**Herstories**

***Library-Short Creative Writing Course Syllabus***

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**Course Website: www.herstories.wordpress.com**

**Course Term:** Spring 2016

**Course Meeting Times (Physical & Virtual):**

March 8th, 22nd, | April 12th, 26th

**Course Goals:**

* Introduce student participants to famous women writers, artists, poets, and advocates for change born in the state of Missouri.

**Expected Student Learning Outcomes:**

* Student participants will read works by writers and discuss their contributions to Missouri history and society.
* Student participants will produce a portfolio of reflective essays that deal with each body of work examined in the course.

**Required Texts**:

All course materials are provided online via the course website under the tab entitled: Reading List - Available for download.

**Types of Assignments**

Reflective Essays & Discussion Forum Posts

**Sequence of Assignments**

Bi-Weekly

**Basis for Assigning the Course Certificate**

* Students must sign-up online using the form provided on the course website.
* Students must turn in (4) reflective essays.
* Students must collaborate in the course (4) times in the discussion forum.
* Students must complete the end of course survey.

**The Reflective Essay**

A reflective essay is a form of writing that examines and observes the progress of the writer’s individual experience. While reflective essays explain and analyze the development of the writer, they also discuss future goals. Reflective essays are often associated with academic portfolios and especially writing portfolios. As part of a writing portfolio, reflective essays will critically analyze your development as a student. This should include a discussion of the strengths you have developed as a writer as well as your weaknesses. Closely related to these weaknesses, writers could also discuss how they plan to improve in the future.

When writing a reflective essay, it is important to use descriptive language. In doing so, your reader will understand that you are familiar with the subject matter and that you have thought critically about your development as a student. Reflective essays are based upon your own experiences, so it is expected that you write about yourself, your ideas, and your opinions. As a result, it is completely acceptable to use first person pronouns such as “I” or “me” in these essays. Since the reflective essay is built upon personal experience, the writer has the liberty of being as creative as necessary. At the same time, do not let a focus on creativity take precedence over the important task of proving to your reader how you have grown as a student.

**Structure**

The structure of a reflective essay is very similar to the structure of most academic writing. Unless you are trying to argue a point, position, or perspective through your reflection, it is not required that your essay contain a thesis statement. Reflective essays will be formatted in MLA citation format (writing style). Structure for reflective essays in this course is as follows:

**Introduction**

Introductions to reflective essays do not need to be longer than one paragraph in length. When writing an introduction, present the purpose of your reflection without giving your reader too much detail about the body of your paper. In the introduction, it is also helpful to tell your reader if you met your goals or the goals of the class/project. Later, in the body of the reflection, you can explain how these goals were or were not met in greater detail. Think of the introduction as a brief preview to the rest of your reflection.

**Body**

The body should discuss in detail your development as a student. For instance, if writing a reflective essay at the end of the quarter for a certain class, how did you grow over the course of the class? What have you learned? Can you apply what you have learned to your future academic or life pursuits? How did you or did you not meet your goals or the goals of the class/project you were involved in? This is slightly different from what you should discuss in your introduction. Do not just tell the reader whether or not you met these goals. Rather, show the reader by using illustrations from class or other relevant experiences. Are there any skills you can improve on? If so, how do you plan on doing so in the future?

**Conclusion**

In the conclusion of a reflective essay, you should remind the reader of the ways in which you have developed as a student. This may seem redundant since you already discussed these things in detail in your essay’s body, but remember that the conclusion is the last thing your audience will read. As a result, leave no doubt in the reader’s mind that your essay clearly demonstrates how you have grown.

**Notes:**

All essays should be in MLA format to receive credit for assignment. Include a cover page with each essay that is due.[**Need a quick tutorial regarding MLA formatting; click here.**](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.youtube.com/watch?v%3D8xAc4yZ8VSA&sa=D&ust=1457464032964000&usg=AFQjCNGrP3Rss34sRJHewWH64hrrpVzWEA) Discussion forum posts should be listed in the **Recent Posts**section of the website for the appropriate lesson. It is required to respond to at least two posts by your peers in this course.

**March 8th | Lucille Bluford**

**Reading Assignment:**

**The Unforgettable Miss Bluford:**

[http://www.poynter.org/2004/the-unforgettable-miss-bluford/21161/](https://www.google.com/url?q=http://www.poynter.org/2004/the-unforgettable-miss-bluford/21161/&sa=D&ust=1457464032966000&usg=AFQjCNEj_lMrTF3K9E8D1majkav0hx-zyA)

**Discussion Forum Due: March 20th**

**Reflective Assignment Due: March 15th**

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**March 22nd | Maya Angelou**

**Reading Assignment**

**Short Story | “The Reunion”**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByMCgZOWVfP3NzZzYmlYUWxqX21KdXNVS21GbGFFT3k5LVJJ/view?usp=sharing](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByMCgZOWVfP3NzZzYmlYUWxqX21KdXNVS21GbGFFT3k5LVJJ/view?usp%3Dsharing&sa=D&ust=1457464032970000&usg=AFQjCNHAl2_vJCT_EeucSWiaUf25SFd17Q)

**Discussion Forum Due**: **March 31st**

**Reflective Assignment Due: March 29th**

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**April 12th | Kate Chopin**

**Reading Assignment**

**Short Story | “The Story of an Hour”**

[http://www.katechopin.org/story-hour/](https://www.google.com/url?q=http://www.katechopin.org/story-hour/&sa=D&ust=1457464032973000&usg=AFQjCNHVtPNI0jGqovipaqOYuH2wIz5WTg)

**Discussion Forum: April 30th**

**Reflective Assignment Due: April 26th**

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**April  26th | Josephine Baker**

**Reading Assignment**

**Speech/Essay | (1963) Josephine Baker, “Speech at the March on Washington”**[http://www.blackpast.org/1963-josephine-baker-speech-march-washington#sthash.eZUd7h7z.dpuf](https://www.google.com/url?q=http://www.blackpast.org/1963-josephine-baker-speech-march-washington%23sthash.eZUd7h7z.dpuf&sa=D&ust=1457464032976000&usg=AFQjCNHmZGuthGLQgMLMCq5eFJFo4wK_RA)

**Discussion Forum Due: May 1st**

**Reflective Assignment Due: May 1st**