

Writing Your Good Life: Short Personal Essays
Instructor: Christine Schoefer

The class meets in person on Mondays, from 10 a.m.– noon (6 sessions: Sept 14; 21; 28; Oct. 5; 12; 19)) at Golden Bear Center, Room 365 (1995 University Ave).

Course Description

In this course, I hope to embolden your creativity and awaken your inner storyteller. I will guide you in honing your writing and revising skills and encourage you to write yourself into a deeper and kinder understanding of your life experiences. In a supportive environment, we will compose short personal essays and share these in class. Listening to classmates' work and giving constructive feedback helps us refine our skill at revising and allows us to become familiar with our own literary voice. Because practice is key, there will be assignments every week. You will have the opportunity to work with a writing partner outside of class. Whether you've been writing for a long time or are just starting out, this class will grow your practice.

At the end of this course, you will

- Have followed a consistent writing practice for five weeks
- Have generated 2 polished personal essays (250 words or less)
- Feel more confident with revision
- Trust yourself to come up with writing prompts/topics.

Week One: Plunging In

We will meet our classmates and explore in writing and conversation what we mean by "good life."

Week Two: Memory and truth

To write personal essays we investigate our memories, observe our feelings, describe our perceptions. In discussion and writing exercises, we will examine the relationship between fact and truth and memory.

Week Three: Becoming your own editor

It's challenging to edit our own writing. In this class, we will explore guidelines for cutting and revising and apply these to in-class writing.

Session Four: Art and Craft

Workshopping writing in class, we offer and receive support and we consider what makes a specific piece of writing effective.

Session Five: Art and Craft

Workshopping writing in class, we offer and receive support and we consider what makes a specific piece of writing effective.

Session Six – Review and Moving Forward

In our final class, we'll reflect on questions and insights that arose in the course and decide where we want to go from here.

Homework: Write, write, write!!

Set aside time every day for writing. Protect this time and space!