	Department of Literature, Journalism, Writing & Languages **Course Number and Name** **ENG 3023 Creative Writing: Creative Nonfiction** **Number of Units** **3**
Fall 2026	

Meeting days: M, W, Bond 155	**Instructor title and name:** **Dr. Dean Nelson**
Meeting times: 1:30-2:45 pm	**Phone: 619-849-2592**
	Email: deannelson@pointloma.edu **NOTE: Use my entire name**
Final Exam: None	**Office location and hours:** **BAC 111, MWF afternoons and by appointment**
Textbooks: **--Talking To Writers: The Craft of Nonfiction, by Dean Nelson** **-- The Art of Memoir, by Mary Karr**	**Additional info:**

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course is designed to provide students with the chance to write from their own experience, observation and research for specific types of audiences, using techniques typically used in fiction writing (creating believable characters, detail, settings, making a point). It's a course in storytelling, with students' lives, experience and observation providing the majority of what the stories are about. These will be true stories, artfully told.

TEXTS:

The Art of Memoir, by Mary Karr

Talking To Writers: The Craft of Nonfiction, by Dean Nelson

ACTIVITIES:

We will read a lot of essays written by others, analyze them, and try to apply the writers' techniques into our own. We will also write a lot, with the semester culminating in a portfolio of your finished works.

GRADING:

Getting a good grade in this class will not depend on whether I like the essay or whether I think the subject matter is appropriate or inappropriate. (I can't think of anything that would be inappropriate in this class, but I do ask that you keep in mind the sensitivities of your colleagues.) It will be depend on whether you do the work, pay attention in class, participate, apply the techniques we learn – in other words, if you meet the deadlines and try your hardest. Slackers and those cutting corners will get the grades they deserve. So will those who are giving it their best. That's all I ask -- give it your best. It's the only way you'll get better.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Every Wednesday a minimum of two pages (typed, double spaced) of your original writing is due. It can be longer (but not a lot!) It can be pages of a work in progress, or it can be a complete story. What it cannot be is a first draft, or something you cranked out during lunch before this class, just to fulfill a requirement. I want thoughtful effort put into this assignment. It's the only way I know to help you become a better writer. Later in the semester it can be a rewrite of something you're trying to refine.

There will also be reading responses due on most days, based on pages from the texts (see Assignment Schedule). These can be 1-2 pages, typed, double spaced, addressing two questions: What were the main points of the readings, and What did the readings make you think about? Regarding that second question, I'm mostly interested in how you can apply the information to your own writing.

Each weekly writing and reading assignment is worth 10 points. The larger projects are worth more.

Each student will turn in a portfolio of his or her writing at the end of the semester, due no later than the final exam. The portfolio will consist of four parts:

1). An essay

2). A story from your experience where you are the main character

3). A story about someone else

4). A story in the voice of someone else

COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3 unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Student grades will be posted in the Canvas grade book no later than midnight on Tuesday of each week beginning in Week Two of this course. It is important to read the comments posted in the grade book as these comments are intended to help students improve their work. Final grades will be posted within one week of the end of the class. Grades will be based on the following:

Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	

A	B	C	D	F
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

STATE AUTHORIZATION

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on State Authorization to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See Academic Policies for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students who need different arrangements can make adjustments with the university's Educational Access Center. The EAC's policies and procedures for assisting such students in the development of an appropriate academic adjustment plan (AP) allows PLNU to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Section 504 (a) prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities. After the student files the required documentation, the EAC, in conjunction with the student, will develop an AP to meet that student's specific learning needs. The EAC will thereafter email the student's AP to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. The AP must be implemented in all such courses.

If students do not wish to avail themselves of some or all of the elements of their AP in a particular course, it is the responsibility of those students to notify their professor in that course. PLNU highly recommends that EAC students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester about the applicability of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not desire to take advantage of some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Face-to-Face Format

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See Academic Policies in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

SPIRITUAL CARE

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.
If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the Office of Spiritual Development

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In order to be successful in the online environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the *Technology and System Requirements* information.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your classwork.

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Check out my new books from Bloomsbury!
Talking To Writers: The Craft of Nonfiction
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