

**ENG 30066-001**  
**Memoir**

**Length:** 4-6 pages  
**Percentage of Grade:** 10% (100 points)  
**Due Date:** Tuesday, September 16

**Purpose:**

Writing relies on a relationship between writer and reader. In creative nonfiction, the use of emotional appeals (pathos) remains a primary means of establishing and developing such a relationship. As students in this class, I'm asking you to experiment with this type of writing: take risks; engage in self-discovery; incorporate elements of creativity (as defined in the "Course Objectives" on your syllabus); focus on responses, not answers; and balance relationships between notions of objective and subjective, private and public, artistic and practical. Beginning the course with the writing of a memoir immerses you in the ideas that a writer's self-awareness builds stronger relationships with readers, that producing rhetorically effective writing involves understanding one's subjectivities in relation to the purpose of a particular piece of writing, and that pushing one's self to be creative develops the ability to think critically (analytically). The memoir, then, aims to serve you as an individual, a student, and someone who will write about other people's lives and social complexities.

**Assignment:**

For this assignment, you will write a memoir (4-6 pages) detailing a memorable event and *why* the event remains significant for you. In other words, refrain from just telling a story; instead, focus on how the event impacted your life, thoughts, actions, or future plans. You may write about an event that evoked physical or emotional trauma, confusion, humor, inspiration, triumph, defeat, a sense of irony, etcetera. Use concepts presented in class to shape your piece of creative nonfiction. In addition, please note the following guidelines:

- \* Use first-person voice. Do not use "you."
- \* If you incorporate dialogue, keep it to a minimum.
- \* Do not rely only on retelling your story; you need to also focus on the *point* of the memory. Remember that *the message* is the reason for the memoir.
- \* Though no documentation is required for this assignment, you may include documentation if you feel that it strengthens your work in some way. Use correct MLA format as explained in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

- \*Appropriate and thorough response to the assignment
- \*Evidence of critical thinking
- \*Proper formatting (as demonstrated in the syllabus)
- \*Incorporation/evidence of ideas presented in class lectures, discussions, and readings
- \*Presentation of error-free text (typos, grammar, punctuation) (I'm serious.)

Note: To read examples of memoirs, see Part Two of WT (beginning on p. 168).