



# ENG 333 (1HE): Advanced Writing: Nonfiction COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2025

## INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Dr. Kelin Loe, Assistant Professor of English (she/her)

**Email:** kelin.loe@etamu.edu

**Office Location:** 317 Talbot

**Office Hours:** TBA

**Office Phone:** 903-886-5260 (Dept. of Literature & Languages)

**Office Fax:** 903-886-5980 (Dept. of Literature & Languages)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

**ENG 333 meets in person Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30-10:45am, in Ferguson 304.**

Creative nonfiction can be a beautiful contradiction as it is simultaneously nonfiction (grounded in fact, research, or experience), prose (normal), and creative (working against normal). In this course, we will treat it as process of choosing which expectations to meet *and which to break* in order to build a structure that can deliver unique, personal, and fresh thinking and experiences to specific audiences. We'll explore this genre through reading, discussion, writing, workshopping, and revision.

In Fall 2025, the course will focus on *attention*. No matter the style or shape of a piece, **good nonfiction requires sustained attention**. As we will read in *The Sirens' Call*, is now the most valuable natural resource. With corporations duking it out to distract us through platforms like TikTok and Instagram, **controlling our own attention has never been more difficult**. Through four shared texts—*The Sirens' Call*, *How To Do Nothing*, *Rest Is Resistance*, and *World of Wonders*—we'll explore attention from different perspectives while studying these texts' different styles and approaches. We will also practice regulating our own attention, bringing digital detox strategies to both our class meetings and the different stages of the writing process (generating, drafting, revising, and editing). The course will culminate in one large writing project that required a semester's worth of sustained attention. Students will have the *option to publish* their projects on the university website.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Through a mixture of reading, writing, and discussion throughout the semester, students will:

- Analyze and compare different forms of creative nonfiction, questioning the relationships the authors build between content and form, between meeting expectations and resisting them; and
- Grapple with possibility at the global level (purpose, inquiry), the meso level (organization and structure), and the local level (language); and
- Follow current conversations about attention in recently published nonfiction writing;
- Engage in writing process, particularly drafting, revision, and feedback; and
- Develop personal strategies for the self-regulation of attention in reading and writing processes; and
- Work towards building a writing community.

## Required Texts & Materials

### Texts:

- *The Sirens' Call: How Attention Became the World's Most Endangered Resource*, Chris Hayes, 2025 [required]
- *World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments*, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, 2024 [optional but highly encouraged]
- *Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto*, Tricia Hersey, 2022 [required]
- *How To Do Nothing: Resisting the Attention Economy*, Jenny Odell, 2019 [required]

### Materials:

- Something with which to write and edit by hand (pen, pencil, etc.)
- A physical journal or notebook
- A video recording device (probably your phone)
- A valid, working email address that you check daily
- Regular internet access
- Access to a word processing program (MSWord, Pages, Google Docs, etc.)
- At least two storage methods such as flash or external hard drive, cloud, or folder

## GENERAL OVERVIEW OF REQUIRED WORK

In brief, you will work through the following each week:

**FREE WRITE & DISCUSS** – During our course meetings, we will engage in: discussions about the readings; writing prompts and activities to push you forward on your original compositions; and time to share and workshop students’ work. Students will also be encouraged to meet one-on-one with each other, Writing Center staff, or Dr. Loe to discuss their writing.

**READ** – The course texts represent different approaches to creative nonfiction and all offer different, contemporary perspectives on attention. Not only will we learn about attention, we will investigate how these authors put their texts together and why. These texts will serve as models for us as we define for ourselves what creative nonfiction is and how (and why) to write it.

**WRITE** – This course is structured around the writing process. In Level 1, we’ll focus on generating ideas, research, and project planning. We’ll also explore the different forms of nonfiction writing in our shared texts. In Level 2, we’ll begin drafting projects and supportive workshopping. In Level 3, we’ll refine and develop projects through revision. In Level 4, we’ll focus on polishing and preparing projects for their final audience.

