The American Road:  
An Investigation Through Inquiry, Interpretation and Experience  
WRTG 3020 Sections 10, 23 (M/W/F 10am, 12pm, respectively)  
Spring 2014

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Office Hours: M/W/F 8:80am-9:30 & Th by appt only

Texts and Materials:  
• Book One: Wild, Cheryl Strayed (required)  
• Book Two: TBD  
• Book Three: Consider the Lobster, David Foster Wallace (required)  
• Handouts (required)  
• Loose-leaf notebook paper for in-class writing (required)  
• Copies of your work when needed for class discussion (required)

Class Policies and Etiquette:  
• Attendance in this class is mandatory (Attendance, page 3). Similarly, being absent from a scheduled conference will count as an absence (unless the conference was rescheduled 24 hours before the original conference time).
• As classes will be full of insightful discussions, enlightening workshops and edifying instruction, it is crucial that you attend all class sessions. In-class activities have been designed to boost your understanding of the readings, sharpen your writing and editing skills, and offer you the essential tools to succeed in this class. Simply showing up for class, however, will not be enough. I expect the class to be the site of lively intellectual activity, which is not the sound of one voice (mine), but rather your voices as you challenge your own beliefs, encounter new ideas, question our texts, welcome new points of view, and—always—contribute respectfully and thoughtfully. Regular participation during class will positively affect our collective classroom experience (and raise your final grade). Failing to contribute your unique voice will strip the class of its diversity.
• Group work is vital to this class and the only way group work is effective is if all members of the group participate. It is important that you be present on days of peer critiquing, not only for your benefit, but also because your group members are counting on your input. This activity plays a major role in your participation grade. Each instance of being unprepared for group work with count as an absence.
• Please be punctual. This class starts at 10am/12pm. Late arrivals disrupt the class and are inconsiderate. Two late arrivals count as an absence.
• Cell phones, iPods and other such devices are both disruptive to the class and inconsiderate. Therefore, these gadgets must be turned off before class.
• **Late assignments will not be accepted**, unless prior arrangements have been made and verified. This is to encourage you to keep up with class assignments and to allow me to return work back to you in a timely manner.
• Your hard work is a reflection of yourself. Plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty will result in failing this course.
• This classroom is a safe haven for all ideas. Respect not only me as your instructor but also your peers. We are all unique individuals entitled to our own opinions and beliefs, however, any comments, jokes, or remarks that denigrate the worth of an individual’s physical/mental ability, body size, religion, race, creed, ethnic background, sexual preference, or gender are inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

I have read and understood these policies. Signature: ___________________________ Date: ________
**Course Description**

The road is where both opportunities arise and dreams die. The road is peopled with a variety of characters—the outcast, the runaway, the opportunist, the felon, the lost soul, the intellect, the sopping wet and hopeless, the observer, the elitist, and the phony, just to name a few. While there are similarities between all these people, the road offers something different to each. In this class we will investigate the myriad reasons why we take to the road and attempt interpretations of what happens when we get there (wherever or whatever “there” is). Questions such as: In what ways might these forces, these exploratory impulses, be distinctly American, and in which ways are they more central to the essence of the human character? What is the role of the road in literature/media/art, and how does this role help shape public consciousness concerning the road? What do we seek to learn through travel? Can travel teach us anything about the value of slowing down or speeding up? Can it give us any insight into the human character that lies beneath cultural trappings? Once we’ve heard from others, we will then attempt to enter the conversation ourselves through an extended and “post-modern” travelogue (i.e. a travelogue that knows it’s a travelogue) in an attempt to show through personal experience and contemplation some of the ideas, questions and concepts explored in the course.

**CCHE CO3 Course Outcomes:**

1. **Extend Rhetorical Knowledge:**
   a) Use texts from rhetoric, discourse studies, communication, or related disciplines to extend understanding of rhetorical concepts to the discipline that is the focus of the course.
   b) Develop sophisticated strategies for critical analysis of several genres, for specified discourse communities. These communities may include professional or disciplinary discourse communities.
   c) Learn more sophisticated ways to communicate knowledge to appropriate audiences.
   d) "Apply more sophisticated strategies to the synthesis and communication of knowledge.

2. **Extend Experience in Writing Processes:**
   a) Use multiple drafts.
   b) Hone strategies for generating ideas, revising, editing, and proofreading for disciplinary or specialized discourse.
   c) Learn to critique own and other’s work.
   d) Use a variety of technologies (writing and research tools).
   e) Learn to evaluate sources for accuracy, relevance, credibility, reliability, and bias.

3. **Extend Mastery of Writing Conventions**
   a) Select and adapt genre conventions for disciplinary or specialized discourse.
   b) Use specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation appropriately.
   c) Control features such as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

4. **Demonstrate comprehension of content knowledge at the advanced level through effective communication strategies,** including:
   a) Ability to compose messages for specific audiences and purposes.
   b) Ability to communicate to the variety of audiences in disciplinary or specialized discourse.
   c) Ability to adapt content and style to respond to the needs of different audiences and rhetorical situations in disciplinary or specialized discourse.
Teaching Philosophy
I enjoy the teaching of writing and rhetoric and take great pleasure in my students’ developing proficiency in academic reading, writing, and critical thinking. I will gladly act as coach and mentor, but please be advised that I consider higher education an exercise in self-reliance, and I will not rescue students from the consequences of their choices. Please understand that enrolling in this class does not mean that you should expect me as your teacher to be solely responsible for your unique learning experience. I will do my utmost to ensure that you improve your writing abilities and leave my class better equipped to handle future courses and job requirements; however, you must take responsibility if you fail to meet the demands of the course. I expect that students will familiarize themselves with the course requirements and policies and do their best to follow these guidelines.

