

CRW4303 NONFICTION

THE PERSONAL ESSAY



Spring 2024
CRN 25427

Prof. Sasha Roque Pimentel
Department of Creative Writing
The University of Texas at El Paso

SYLLABUS

COURSE MEETINGS

- Tuesdays, 1:30pm - 2:50pm (Mountain Standard Time)
- Education Building, Room 110

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The personal essay form in the genre of Creative Nonfiction

In this undergraduate course in creative nonfiction, we'll study the modern *mémoire*, or how we can take the material of our autobiographical experience (our memories, the events of our very own lives) and through the practice of modern literary craft transform those moments towards vital, compelling and responsibly-constructed "stories".

In particular, we'll study—through critical readings and through workshops of your peers' and your own creative work—the personal essay form.

We'll discuss techniques of craft such as character, setting, dialogue, imagery, etc., and how such elements can be developed into cohesive narrative structures in the face of our seemingly non-cohesive memories. How do we develop personal narratives that are driven as much by the essays' need and not just our authorial intents or needs? How do we learn to think of ourselves not just as authors, but as narrators and characters too, and thus arrive at what's truly at risk, what's truly at stake in what we've experienced? Moreover, what are our ethical responsibilities in the work of creative nonfiction, which is both “creative,” and “non,” or “not fiction,” a genre defined by its missingness, not by its contained elements? How can we write rigorously in ways that respect that contract of trust with our readers? How do we write demanding of, but compassionate to, ourselves? And what if we just can't *remember*?

The personal essay, written through the first-person, asks a writer to think of them/her/himself as multiple selves: as a craftsperson of narrative, one who chooses how and what one reveals, and one who keeps silences in service of pace and tension; as a possibly redeemable, faulty, or culpable character; as a hopefully reliable narrator; and as a human being who has experienced and experiences, a person who thinks and feels. These multiple selves can conflict in life and on the page, and the forms of narrative we choose will privilege one self over another.

How does the personal essayist create, from what is most intimate, a text that can compel, and offer something true to a stranger? How do we deal with the problem of memory, and how we enter, re-enter, and thus reconstruct our own autobiographies? How do we plumb the subjects of body, family, community, and place, and from those specificities, leap to greater insights? How do we write out from the in, and write from lived experience without claustrophobia? How do we find form, and choose details from the mass of matter that is the messiness of living?

In this course, we'll read the works of contemporary essayists, and write our own personal essays for workshop throughout the semester. I will ask each of you to write two publishable-length, whole and holistic personal essays, and to learn through the workshop of those pieces. But most of the learning you'll do in this class will come from how you, in workshopping your colleagues' pieces, come to see the needs of the Creative Nonfiction subject as you respond to your colleagues' work: how you yourself come to see and understand and articulate the personal essay form.

We'll discuss how to deal with difficult subjects that matter deeply to us while balancing technical issues like temporal tenses, sequence and spacing, perspective, narrative time, rhythm, dialogue, setting, character, etc. Through the personal essay form in the genre of creative nonfiction, we will negotiate public acts of vulnerability in service of what is important to write and say.

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to recognize and understand, and begin to develop “form” in the personal essay. We'll also discuss the larger memoir form, and how to eventually work our personal essays towards the publishable book-length memoir.

PROFESSOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

Prof. Sasha Roque Pimentel
srpimentel@utep.edu
(915) 747-6810 (for voicemail, or during at-office hours only, please see below)

Spring 2023 Office Hours

- Thursdays, 11:00am - 1:00pm MST, at University Towers 510G. Please check in with the staff at Suite 520 first.
- Please use [this link](#), or the QR code below, to book a meeting with me during my office hours. You do not need to follow up with me after booking a meeting, or to ask me beforehand; my booking app will automatically notify me that you've booked a meeting. If a time slot on a certain day is not available, it is because I already have another meeting scheduled on that day/time.



- Please use [this meeting link](#) and password for virtual appointments through my Zoom Office. (Password: Poetry1!).

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

Required Readings

This is a zero-cost course, meaning I will supply all readings (essays, and supplemental readings like poems, interviews, craft pieces) via downloadable PDF documents or as internet links on Blackboard, or sometimes as physical handouts in class.

Please feel free to bring your own computers/tablets/phones on which to view course documents, or please use [UTEP's Mobile Print app](#) or UTEP's other printing resources [here](#) if you prefer to bring printed documents for your own use.

Required Software/Applications

In addition, you'll need to use the following free software/applications to read course readings, and to upload your own creative work for workshop:

- A PDF reader:

You'll use this to view course materials. If you don't have one already, you can download Adobe Reader for free: <http://get.adobe.com/reader>.

- A PDF writer.

Most word processing programs can save documents directly to PDF format (save as > PDF). But if you don't have one already, you can download Primo PDF for free: http://download.cnet.com/PrimoPDF/3000-18497_4-10264577.html?part=dl-10264577&subj=dl&tag=button

GRADING AND REQUIREMENTS

Your final grade will be dependent on your successful completion of the following course requirements:

Essays, Rough Drafts (30% of your final grade)

You will write two essays of 3,000-7,000 words in the practical study of the personal essay form in Creative Nonfiction.

Through the process of writing each of these essays, you 'll try to master, as all writers at all stages of their career do, form, linguistic rhythm, imagistic precision, tensions, etc. These essays are an opportunity for you to push yourself in ways you may not otherwise try.

We will read, and critique, and through each of our own contexts and our course's context understand your essays through workshop sessions during our regular course meetings. Please turn in your essays for each workshop on time to Blackboard, **the week before you are scheduled to workshop by 11:59pm MST**, in the appropriate forum, to ensure a class workshop for your work.

I can't accept late essays for these workshops out of consideration to your peers, who need time to be able to read them and prepare before workshop. If at any point you miss a class workshop of your essays however, whether due to absence or tardiness in turning in your work, I will always gladly privately workshop your poem during my office hours.

Each essay will be graded as simply: "Satisfactory" (100 pts), "Pass" (70 pts., for essays that do not meet the minimum word requirement or that go substantially over the word limit) or "Fail" (0 pts). If you turn in a draft on time and within word limits, you will receive full credit for that essay.

