

Please note that this syllabus is provisional and subject to change as the semester program is finalized

Specialized Reporting & Writing: Travel Writing

JMC3400 (4). 019:120.

Spring, 2013

CIMBA Undergraduate Program

University of Iowa

Paderno del Grappa, Italy

Professor: Dr. Dominic Standish, University of Iowa/CIMBA.

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Please refer to the University of Iowa policy on email use. E-mail will be responded to within 24 hours.

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu).

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Directory information for Dr. Dominic Standish can be found here:

<http://tippie.uiowa.edu/people/profile/profile.aspx?id=410221>

Texts:

Zobel & Butler, *The Travel Writer's Handbook*, Edition 6. Surrey Books, 1572840846.

Shapiro, *A Sense of Place: Great Travel Writers talk about their craft, lives and inspiration*. Edition 1.

Travellers' Tales, 1932361081.

Morris, *The World of Venice*. Edition 3, Faber & Faber, 168973.

Standish, *Venice in Environmental Peril? Myth and Reality*, (2012). Edition 1. University Press of America, 978-0-7618-5664-1.

We will use selected chapters from various editions of "The Best American Travel Writing."

In addition, photocopied handouts and on-line readings will be provided.

Course Overview:

Travel Writing focuses on researching and writing travel articles for magazines, books, newspapers or travel blogs. Students will read and discuss the work of accomplished contemporary travel writers and will draw upon their own experiences from their semester in the Veneto and related travels to write in a variety of travel story forms. Such forms will include the destination piece, interviewing people, environmental travel writing, culinary and travel news. Students will be encouraged to publish their work in a variety of media and will publish their own travel blog.

In addition to reading and discussing chapters and essays from the course texts, students are encouraged to visit web sites devoted to travel writing, including: www.travel-writers-exchange.com, www.transitionsabroad.com/listing/travelwriting/index.html and www.rolfpotts.com.

Much travel writing is devoted to providing practical information that assists tourists in finding prime attractions, good food and lodging in unfamiliar places. Yet the best travel writing goes beyond that to educate people about the cultures, religion, history, geography, climate, politics and people of other societies. Living and learning in Northern Italy for nearly four months gives you a unique opportunity to go beyond simple tourism to observe and tell others about Italians and their country. Given that we are in the region of Venice, we will use this opportunity to focus on travel writing about the city that became established as a key location on the European 'Grand Tour' for Americans and people from all around the world during the eighteenth century.

Goals:

By the time you board your flight to return to the United States, you should have learned in this class how to:

- research, plan, gather, organize, write and edit publishable quality stories about other countries and their people
- develop a variety of strong story ideas about other countries and cultures
- be sensitive to reporting about other people, places and the role of the media in representing various cultures to an American audience
- develop basic reporting, interviewing and research skills
- become adept at gathering descriptive details that can SHOW rather than simply TELL readers about other cultures and places
- write stories that effectively incorporate those descriptive details in simple declarative sentences that attract readers and accurately portray the places you visit
- edit, tighten and revise stories to make them of professional quality

Grades:

Final point scale: Final grades will be by percentage, following customary scales. 98.00+ = A+; 92.00 – 97.99 = A; 90.00 – 91.99 = A-; 88.00 – 89.99 = B+; 82.00 – 87.99 = B; 80.00 – 81.99 = B-; 78.00 - 79.99 points = C+; 72.00 – 77.99 = C; 71.99 - 70.00 = C-; 68.00 – 69.99 = D+; 62.00 - 67.99 = D; 60.00 – 61.99 = D-. F = below 60 points.

Please note: showing up for class, participating in discussion, having good, error-free papers and presentations is average (“C”), not excellent work. “B” work requires evidence of above-average effort, above-average understanding of the material and above-average depth of thought. “A” work will truly separate itself from the rest of the class.

There will be 1000 points available during the semester. These will be earned through travel piece assignments, a final written exam and writing weekly contributions for a travel blog.

In addition to the blog, you will write a collection of travel stories and travel commentaries that will become your travel writing portfolio:

- The culinary story
- A destination story
- A travel news feature

All written assignments must be typed, printed and emailed to the instructor on the same day the printed copy is turned in. Exams will be written answers to set questions. Excellence in exams can be achieved by answering set questions completely and through in-depth analysis of set texts.

Ways to <i>earn</i> points:	Maximum to be awarded
Travel piece assignments.....	100 points – 300 pts. total
Blog.....	100 points total
Mid-term exam	200 points total
Final exam.....	400 pts. total

Ways to lose points:

Attendance: (see CIMBA Academic Policy below).

Late assignments: 30 points will be deducted every time an assignment is not brought with you to class and turned in at the start of the class session (printed out). Be aware of printing queues. Arriving at class while your document is still printing means it is late.

You may do assignments well in advance. If an assignment is late, do it eventually and submit it by the time points are assigned. 50 points will be deducted for each assignment not turned in when the assignments are graded. Students cannot request additional activities to earn quality points.

