensored, unstructured, nonstop, stream of consciousness writing that goes wherever your thoughts go, so don’t expect to stay focused. In short, don’t worry about organization, expression, grammar or spelling. Just keep writing to “discover” whatever insights & surprises your journaling might reveal.

VI. Read “Natural Disasters” by Natalie Angier, noting the role and development of descriptive examples (the building blocks of any good essay) that allow the author to show readers her fears.

VII. In your journal, write about any fears (former or current) you hold related to the natural world, including any fears you may harbor in regard to spending nine days in Yellowstone as part of this class. Also, discuss how your fear(s) may make you a danger to yourself or others and why. Freewrite for a good hour or more, analyzing causes as well as effects. (If you think you have no fears, freewrite on your fearlessness and analyze its potential causes and actual consequences.)

VIII. Essay Assignment: Look over your two freewrites and determine what material surprises you (no doubt offering some insight) and what holds the greatest conflict and, therefore, the greatest promise for an interesting essay with an argument uniquely your own. Develop the essay. As you do, 1) pile up the examples (never settle for one or two; every good point deserves at least three if not six, seven, or eight), 2) incorporate ALL the elements of SIR BELCH, and 3) review all you have ever learned about good writing, keeping in mind that good nature writing contains many of the same elements as a good story.

- an introduction that suggests conflict and hooks the reader.
- a main character who wants something (even if that something is a better understanding) and who encounters internal and/or external conflict that moves the story forward
- effective description that brings the narrator and any other characters, the setting, the actions, the language, and the story or narrative, itself, to life by showing (not telling)
- a carefully crafted structure to keep readers oriented (to time and place and to how they arrived at point B from point A)
- a provocative conclusion, often an image that shows rather than words that tell
- surprise (often achieved through honest handling of conflict, description, or theme)
- insight into what it means to be human (theme, the heart of the text)

Continue to revise and polish this essay before class begins. Bring 11 double-spaced, typed copies of your paper (1000 words min.) to class for pre-course points and a class/group workshop.

IX. YNP Readings and Quiz: Carefully read the “Introduction” and “Park Issues” texts. Complete the “Quiz” over the material in these two documents for pre-class points.
Points Possible

Pre-course Materials (bring all four completed projects to class)
35 pts. – Outline of McClanahan (1st five chapters, two copies, typed)
35 pts. – Quiz over “Introduction” and “Park Issues” materials
50 pts. – 11 copies of essay (double-spaced, typed, 1000 word min.) for class workshop
10 pts. -- Learning Community Start of Class Survey (addressing three questions, typed)

Course Portfolio
Due before noon, Thurs., July 21st – ground floor PS office/faculty mailroom.
Place Expression submission (in separate envelope) in Terry’s mailbox. Prepare two hard copies of all other materials, placing each portfolio in a folder or envelope for each instructor.
200 pts. – Two Longer Creative Nonfiction Essays, 1000 word min. (100 pts. each)
130 pts. -- Two Shorter Essays, 500-1000 words each (65 pts. each)
160 pts. -- Four Poems, 12 line min. each (40 pts. each)
60 pts. – Abecedarian of YNP flora and fauna; each entry should 1) describe w/both the “naked” and the “imaginative” eye and 2) inform (borrowing from Mathews &/or others)
25 pts. – End of Class Reflection, 250 word min. (addressing seven questions)
25 pts. – Expression submission (go to http://www.caspercollege.edu/expression for guidelines and application – application must be complete to earn pts.)

Daily Participation and Preparedness
40 pts. – “sing for your supper” each evening – share journal excerpt OR essay or poem draft that captures all elements of SIR BELCH, followed by plans for development
40 pts. -- receive daily feedback from both instructors on poem or essay in progress.
90 pts. -- responsible, safety-oriented backcountry preparedness (review backpack requirements daily!) and participation in daily hikes (health permitting)

Other
too valuable to tally -- journal
too valuable to tally -- curiosity, wonder, enthusiasm, determination, and teamwork (when the going, literally, gets tough and the physical terrain presents a challenge)
Brownie pts. -- photos of our week together on the “Yellowstone Experience” Facebook page

900 Total Points Possible

Grading Scale -- 900-820=A; 819-760=B; 759-700=C; 699-620=D; 619 and below=F

Evaluation Criteria:

Daily Participation and Preparedness
You begin the course with the 170 points possible for participation and preparedness. If you are not present at a scheduled meeting or van departure time, you lose a whopping 90 points and, yes, the van will leave without you. Exhibiting irresponsible trail preparedness (such as failing to inventory and restock your backpack daily) or other reckless behavior that jeopardizes you or your classmates will also cost you 90 points (or, if severe enough, expulsion). You lose 40 points if you fail to visit one-on-one with each instructor each day to receive feedback on a work in progress, just as you lose 40 points if you are ill-prepared to “sing for your supper.”
Essays
Each work will be evaluated for how well it captures the elements of \textsc{SIR BELCH} in an engaging and \textbf{DESCRIPTIVE NARRATIVE} that connects, directly or indirectly, to our week together in Yellowstone. Review McClanahan’s points regarding quality description.

