

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS  
University of Virginia, Academic Sponsor

**Voyage: Spring 2016**

**Discipline: English**

**ENWR 2559-503: Travel Writing: World Heritage**

**503 section: 11 am B-days + field lab 28 January (Day 2 Kobe = last day in Japan)**

**Division: Lower**

**Faculty Name: Prof. Elizabeth Fowler**

**Credit Hours: 3; Contact Hours: 38**

**Pre-requisites:** nothing required but an interest in thinking and writing about places that matter.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Cultures around the world put up monuments to memorialize heroes, achievements, events (whether traumatic or triumphal), religious aspirations, intentions for the future, and regrets about the past. What does the world preserve and remember? And how? These built sites mark real places and help produce a virtual reality that becomes even more powerful than the real.

In this course, we'll visit, study, and write about such cultural sites -- including especially UNESCO World Heritage Sites -- and the ways they encounter their many audiences. Beginning the course with brief readings in ongoing conversations about heritage (in anthropology, human rights philosophy, and art history), we'll then develop an approach to take with us in our fieldwork. Throughout, exemplary travel writing from contemporary authors will model the beautifully written, ethically alive, aesthetically responsive prosecraft to which we'll aspire. We will consider the way that words collaborate with architecture and landscape to allow built sites to address their various audiences, support ritual performance and liturgy, embody visual and verbal perspective (bring a camera, even if it's only in a phone), and direct our experience with signage, story telling, inscription, graffiti and other modes of legitimate or rebellious interactivity.

Students will develop individual and collaborative accounts of heritage sites according to their particular itinerary of visits, writing multiple short entries and then choosing two of them to develop into longer essays. In addition to great writing, a high quality of class participation will be rewarded (this is a seminar, not a lecture course).

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

The class will design a collaborative research, writing, and image project, coming up with criteria for it by reading and talking about world heritage from the first meetings of the course. It will result in a composite guidebook and travel narrative called something like **THE INTELLIGENT GUIDE TO WORLD HERITAGE** that will cluster around a series of sites and include cultural analysis, travel guide tips, and personal narratives written individually and

jointly by members of the class.

This is the process. Each student will join a team to produce a PRESENTATION on a port before we arrive. In port, each student will keep a FIELD NOTEBOOK and make a BANK OF IMAGES to use as raw material for his or her writing. This will include trial paragraphs of cultural analysis, guidebook entry, and personal narrative – please mark them accordingly. Out of this raw material, in the course overall, she or he will craft one individually authored ESSAY OF CULTURAL ANALYSIS, one GUIDEBOOK ARTICLE, and one PERSONAL NARRATIVE. The cultural analysis and guidebook entries will derive from and be integrated into the earlier, now revised team presentations on East Asia, South Asia, and Africa; teams will decide how and where to intersperse the personal narratives in the course of our workshops and time together on the ship. All will be revised towards a useful INTELLIGENT GUIDE, our final collaborative product.

Assessment: grades will be assigned to the following: participation in seminar, including quizzes and especially the presentations (15%), participation in the collective field lab (10%) and three field notebook entries for the field lab, one of each kind (10%), the field notebook overall (10%), and the three individual essays (cultural analysis 15%; guidebook article 15%; personal narrative 15%). The grade given to the collaborative team production will make up a further 10% of the individual student's grade.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

We'll work on writing as a mode of deepening engagement with what we encounter in these cultural sites, picking up some vocabulary and tools for thinking about architecture and landscape, public history, user-friendly design, texts, signage, inscription. A little research expertise (how do you find a "true" story of cultural sites?) together with facility of analysis and expression will be our goals as we acquire knowledge of the comparative cultural practices of memory and history and produce a splendid record of our experiences in the class project.

**NO REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS. Readings will be found on the course folder in the ship's intranet.**

## **TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE**

Depart Ensenada- January 5:

**B1- January 8:** Introduction to travel writing and three kinds of attention and approach: 1. the site (monument, built environment, and "user interface"), 2. intangible heritage (the people and their practices in time), 3. the narrative (the writer and the story). Begin our collaborative project design. A brief, exploratory, ungraded writing assignment.

**B2-January 10:** Anthropological approaches to heritage: Edward Bruner, "Tourism in Ghana: The Representation of Slavery and the Return of the Black Diaspora," in *Tourists and Tourism: A Reader*, ed. Sharon Bohn Gmelch (Waveland, 2004), 345-68. Collaborative project design. Divide

into groups for sites/continents.

**HONOLULU:** January 12

**B3- January 13:** Human rights approaches to heritage: Amareswar Galla, “World Heritage in poverty alleviations: Hoi An Ancient Town, Viet Nam,” in *World Heritage: Benefits Beyond Borders*, ed. Amareswar Galla (Cambridge UP, 2012), 107-120. Collaborative work on project design. **Quiz** on Bruner and Galla readings.

