

BEYOND THE SELFIE: EXPLORING LONDON TO COMMUNICATE INWARD & OUTWARD JOURNEYS VIA MULTIMEDIA STORYTELLING

Dr. Marcie L. Hinton

Located: WILSON 209, Murray State University
Journalism Mass Communications Department
AJB-College of Business

Contact: mhinton@murraystate.edu (O)270-809-5308 (Text) 615-481-8002

Why travel writing in London?

- Explores all types of travel storytelling: personal journaling, essay writing, photography, magazine article writing, and reviews via diverse, active classes spent at both obscure venues and attractions you have wanted to see all your life. The professor wants you to find the medium that will best help you express your experiences.
- Students will have the opportunity to submit a story for online or traditional publication, which is great for a professional portfolio and personal satisfaction.
- Travel writing is one of the most socially important genres in the literary traditions, helping us to make sense of ourselves and others, which seems more important than ever when navigating virtual social communities. It's a practical, creative and commercial art!
- Professor was a professional food and travel writer at one point in her career for *Southern Living* magazine; therefore she brings an enthusiasm and expertise beyond the purely academic. She is also a media professor so there is a heavy media component to the course including photography, Harry Potter and the BBC.
- Chronicling a journey can be a lifelong pursuit that enhances every travel experience.
- Bill Bryson and Rick Steves are the required reading! Bryson wrote this about England:

The fact is that this is still the best place in the world for most things - to post a letter, go for a walk, watch television, buy a book, venture out for a drink, go to a museum, use the bank, get lost, seek help, or stand on a hillside and take in a view.

All of this came to me in the space of a lingering moment. I've said it before and I'll say it again. I like it here. I like it more than I can tell you."

- The class is cross-listed as an upper-division creative writing class in the English department as well as upper-division Journalism credit. Could possibly even count for film and television credit.

What You Should Expect to Learn from This Class

(II. description and prerequisites and credit hours)

Course Description: (3 credit hours) (W) Traverse the world in one setting by exploring art and culture in London. From the historic paintings and photographs of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Portrait Gallery to the Warner Brothers Harry Potter Studio tour, we will consider how media producers throughout history have documented their cultural interactions. By examining and using photography, journals, video, essays and documentaries, we will learn to record our own travel experiences for both private growth and public consumption. This travel writing class challenges students to critically investigate culture and find the best tools to communicate their inward and outward experiences beyond selfies.

Prerequisites: An introductory writing course such as media writing, technical writing or creative writing or introductory television production course.

(III. Course objectives)

Learning Objectives: This course will challenge students to critically examine how travel impacts how we relate to ourselves and others. Students explore the spiritual and psychological impact of preparing for and taking a journey.

They will:

- ✓ Examine the definition, history and development of travel writing, exploring the differences between travel journalism, travel literature, guidebook writing, blogging, etc.
- ✓ Learn the skills required to produce short travel features as published in many newspapers, magazines and online environments, as well as explore the best multimedia tools to communicate their inward journeys.
- ✓ Reflect on global communities and how those communities converge in London.
- ✓ Understand the distortions and misapprehensions of one's own perspective in examining history, cultural and accompanying social issues around the world.
 - Be aware of how media fosters understanding between groups, locally and globally
- ✓ Develop an understanding of multiple "audiences" and a respect for cultural, racial and gender differences.
 - The globalization of media, the vulnerability of different kinds of audiences and the nature of stereotypes and media products mean producers and consumers of media must be aware of the many different audiences participating in mediated rhetorical situations.
- ✓ Cultivate global awareness
- ✓ Write for personal growth as well as commercial gain as they will be required to produce reviews and one travel feature or essay to be submitted to an established publication (on- or off-line).

Accrediting standards to which we adhere

The learning objectives above were developed according to the Journalism and Mass Communications department's accrediting body: the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC). About one-fourth of all journalism and mass communication programs in the United States are accredited by ACEJMC. Murray State is one of them. As connected to the learning objectives above, this course will help you meet the following student learning outcomes that have been established by ACEJMC:

- ✓ Think critically, creatively and independently.

