COURSE DESCRIPTION/OBJECTIVES:
This course will cover the basic elements involved as you begin to write a fiction or a non-fiction book. You can choose from structures such as memoir, historical, essay, autobiography, self-help, how to, humor or the novel. Each student will be expected to complete all readings and assignments, along with participating fully in class exercises, activities and discussions. Student writing will be constructively discussed through individual workshop sessions. Students will complete two major projects: a non-fiction or fiction book proposal and a sample chapter, along with a number of smaller writing exercises and a book presentation in the Author’s Pavilion.

TEXTS:
The following book will be available in paperback at the University Bookstore in the IMU. Every student is required to read all assigned readings. This material will be synthesized, evaluated and debated in discussions. Additional readings will be assigned on ICON during the semester. Ryan Van Cleave The Weekend Book Proposal: How to Write a Winning Proposal (Writers Digest Books 2011)

WRITING/STORYTELLING LEARNING GOAL:
Understand that clear, concise, correct writing is at the heart of journalistic expression and that reporting and communicating it effectively requires a knowledge and achievement of the highest, professionally-accepted standards in all work.

   Learning Objective 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to gather factual story elements, and to evaluate and express them in logical, narrative forms for multiple media and audiences.

   Learning Objective 2: Students will display the ability to access and analyze data, report facts accurately, research and edit information responsibly and in a manner commensurate with professional standards.

   Learning Objective 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to apply above concepts in a manner that is sensitive to audiences across all media.

NOTES:
ADMINISTRATIVE HOME - The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook

DISABILITY - I would like to hear from anyone who has a disability which may need some modification of seating, testing or other class requirements so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Please see me after class or during my office hours.

EMAIL - Make sure your email account is active and connected to the University system so that you can get J-MC School, UI and class messages. You should check your email regularly. University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty must use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll to k.11.)

ATTENDANCE - Attendance is mandatory. Every class is important so please don’t ask my permission to miss a class. If you must miss a class you will need to provide a written explanation and adequate documentation for me to consider suspending the penalty. Missing 30 minutes of one class can be considered an absence. You can miss two classes without penalty.
DEADLINES- Deadlines in this class are firm. Late assignments should be pre-approved. NO assignment will be extended more than one week past the deadline – NO exceptions. It is your responsibility to turn in your assignments directly to the professor when they are due. If you turn in an assignment in some other way (under office door or email), at some other time (before or after due date), the professor not responsible if it is lost or misplaced. It is always a good idea to keep a copy in case there is a problem.

RESOURCES – The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences offers a number of resources for student success. For example: The Writing Center, The Speaking Center and Tutor Iowa. The School of Journalism Resource Center (E350 Adler) also offers a broad range of help including computer access, writing assistance and relevant journalism materials.

CHANGES - It may be necessary to make changes in the syllabus according to how readings, videos, and assignments flow throughout the semester. A number of new videos have been ordered. So a currently listed video in the syllabus may be replaced by a new one depending on arrival date.

WARNING - If any of the videos shown in class are offensive you are not required to stay and view them. However, each video has been selected because of its appropriateness to the particular section studied. And all are available on television or on the Internet.

UNIVERSITY EXAM POLICY - Final Examinations. An undergraduate student who has two final examinations scheduled for the same period or more than three examinations scheduled for the same day may file a request for a change of schedule before the published deadline at the Registrar’s Service Center, 17 Calvin Hall, 8-4:30 M-F, (384-4300). Missed exam policy. University policy requires that students be permitted to make up examinations missed because of illness, mandatory religious obligations, certain University activities, or unavoidable circumstances. Excused absence forms are required and are available at the Registrar web site: http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/forms/absence.pdf

SUGGESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS – For student complaints concerning problems with the professor - first attempt to resolve the matter with the professor, if you are still not able to settle it go to department executive officer, Dr. David Ryfe, The full text of this policy can be found in the College's Student Academic Handbook. www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml#5

SEVERE WEATHER – The University Operations Manual section 16.14 outlines appropriate responses <http://www.uiowa.edu/%7Eour/opmanual/v/16.htm#1614d> to a tornado or similar crisis. If there is a crisis as indicated by the UI Outdoor Warning System members of the class should seek shelter in the innermost part of the building at the lowest level and stay until the crisis is over. In the case of really bad weather like an ice storm, please check your email before coming to class. If the class is cancelled I will send an email notice as far ahead as possible.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT - Student Academic Misconduct includes plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's words or ideas as your own, whether in writing or speaking. Cheating includes copying someone else's work or purposefully allowing someone else to copy your work. Disciplinary actions - the professor will inform you immediately of the allegation. Each situation is handled individually, but if found guilty you will definitely receive an F on the assignment and possibly an F in the entire course, probation, suspension or even expulsion. The full text of this policy can be found in the College's Student Academic Handbook.