## GRADING

I see grading and evaluation as technologies of surveillance and control. I have never found normal grading practices productive for learning, watching how they limit the learning process, create habits designed only to “get the A,” and cause harmful anxiety that is counter-productive to learning and thinking (and surviving school). Much research suggests the limits of grades and the benefits of going “gradeless.” However, our education systems depend on grades, and they are a major factor in your pathway towards your degree. As data points, they almost work like a form of currency that you need to obtain and maintain scholarships, employment, and sometimes reductions in insurance costs. To balance my distrust of grades with the requirements of the university, we will use a **feedback and labor model**. This means you will receive (a lot of) feedback from me and your colleagues throughout the semester with the expectation that you use that feedback to continually revise, rethink, and remix your work. *This grading policy is based on the pedagogical work of Dr. Traci Gardner, Dr. Gavin P. Johnson, & Dr. Ashanka Kumari*

That being said, this course is not “gradeless.” In this US higher education system, I must enter a final course grade at the end of the term. Instead of a standard grading system, we will be using a **Gamified grading system**. As my colleague Dr. Rowe outlines in her syllabi, the point of this Gamified learning design of course assessment is to **give you complete control over your grade – and to separate my feedback from the anxiety of grading and evaluation**.

## The ENG 333 Game

### The Quest

Produce a large writing project that requires a semesters' worth of dedicated attention. You will decide what a "large writing project" is. It could be a 20-page essay. It could be two 10-page essays. It could be an essay and a podcast episode. It could be a video. Early on in the semester, there will be a "Quest Meeting" when students will work one-on-one with me to determine their individual quests (and we'll revise the quests as the semester goes on).

### The Objective

Your objective is to earn the number of points needed for the grade you hope to achieve in the course. Different point totals lead to different final grades:

<89.5 points	A
79.5-89.4 points	B
69.5-79.4 points	C
59.5-69.4 points	D
>59.4 points	F

## Actions (aka Assessed Course Work)

“Actions” are the labor of the course broken down into activities with point values. (In other words, they are the homework). I’ve designed the Actions so that as you complete them, you will build a lengthy, sharp, compelling writing project built from strong evidence. Actions you’ll encounter early in the course will be things like Reading Notes or Generative Thoughts. Later on, Actions will include things like “Initial Draft” or “Copy-Edit for Grammar.”

You’ll receive full credit (the full point value) for an action if complete and performed in good faith. If you don’t turn in a complete action (but have turned in SOMETHING on time), you’ll have the option to Revise and Resubmit.

A few actions over the course of the semester will be required (like the Start-of-Semester Survey).

You’ll also be required to earn a certain number of points in each Category. There will be different types of Actions in each category. **How you earn those points—the Actions you take—will be up to you.**

## Categories & Levels

You’re required to earn a certain number of points in each Category. “Level” is my term for “Unit.” Different levels will unlock new Actions. Any “unlocked” Action will be available for you to perform for the rest of the semester.

At the start of each Level, you’ll receive a list of possible Actions, their point values, and instructions for how to complete them.

Level	Action Category	Aim	Category Point Cut Off <i>Any points earned in this category that EXCEED the number below will not be counted towards your final grade.</i>	To get a C... <i>...you must have a MINIMUM of the points below for this category. *</i>
1	Generating	12	14	8
All	Reading	8	10	6
	Research	8	12	6
2	Drafting	12	14	8
3	Revising	12	20	8
4	Editing	8	10	6
	Delivery	8	10	4
All	Social	20	36	18
	Reflective	10	14	6
	Accessibility	2	4	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	100	144	70

**\*If, at the end of the semester, there is any category with fewer points than the numbers outlined here, you may receive a "D" in the course.**

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

### LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Our classroom is made up of a diverse array of learners and I am happy to make reasonable accommodations to make sure you and your colleagues have as much access to accomplishing course goals as possible. Disabilities are documented and undocumented, visible and invisible. If you know how you best learn, please communicate with me. If something is hard or isn't working for you, please communicate with me. If you are proud of something, please communicate with me. In whatever workplace or academic context you enter next, you'll best served by articulating your needs, challenges, and strengths as a learner and as a colleague. My hope is that this course can be generative for, and support you in, developing how you understand and talk about your needs, challenges, and strengths.