- ✓ Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which you work.
- ✓ Critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.

How to demonstrate what you've learned

(v. instructional activities)

Instructional Activities: The class mostly includes going to excursions and reflecting on specific prompt questions. The professor requires students to be on time and present for all activities.

Students should come to class fully prepared by having read appropriate materials beforehand.

Laptop usage and behavior: The professor does invite students to use their laptops/ipads/smartphones/recording devices/cameras when appropriate throughout class.

Resources: 1. *Virtual course packets will be provided by the professor. Students will be responsible for blogging their journal prompts, which will be shared with the class. This means students will need to create a blog in word press (or other blog site), and have access to our facebook page.*

2. *Access to media—television, magazines, Internet, social media, radio, movies, newspapers, advertisements, etc. Students should spend thoughtful time with such media “in country.” (watch TV, go to the movies and surf the ‘net for fun and for the class!)*

3. *Access to a device that will allow you to produce daily blogs and visual documentation methods probably a smart phone and computer.*

4. “Notes from a Small Island” by Bill Bryson.

5. “Travel as a Political Act” by Rick Steves. (latest edition)

6. “Rick Steves London 2018,” by Rick Steves.

8. Group Me App, Facebook, Dropbox

7. Additional readings provided electronically.

Graded work:

Pre-departure work (Due December 20) 15%

Attendance and participation in class meetings,
lectures, field trips during the term 15%

Maintaining a daily journal in London (prompt questions provided) 25%

Four assigned blog posts 35%

Online review on study abroad or consumer website
(due January 20) 10%

Grading Scale:

A = 92-100 points

B = 81-91.9

C = 70-80.9

D = 61-69.9

E = 60.9 and below

Definitions of Grades:

While grades mean different things to different people, here is how I identify the meaning of a letter grade. (Notice that a “C” does not mean failing; a “C” is average and meets expectations.)

A. Work of **distinctly superior** quality and quantity accompanied by **unusual** evidence of achievement.

- B. Work of good quality and quantity accompanied by evidence of achievement **beyond** the essentials of a course.
- C. **Work demonstrating fulfillment of the essentials of a course.**
- D. Passing work, but below the standards of graduation quality.
- F. Failure, necessitating repetition of the course to obtain credit.

Attendance Policy: Attendance and punctuality are required. You are expected to discuss, think, critique and reflect during the excursions, therefore being hungover or inebriated is a terrible idea (and could result in being left behind).

The Journal: The daily journal will be a handwritten journal following specific assignment sheets/prompt questions. You are to evaluate and analyze inward and outward journeys as we visit relevant sites throughout London. You will also be able to save ticket stubs and general scrapbook material this way. I will collect these on New Year's Eve and January 7 and mail them back to you, if you are not a student at Murray State. The journal will be part notes for your blog entries, part scrapbook. The objective of this assignment is to learn to observe and take notes as writers do, so that you can have richer content for your blogs.

The Blogs: There will be 4 blogs (3 due in country, one due upon your return); The blogs will be the result of your journal (i.e. extensive notetaking) that will take on a variety of travel writing styles. Your blog should be designed and reflect your own personality. You are more than welcome write a blog more often than the 4 blogs you will be required to do. I find this a fun and easy way to share your journey with people back home, while only having to tell the story once and while it is fresh in your head. This might save you on texts, phone calls, etc.

You will share your blog with the class at the designated times and I will do my best to be prompt in responding to your blog within 24 hours of their due date (see schedule). The blog topics are:

1. Guidebook blog
2. Media and London as Character Blog
3. Art and London culture Blog
4. Travel Narrative Blog

Prior to our departure, you are to familiarize yourself with travel media. Specifically, you will look at guidebooks, travel blogs and the assigned readings.

Personal Travel Narrative: You will write a personal travel narrative essay/blog based on the assignment sheet found in the class dropbox. This assignment will be due in February after you have returned from London.

