

CATALOG INFORMATION

Dept and Nbr: OA 502

Title: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING

Full Title: Autobiographical Writing for Older Adults

Last Reviewed: 11/25/2024

Units		Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total	
Maximum	0	Lecture Scheduled	0	18	Lecture Scheduled	0
Minimum	0	Lab Scheduled	3.00	6	Lab Scheduled	54.00
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	54.00
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 0.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 54.00

Title 5 Category: Non-Credit

Grading: Non-Credit Course

Repeatability: 27 - Exempt From Repeat Provisions

Also Listed As:

Formerly: SE 502

**Catalog Description:**  
This course is designed to teach older adults the skills necessary to write personal accounts of their life stories. A supportive learning environment allows students to read their stories and receive feedback in order to bring interest and clarity to their life experiences. Course activities promote or maintain mental, social and emotional well-being and accommodate varying skill levels.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:**

**Recommended Preparation:**

**Limits on Enrollment:**

**Schedule of Classes Information:**  
Description: This course is designed to teach older adults the skills necessary to write personal accounts of their life stories. A supportive learning environment allows students to read their stories and receive feedback in order to bring interest and clarity to their life experiences. Course activities promote or maintain mental, social and emotional well-being and accommodate

varying skill levels. (Non-Credit Course)  
Prerequisites/Corequisites:  
Recommended:  
Limits on Enrollment:  
Transfer Credit:  
Repeatability: Exempt From Repeat Provisions

## **ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:**

<b>AS Degree:</b>	<b>Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>CSU GE:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>IGETC:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>	Effective:	Inactive:
<b>CSU Transfer:</b>		Effective:	Inactive:
<b>UC Transfer:</b>		Effective:	Inactive:

**CID:**

**Certificate/Major Applicable:**  
Not Certificate/Major Applicable

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Outcomes and Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to accomplish some or all of the following:

1. Develop a regular schedule of writing.
2. Employ elements of story writing to personal accounts.
3. Describe life's challenges, as well as joys.
4. Receive and evaluate responses to writing.
5. Revise and edit work after receiving critique.
6. Discover personal insights through writing about events.
7. Gain a new perspective and understanding of past experiences.
8. Listen to peer stories and provide constructive feedback.
9. Recognize and acknowledge accomplishments of self and peers.
10. Discover a sense of meaning regarding questions of life.
11. Increase self-esteem, self-image and confidence through writing.

### **Topics and Scope:**

The topics accommodates varying levels of ability and participation and may include, but are not limited to the following:

#### **I. Types of Life Stories**

- A. Personal experiences (e.g. thoughts, opinions, reflections, observations)
- B. Theme (e.g. growing up in the city, life on the farm, jobs, vacations)
- C. Feelings (e.g. happiest/saddest day of my life, embarrassment)
- D. Events (e.g. wedding, birth of a child)
- E. Period of life (e.g. kindergarten, high school, military)
- F. Family (e.g. parents, siblings, children)

- G. Firsts (e.g. airplane ride, kiss, night away from home)
- H. Life changing moments (e.g. fell in love, natural disaster)
- I. Historical events (e.g. Kennedy assassination, WWII)
- J. Career (e.g. first job, lost job, accomplishment)
- K. Journal (e.g. observations, experiences, feelings, descriptions)

## II. Elements of a Story

- A. Purpose (e.g. autobiography, family history)
- B. Audience (e.g. family, friends, publish)
- C. Time and place (e.g. specific, not general)
- D. Research (e.g. names, dates)
- E. Shaping (e.g. organization)
- F. Point of view (e.g. through whose eyes the story is told, personal or private)
- G. Emphasis on human experience (e.g. gunners rather than guns, sailors rather than ships)
- H. Use of dialog
- I. Mood (e.g. emotional atmosphere)
- J. Tone (e.g. attitude, distinguish between sentiment and sentimentality, emotion and feeling)
- K. Visuals (e.g. pictures, drawing)
- L. Descriptions (e.g. specifics, sounds, tastes, smells)
- M. Verbs (e.g. action, tempo)
- N. Spelling and grammar

## III. Reading Story and Constructive Feedback

- A. Effective reading
  1. Prepare introduction (e.g. time, setting, people)
  2. Practice ahead
  3. Delivery (e.g. loudness, diction, emphasis)
- B. Offering of feedback
  1. Critique of story
    - a. Clarity (e.g. who, what, where, when)
    - b. Element of interest (e.g. how, why)
    - c. Simplicity
    - d. Brevity
  2. Communication of feedback
    - a. Tactfulness (e.g. safe environment)
    - b. Constructive/positive critique (e.g. "I feel it would be clearer if... I would know your sister better if...I think your story would be more interesting if... I would like to hear why...")
    - c. Encouragement
    - d. Confidentiality of classmates
- C. Listening to feedback
  1. Openness to critique/suggestions
  2. Clarification (e.g. summarization, paraphrase)
  3. Tolerant/appreciative
  4. Acknowledgment of suggestions

## IV. Enhancement of Quality of Life

- A. Mental stimulation
  1. Memories recollected and preserved
  2. Enhancement of writing skills
  3. Critical self-reflection (e.g. relationship of past experiences to present life)
    - a. Observation (e.g. new perspective on the past)
    - b. Recognition (e.g. new understanding of the past)

- c. Application (e.g. new meaning and value to present life)
- B. Social Interactions
  - 1. Community of writers
  - 2. Peer encouragement
  - 3. Diversity of experiences yet amazing similarities
  - 4. Class discussions
  - 5. Connections to generations (e.g. grandchildren)
- C. Emotional well-being
  - 1. Identity as a writer (e.g. discovering one's voice)
  - 2. Sense of purpose/value
  - 3. Remembrance of accomplishments
  - 4. Expression of feelings and emotions
  - 5. Experimentation and risk-taking
  - 6. Humor and laughter (e.g. funny memories and experiences)
  - 7. Pleasure and satisfaction
  - 8. Positive self-evaluations (e.g. peer compliments, "I learned...")
  - 9. Self-discovery
  - 10. Legacy to family and friends

### Assignment:

Representative assignments may include:

- A. In-class work
  - 1. Writing exercises (e.g. When I was 50... I would never... I danced... The dog...)
  - 2. Group reading (e.g. instructor or writer reads story to group)
  - 3. Group listening to stories, critiquing and discussing
  - 4. Feedback to writer (verbal and written)
- B. Homework
  - 1. Writing of stories
  - 2. Revision of critiqued stories (e.g. enliven narrative, clarifying)

### Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

**Writing:** Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Writing stories, rewrite and edit critiqued stories

Writing  
40 - 60%

**Problem Solving:** Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

None

Problem solving  
0 - 0%

**Skill Demonstrations:** All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

None

Skill Demonstrations  
0 - 0%

**Exams:** All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

None

Exams  
0 - 0%

**Other:** Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Attendance and participation in class activities.  
Oral critique of peer writings.

Other Category  
40 - 60%

**Representative Textbooks and Materials:**

Instructor prepared materials