### Students with Disabilities – ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

### Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### ETAMU Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

### **Military and Student Veteran Accommodation**

I recognize the complexities of being a military student or a student veteran. If you are a military student or student veteran, please inform me if you need special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, complications with GI Bill disbursements, and other unforeseen military and veteran-related developments can complicate your academic life. If you make me aware of a complication, I will do everything I can to assist you or put you in contact with other university staff who are trained to assist you.

### **Accessing the Course Website**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES, POLICIES, & RESOURCES**

### **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

### **Inclusion & Nondiscrimination Notice**

To me, diversity is the goal—and inclusion the practice—of valuing difference in higher education. If your colleagues share ideas and experiences you haven't encountered before, *they are giving you something beyond the course that I have designed*. Our readings, discussions, and activities may challenge how you perceive the world and your reality—and that challenge is at the heart of a liberal arts seminar. To learn *both from and alongside* your colleagues is an immense privilege. Often, moments when our thinking and perceptions are altered or challenged, we are provided a window into a deeper understanding of critical thinking and complexity. My goal is to *include* the challenges that difference and non-normativity create, and to approach them with openness, curiosity, and generosity. In so doing, I hope we can better prepare each other for our next academic and professional contexts.

When it comes to your comfort zone, my intention is that our beliefs and understandings are challenged, not our senses of value to our course community and campus community. I will not tolerate discrimination, rudeness, or insults (in person or online, in discussion or peer feedback, in voice or text). For questions, concerns, and problems related to discrimination based on race, ethnicity, class, disability, nationality, gender identity, sexuality, religion, veteran status, or other social or personal identity factors, if you are willing, please communicate with me. My intention is to support my students by any means available to me.

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### **Academic Integrity & Honesty**

In a nutshell, plagiarism is any attempt to pass off the ideas (or worse, the words) of another as your own. And this can happen mistakenly by not giving credit where credit is due. I want to hear *your* thoughts, ideas, inquiries, and language. My assignments are challenging, and I want to support you through them. Please, before intentionally plagiarizing, communicate with me. Plagiarism is never worth the risk.

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

### **AI Use in Courses**

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words.

However, since this course is intended to teach you how to generate your own content, **no use of AI will be permitted** (*unless permission for AI use on an assignment is explicitly specified*). Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty  
13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

### **ETAMU Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generallInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

## DEPARTMENTAL-SPECIFIC PROCEDURES

### **Student Grievance Procedure**

Students who have concerns regarding their courses should first address those concerns with the assigned instructor in order to reach a resolution. Students who are unsatisfied with the outcome of that conversation or have not been able to meet individually with their instructor, whether in-person, by email, by telephone, or by another communication medium, should then schedule an appointment with the Department Head or Assistant Department Head by completing a Student Grievance Form (available in the main office, HL 141). In the event that the instructor is the Department Head, the student should schedule a meeting with the Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Humanities after following the steps outlined above; if the instructor is the Assistant Department Head, students should schedule a meeting with the Department Head. Where applicable, students should also consult [University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.05](#) (“Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation”).

### **Collection of Data for Measuring Institutional Effectiveness**

In order to measure the level of compliance with the university’s Institutional Effectiveness guidelines, throughout the semester, I may collect some of the ungraded texts you produce. The texts will be part of a portfolio created on your behalf and will be measured to ensure that our program “promotes practices that result in higher student academic achievement; an enhanced student experience; aligned and transparent decisions; and readily available information for improvement, accountability, and accreditation” (see “Department of Institutional Effectiveness,” <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutus/institutionalEffectiveness/default.aspx>).

This is solely an assessment of program effectiveness and in no way affects students’ course grades or GPAs.