COLLABORATION – If a group project is assigned, each group member is expected to contribute equally. If, the professor receives a complaint, each student will be required to complete a self-evaluation describing the equality or the lack of it during the group’s project. Students who misrepresent themselves as equal partners in this collaborative project but who are actually letting others do the bulk of the work will be reported to the College for academic dishonesty.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT - The University has a policy on sexual harassment and consensual relationships in the instructional environment. Obtain the full text of this policy in the Office of Affirmative Action, 202 Jessup Hall
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES - Student Rights and Responsibilities include your right to expect a classroom environment that enables all to learn comfortably, plus you have a responsibility to this class and your own education to help create a classroom environment where the same is possible for everyone. At the most basic level, this means that you will respect the other members of the class, including the professor, and treat everyone with the same courtesy you want to receive in return.

INAPPROPRIATE USE OF COMPUTER- Once class starts you may not use the computer to check your email, go on Facebook or any other computer activity outside of class work. You will lose 5 points each time the professor discovers an inappropriate use of the computer. It is also rude and unacceptable to work on the computer while the professor or fellow students are presenting to the class or a video is playing. Please be respectful at all times.

GRADING:
You must earn 60% of the available points in order to pass this class. I have rigorous expectations and grade accordingly. *Assignments will be graded with these guidelines in mind: A = Exceptional work, B = Very good work, C = Average work, D = Poor work, F = Unacceptable work. Grades for each assignment will be determined within the range of that particular assignment. Grades are not based on percentages, but on points. The final grade will be based on the total points earned for all class assignments and activities (see grade scale below). Plus/Minus will only be added to the final grade and only if total points are on the edge of the point range. You should plan to put sufficient time and attention into this class. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences suggests that students work at least two hours outside class per week for each semester hour of course credit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>30pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>30pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model Book Analysis</td>
<td>15pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Proposal</td>
<td>50pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Chapter</td>
<td>50pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Author Reading</td>
<td>15pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Synopsis</td>
<td>15pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter Outline</td>
<td>21pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class exercises (12/2pts. Each)</td>
<td>24pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>250pts.</td>
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Final Grade Scale:
- 250-225 = A
- 224-200 = B
- 199-170 = C
- 169-150 = D
- Below 150 = F

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

**Participation** - Participation in class discussion is a very important component. Points will be distributed based on your contribution to workshops and other class discussions. Minimum contribution/rarely speak - 10pts. Average contribution/sometimes speak - 20pts. Exceptional contribution/always speak - 30pts. All members of the class must be respectful of each other when commenting. Constructive criticism only. **No exceptions!!!!!!**

**Class Writing Exercises** – In class you will complete a number of short writing exercises dealing with specific topics like narrative, point of view, voice, transitions, word choice, flow, framing, and others. You will be asked to turn in some of those assignments at the end of the class period for credit. You should always be prepared to read your writing in front of the class. You should volunteer to present your work when you can because authors must be outgoing concerning the promotion of their books.

**Book Proposal** - Choose a topic for your novel or non-fiction book. Research that topic and develop a book proposal including these specific elements: title, hook, synopsis, market/competition, promotional activities, bio and chapter outline.

**Chapter Outline** - Estimate the number of chapters for your book (at least 15 chapters) and write a paragraph explaining what will be included in each chapter (See handout below). Must be double-spaced with one-inch margins – average typeface Times 12/14).
Synopsis – Your synopsis should explain the entire novel story or non-fiction book topic from beginning to end – no surprises. Need to show the main characters or issues, core conflict, what is at stake, and resolutions. Stick to the basics but narrative should be visual and compelling because it represents your writing style.

Sample Chapter - You will write one chapter from your novel or non-fiction book. The chapter should be between 7 & 10 pages, double-spaced with one-inch margins, average typeface Times 12/14.

Model Book Analysis - You will complete a book analysis based on a model book chosen in your genre. For the fictional novel, identify the six major structural elements and discuss how the book relates to the story you want to write – title, characters, plot, prose, point of view, etc. For the non-fiction book summarize the effectiveness of major concepts like: the title, chapter structure, narrative style, and topic. (Maximum 3 pages) Make sure that you document the main points of your analysis by including examples from the model book.