Attendance & Workshops of Your Colleagues' Essays (20% of your final grade)

Your active participation in the workshops of your peers' essays is a course requirement. I ask you to please respond, during class, verbally to each of your classmates' work. Much of the learning this course will happen through the practical discussion in these workshops, and as such, you are required to attend class.

Please use the attendance form (linked [here](#), but also available in the lefthand course menu on Blackboard, and in our Course Calendar) to "check in" your attendance every class day. It will automatically record and timestamp your check-in. You will also need to mention something specific to our class that day to prove your attendance that day; please be as specific as possible.

If you forgot to check-in during class time and you remember it later, please submit the form when you remember, and do just note that in your answer on the attendance form, as well as the date for which you are submitting your attendance.

Please do not "check-in" on days when you have not attended class, as I will check the accuracy of this electronic record.

If you are unable to attend class because of a UTEP-sanctioned event, personal illness, child's illness, or any other official reason for which you are able to provide documentation, I will excuse that absence.

Semester Conference (10% of your final grade)

I ask you to meet with me one-on-one for a midterm conference, for 20 minutes, sometime during the semester. I just want to be able to check in with you, privately, about how you feel about your writing, or any issues you may be considering in your writing.

This doesn't need to be a workshop session, but rather, a chance to talk, writer to writer. We can talk about if you are struggling writing through something, or how you might strategies writing about something before you submit an essay to the class. Or we could talk about revisions after your workshop, if they make sense for your subject (in which case I would ask you to provide your revisions to me via email at least 48 hours before our meeting). We can talk also talk about your larger goals, about anything in your career or the profession, or your needs as a student in our Creative Writing program. It's up to you how you would want to use our conference time together, but please be mindful to try to schedule it in a way that is timely to what you might want to talk about.

Please sign up for one of these conferences during my office hours, using my Office Hours QR code. **Please sign up for a conference session (to take place any time in the semester) by Thursday, January 25th, by 11:59pm MST.** When you sign up, please indicate in the notes section, "Nonfiction Class Semester Conference."

Once you've signed up for a time slot, you can later revise it to another available time slot, but you should sign up for a conference session by the deadline listed above.

Please note that if some of my office hour slots are not available for a certain day, that is because I already have a meeting scheduled at that time and day, or another student has already scheduled their conference with me then.

If you absolutely cannot attend one of these available time slots throughout the semester, please let me know privately, and in advance.

Final Portfolio & A Statement of Reflection (40% of your final grade)

I. Revisions (30% of your final grade)

Finally, I'll ask you to deeply revise the two essays you drafted and workshopped this semester, based on your learning of course concepts and feedback, into a final creative submission. Please turn in those revisions as a creative Final Portfolio at the end of the semester, to the appropriate forum on Blackboard.

Please turn in both your final drafts and the original drafts that you submitted to workshop. Your revisions should reflect your practical understanding of central concepts from class, and they should show deep and structural changes, whether as more pages (there are no page limits for these), or some other form of revision.

I will provide examples of good revision in the genre, as well as a grading rubric before your Final Portfolio is due.

Throughout the semester, we'll also have some generative writing exercises, and some small-groupwork wherein we can discuss these exercises, discuss issues of writing, or discuss revisions.

II. Statement of Reflection (10% of your final grade)

In addition, I will also ask you to turn a formal Statement of Reflection.

This statement is intended to give you a chance to construct a first draft of your aesthetics and writing process for the kind of work you will be asked to do in a career in professional writing, and for your MFA thesis. More importantly, it's an opportunity for you to define your developing aesthetics in creative writing, as artistry should be a deliberate, careful and conscious venture. I am also asking you to consider how, as artists, you "take place" in larger and ongoing literary and artistic conversations.

This should be a carefully constructed text of **7-10 pages**, in a standard 11-12 pt. font, double-spaced. Please use MLA Style for any in-text citations, and a corresponding Works Cited page in MLA style, those these are not required.

Your Statement of Reflection should include, but need not be limited to:

- a thoughtful and sustained reflection of what was, and what is, important to you to in *writing* these essays, and why
- a discussion of how your process, and how you are approaching your subjects, has changed throughout your writing process this semester.
- a reflection of how you have wrestled the difficulties of nonfiction, such as: 1) writing about your experience as narrator, character and author; 2) the limitations of memory you experienced in writing, 3) the risks you asked yourself to take in your pieces, from the technical to the emotional, 4) the risks you sight you may yet still need to take in writing each piece, but perhaps are not ready for yet right now, and 5)

further work or research that you need to do for each piece
 a thoughtful proposal and discussion of what is important to you to in *creative nonfiction*, specifically, and why

- an analysis of how your own writing and your aesthetics are grounded in the philosophies and practices-of-craft of published writers (you must include some of the nonfiction writers we discussed in class), philosophers and other artists
- a thoughtful proposal and discussion on the relationship between form and language
- an analysis of the kind of writing you have been producing, or trying to produce with regards to your larger aesthetic goals (please include as examples work you've specifically produced in this class)

For each of your major discussion points, you should also include:

- examples from your own essays that show growth in revision, comparing and contrasting between the workshop draft and the final draft,
- or selections from your own or others' work that exemplify a point you are making about a point of craft, technique, philosophy or process.

This entire portfolio will be due as a PDF document at the end of the semester. Near the end of the semester, the link to submit this will be available: 1) on the lefthand course menu, and 2) as a red link in the top, in The Living Room, on Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This Schedule is subject to change according to my discretion as I gauge the ongoing needs of the class. I will only reduce readings or extend deadlines; I will never move up deadlines or add more required work than is listed in this Syllabus and Schedule. In the event of any changes to the Schedule, I will either announce those in class, or through email.

To sign up for the Workshop Schedule, please click [here](#). Please sign up for two workshop sessions this semester, trying hard to choose one session in the first half of the semester, and another session in the second half of the semester.