Late assignment (not brought to class by the assigned date and time).....30 points

Each assignment not turned in by the time grades are assigned..... 50 points

Course grades will be approximately distributed according to the recommended guidelines:

Grade Distribution Chart

	A	B	C	D	F	Average
Elementary courses	15%	34%	40%	8%	3%	2.50
Intermediate courses	18%	36%	39%	5%	2%	2.63
Advanced courses	22%	38%	36%	3%	1%	2.77

This course supports the **standards of the Iowa Dozen**, the University of Iowa School of Journalism and Mass Communication’s 12 principles for excellence in journalism education, which include: learning to write correctly and clearly; to conduct research and gather information responsibly; to edit and evaluate carefully; to use media technologies thoughtfully; and to apply statistical concepts appropriately; valuing First Amendment principles; a diverse global community; creativity and independence; truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity; and exploring mass communications theories and concepts, media institutions and practices, and the role of media in shaping cultures.

Requirements

Attendance & Participation:

The program requires mandatory attendance, as outlined in the CIMBA Academic policy below:

CIMBA Academic Policy:

- Classes and CIMBA events are mandatory
- 3 unexcused absences is grounds for dismissal from the program
- We may have Saturday classes during the semester
- Our official policy is below.

Attendance policy:

Attendance at all classes and CIMBA sanctioned activities is MANDATORY. All unexcused absences will have the following consequences:

- **1st absence will result in a loss of a 1/3 of a letter grade in that class**
- **2nd (cumulative) absence will result in a loss of an entire letter grade in that class**
- **3rd (cumulative) absence will result in a dismissal from the program**

Absences due to illness require a note from the CIMBA Undergraduate Office Staff and/or the Istituto Filippin medical staff. If a student is sick and cannot attend class, he/she must inform the CIMBA Staff immediately. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.

Accommodations for Disabilities:

A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Academic Honesty:

All CLAS students have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

CLAS Final Examination Policies:

The final examination schedule for each class is announced around the fifth week of the semester by the Registrar. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. **No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes.** All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the dates and times of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint:

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

Understanding Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the [UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment](#) for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather:

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the [Department of Public Safety website](#).

Let's talk

I am eager to meet with you about the course. I will be available in the faculty office between 12 noon and 1 pm on every day we have class. Please note that this time is for pre-arranged appointments only. I will be in the smaller of the two faculty offices for these appointments.

Schedule: (Subject to change after semester program is finalized)

Unit One:

Week 1

Introductions and syllabus.

Readings:

Categories of Travel articles (packet)

'Travel', Hammer (NYT) (packet)

Week 2

Destination profiles: Focus on Venice

Readings:

Morris, *The World of Venice. Foreword and Landfall.*

Writing about culture and food

Readings:

Midnight in Sicily, Robb p.1-8 (packet)

Three Chopsticks, Trillin (The Best American Travel Writing, 2008) (packet)

Week 3

Destination profiles: Focus on Venice

Readings:

Morris, *The World of Venice. Islanders and The Venetian Way.*

Week 4

Beginning with research

Readings:

Zobel & Butler, *The Travel Writer's Handbook*, Chap. 2.

'Knowledge of history enriches our travels' (packet)

'Find details in small stories' (packet) – for blogs

Destination profiles: Focus on Venice

Readings:
Venice in Environmental Peril? Myth and Reality, Chapter 1.

Week 5 Travel week

Unit Two:

Week 6

Writing for others to read

Readings:
Zobel & Butler, *The Travel Writer's Handbook*, Chap. 13.
'Guidebooks meet Web challenge,' (IHT, 2010) (packet)

Writing about people

Readings:
'Writing about People' (packet)
Zobel & Butler, *The Travel Writer's Handbook*, Chap. 14.

Week 7

Eco-travel writing

Readings:
The Moralisation of Tourism, Butcher, Chap. 1 (packet)

Eco-travel writing

Readings:
The Moralisation of Tourism, Butcher, Chap. 2 and Postscript (packet)

Mid-term exam

Week 8

A sense of place

Readings:
Shapiro, *A Sense of Place: Great Travel Writers talk about their craft, lives and inspiration. Introduction and The End of the World* (Jan Morris)

Travel news features

Readings:
'Writers on writing' (NYT) (packet)
'The Road to Damascus', Standish (packet)
'Europe's SARS 'Capital',' Standish (packet)

Destination profiles: Focus on Venice

Readings:
Venice in Environmental Peril? Myth and Reality, Chapter 2.

Week 9

Travel week

Unit Three:

Week 10

Cross-cultural influences on travel writing

Readings:

'Excerpt from "Bill Bryson's Africa Diary"' (packet)

Marketing and publishing travel writing

Readings:

Zobel & Butler, *The Travel Writer's Handbook*, Chap. 4 and 11.

Destination profiles: Focus on Venice

Readings:

Morris, *The World of Venice. Island Towns and Holy Waters.*

Week 11

Cross-cultural influences on travel writing

Readings:

Shapiro, *A Sense of Place: Great Travel Writers talk about their craft, lives and inspiration. Yearning for the Sun, Mayes.*

Destination profiles: Focus on Venice

Readings:

Death in Venice (packet)

Morris, *The World of Venice. Dead and Alive.*

Week 12

Reflecting on our traveling

Readings:

Shapiro, *A Sense of Place: Great Travel Writers talk about their craft, lives and inspiration. A Hop Across the Pond*, Bryson.

Final exam