Proposal/Chapter Workshops - The two primary writing assignments: a fiction or non-fiction book proposal and sample chapter must be completed and submitted to ICON drop box by the deadline (see course schedule). Everyone must read all classmates assignments before the scheduled workshop. Prepare a one page typed comment sheet for each classmate and also be prepared to participate in a constructive discussion during critique session. Your participation is crucial because you are all potential readers and your comments can help fellow classmates to develop the best book possible. Evaluation will cover Focus/Clarity/Logic, Structure/Organization, Narration/Style/Flow, Substance/Content, Grammar/Language/Mechanics.

Author’s Pavilion - You will participate in an Author’s Pavilion at the end of class. You will select a five-minute reading from your sample chapter (approximately 5 pages). Be sure to start with background on yourself and set up for the context of the reading. Evaluation will include: confidence/eye contact, inflection/rhythm/flow. Make sure you practice ahead of time so that you are comfortable presenting your text. After reading we will take a couple of minutes for questions and answers.

Extra-Credit – Identify three possible agents to send your proposal to. Write a paragraph explaining why you chose each agent (1 page), then write a query letter for those agents about your book project and yourself (2 pages maximum).

COURSE SCHEDULE:

January 19-21st - Introduction/Syllabus Overview
Video Interview – History and Future of Books (35 min) / Charlie Rose: Writers on Writing (14 min)/ Inside Random House (10 min)
Discussion/Exercises Fiction/ Non-Fiction proposal exercises/Synopsis assignment

January 26-28th – Book Proposals & Consider the Audience
Video Interview – Hollywood Reporter Writers Panel 2015 (71 min)
Discussion/Exercises Explanation/Clarity & Depth Exercises

February 2-4th – Snappy titles & Market Analysis
Video Interview – Charlie Rose: J.K. Rowling (30 min) / CSpan Q & A: Malcolm Gladwell (30 min)
Discussion/Exercises Narrative Structure/Connections Model Book assignment

**Synopsis Due February 4th!**

February 9-11th – Competition & Publicity
Video Interview – The Future is the Word: Writer’s Panel (80 min)
Discussion/Exercises Show Don’t Tell/Transition Exercises
COURSE SCHEDULE CONTINUED

February 16-18th – Author Background & Manuscript Samples
Video Interview – Louise Erdrich, Memoir/Children’s Books (30 min) / Toni Morrison, Fiction (30 min)
READING –  
The Weekend Book Proposal pp. 87-102
ICON – Elizabeth Lyon: Writing Tool Kit
Discussion/Exercises  
Learning to Layer/Point of View Exercises
**Model Book Analysis Due February 18th!

February 23-25th – Endorsements & the Pitch
Video Interview – Science Fiction Writers Panel (100 min)
READING:  
The Weekend Book Proposal pp. 103-132
ICON – Frishman and Spizman: Research/Outlining
Discussion/Exercises  
Characterization & Dialogue Exercises

March 1-3rd – Nuts and Bolts & Insider Tips
Video Interview – The Hollywood Reporter: Literary Agent Panel (58 min)
READING:  
The Weekend Book Proposal pp. 133-143 & pp. 224-234
ICON – Walter Mosley: Revision
Discussion/Exercises  
Metaphor/Revision/ Word Choice Exercises
**Chapter Outline Due October 6th!

March 8-10th – Sample Proposals – Nonfiction & The Novel
Video Interview – Dirty Family Secrets: Memoir Writing (75 min)
READING:  
The Weekend Book Proposal pp. 144-182
ICON – Sol Stein: Craft Techniques
Discussion/Exercises  
Creating Powerful Scenes Exercises

March 15-17th – Spring Break

March 22-24th – Research and Writing Days  
**All Proposals Due March 25th by 6pm!

March 29-31st – Proposal Workshops
Discussion – Ten students will receive 15-20 minute individual constructive sessions

April 5-7th - Proposal Workshops
Discussion – Ten students will receive 15-20 minute individual constructive sessions

April 12-14th - Research and Writing Days  
**All Chapters Due April 15th by 6pm!

April 19-21st- Chapter Workshops
Discussion – Ten students will receive 15-20 minute individual constructive sessions

April 26-28th Chapter Workshops
Discussion – Ten students will receive 15-20 minute individual constructive sessions

May 3-5th – Author’s Pavilion/Wrap Up/Evaluations

May 10-12th – FINALS WEEK  
**EC – Agents Query Due May 10th by 6pm!
Bibliography