If you need to change or revise the workshop date for which you signed up, please negotiate that with another student first before informing me, and please do so at least two weeks before your scheduled workshop, as your essay (3,000-7,000 words) will be due the week before your workshop session.

Spring 2024

- **Please sign in, for every day that we have class, to record your attendance for that day.** Please use [this form](#). You will need to mention something specific to our class that day to prove your attendance that day.

- All readings will be available through Blackboard. You should be prepared to discuss readings by the beginning of each class.
- When work is due semester, it is listed below in blue.
- Except for the workshop sessions the week after Spring Break, all essays meant for workshop should be turned into the appropriate forum **one week before we will workshop it, by 11:59pm MST**. The essays meant for workshop the week after Spring Break should turn in their essays to the class *two weeks before* Spring Break, so your peers don't have to use their Spring Break time to read and prepare for your essay. **Please be aware of your workshop submission deadline; so that your peers can have enough time to read and prepare for workshop over your piece, I cannot accept late submissions for class workshops.** Even if you turn in your essay for workshop late on Blackboard, we will not be able to workshop it in class.

Key

- ☐ = Lecture or workshop days (required attendance; please sign [the attendance form](#))
- = No class meeting

Weekly Work

Week 1	Tuesday, January 16	Syllabus & Course Introductions. The Personal Essay as Literary Form, and Lifting Tension Through Language and Image. Readings on Blackboard.	Thursday, January 18	The Personal Essay as Literary Form, and Lifting Tension Through Language and Image. continued. Readings on Blackboard. Deadline today to sign up for the Workshop Schedule.
Week 2	Tuesday, January 23	Writing About Family and Community. Readings on Blackboard.	Thursday, January 25	Writing About Family and Community, continued. Readings on Blackboard. Deadline today to sign up for a Semester Conference.
Week 3	Tuesday, January 30	Writing About Body and Place. Readings on Blackboard.	Thursday, February 1	Writing About Body and Place, continued. Readings on Blackboard. <i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on February 8.</i>
Week 4	Tuesday, February 6	Writing About Forms of Knowing.	Thursday, February 8	Writing About Forms of Knowing, continued.

		<p>Readings on Blackboard.</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on February 13.</i></p>		<p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on February 15.</i></p>
Week 5	Tuesday, February 13	<p>Wrestling a Form of Intimacy, and Arriving at the "There-There."</p> <p>Readings on Blackboard.</p> <p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on February 20.</i></p>	Thursday, February 15	<p>Wrestling a Form of Intimacy, and Arriving at the "There-There," continued.</p> <p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on February 22.</i></p>
Week 6	Tuesday, February 20	<p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on February 27.</i></p>	Thursday, February 22	<p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on February 29.</i></p>
Week 7	Tuesday, February 27	<p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on March 19.</i></p>	Thursday, February 29	<p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on March 21.</i></p> <p>Bring 3 printed copies of 2-3 pgs. of revision for one of the essays that you workshopped this semester, in a way that substantially changes the</p>

				form of that excerpt from how you had originally submitted it to the class. Due 3/19.
Week 8	Tuesday, March 5	<i>No class today, local school districts on intersession. Work on your writing and revising your essays, and especially work on the revisions you'll be workshopping in class after Spring Break.</i> (While at present we don't have class scheduled for this day, this may change if more people enroll in our course).	Thursday, March 7	<i>No class today, local school districts on intersession. Work on your writing and revising your essays, and especially work on the revisions you'll be workshopping in class after Spring Break.</i>
Week 9	Tuesday, March 12	<i>No class today, Spring Break, university holiday.</i>	Thursday, March 14	<i>No class today, Spring Break, university holiday.</i>
Week 10	Tuesday, March 19	Small group workshop: Revisions, playing with form. Bring 3 printed copies of 2-3 pgs. of revision today for one of the essays that you workshopped this semester, in a way that substantially changes the form of that excerpt from how you had originally submitted it to the class. Workshop essays by: ◇ _____ ◇ _____ In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it. <i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on March 26.</i>	Thursday, March 21	Small group workshop: Revisions, playing with form. Workshop essays by: ◇ _____ ◇ _____ In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it. <i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on March 28.</i>
Week 11	Tuesday, March 26	Small group workshop: Revisions, playing with form, continued. Workshop essays by: ◇ _____ ◇ _____ In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.	Thursday, March 28	Small group workshop: Revisions, playing with form, continued. Workshop essays by: ◇ _____ ◇ _____ In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.

		<i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on April 2.</i>		<i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on April 4.</i>
Week 12	Tuesday, April 2	<p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.</p>	Thursday, April 4	<p>Workshop essays by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on April 11.</i></p> <p>Bring 3 copies of 1-2 pgs. of deep revisions for one of the essays that you workshopped this semester, for a small group workshop next week. Due 4/11.</p>
Week 13	Tuesday, April 9	<i>No class today, work on your revisions for your Final Portfolio.</i>	Thursday, April 11	<p>Class begins at 2:00pm today.</p> <p>Discuss revising essays. Small group workshop: Bring 3 printed copies today of 1-2 pgs. of deep revision for one of the essays that you workshopped this semester (a different section than what you workshopped on 3/19-3/21, though it can be from the same essay).</p> <p>Workshop essay by:</p> <p>◇ _____</p> <p>In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it.</p> <p><i>Essays due (3,000-7,000 words) by 11:59pm MST to Blackboard for writers scheduled for workshop on April 18.</i></p> <p>Bring 3 copies of deep revisions for a small group workshop next week, for another part of any essay that</p>

				you workshopped this semester. Due 4/18.
Week 14	Tuesday, April 16	<i>No class today, work on your revisions for your Final Portfolio.</i>	Thursday, April 18	Class begins at 2:00pm today. Discuss revising essays. Small group workshop: Bring 3 printed copies of 1-2 pgs. of deep revision today for the <u>second</u> essay that you workshopped this semester. Workshop essay by: ◇ _____ In case of any readings (on Blackboard) for this week, I will announce it. Discuss Final Portfolio Grading Rubric.
Week 15	Tuesday, April 23	Workshop essays by: ◇ _____ ◇ _____ Course wrap-up & Pot Luck. Bring a pot-luck item (see sign-up sheet).	Thursday, April 25	<i>No class today, work on your revisions for your Final Portfolio, and work on your final Statement of Reflection.</i>
Week 16	Tuesday, April 30	<i>No class today & no final, work on your revisions for your Final Portfolio, and work on your final Statement of Reflection.</i>	Thursday, May 2	<i>No class today & no final, work on your revisions for your Final Portfolio, and work on your final Statement of Reflection.</i> All semester conferences should be complete by today.
Finals Week	May 6 - May 10	Please turn in your Final Portfolio (Essays + Statement of Reflection) to Blackboard, in the appropriate forum (in red on the lefthand course menu, or in red as a top link in The Living Room), by Friday, May 10th, by 11:59pm MST. I am required to submit your grades to UTEP by May 15th, and grades will post on May 16th.		