Review: You will write a review of a London attraction after you have returned from London, via an online website or app such as:

- TripAdvisor
- Yelp

Pre-departure work: There will be some virtual reading assignments, a vocabulary/definition list and some prompt questions provided before our "in country" assignments start December 28. Please do the following:

1. Join the CCSA facebook group: London Winter 2018-19
2. Join our class facebook group: Beyond the Selfie: London Winter 18-19
3. Join our GroupMe group (see facebook newsfeed for details.)
4. Text to Me a selfie with your name to 615-481-8002
5. Read the books assigned in the Resources section of the syllabus.
6. Take a look at the readings for each individual assignment found in Dropbox.

7. Start a blog. This is where you will write your daily assignments. You may start it in any platform you wish. I suggest Wordpress. You should design it, be creative with naming it, etc. This blog is London specific. This is where you post your assignments. After every assignment you should post the link to our facebook page, so everyone can take a look and I can grade it.
8. Read the CCSA participant handbook.

Extra Money: Not all expenses for class activities will be covered by the CCSA program fee. Some places we visit may charge admission; some do not but may ask for a donation. You will need to purchase newspapers/magazines, and it is possible that we will need to have a plan B if something "isn't as it appears on the internet." It is recommended that you set aside at least \$100 for such incidental costs associated with participation in the class.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities or special needs must contact the instructor and the CCSA office at least a month in advance of the program's beginning so that accommodations can be made, to the extent possible in a study abroad setting. Students seeking such accommodation must provide CCSA with a copy of the letter on file with their own Office of Disability Services, outlining what services they receive on their home campus.

Academic Honesty Policy: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty on an assignment in this class will result in a failing grade on the assignment and may result in a failing grade for the class. Incidences of academic dishonesty will be reported to the student's home school. For the official Murray State policy, see "Academic Honesty" in the latest *Murray State University Undergraduate Bulletin*. Students from other schools should check their home bulletin for their policies on academic honesty.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is unacceptable at any time, whether intentional or unintentional. According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means:

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

All of the following are considered plagiarism, according to plagiarism.org (quoted exactly and is a good source if ever you are confused):

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

What is Plagiarism? (n.d.) Retrieved January 20, 2011, from http://www.plagiarism.org/learning_center/what_is_plagiarism.html

Schedule

Professor reserves the right to change the schedule (or the syllabus as a whole) on a whim! Schedule is still tentative, depending on bookings and money; not all readings and prompts are quite prepared, but will show up in Dropbox.

Date**Class Topics & Activities****Assignments Due**

Dec 20 Pre-departure	Take care of connecting with professor and classmates; Assignments can be found in Dropbox. Read the books if you don't want to bring them to London! (Bring the Rick Steves London travel guide for sure though!)	Text a Selfie to Dr. Hinton. Join GroupMe group Join Class facebook group
Dec 20 Pre-departure	Blogging as a form of travel writing.	Create a blog according to instructions in Dropbox.
Dec 20 Pre-departure	READ "Travel as a political act" and the "Notes from a small island" as described on the Assignment sheet in class Dropbox.	JOURNAL WILL BE DUE TWICE, Once on Dec 31 and then again on Jan 7. (your readings will be included in journal prompts and beyond)

