Modesto Junior College
Course Outline of Record
ENGL 108

I. **OVERVIEW**
The following information will appear in the 2010 - 2011 catalog

**ENGL 108 Creative Writing: Autobiography**

**3 Units**

*Prerequisite:* Satisfactory completion of ENGL 101 with a minimum grade of C or better.

Instruction and practice in the writing of an autobiography.

Two maximum completions.

Field trips are not required. (A-F or P/NP - Student choice) Lecture

Transfer: (CSU, UC) General Education: (MJC-GE: Activities )

II. **LEARNING CONTEXT**
Given the following learning context, the student who satisfactorily completes this course should be able to achieve the goals specified in Section III, Desired Learning:

A. **COURSE CONTENT**

1. **Required Content:**

   a. Analysis of exemplary works of autobiography

   b. Literary and rhetorical elements relevant to writing of autobiography

      i. prose style, voice, and tone

      ii. major modes of writing: narrative, expository, descriptive, argumentative

      iii. plot: conflict, suspense, pacing, resolution

      iv. characterization

      v. description

      vi. theme or thesis

   c. Autobiography-writing techniques, application of principles

      i. planing and outlining autobiographical writing

      ii. selecting and developing overall structure of an autobiography

      iii. selecting life events to be included

      iv. determining and controlling tone

      v. developing reader interest and maintaining suspense

      vi. developing characterization through dialogue, action, and attitude

      vii. using implication or explication in development of theme or thesis

      viii. selecting and developing setting or scene
ix. writing description: long and short forms, selection and use of detail

x. establishing conflict

xi. writing dialogue

xii. establishing chronology (sequential, flashback)

xiii. determining and developing structure of the separate chapters

xiv. ending the autobiography

* Repeat students will be exposed to new writing styles and content in course readings that change each semester; they will benefit from workshops based on the original work of students in any given semester; and, finally, they must submit original work each time they take the course.

B. ENROLLMENT RESTRICTIONS

1. Prerequisites
   Satisfactory completion of ENGL 101 with a minimum grade of C or better.

2. Requisite Skills
   Before entering the course, the student will be able to:
   a. Read actively and analyze reading selections in directed class discussion or in written analysis.
   b. Write compositions as assigned employing mastery of the following skills: a. understanding rhetoric and organization, b. composing clear conventional sentences, c. selecting appropriate language.
   c. Rewrite effectively by examining and analyzing their own writing or that of another student, proofreading well, and revising and rethinking writing drafts.

C. HOURS AND UNITS

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<thead>
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<th>INST METHOD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Disc</td>
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D. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION (TYPICAL)
   Instructors of the course might conduct the course using the following method:

1. Lecture.
2. Assign reading of exemplary autobiographies, autobiographical sketches, and readings about the craft of writing.
3. Analyze exemplary autobiographical writing in assigned compositions, essay exams, or in directed class discussion.
4. Assign planning and writing of original autobiographies or parts of autobiographies.
5. Short written exercises practicing techniques of autobiographical writing.
6. Direct class discussion that involves analyzing and evaluating student work.
7. Ask students to reflect on personal life experiences with a view toward drawing upon those experiences in writing of original autobiographies a. identifying experiences and conclusions derived from experience that might serve as situational or thematic bases for writing; b. reaching conclusions about and evaluating the appropriateness of particular aspects of personal experiences as a basis for autobiographical writing of interest to other people.

8. Apply criteria developed in class discussion, lecture and reading to student-written and other autobiographies and autobiographical sketches to a. identify factors in the work itself and in the nature of its intended audience that might affect the way the work is understood or how well it is received by the audience; b. express judgments about the way in which a given work is likely to be understood or received by its intended audience; c. express and support judgments about the degree to which a given work of autobiography conveys a sense of the universality of human experience or contributes to the readers' understanding of a time, place, or cultural milieu; d. evaluate 1. the work in terms of its probable reception by the intended audience; 2. the judgments made about the work by other class participants.