UTEP'S SPRING 2024 ACADEMIC CALENDAR & LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHEDULES

Please find the university's calendar for this semester [here](#).

Please find local school districts' school calendars linked [here](#).

GRADING SCALE

- A: 90-100%
- B: 89-80%
- C: 79-70%
- D: 69-60%
- F: 59% and below

TURNING IN ESSAYS (on blackboard)

This is a literature course for professional, practicing writers and as such, we'll be conducting some workshops of your creative work. The pieces that you turn in to workshop should not be your "first" draft of that piece. You should turn in the best possible piece you can write (having worked on that essay considerably, and through multiple drafts and revisions on your own, until you feel you can absolutely do no better) when a creative work is due, because you'll get more advanced feedback. As in any form of artistry, the harder you work at each stage of the writing process, the faster and better you will learn your craft.

When I ask you to turn in a essay for workshop, please attach it to the appropriate discussion board in Blackboard as a PDF document. Please do not use Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or other formats, as not everyone has the same computer operating system; please only use the PDF format because our class is composed of writers from all over the world who are working on different electronic devices, and a PDF document ensures compatibility so that all of your colleagues can read your work, whether they are working off PCs, Macbooks, tablets, smartphones, etc.

To post your piece, first please create a new thread in the discussion board, using your first and last name(s) and the piece's title as the thread's title (e.g.: "Federico García Lorca, "Romance Sonámbulo"). Please write any prefatory contextual comments you'd like for us to know about your work, or anything that you'd like the workshop to address (optional). Then please attach your PDF document to your thread.

When your classmates respond with their notes to your piece, they will reply to your thread.

FORMATTING ESSAYS

Your work should be typed, double-spaced, and in a single standard font, 12 pt. size, with one-inch margins.

Please turn in only one essay that is between 3,000 - 7,000 words, *per workshop*. Because we have to have the time to discuss course readings and to discuss your peers' work too, we simply cannot workshop multiple essays from a single writer per workshop session, and we do not have the time to workshop more than 7,000 word essays.

I'm also asking you to limit your draft's word count because in the publishing field I know (of personal essays in Creative Nonfiction in literary journals in the United States), it is extraordinarily rare to publish any essay over 7,000 words for unsolicited pieces. The length that most Creative

Nonfiction editors accept is generally between 3,000 - 5,000 words. (The general ideal length for many literary journals is closer to 3,500 words.) The longer your essay is, the more it would cost a publisher to print it (each page costing money), and each genre editor only has a set number of pages to give to writers. So the longer your essay is, the more you are asking an editor to consider those economics before they even read a single word of your essay, which can put your essay on a back foot: i.e.: *should I publish this one piece, or three other pieces by three other writers?* In our industry, each and every word has to matter; there can be no "fat," or it will be rejected from publication.

Similarly, editors in the profession only accept work in a standard font (Times New Roman, Garamond, Georgia, etc., and in standard font size, almost always 12 pt. font). Please include the following header for each essay, which uses the standardized U.S. version for prose submissions:

Example of a first page:

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
 ngozieadichie@miners.utep.edu

← *author's information justified to the left*

"To Write a Title"
 3,357 words

← *when submitting to journals in the U.S., put your address and phone number between your name and email address (but no need to put in your address for class)*

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet. Ea eveniet dolores et eveniet dolor ut quod dolor. A voluptatum impedit et maxime fuga qui omnis optio At dolorem preferendis est internos quos. Cum sunt totam quo labore iste et omnis architecto 33 consequatur rerum.

← *include two line spaces between the header and the title of your essay.*

Sit unde quas eos quod minima vel sint nihil eum repudiandae aperiam.

← *title center-justified, and in quotations. Place your essay's title in quotation marks, because that indicates a manuscript available for consideration, rather than italics, which would indicate an already published piece.*

Vel mollitia nemo aut nesciunt galisum rem commodi quis aut magni alias ut nostrum quia. Sed omnis nobis rem molestias repudiandae et exercitationem commodi.

← *always place a correct word count.*

← *include two line spaces between the title and the text*

Vel mollitia nemo aut nesciunt galisum rem commodi quis aut magni alias ut nostrum quia.

← *left-justify the text of your essay. Use tabs to indicate new paragraphs, and only use line spaces to indicate new sections in the essay)*

Example of every page after the first page:

Ngozi Adichie 2 *← for every page after the first page, include a right-justified header with the last name(s) and the page number. (If submitting to a journal that only uses blind submissions, or anonymous submissions, replace the last name with the essay's title in this header, and remove the author's information from the first page, and any other instance)*

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet. Ea eveniet dolores et eveniet dolor ut quod dolor. A voluptatum impedit et maxime fuga qui omnis optio At dolorem perferendis est internos quos. Cum sunt totam quo labore iste et omnis architecto 33 consequatur rerum.

Sit unde quas eos quod minima vel sint nihil eum repudiandae aperiam.

Vel mollitia nemo aut nesciunt galisum rem commodi quis aut magni alias ut nostrum quia. Sed omnis nobis rem molestias repudiandae et exercitationem commodi. Vel mollitia nemo aut nesciunt galisum rem commodi quis aut magni alias ut nostrum quia.

