



**Feature & Travel Writing
Syllabus
COM 428
Dr. Brian Carroll**

EC USG
Paris
Summer
2017

I. Introduction

Students will write and develop, revise, and publish to the web multimedia travel narratives. To do this, they will learn descriptive and narrative writing, as well as photographic and videographic skills and techniques. Students will learn to read Paris as a text by looking beyond the surface and by avoiding stereotype or the treatment of subject as a sort of exotic 'other.' As mostly a writing course, its emphasis is on writing as process.

Core course questions include:

- Why do we travel?
- Why do we write about travel?
- What are the core genres and styles of travel writing?
- What are the components of a skillfully crafted travel article?
- What are the habits of successful travel writers?

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, my goal is for students to:

- learn how to write travel articles for publication
- improve techniques of observation, description, and narration
- explore the ethics of travel writing
- learn basic photography, videography, and multimedia storytelling
- publish layered, multimedia travel stories to the web

II. Stuff you need to know

Instructor: Dr. Brian Carroll

E-mail: bc@berry.edu

Home page: <http://www.cubanxgiants.com>

Blog: <http://wanderingrocks.wordpress.com>

III. What you will need (required)

- *Writing & Editing for Digital Media*, Brian Carroll (Routledge, 2015)
- *Travel Writing: See the World, Sell the Story*, L.P. O'Neill (Writer's Digest, 2005)
- *A Moveable Feast*, Ernest Hemingway

Also recommended, but not required:

- *Associated Press Stylebook*, 2013 edition
- A writer's handbook (any writer's handbook)

IV. Class format: The professor has planned a combination of dynamic out-of-class excursions, a range of media to examine in the classroom, and a bounty of discussion

themes and lines of inquiry. Class time will be spent learning the basic skills, planning our field work, coaching, and revising. The professor believes in discussive and collaborative learning experiences, thus we will work closely together as a team.

V. Policies

- **Attendance:** Every absence that is not excused by the program director results in the drop of a letter grade (EC USG policy). Three instances of tardiness equal one absence.
- **Field trips & fees:** Field trips are an integral and required component of Program courses, and students pay their own way.
- **Distractions:** This instructor is easily distracted. Ringing cell phones, therefore, will be lobbed out of the classroom window and into the Paris streets. Chatter during lecture will result in "professionalism and participation" point deductions, as will texting or any other unauthorized device use during lecture or topic presentations.



- **Preparation:** Complete the assignments, do the readings and be ready to tackle the activities of the day. Be ready to discuss and debate ideas and approaches.
- **Academic integrity:** Because academic integrity is the foundation of college life, academic dishonesty will result in automatic failure on the assignment in question. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism (reproducing ideas, words, or

statements without giving proper credit to original sources), fabrication, submitting the same work in multiple courses, and aiding and abetting (collusion). For definitions of these terms, please consult the instructor. If you breach this academic integrity policy, you will fail the course and be referred to your college or school dean for disciplinary action. Writing assignments will be submitted to turnitin.com, a plagiarism detection database.

VI. How your course grade will be computed

Writing assignments	70%
Blog posts	20%
Professionalism, participation, attendance	10%
	<hr/> 100%

To compute your final grade, add up your point totals, apply the appropriate percentages, then refer to the suggested grading system, summarized here:

Definitions of the grades include: "A" students will demonstrate an outstanding mastery of course material and will perform **far above** that required for credit in the course and **far above** that usually seen in the course. The "A" grade should be awarded sparingly and should identify student performance that is relatively unusual in the course and that **demonstrates mastery**.

VII. Assignments

- A. Daily assignments: There will be great variety in these assignments, from observation safaris to analyzing a travel piece.
- B. Larger projects: Students will develop at least two major travel pieces, both incorporating multimedia (photography, audio, video, Flash).
- C. Blogging: So we are writing every day and exploring various stylistic techniques, students will set up and maintain a travel blog throughout the month in Paris. Some of these posts will inform the larger writing projects. Evaluated here are a student's creativity, thoughtfulness and the questions the student raises.
- D. Note that professionalism is a significant dimension to each grade. Attendance, participation, preparation and overall professionalism are aspects of this 10%.



VIII. Submitting Work

- **Late submissions:** Because the due dates for written assignments are known well in advance, there is no reason why the assignments cannot be completed on time. Moreover, it would be unfair to selectively grant extensions. All late work, therefore, will be penalized. Assignments received one class period late will be penalized one letter grade. No assignments will be accepted more than one class period late.

IX. Students with special needs

If you have special needs of any kind, including learning disabilities and/or medications, please let me know.

Finally, I believe we are here for a good time, not a long time, so let's have some fun.