E. ASSIGNMENTS (TYPICAL)

1. EVIDENCE OF APPROPRIATE WORKLOAD FOR COURSE UNITS
   Time spent on coursework in addition to hours of instruction (lecture hours)
   1. Weekly autobiography exercises.
   2. Weekly reading of representative texts.
   3. Weekly readings about the different elements of autobiography from the textbook.
   4. The writing of weekly peer reviews of students' stories submitted for weekly workshops.
   5. Submission of autobiographical works for workshop at least twice during the semester.
   6. Completion of approximately fifteen pages of autobiography for the term.
   7. Completion of various weekly writing activities during class times.
   8. Weekly participation in workshops during class.

2. EVIDENCE OF CRITICAL THINKING
   Assignments require the appropriate level of critical thinking
   A. Examples of typical assignments which develop and demonstrate critical thinking skills:
   1. Weekly 150-word peer reviews that require students to indicate effective and ineffective areas within students' essays.
   2. Weekly 300-600-word exercises that require students to demonstrate their ability to create writings that reflect effective scenes, summaries, dialogue, setting, characterization, tension.
   3. Participation in weekly class workshops, where students must verbally specify effective and ineffective aspects of peers' works.
   4. Revision of personal works throughout the semester to render their autobiography writings more effective.
   B. Actual quiz question, activity prompt, and story prompts:
   1. In "Drama Bug" how does the writer David Sedaris add humor to his writing?
   2. Observe one of your autobiographical essays. Examine your use of "is" throughout the writing. Replace this weak verb with a power verb, one that adds force to your prose by more accurately describing particular action.
   3. Write about a childhood experience that involved nature and your parent(s). What happened that created a tension-filled experience? Remember to illustrate, not tell, the experience on the page.
   4. Write about a personal secret that only you know about. After describing your secret, discuss why you choose to keep it a deeply personal secret.

F. TEXTS AND OTHER READINGS (TYPICAL)

nonfiction (4th/e). Longman.


### III. DESIRED LEARNING

**A. COURSE GOAL**

*As a result of satisfactory completion of this course, the student should be prepared to:*

- critically analyze the various elements of effective autobiographical writing and be able to create his/her own autobiographical works.

**B. STUDENT LEARNING GOALS**

*Mastery of the following learning goals will enable the student to achieve the overall course goal.*

1. **Required Learning Goals**

   *Upon satisfactory completion of this course, the student will be able to:*

   a. Identify the meanings of and concepts behind the literary terms commonly used in analysis and discussion of autobiographical writing (e.g. tone, style, voice, description, narration, suspense, plot or development, setting, theme, conflict). The students' ability to use these terms will be demonstrated by their appropriate and accurate use of the terminology in written or directed class discussion.

   b. Analyze and discuss exemplary autobiographies and autobiographical sketches with emphasis on the following:
      a. the effect of prose style on voice and tone in autobiographical writing;
      b. the literary techniques of character development in autobiography;
      c. the literary techniques of plot development, suspense, and climax as used in autobiography;
      d. the writer's manipulation of major and minor themes in autobiography;
      e. the universality of experience conveyed through most important autobiographical writing;
      f. the coalescence of literary elements to form a coherent unit.

   c. Prepare a workable outline or plan for original autobiographical writing.

   d. Perform research necessary and otherwise gather material appropriate for the completion of autobiographical writing.

   e. Write a number of autobiographical sketches or a major part of a longer autobiographical work applying approaches and techniques discussed in lecture, reading, and other class components.

   f. Analyze and critique their own work and those of other class members objectively and constructively, applying methods of analysis, principles, and criteria developed in lecture and other class exercises.

   g. Read actively and critically with conscious recognition of effective writing in the work of other authors. Active reading and recognition of good writing will be demonstrated in the students' analysis of autobiography in directed class discussion and other class exercises.

   h. Read actively and critically their work and excerpts of professionals who cover a broad range of multicultural experiences.
IV. METHODS OF ASSESSMENT (TYPICAL)

A. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT
   1. Quizzes
   2. Writing exercises
   3. Peer reviews
   4. Participation during workshop
   5. Essay(s)

B. SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT
   1. Portfolio consisting of approximately fifteen pages of original autobiographical writing(s)