GIVING FEEDBACK

I ask you to take your role as a writer, and as a literary critic, with great care, with seriousness and sensitivity. You have a responsibility as a fellow artist to your colleagues to not only read their work deeply, but to make constructive comments to help them express their art into a compelling aesthetic to a public audience.

Participating in giving feedback to your classmates' work will help you to read and revise your own work with more fluency and expertise, and there is always something to respond to, technically and formally, in your colleagues' writing: it's your job as a writer to find it. (It's not helpful just to tell a fellow writer that you love or like everything about their/her/his essay. While that's nice, it isn't intuitive to the writing process, which demands profound revision.)

On the other hand, because we are working in the field of Creative Nonfiction, which stems from all authors' autobiographies, and especially because we are writing personal essays, please practice care with how you talk about subjects during our workshops, especially if the topics seem sensitive. While as writers we work on the technical aspects of form, we may not always be wholly prepared for the emotions that accompany the experiences from where we are writing. While I ask you as writers to try your best to listen to the craft that your peers are recommending, as readers, I ask you to remember that behind each written piece is a human being who has experienced that essay's content, and sometimes those experiences have been, and continue to be, painful.

EMAILING & COMMUNICATING OUTSIDE OF CLASS

When I contact you via email, I will do so by sending an email to your official UTEP student email.

To access your email through a phone or tablet, please [click here](#) for Mac ios and [here](#) for Android ios. If you prefer to receive email through a non-UTEP email account, please set up email forwarding. Please visit UTEP's Technology Support page for email [here](#).

Please feel free to call me anytime at 915-747-6810 to leave a voicemail message, and I'll get back to you the next time that I hold office hours.

You may also email me at srpimentel@utep.edu. I will try my best to get back to you within two days of your email during weekdays, though it may take longer over the weekend, depending on when you send your email. If at any time I anticipate an extended period in which I won't have access to email (e.g.: travel, conference, etc.), I will announce this.

WITHDRAWING FROM THE COURSE

If you feel that circumstances arise so you cannot be successful in this course this semester, please withdraw from this course officially (on Goldmine) by the university's course drop deadline of March 28, 2024 so that you can receive a "W" for a grade.

But please do write/talk to me first? I will try my best to find alternative or makeup methods for you for coursework where possible.

CENTER FOR ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) aspires to provide students with disabilities, accommodations and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals. Please contact CASS at cass@utep.edu or by phone at (915) 747-5148 if you will need any accommodations for this class.

Once you contact CASS, their office will send me a letter of your needs, and I will respect all CASS-mandated accommodations.

Please note that the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) uses a software system called AIM (Accessible Information Management system). This portal provides you with access to letters of notification and the ability to fill out your CASS Alternative Testing Agreement form. This portal is available [here](#).

THE DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE WRITING'S POLICY ON NAMES AND PRONOUNS

Many people might go by a name other than their legal name. In this class, we seek to refer to people by the names they choose. Pronouns may affirm someone's gender identity, but they could also be unrelated to a person's identity.

In this class, you are invited to share what pronouns you go by, and we seek to respect, and to refer to, people using the pronouns that they share (e.g. "he" or "she" or "they" or "ze" or any form you choose).

UTEP'S STUDENT PREGNANCY AND PARENTING NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The University of Texas at El Paso (University) is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discrimination of pregnant or parenting students in accordance with the Texas Education Code, Section 51.982 and other applicable laws, such as Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including pregnancy discrimination) in education programs or activities; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability (including disabilities based on temporary medical conditions from pregnancy); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in public schools such as institutions of higher education.

Reasonable Accommodations for Pregnant Students

Reasonable Accommodations. The University will offer reasonable accommodations to pregnant students, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. Accommodation requests are voluntary and involve an individualized, interactive process where both the University and the student engage in a good faith discussion based on the student's specific needs with the goal of identifying reasonable options for accommodations. Accommodations that constitute undue hardship are not reasonable.

Reasonable accommodations for pregnant students may include but are not limited to:

- Excused absences with the availability to make up missed assignments or coursework;
- Additional time to complete assignments (applied in the same manner as ADA/504 accommodations for additional time on assignments or tests, with required documentation);
- Allowing the student to maintain a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant students or unborn children;

- Access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures (if available) for classes due to excused absences due to pregnancy or related conditions (applied in the same manner as any other student with excused absences); and
- Any other accommodations deemed reasonable, based on the student's individual needs.

Leave of Absence for Pregnant and Parenting Students

The University will allow pregnant and parenting students to take a leave of absence, as defined in this Policy, for a reasonable duration depending on the circumstances. In addition, if the pregnant or parenting student is in good academic standing at the time of the leave of absence, the student may return to the same degree or certificate program in good academic standing without being required to reapply for admission.

For more information, please see [the full policy here](#).

UTEP'S EQUAL OPPORTUNITY NON-DISCRIMINATION, NON-RETALIATION POLICY

The University of Texas at El Paso ("University" or "UTEP") is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. The University, in the administration of its employment policies and practices, will not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran's status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The University will take affirmative steps to ensure that applicants and employees are treated in a non-discriminatory manner in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, promotion, compensation, benefits, and training. UTEP's commitment to providing equal opportunity also applies to students, applicants for admission, and other beneficiaries seeking access to University programs, facilities, or services.

Our institutional commitment to these policies provides for selection procedures based upon objective, defensible qualifications; promotions based upon documented performance, merit, and achievement; evaluations that are accurate and unbiased; and a complaint process that is fair and equitable. In addition, the University commits itself to increased recruitment efforts to ensure that qualified minorities, women, veterans, and individuals with a disability are represented in the applicant pool and evaluated equitably by search committees or administrative personnel.

Complaints regarding impermissible discrimination should be addressed to the Equal Opportunity Office, Kelly Hall, Room 302. All inquiries will be confidential to the extent permitted by law. Individuals may be assured that they are protected from retaliation for filing or cooperating in an investigation of a complaint of discrimination. A copy of the complaint procedure is available at the Equal Opportunity Office, or electronically in the Handbook of Operating Procedures under Section VI, Chapter 1, <https://www.utep.edu/vpba/hoop>.