80781

## **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

<b>Level 1: Generating</b>					
W	Day	Date	Reading Due	Topic	Action Drop
<b>1</b>	TUES	8/26	---	Gamification	Reading & Accessibility
	THURS	8/28	Work Day – No Class		
<b>2</b>	TUES	9/2	AI Readings Packet	AI Usage...	
	THURS	9/4	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catalpa Tree, 1</li> <li>Firefly, 9</li> </ul>	Writing Process & Scales	Generating
<b>3</b>	TUES	9/9	TSC, Chapters 1 & 2 (1-58)	Generative Writing	Research
	THURS	9/11	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peacock, 15</li> <li>Comb Jelly, 20</li> <li>Touch-Me-Nots, 25</li> </ul>	Global Reading	Level 1: Social
<b>4</b>	TUES	9/16	TSC, Chapters 3 & 4 (69-114)	Meso Reading	Reflective
	THURS	9/18	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cactus Wren, 28</li> <li>Narwhal, 35</li> </ul>	Research	
<b>5</b>	TUES	9/23	RIR, Introduction (9-42) WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Axolotl, 43</li> <li>Monsoon, 58</li> <li>Calendars Poetica, 79</li> <li>Barreleye Fish: An Abecedarian, 157</li> <li>South Philippine Dwarf Kingfisher, 173</li> </ul>	Meso Reading	
	THURS	9/25	TSC, Chapter 5 (115-155)	Research	
<b>Level 2: Drafting</b>					
Week	Day	Date	Reading Due	Topic	Action Drop
<b>6</b>	TUES	9/30	HTDN, Chapter 1 (3-29) RIR, Part 1: REST! (43-90)	Global Reading: Genre	
	THURS	10/2	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dancing Frog, 49</li> <li>Vampire Squid, 53</li> <li>Corpse Flower, 69</li> </ul>	Meso Reading: Genre	Drafting
<b>7</b>	TUES	10/7	TSC, Chapter 6 (155-194) RIR, Part 2: DREAM! (91-126)	Research	Level 2: Social
	THURS	10/9	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bonnet Macaque, 74</li> <li>Whale Shark, 85</li> <li>Potoo, 93</li> </ul>	Drafting, Research, Workshopping	
<b>8</b>	TUES	10/14	TSC, Chapters 7 & 8 (195-268)	Global/Meso: Argumentation	

	THURS	10/16	Selections from WM&N	Meso Research, Audience, & Delivery	
<b>Level 3: Revising</b>					
Week	Day	Date	Reading Due	Topic	Action Drop
<b>9</b>	TUES	10/21	HTDN, Chapter 2 (30-62) RIR, Part 3: RESIST! (127-156)	Global Reading: Genre	
	THURS	10/23	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cara Cara Orange, 98</li> <li>• Octopus, 103</li> <li>• Gray Cockatiel, 108</li> <li>• Dragon Fruit, 113</li> </ul>	Local Reading	Revising
<b>10</b>	TUES	10/28	HTDN, Chapter 3 (63-94) RIR, Part 4: IMAGINE! (147-196)	Local Reading	
	THURS	10/30	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flamingo, 116</li> <li>• Ribbon Eel, 123</li> <li>• Questions While Searching..., 128</li> </ul>	Global/Meso: Argumentation	Level 3: Social
<b>11</b>	TUES	11/4	HTDN, Chapter 4 (95-126)	Global/Meso: Argumentation	
	THURS	11/6	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superb Bird of Paradise, 133</li> <li>• Red-Spotted Newt, 138</li> <li>• Southern Cassowary, 145</li> </ul>	Revising, Workshopping	
<b>12</b>	TUES	11/11	HTDN, Chapter 5 (127-154)	Revising, Workshopping	
	THURS	11/13	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monarch Butterfly, 151</li> <li>• Dandelion, 169</li> <li>• Candle Larkspur, 181</li> </ul>	Revising, Workshopping	Editing
<b>Level 4: Editing &amp; Delivery</b>					
Week	Day	Date	Reading Due	Topic	Action Drop
<b>13</b>	TUES	11/18	HTDN, Chapter 6 & Conclusion (155-204)	Global/Meso: Argumentation, Local: Editing	Level 4: Social & Delivery
	THURS	11/20	WOW <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firefly (Redux), 183</li> </ul>	Global/Meso: Argumentation Local: Editing	
<b>14</b>	TUES	11/25	Work Day - No Class		
	THURS	11/27	Thanksgiving - No Class		
<b>15</b>	TUES	12/2		Editing, Delivery, Workshopping	

	THURS	12/4	Last Day!	Editing, Delivery, Workshopping	
<b>Final</b>	THURS	12/11		Due by 10am	