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 Authors Pavillion.

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 may be assigned on ICON during the semester.

Ryan Van Cleave The Weekend Book Proposal: How to Write a Winning Proposal (Writers Digest Books 2011)

THE IOWA DOZEN is a pledge from the School of Journalism to help you:
Learn:
- to write correctly and clearly
- to conduct research and gather information responsibly
- to edit and evaluate carefully
- to use media technologies thoughtfully
- to apply statistical concepts appropriately
Value:
- First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups
- a diverse global community
- creativity and independence
- truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity
Explore:
- mass communication theories and concepts
- media institutions and practices
- the role of media in shaping cultures

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. You can miss two classes without penalty.

DEADLINES- Deadlines in this class are firm. Late assignments must 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.

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](http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/forms/absence.pdf)

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, on videos or YouTube.

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](http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml#5)

SEVERE WEATHER – The University Operations Manual section 16.14 outlines appropriate responses &lt;[http://www.uiowa.edu/%7Efour/opmanual/v/16.htm#1614d](http://www.uiowa.edu/%7Efour/opmanual/v/16.htm#1614d)&gt; 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.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT - The University has a policy on sexual harassment and consensual relationships in the instructional environment. You may obtain the full text of this policy in the Office of Affirmative Action, 202 Jessup Hall.
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.

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.

Attendance                  30pts.            Final Grade Scale:
Participation               30pts.            250-225  =  A
Model Book Analysis         15pts.            224-200  =  B
Book Proposal               50pts.            199-170   = C
Book Chapter                50pts.            169-150   = D
Author Reading              15pts.            Below 150 = F
Chapter Outline             30pts
Class exercises (10/3pts. Each) 30pts
Total                         250pts.

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!!!!!**

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 when called on. 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, 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.

**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 in the novel premise and discuss how the book relates to the story you want to write – 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 one week before your scheduled workshop session. 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 Pavillion** - You will participate in an Author’s Pavilion at the end of class. You will select a three-minute reading from your sample chapter (approximately 4 pages). Evaluation will include: confidence/eye contact, inflection/clarity, and rhythm/flow. Make sure you practice ahead of time and you’re comfortable presenting your text.

**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:**

**August 25-27th** - 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

**September 1-3rd** – Book Proposals & Consider the Audience
- Video Interview – Women’s National Book Association Writer’s Panel (71 min)
- **READING:** The Weekend Book Proposal pp. 1-30
- Discussion/Exercises Narrative Structure/Flow Exercises

**September 8-10th** – Snappy titles & Market Analysis
- Video Interview – Charlie Rose: J.K. Rowling (30 min) / CSpan Q & A: Malcolm Gladwell (30 min)
- **READING:** The Weekend Book Proposal pp. 31-54
- Discussion/Exercises Word Choice/Explanation/Model Book assignment **Synopsis Due September 10th!**

**September 15-17th** – Competition & Publicity
- Video Interview – 2014 Santa Barbara Film Writer’s Panel (92 min)
- **READING-- The Weekend Book Proposal** pp. 55-86
- Discussion/Exercises Show Don’t Tell/Transition Exercises
COURSE SCHEDULE CONTINUED

September 22-24th – 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
Discussion/Exercises Learning to Layer/Point of View Exercises

**Model Book Analysis Due September 24th!

Sept 29th – Oct 1st – Endorsements & the Pitch
Video Interview – Fiction Writers Panel: The Starship Era (46 min)
READING: The Weekend Book Proposal pp. 103-132
Discussion/Exercises Characterization/Dialogue Exercises

October 6-8th – Nuts and Bolts & Insider Tips
Video Interview – The Hollywood Reporter: Literary Agent Panel (58 min)
Discussion/Exercises Connections/Clarity/Depth Exercises

**Chapter Outline Due October 8th!

October 13-15th – Sample Proposals – Nonfiction & The Novel
Video Interview – Dirty Family Secrets & Memoirs: McCort, Amis, Carr and Eckers (75 min)
READING: The Weekend Book Proposal pp. 144-182
Discussion/Exercises Writing: Spirit, Nature & Experience Exercises

October 20-22nd – Research and Writing Days

**Selected Proposals Due October 23rd!

October 27-29th – Proposal Workshops
Discussion – Ten students will receive 15-20 minute individual constructive sessions

November 3-5th - Proposal Workshops
Discussion – Ten students will receive 15-20 minute individual constructive sessions

November 10-12th - Research and Writing Days

**Selected Chapters Due November 13th!

November 17-19th- Chapter Workshops
Discussion – Ten students will receive 15-20 minute individual constructive sessions

November 24-26th – Thanksgiving Break

December 1-3rd Chapter Workshops
Discussion – Ten students will receive 15-20 minute individual constructive sessions

December 8-10th – Author’s Pavilion/Wrap Up/Evaluations

December 15-17th – FINALS WEEK

**EC – Agents Query Due December 15th!