Our commitment to equal opportunity principles and policies is shared by all members of the University community.

THE DEPARTMENT OF CREATIVE WRITING'S STATEMENT IN SOLIDARITY AGAINST RACIAL VIOLENCE *(June 15, 2020)*

The Department of Creative Writing at the University of Texas at El Paso stands in solidarity with Black Lives Matter and issues the following statement:

In April 1963, during the eleven days of solitary confinement for protesting for civil rights in Alabama, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, 34, began writing in the margins of a newspaper what would later be known as his "Letter from Birmingham Jail." He continued on paper towels, scraps of yellow paper, and, eventually, a writing pad his lawyers were allowed to leave with him.

"Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, 'Wait.' Dr. King Jr. wrote, "[b]ut when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she can't go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television . . . and see ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five-year-old son who is asking: 'Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?'; . . .when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of 'nobodiness' — then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait."

Released just days ago, through the fisheye lens of a shaky body camera worn by the police officer who chased him, we see in Oklahoma on May 20, 2019, Mr. Derrick Scott, 42, imploring the limbs choking him, "I can't breathe, I can't breathe, please!" *Give me your hand*, a voice says, as multiple knees pin him to the grass, *don't resist, you're fine*, before he dies in their custody.

On May 25, 2020 in Minnesota, Mr. George Floyd, 46, is asking for his own breath on East 38th Street and Chicago Avenue. "Please, please, please, I can't breathe. Please, man," he asks. He is being murdered by a police officer whose knee is on Floyd's neck for five minutes while a bystander begs him and the other three officers there, "No, bro, look at him, he's not responsive right now." The word bro, brother, is an invocation of kinship, that one man on a street can be tied to another man on that street, but the murderer keeps pressing his knee against Mr. Floyd, who is restrained, unarmed and unconscious, for another three minutes and 46 seconds.

In Kentucky on March 13, 2020, Ms. Breonna Taylor, 26, is sleeping in her own apartment between shifts as an EMT when police batter her front-door with a no-knock warrant after midnight, searching for two people who were already in their custody. Ms. Taylor, in her bed, unarmed, is shot eight times. They never find the drugs for which their warrant was signed, though they charge Ms. Taylor's boyfriend, Mr. Kenneth Walker, who, woken from his sleep, thinking the plainclothes officers were criminals, tried to defend himself from his bed with his licensed firearm. The officers charge him with first-degree assault and the attempted murder of a police officer. They fire over 20

shots. Ms. Taylor was studying to be a nurse while a pandemic surged across the globe, everywhere people's lungs filling with fluid, swelling for air. She was hoping to help them breathe.

On February 23, 2020, Mr. Ahmaud Arbery, 25, is jogging in a t-shirt and shorts, unarmed. He is exercising in his own neighborhood when the angle of the camera closes in on the long, grey curve of the road, then another truck and Mr. Arbery. The camera whizzes and shakes, but we can see a father and son raise their shotgun, handgun, and voices while Mr. Arbery struggles against his murderers, fighting not to be felled.

In our own Juárez-El Paso, on August 4, 2019, one summer ago, a man drives across the whole of Texas with a semi-automatic rifle. He leaves a manifesto saying he is shooting us by the rhetoric and command of the U.S. nation-state. Mr. Leonardo Campos Jr, 41; Mrs. Maribel Campos, 56; Mr. David Alvah Johnson, 63; Mr. Ivan Filiberto Manzano, newly 41; Mrs. Jordan Anchondo, 25; Mr. Andre Pablo Anchondo, 23; Mr. Arturo Benavidez, 59; Mr. Javier Amir Rodriguez, 15; Ms. Sara Esther Regalado Moriel, 66; Mr. Adolfo Cerros Hernández, 68; Ms. Gloria Irma Márquez, 61; Mrs. María Eugenia Legarreta Rothe, 60; Mrs. Elsa Mendoza de la Mora Márquez, 57; Mr. Juan de Dios Velázquez Chairez, 77; Mrs. Maria Flores, 77; Mr. Raul Flores, 83; Ms. Margie Reckard, 63; Mr. Alexander Gerhard Hoffman, 66; Ms. Teresa Sanchez, 82; Ms. Angelina Silva Englisbee, 86; Mr. Jorge Calvillo Garcia, 61; and Mr. Luis Alfonzo Juarez, 90 die shopping for a wheelchair, composition books, loose-leaf paper, highlighters, bread, beans, soap. On April 25, 2020, Mr. Guillermo Garcia, 36, who had been at Walmart to raise money for his daughter's soccer team, dies after fighting to breathe in the hospital for nine months. On May 25, 2020, Paul Gilbert Anchondo, whose parents Jordan and Andre had shielded him, turns one year old.

The Department of Creative Writing at the University of Texas at El Paso sees the loss of these lives—as well as those lives lost who are not yet known—as extrajudicial killings of systemic racial violence. These are deaths caused enforcing a border, shooting a gun, pressing a knee, executing a policy, uttering language, by someone who feels entitled to it, whether it be an official, officer, or a citizen. We condemn these murders; we name them among the tyrannies of the caging of our own from across the Americas who seek and have sought refuge here; of the disproportional deaths, for lack of healthcare or economic access, of communities of color across the Americas from COVID-19; of the documented femicides of hundreds of our daughters; of the ICE raids across our streets, our high schools, and our university campus; and of the theft of the unceded territory of our Indigenous Tigua and Mescalero peoples; among other acts, visible and hidden, wrought from the racism of our countries, rended and founded in genocide, slavery and imperialism.

We stand in solidarity with the African American Studies Program and our Black own in this profound Black Lives Matter movement, who dignify those who have fought and died, who are still fighting; and with the Chicano Studies Program and the Institute of Oral History, who surface the lived experiences of, and in so doing, call dignity to, our Indigenous and Latinx own. We are aware of the very many for whom the cause of equality has already been their lives' work, and we pledge to see it, attend to it, and to continue the cause ourselves in our own teaching, community service, and in the poems, stories, essays, memoirs and novels we will write.

