The American Road:
An Investigation Through Inquiry, Interpretation and Experience
WRTG 3020 Sections 40, 45 (M/W 3pm & 430pm, respectively)
Fall 2014

Professor: Steve Caldes  Email: stephen.caldes@colorado.edu
Office: 1338 Grandview, Room C110-C  Office Hours: M/Tu/W: 10-11am

Texts and Materials:
• Book One: Of Mice and Men, John Steinbeck (required)
• Book Two: Into the Wild, John Krakauer (required)
• Book Three: Consider the Lobster, David Foster Wallace (required)
• Handouts on D2L (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 3pm/430pm. Late arrivals disrupt the class and are inconsiderate. Two late arrivals count as an absence.
• Cell phones 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? Also the anonymity of the road and its connection to writing will also be explored. Once we’ve heard from others, we will then attempt to enter the conversation ourselves through multiple personal narratives, written academic inquiries as well as our major semester project: a long-form piece of literary journalism.

Department Approved Curricular Goals
Critical Thinking and Its Written Application
As writers and as readers, students should leave 3020 able to:
- See writing as a form of personal engagement, demanding an awareness of the inherent power of language and its ability to bring about change.
- Pose and shape a question at issue.
- Locate and use resources when necessary to exploring a line of inquiry.
- Critically evaluate information sources for credibility, validity, timeliness, and relevance.
- Draw inferences from a body of evidence.
- Distinguish description from analysis and argument.
- Distinguish flawed from sound reasoning, and be able to respond to and challenge claims.
- Recognize a thesis, and understand the organic relationship between thesis and support in an essay.
- As writers, structure and develop points of argument in a coherent order to build a case; as readers, recognize this structure and development within texts.
- Critique one’s own works in progress and those of others.
- Recognize that academic and public writing is dialogic, addresses an audience, and anticipates the thinking, the questions, and the possible objections of readers.

The Writing Process
As writers, students should be able to:
- Understand writing as an ongoing process that requires multiple drafts and various strategies for developing, revising and editing texts.
- Understand that revision is informed by critical dialogue.
- See the critical analysis of others’ work as relevant to one’s own writing.

Rhetorical Situation
Students should learn to:
- Exercise rhetorical skills: frame issues, define and defend theses, invent and arrange appeals, answer counterarguments, and contextualize conclusions.
- Value writing as a collaborative dialogue between authors and audiences, critics, and colleagues.
- Make decisions about form, argumentation, and style from the expectations of different audiences.
• Recognize that a voice or style appropriate to one discipline or rhetorical context might be less appropriate for another.
• Develop "topic"-specific language that is appropriate for the defined audience while also intelligible to a non-expert audience.

Mechanics and Style
Students in WRTG 3020 should learn to:
• Convey meaning through concise, precise, highly readable language.
• Apply the basics of grammar, sentence-structure, and other mechanics integral to analytical and persuasive writing.
• Develop skills in proofreading.
• Use voice, style and diction appropriate to the discipline or rhetorical context.
• Use paragraph structure and transitional devices to aid the reader in following even a complex train of thought.

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 reflective 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
   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 do 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.
expect that students will familiarize themselves with the course requirements and policies and do their best to follow these guidelines.

Grading

Assignments #1: Driving Song 50pts (5%)
Assignments #2: A Picture is Worth 1000 Words 50pts (5%)
A#1 or A#2 “Presentation” 25 (2.5%)
Assignments #3: Option: Road Narrative or Argument Analysis 200pts (20%)
Assignments #4: Literary Journalism 425pts (45%)
Proposal 25pts
Annotated Bib 50pts
Workshop Draft 25pts
Response Letters 50pts
Preface 25pts
Final Draft 250pts
Reading Quizzes (1 for OM&M, 2 for ITW, 2 for CTL ) 100pts (10%)
Participation (in-class discussion & peer review workshops) 50pts (5%)
Attendance* 100pts (10%)
Total 1000pts. (100%)

*Everyone starts with 100 points and is giving one “freebie”. You lose 10 points for your second, third, fourth, and fifth absences. On your sixth and seventh you lose 25 points (taking you down to 10 attendance points) and on your eighth you lose the rest of your attendance points and are given a 0/50 for Participation. However, not losing points is SO easy. Just show up here twice a week for 16 weeks. (Also…2 tardies equal one absence.). Only (advanced-notice) school-related functions and religious observations represent an “excused” absence.

A=940-1000pts, A-=900-939pts, B+=870-899pts, B=840-869pts, B-=800-839pts, C+=770-799pts, C=740-769pts, C-=700-739pts, D+=670-699, D=640-669pts, D-=600-639pts, F=0-599pts

Major Assignments

• A#1 & A#2 “Suite”: A short persuasive editorial (Best Driving Song) & a short descriptive essay (The Story Behind a Photo). (Approx 8 pages total) See Project Prompt on D2L

• A#3 Option: (a) CNF Road Narrative or (b) Into the Wild Argument Analysis: (a) 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. (b) For this option: create a brief “argument” analysis (read: theme) of Krakauer’s Into the Wild and either extend, modify or complicate that theme using credible outside texts. To accomplish this goal, you must (1) argue for a major theme, you must (2) identify a purpose and audience for your chosen theme, you must (of course) (3) substantiate all these claims with explanation, illustration, quotes and/or paraphrases from Into the Wild (i.e. provide textual evidence), and you must (4) either extend upon, modify or complicate this theme by conducting and included scholarly research. (Approx revised 8 to 14 pages) See Project Prompt on D2L

• A#4 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”. Single-sentence prompt: Give something specific an honest look. (16-20pgs, 30 including revisions) See Project Prompt on D2L
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. WC: To (a) Improve your planning, logic, and organization; (b) Refine your clarity, style, citation, and grammar; (c) 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, 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/

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 Fall 2014 semester. For each project you will receive an in-depth project calendar that highlights the reading and due dates in more depth.)

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<td>Informal Class Intro, “Anonymous Essay”</td>
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<td>Anonymous Essay DUE, A#1 (50pts) Discussion</td>
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<td>A#1 Rough Drafts Due</td>
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<td>A#1 DUE, Of Mice and Men reading quiz (whole book) (25pts)</td>
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<td>A#1 “Presentations”, OMAM Discussion, Intro A#2 (50pts)</td>
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<td>RW Emerson handout, “Transcendentalism” Discussion, Intro A#4 LITERARY JOURNALISM (450pts/250 Final Draft)</td>
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<td>A#2 RD/Discussion</td>
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<td>Into the Wild reading quiz (first half of book) (25pts), ITW discussion</td>
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<td>A#3 DUE, A#4 Discussion</td>
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<td>David Foster Wallace “Consider the Lobster” essay reading quiz (10pts)</td>
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<td>DFW “Up Simba!” reading quiz (15pts)</td>
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