Each essay should \textbf{INFORM} (teach) readers about some element of the natural world and \textbf{ENLIGHTEN} readers (lead to some higher understanding) in regard to what it means to be human. To achieve the former will require a critical analysis of the available research; to achieve the latter will require some honest reflection.

\textbf{Material.} Along with meeting the above requirements, the essay contains a clear, interesting, and well-developed thesis. \textbf{Organization.} Each paragraph has a single focus; material flows smoothly through the use of transitions between & within paragraphs and through the careful synthesis of information and experience. \textbf{Expression.} Sentences varied, rhythmic, and active (including active verbs); diction is accurate and precise, with attention to a word’s connotations; imagery is fresh and colorful; tone is rhetorically effective. \textbf{Presentation.} Clean grammar, spelling, and punctuation prevail. Review “Using Latin Names of Organisms” for proper handling of genus and species.

\textbf{Documentation.} All borrowed information, ideas, research, and numerical data is carefully documented using MLA style. Direct and indirect quotations are also handled with extreme care. \textbf{Nature essays are a form of creative nonfiction; for in-text MLA handling of sources, review attached “Creative Nonfiction and Research Paper Documentation.”}

\textbf{Poetry}
Poetry will be evaluated for \textbf{sound} (including meter and line breaks) & \textbf{sense} (particularly precise and accurate diction, imagery, originality, and impact), for how well it incorporates the \textbf{elements of poetry covered in “Poetry Guidelines” handout}, and for \textbf{presentation} (editing). Each poem in the portfolio must also connect, directly or indirectly, to our time together in YNP.

\textbf{End of Class Reflection}
Thoughtfully respond in paragraph form (min. of eight paragraphs) to the following questions, sharing plenty of specific examples as support when possible, to earn up to 25 points.

1) What did you gain from this experience?
2) What did you enjoy about this learning community?
3) Did this learning community meet your expectations and goals? Why or why not?
4) What would you change about this learning community?
5) How has the learning community helped you to make connections and become a better critical thinker?
6) In what ways might you apply what you have learned in this learning community to future classes or your career?
7) Would you enroll in another learning community? Why or why not?
8) Would you recommend a learning community to a friend? Why or why not?
Essential Items to Bring to Class

- required course texts (Mathews, McClanahan), this syllabus, and all advance readings
- 11 typed copies of essay
- completed quiz over “YNP Introduction” and “Park Issues”
- field journals and several pens
- a good dictionary and thesaurus
- comfortable, lightweight backpack (overnight packs may be too bulky for the vans)
- toiletries, bath towel, and washcloth (in case towels are limited in the lodge)
- heavy socks and comfortable, worn-in, waterproof ankle-high hiking boots (no sandals or tennis shoes on the trail)
- warm clothing (think layers!), waterproof jacket, warm hat, sun hat, gloves
- large (min. quart-sized) water bottle or bladder to refill daily
- cash for incidentals (Terry and Will occasionally stop for ice cream after a hike)
- curiosity, imagination, wonder, and enthusiasm

Additional Items to Bring/Keep/Restock Daily in Your Backpack

- field journal and several pens
- Mathews’ text
- Ziploc baggies, toilet paper (we don’t leave anything on the trail)
- large (min. one quart) water bottle or bladder
- warm hat, sunhat, sunscreen, and sunglasses
- rain gear
- warm jacket, hat, gloves
- extra pair of socks, extra shoelaces, and moleskin (for blisters)
- “Trail Readings Packet” (provided)
- additional flora, fauna, and tracking guides (provided)
- binoculars (if you have them – otherwise, provided) and hand lens (provided)
- lunch (provided)

Again, no activated cell phones on the trail or in the van, unless okayed.