We will scrutinize the ways that racial, ethnic and LGBTQIA+ discrimination persists in our department, from our students and our faculty to our programmatic goals, and each of our projects, and we commit and recommit to dismantling the inequities of Black, AfroLatinx, Indigenous and LGBTQIA+ representation in our department.

We will continue to teach our students a writing that is informed by a rich multitude of literatures driven by, and not just tokenly inclusive of, the stories and verses of traditionally underrepresented communities. We will examine where we lack that, and we will correct it. We refuse to perpetuate a white, heteronormative, monolingual or patriarchal literary canon. We are a bilingual department and a multilingual community; our students and faculty are from Juárez-El Paso and from across the globe. So we acknowledge the veracity of each of our students' cultural knowledge, and that ours is a collectively-constructed and living literature: one which knows and speaks of rivers, can reimagine dreams from what dreams have been deferred.

We renew our perspective that the term "America" is the *Americas* for our students, staff and faculty, that our identities and our missions cross borders and oceans. We commit to cry out, again and again in language, the power of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's words, 57 years ago, when he beckons us to be "cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states." We still grasp for, through our communal sorrow, his wisdom that "[i]njustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny."

We stand in solidarity for true civil rights, and we ask you too, to name now through the power of language our terrors and our loves swirling around us, what is our history flooding our present. We ask you to help us to uncover, with clarity: a promise—on newspapers, paper towels, all your scraps of paper—of our collective ache for a social change that can succor and sustain.

En abril de 1963, durante los once días de confinamiento por protestar por los derechos civiles en Alabama, el reverendo Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, entonces de 34 años, comenzó a escribir al margen de un periódico lo que luego se conocería como su "Carta de la cárcel de Birmingham ". Continuó escribiendo en toallas de papel, hojas amarillas y, finalmente, en el bloc de notas que sus abogados pudieron dejarle.

"Tal vez sea fácil para aquellos que nunca han sentido los punzantes dardos de la segregación decir: "Esperen ". El Dr. King Jr. escribió:" [b] pero cuando has visto a turbas salvajes linchar a tus madres y padres por voluntad propia y ahogar a tus hermanas y hermanos a su antojo; cuando has visto a policías llenos de odio maldecir, patear e incluso matar a tus hermanos y hermanas negros; cuando ves a la gran mayoría de tus veinte millones de hermanos negros asfixiados en la hermética jaula de la pobreza en medio de una sociedad acomodada; cuando de repente tu lengua titubea y tartamudea al intentar explicarle a tu hija de seis años por qué no puede ir al parque de diversiones público que acaba de anunciarse en la televisión. . . y observas las ominosas nubes de inferioridad que comienzan a formarse en su pequeño cielo mental, y observas que comienza a distorsionarse su personalidad y a desarrollar una amargura inconsciente hacia los blancos; cuando tienes que inventar una respuesta para tu hijo de cinco años que pregunta: "Papi, ¿por qué las personas blancas tratan a las personas de color tan mal?"; . . .cuando te acosan de día y te atormentan de noche por el hecho de ser negro, cuando vives constantemente de puntillas, sin saber exactamente qué esperar a continuación, y plagado de miedos internos y resentimientos externos; cuando siempre luchas contra una sensación de degeneración de 'no-cuerpo', entonces entenderás por qué nos resulta difícil esperar ".

Compartido hace poco, vemos a través del lente de la inestable cámara que llevaba en su cuerpo el oficial de policía que lo persigue, cómo en Oklahoma el 20 de mayo de 2019, el Sr. Derrick Scott, de

42 años, implora a las piernas que lo ahogan, "No puedo respirar, no puedo respirar, por favor!" *Dame tu mano*, dice una voz, mientras varias rodillas lo sujetan al pasto, *no te resistas, estás bien*, le dicen antes de que muera bajo su custodia.

El 25 de mayo de 2020 en Minnesota, George Floyd, de 46 años, está pidiendo su propio aliento en la calle 38th y la avenida Chicago. "Por favor, por favor, por favor, no puedo respirar. Por favor, hombre", ruega. Está siendo asesinado por un oficial de policía cuya rodilla se mantiene en el cuello de Floyd durante cinco minutos, mientras que un espectador le ruega a él y a los otros tres oficiales allí: "No, mano, míralo, ya no responde ". La palabra mano, hermano, es una invocación de parentesco, una palabra que nos dice que cualquier hombre puede estar ligado a otro hombre en esa calle, pero el asesino sigue presionando su rodilla contra el Sr. Floyd, quien está inmóvil, desarmado e inconsciente, por otros tres minutos y 46 segundos.

En Kentucky, el 13 de marzo de 2020, la Sra. Breonna Taylor, de 26 años, está durmiendo en su propio apartamento entre sus turnos de EMT cuando la policía golpea su puerta con una orden de no tocar después de la medianoche, en busca de dos personas que ya estaban en su custodia. La Sra. Taylor, en su cama, desarmada, recibe ocho disparos. Nunca encuentran las drogas por las cuales se firmó su orden judicial, aunque acusan al novio de la Sra. Taylor, el Sr. Kenneth Walker, quien, arrancado de su sueño, pensó que los oficiales vestidos de civiles eran criminales, trató de defenderse de su cama con su arma de fuego autorizada. Los oficiales lo acusan por asalto en primer grado y por el intento de asesinato a un oficial de policía. Disparan más de 20 veces. La Sra. Taylor estaba estudiando para ser enfermera mientras una pandemia se extendía por todo el mundo, mientras los pulmones de las personas se llenaban de líquido y se hinchaban por aire, ella anhelaba poderlos ayudar a respirar.

El 23 de febrero de 2020, el Sr. Ahmaud Arbery, de 25 años, corre vestido con una camiseta y pantalones cortos, desarmado. Está haciendo ejercicio en su propio vecindario cuando el ángulo de la cámara se acerca a la curva larga y gris de la carretera, luego se ve otro camión y al Sr. Arbery. La cámara zumba y tiembla, pero podemos ver a un padre y a su hijo levantar escopeta, pistola y sus voces mientras que el Sr. Arbery lucha contra sus asesinos, luchando por no ser derribado.