Grading
Assignment #1: Driving Song 50pts (5%)
Assignment #2: A Picture is Worth 1000 Words? 50pts (5%)
A#1 or A#2 “Presentation” 25 (2.5%)
Assignment #3: Road Narrative 200pts (20%)
Assignment #5: Literary Journalism 450pts (45%)
Proposal 25pts
Annotated Bib 75pts
Workshop Draft 25pts
Response Letters 50pts
Preface 25pts
Final Draft 250pts
Reading Quizzes (2 for Wild, 1 for BOOK TWO, 1 for DFW) 100pts (10%)
Participation (in-class discussion & peer review workshops) 50pts (5%)
Attendance* 100pts (10%)
Total 1000pts. (100%)

*Everyone starts with 100 points, lose 10pts/absence, 3pts/tardy. Everyone gets one (1) “freebie”. Those with more than ten (10) absences lose a full letter grade for each additional absence. Only (advanced-notice) school-related functions and religious observations represent an “excused” absence.

Major Assignments
- A#1 & A#2 “Suite”: A short persuasive editorial (Best Driving Song) & a short descriptive essay (The Story Behind a Photo).
- Road Narrative: A brief narrative essay in which the author draws from his/her own personal beliefs, thoughts and experiences “on the road” to reflect on a larger questions, ideas or concepts. A story with a point. (Approx 1400 words)
- Literary Journalism Essay: A creative nonfiction essay where author takes the role of participatory journalist and collects data through experience, interview, research, etc. in an attempt to reflect on and offer answers for larger questions, concepts and/or ideas influenced by the “outsider perspective”. (Approx 2400 words)

Writing Center
If you want additional help with your writing, the Writing Center in Norlin Library is a great place to go to talk about ideas, improve your thesis or essay organization, or just generally work on your writing skills. All students are invited to bring their writing to the Writing Center for feedback and advice. Students are welcome to bring writing from any discipline at any stage of the writing process. Fifty-minute consultations with experienced writing consultants are available by appointment at no charge to CU students. Because the Writing Center is a very popular campus resource, please plan to
make reservations at least one week in advance. Reservations can be made through the Writing Center website or in person.

§ Improve your planning, logic, and organization
§ Refine your clarity, style, citation, and grammar
§ Prevent procrastination and writing anxiety

Find more information at: http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html

Disability accommodations: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to your professor a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner (for exam accommodations provide your letter at least one week prior to the exam) so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu.

If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website (http://disabilityservices.colorado.edu/) and discuss your needs with your professor.

Classroom Behavior: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

Discrimination and Harassment: The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, “Protected Classes” refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/ and at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html

Honor Code: All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu, 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://honorcode.colorado.edu

Religious Observances* Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance. In this class, I ask that you contact me at least one week ahead of the date(s) that you will be absent so that we can discuss any assignments/class material that you will miss.
**Course Calendar:** (This is a tentative schedule for the Spring 2014 semester. For each project you will receive an in-depth project calendar that highlights the reading and due dates in more depth.)

WEEK 1 Brief Course Introduction; Syllabus, Intro Assignment #1: Driving Song  (Jan 13-17)

WEEK 2 MLK Jr. Day, NO CLASS; Assignment #1: Road Song Due/Presentations; Intro Assignment #2: A Picture…; Start Reading *Wild*  (Jan 22-24)

WEEK 3 Details/naming lecture; Assignment #2: A Picture…DUE (FRIDAY 31); Read: *Wild*  (Jan 27-31)

WEEK 4 NO CLASS Monday; Quiz #1: 1st half of *Wild*; Introduce A#3  (Feb. 5-7)

WEEK 5 Scene and Context lecture/Discussion; Quiz #2: 2nd half of *Wild*  (Feb 10-14)

WEEK 6 Dissections of a Scene (from *Wild*); In-class drafting of A#3  (Feb 17-21)

WEEK 7 A#3 Workshop  (Feb 24-28)

WEEK 8 A#3 Workshop  (Mar 3-5)

WEEK 9 A#3 DUE; Quiz #3: TBD; Intro to Literary Journalism; NO CLASS Friday  (Mar 10-14)

WEEK 10 A#4 Proposals Due; Quiz #4 (3 Essays from “Consider the Lobster”)  (Mar 17-21)

WEEK 11 SPRING BREAK!

WEEK 12 Creative Nonfiction Discussion Craft & Theory discussion; A#4 Annotated Bibliographies DUE  (Mar 31-Apr 4)

WEEK 13 A#4 Workshop (Peer Review Letters)  (Apr 7-11)

WEEK 14 A#4 Workshop (Peer Review Letters)  (Apr 14-18)

WEEK 15 A#4 Workshop (Peer Review Letters)  (Apr 21-25)

WEEK 16 A#4 Preface & REVISED Final Draft DUE  (Apr 28-May 2)

WEEK 17: EXAM WEEK. NO CLASS.