Dec 27: arrival day Thursday	Tube Navigation and Riding Lesson (not mandatory, but if you are around and want to); 4 p.m. orientation 5 p.m. Class orientation 5:30 dinner at the hotel. We can continue our tube navigation and walking tour if we need to STAY AWAKE UNTIL at least 8:30 DON'T TAKE A NAP; GO TO BED AFTER 8:30	Planned via facebook and GroupMe and dependent on your arrival times. I will give you your blank journals
Dec 28 Friday	8:45 Board our specific City Bus Tour COACH # You will have lunch on your own Dr. Hinton has faculty orientation at 2 2. We will meet at 2:45 to make our way to the London Eye, where we will have a Photography lesson. (3:45 reservation)	Readings and JOURNAL Prompt regarding London as a character.
Dec 29 Saturday	Meet in the classroom at 9:00 to plan and talk about journals. Walk to Hyde Park at 10 UB TOUR GUIDE (there will be a rainy day Plan B SWAP with Dec 31 activity if necessary) With Hinton: I will likely try to go to Notting Hill and The Portobello Road Market afterwards. Maybe Christmas by the River at London Bridge (open til 10)	You must have your "UB Tour Guide" assignment prepped and ready. You will coordinate with each other to get us from attraction to attraction using a PHYSICAL MAP. Readings and Journal Prompt
Dec 30 Sunday	Full day excursion to DOVER/CANTERBURY Board bus at 8:15 a.m. outside hotel (entrance to Canterbury Cathedral and Dover Castle included)	Readings and Journal Prompt
Dec 31 Monday	Meet in lobby at 9:30 to go to London City Museum Entrance is free With Hinton: I will likely go to Fortnam and Mason as well as the oldest Bookstore in London and walk down to Picadilly Circus and shopping district. Maybe try to book the pop up Circus Bar at Southbank Center 5 p.m. Classroom time to check in on blog and maybe have writing buddies!	Readings and Journal Prompt BLOG # 1 DUE by 10 p.m. (Guidebook blog) Journal will be due at 5 p.m.—I will review them while you work on your blogs and I will return them right back to you.
Jan 1 Tuesday	Bank Holiday MAKE A DECISION ON YOUR Media and London as character BLOG. Your one day off! (I don't suggest you wander too far from London. Train and Bus schedules will be limited, so if you do go outside London, check the HOLIDAY train schedules)	Example: A Beatles Fan tours London; Everybody loves a parade; Shopping in London. (will need to plan this ahead, do some research, etc.) Journal Prompt
Jan 2 Wednesday	Victoria and Albert Museum With Hinton: I will likely go to a Christmas Market, then to Somerset House for the Charlie Brown Exhibit THEN to the	Readings and Journal Prompt

	ICE SKATING rink for night ice skating.	
Jan 3 Thursday	Warner Brothers Studio Tour: J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and storytelling (all day)*	Readings and Journal prompt
Jan 4 Friday	1. Meet in lobby at 9:00 a.m. to go to Westminster Abbey (We meet the guide at 10 a.m.) We will break for lunch and then 2. reconvene at 1:40 at the entrance to Tottenham Station for the Rock n' Roll walking tour. (this is a HEAVY walking day, so dress accordingly) 5 p.m. Classroom time to check in on blog and maybe have writing buddies!	Blog # 2 Due by 10 p.m. (Media and London as character)
Jan 5 Saturday	Meet at 9:30 a.m. to travel to National Portrait Gallery With Hinton: I will likely go to the other Gallery, then who knows!	Readings and Journal Prompt: Due Jan 6
Jan 6 Sunday	Meet in Lobby at 9:30 a.m. for walking tour from St. Paul's to West Bank and Visit to Tate Modern. With Hinton: I might hop on the boat tour and make my way up to Tate Britain—yet another museum. (this is a huge walking day, so dress accordingly!)	Readings and JOURNAL prompt London City BLOG # 3 due by 10 p.m. (Art and Culture in London)
Jan 7 Monday	Meet with Julia at JAC travel. With Hinton: I am thinking I might go to Harrod's, Selfridges or Liberty's (LARGE dept. stores) 4 p.m. Classroom time for evaluation, journal submission, departing orientation then to dinner at Black Friars as a group @ 6 p.m.	Readings/Listening: https://soundcloud.com/rick-steves/indigenous-arctic-and-andes Starting at @31:43 Journal Prompt: Managing tourists and the problems in the Travel Industry. JOURNALS ARE DUE at 4.
Jan 8 Tuesday	Meet in the lobby with your packed luggage and passport at a your designated time in order to board the bus to the airport.	
January 20	Online review due (yelp, trip advisor, etc.)	Proof of submission
February 20	Personal Narrative Blog # 4 DUE	

* “mind your shoes” heavy walking days, therefore make sure you have comfortable walking shoes.