En nuestra propia frontera Juárez-El Paso, el 4 de agosto de 2019, hace apenas un verano, un hombre maneja por todo Texas con un rifle semiautomático. Él comparte un manifiesto en el que plantea que nos dispara por la retórica y el comando del estado-nación de EE. UU. Mueren así: Leonardo Campos Jr, de 41 años. Maribel Campos, de 56; David Alvah Johnson, de 63; Ivan Filiberto Manzano, quien recién cumplía 41; Jordan Anchondo, de 25 años; Andre Pablo Anchondo, de 23; Arturo Benavidez, de 59; Javier Amir Rodríguez, de 15 años; Sara Esther Regalado Moriel, de 66; Adolfo Cerros Hernández, de 68; Gloria Irma Márquez, de 61; María Eugenia Legarreta Rothe, de 60; dElsa Mendoza de la Mora Márquez, de 57; Juan de Dios Velázquez Chairez, de 77; María Flores, de 77; Raúl Flores, de 83; Margie Reckard, de 63; Alexander Gerhard Hoffman, de 66; Teresa Sánchez, de 82; Angelina Silva Englisbee, de 86; Jorge Calvillo García, de 61; y Luis Alfonso Juárez, de 90. Todos ellos murieron comprando una silla de ruedas, cuadernos, papel de hojas sueltas, marcadores, pan, frijoles, jabón. El 25 de abril de 2020, Guillermo García, de 36 años, quien había estado en Walmart recaudando dinero para el equipo de fútbol de su hija, muere en el hospital después de pasar nueve meses tratando de volver a respirar. El 25 de mayo de 2020, Paul Gilbert Anchondo, cuyos padres Jordan y Andre murieron protegiéndolo, cumple un año.

El Departamento de Escritura Creativa de la Universidad de Texas en El Paso reconoce estas vidas como nuestras, como parte de esos reconocidos—dentro de los cuales hay quienes han muerto y aún lo ignoramos—asesinatos y asaltos extrajudiciales de violencia racial sistémica. Estas son muertes ejercidas por fronteras, armas, rodillas, hisopos, políticas, idiomas, por funcionarios, oficiales o ciudadanos. Nosotros condenamos estos asesinatos; los nombramos entre las tiranías de enjaular a los nuestros que vienen de todo el continente americano y que buscan y han buscado refugio aquí; condenamos el número desproporcionado de muertes que por falta de atención médica o de recursos económicos han enfrentado las comunidades de color en todo el continente americano por COVID-19; condenamos los feminicidios documentados de cientos de nuestras hijas; de las redadas de ICE en nuestras calles, en nuestras escuelas secundarias y en nuestro campus universitario; y condenamos el robo de Tigua y Mescalero territorio de nuestros pueblos Indígenas; entre otros actos que, visibles y ocultos, son el resultado del racismo de países concebidos y fundados desde el genocidio, la esclavitud y el imperialismo.

Nos solidarizamos con el Programa de Estudios Afroamericanos y con la profundidad del movimiento Black Lives Matter, que dignifica a quienes han luchado y muerto, y que todavía están luchando; también con el Programa de Estudios Chicanos y el Instituto de Historia Oral, que muestran las experiencias vividas y, al hacerlo, dignifican a nuestros Indígenas y latinos. Somos conscientes de todos aquellos que han hecho de la igualdad su causa y el trabajo de sus vidas, y nos comprometemos a verla, atenderla y alimentar esta causa nosotros mismos en nuestra práctica docente, servicio comunitario y en los poemas, cuentos, ensayos, memorias y novelas que escribiremos.

Examinaremos las formas en que la discriminación racial, étnica y LGBTQIA + persiste en nuestro departamento, desde nuestros estudiantes y nuestra facultad hasta nuestros objetivos programáticos y cada uno de nuestros proyectos, y nos comprometemos y volveremos a comprometer en desmantelar las desigualdades de representación de negros, Afrolatinos, Indígenas y de la comunidad LGBTQIA + en nuestro departamento.

Continuaremos enseñando a nuestros estudiantes a construir una escritura informada desde la rica diversidad de literatura impulsada por, y no solo simbólicamente inclusiva, las historias y versos de comunidades tradicionalmente subrepresentadas. Examinaremos qué es lo que nos ha faltado y lo corregiremos. Nos negamos a perpetuar un canon literario blanco, heteronormativo, monolingüe o patriarcal. Somos un departamento bilingüe y una comunidad multilingüe; Nuestros estudiantes y profesores son de Juárez-El Paso y de todo el mundo. Por lo tanto, reconocemos la veracidad del conocimiento cultural de cada uno de nuestros estudiantes y que la nuestra es una literatura viva y construida colectivamente: una literatura que sabe y habla de ríos, que puede reimaginar esos sueños desde los sueños que se han aplazado.

Renovamos nuestra perspectiva de que el término "América" es Las Américas en honor a nuestros estudiantes, personal y facultad, porque nuestras identidades y nuestras misiones cruzan fronteras y océanos. Nos comprometemos a gritar y a demandar, a través del lenguaje, el poder de las palabras del reverendo Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, hace 57 años, cuando nos llamaba a ser "conscientes de la interrelación de todas las comunidades y estados". Aún entendemos, a través de nuestra tristeza colectiva, su sabiduría de que "[la] injusticia en cualquier lugar es una amenaza para la justicia en todas partes. Estamos atrapados en una inevitable red de mutualidad, atados en una sola prenda de destino".

Nos solidarizamos con los verdaderos derechos civiles y te pedimos también que señales a través del poder del lenguaje esos terrores y pasiones que nos rodean, lo que llamamos nuestra historia y que inunda nuestro presente. Te pedimos que nos ayudes a descubrir, con claridad: una promesa, en periódicos, toallas de papel, en todo trozo de papel, nuestro llamado colectivo por un cambio social que nos socorra y sostenga.