Optional Items

- camera
- walking stick
- insect repellent
- bear repellent (absolutely must be sealed in Ziploc baggie at all times except on the trail!)
- slip on shoes for off-trail travel to dinner (think mud and snow)
- swimwear (for possible soak in hot springs)
- musical instruments for evening entertainment
- favorite snacks/foods/refreshments; while meals are provided, you are welcome to bring your favorite snacks (communal refrigerator available in lodge)

The instructors will carry a first-aid kit and bear spray.
Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as failure to credit the source of borrowed information or ideas; failure to place another’s exact words within quotation marks; copying or buying someone else’s material or work and presenting it as your own; distorting or misrepresenting someone’s material or thoughts through a sloppy paraphrase or an incomplete direct quote; and inaccurately presenting a source’s name or bibliographic information. If you have questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, contact the instructors before you submit questionable material. Any evidence of plagiarism will result in failure of the paper and possible disciplinary action by the college.

What is documentation: giving credit to the source (author) of borrowed information, ideas, and/or passages

Three ways to document a source in your paper:
1. Direct quotation (“word for word within quotation marks”)
2. Indirect quotation (restating another’s passage in your own words and your own sentence structure; also known as paraphrasing)
3. Summary (recapping another’s main argument and support, often mixing direct and indirect quotes)

All three of the above require citing the source (according to Terry Rasmussen . . . ) in the paper, itself, to avoid plagiarism!

Employ more indirect than direct quotations when you document so that
1. your voice dominates, and
2. you gain greater credibility as a writer.

An indirect quotation (paraphrase) must be restated not just in your own words but also in your own sentence structure to avoid plagiarism. Simply plugging in synonyms but retaining the original sentence structure is unacceptable.


A direct quotation that is a complete thought can be introduced w/your voice in three ways – through the use of a comma, the word “that,” or a colon:
Gary Snyder states, “we are all capable of extraordinary transformations” (54).
Gary Snyder states that “we are all capable of extraordinary transformations” (54).
Gary Snyder shares an optimism in regard to all: “we are all capable of extraordinary transformations” (54). (Note how a complete sentence must precede the use of a colon.)

Your voice can also be inserted within or at the end of a direct quotation, as follows:
“We are all capable,” writes Gary Snyder, “of extraordinary transformations” (54).
“We are all capable of extraordinary transformations,” according to Gary Snyder (54).

Note the placement of commas in relation to quotation marks in the above examples.

The only two reasons to use a direct quotation over an indirect quotation:
1. necessary (no way to restate the original passage in an equal or better fashion)
2. memorable (passage is particularly memorable due to language, imagery, or rhythm)
What must be documented:
1 Anything not considered “common knowledge” (see next section)
2 Research findings
3 Statistics or other numerical data
4 Controversial opinions (anything open to argument)
5 Original ideas, creative expressions, or wording
6 Any arguments/assertions not based on your own experiences or observations

What does not need to be documented:
7 Personal experiences, observations, inferences, ideas, or speculations
8 Common sense conclusions
9 “common knowledge” (accepted facts or information that can easily be verified in several sources)

Documentation Guidelines:
1 When in doubt, document (according to so and so!)
2 It’s always better to over-cite a source rather than under-cite. (In other words, if an entire paragraph borrows from a single source, refer to that source throughout the paragraph and not just once.)
3 The first in-text reference to the author should include the author’s first and last name; subsequent references should only cite the last name.
4 The author’s voice should always be treated in the historical present tense, regardless of when a text was written. (Aristotle writes, states, argues, etc.)
5 Page numbers, when available, should appear in parenthesis before the final punctuation with both direct and indirect quotations.
6 If a letter, word, or clause is inserted into a direct quotation, that material must be placed in brackets.
7 If a word or more is omitted from a direct quotation, a three dot ellipsis is used … and if the end of the sentence is omitted a four dot ellipsis is used. . . .

No Bibliography for Creative Nonfiction
Traditional academic research papers usually follow a strict documentation style, such as MLA or APA, and conclude with a complete bibliography. In contrast, creative nonfiction, much like journalistic pieces and letters to the editor, typically integrates source information (author, title, and year) in sentences within the essay, itself, and the paper does not contain a bibliography. The following sentence illustrates what must appear: According to Becky Bradway and Doug Hesse in their 2009 book, Creating Nonfiction, most readers of creative nonfiction don’t expect a bibliography or footnotes; instead, they “trust” the author not to fabricate material and recognize that “the information is not the focus.” Instead, these authors continue, the real focus is on “ground[ing] an emotional subject in reality.”

Bibliography (known as/titled Works Cited with MLA) for Research Papers:
1 A complete and accurate bibliographic entry for each source cited in the paper must appear on the Works Cited page.
2 The author of each source appearing on the Works Cited page must also appear in the paper.
3 Bibliographic entries should be organized alphabetically, by the authors’ last names, and should contain and properly format all of the publishing information.

For more information on preparing each entry, according to MLA guidelines, go to the OWL at Purdue University: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/