**B4-January 15:** Literary and art historical approaches to heritage (ritual landscapes): Elizabeth Fowler “Art and Orientation,” *New Literary History* 44 no. 4 (Autumn 2013), 597-618

**B5-January 18:** Refining of project design and development of criteria for presentations, essays, and other components. Sign up for our collaborative pre-port presentations: they will provide a list of interesting heritage sites to the group, an introduction to the issues raised by these sites, and otherwise respond to the criteria that we develop together. Why go? What to look for? Who seem to be the intended users of the site? How are they oriented? What kind of experience do they offer? What do we want to know about these sites?

**Study Day:** January 19.

**B6- January 21:** Presentations begin: sites in Japan. Read Donald Richie essay on Japan. **SUBMIT YOUR ONGOING FIELD NOTEBOOK in class today together with your image bank (format to be announced; perhaps flash drive) for intermediate review. It should have brief drafts of potential cultural analysis, original guidebook entries, and personal narratives, with images pegged for each.**

**B7-January 23:** Presentations (and project design) continue. Read Peter Hessler, from “Strange Stones” about China.

**JANUARY 28 (Kobe Day 2) IS OUR FIELD LAB!**

**We’ll meet back on the ship and travel to the astonishing Nara World Heritage Site. See more below. This takes place the LAST day in Japan, so you must be back early from your other travels in Japan to join us.**

**YOKOHAMA:** January 24-25

In-Transit: January 26

**KOBE:** January 27-28

**B8- January 30:** Discussion of Japan, presentations on sites in China. Bring ideas for how we can refine our project design.

**SHANGHAI:** January 31 - February 1

In-Transit: February 2-3

**HONG KONG:** 4-5

**B9- February 7:** Discussion of Japan, presentations on sites in Viet Nam: refining research design.

Jane Kramer, "A Reporter at Odds: Trading the Notebook for Guidebook," *The New Yorker* July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/07/23/a-reporter-at-odds>.

**HO CHI MINH CITY:** February 8-12

**B10- February 14:** Discussion and refining of the East Asia component of our project

**B11 - February 17:** Presentations on sites in Myanmar. George Orwell, "Shooting an Elephant" 1936, <http://www.online-literature.com/orwell/887/>

**YANGON:** February 18-22

**B12-February 24:** Refining our East Asia component, presentations on India begin. Mahatma Gandhi, 1917, "Third Class in Indian Railways" <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/24461/24461-h/24461-h.htm>

**B13- February 26:** Presentations on sites in India.

**COCHIN:** February 27-March 3

**B14-March 5:** Discussion and refining the Asia component of our project

**Study Day:** March 6

**B15-March 8: SUBMIT YOUR FIELD NOTEBOOK AND IMAGE BANK today for intermediate review. AT LEAST ONE ESSAY (whether cultural analysis, guidebook entry, or personal narrative) DUE TODAY. TWO BETTER.** Workshop on project revisions, refining research design and essay templates, notes on Mauritius.

**PORT LOUIS:** March 9

**B16- March 11:** Workshops and revisions

Paul Theroux, "The Trans-Karoo Express to Cape Town" in *Dark Star Safari: Overland from Cairo to Cape Town* (Mariner Books, 2004), 437-467.

**Study Day:** March 12

**B17-March 14:** Presentations. George Aligiah, "Mandela's Miracle," in *A Passage to Africa* (Little, Brown, 2002), 234-268.

**CAPE TOWN:** March 15-20

**B18- March 22:** Presentations. Julia Martin, from *A Millimetre of Dust* (NB Publishers, 2010)

**B19-March 24:** Reflections and revisions on sites in South Africa

**B20-March 25:** Richard Wright on Elmina Castle from *Black Power* (Harper, 1954).

**TAKORADI:** March 27-28

**TEMA:** March 29-31

**B21- April 2:** workshop for final site guides: all the cultural analysis, but spun so as to guide the visitor. Read Ama Ata Aidoo, “For Whom Things Did Not Change” in *No Sweetness Here and Other Stories*.

**B22-April 4:** workshop: final personal narratives

**B23-April 6:** presentation of and reflection upon final collaborative group projects

**CASABLANCA:** April 7-11

**Study Day: April 12**

**B24: April 14:** final individual readings

**April 16:** Disembarkation in Southampton

## **FIELD WORK**

Experiential course work on Semester at Sea is comprised of the required field lab led by your instructor and additional field assignments that span multiple ports.

## **FIELD LAB**

Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field lab.

The field lab for our course takes place on: **28 January (Day 2 Kobe = last day in Japan)**

ENWR 2559-503 will explore the “Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara” UNESCO World Heritage Site in Nara Prefecture, Japan. Nara was the capitol of Japan for most of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, 710-784. Laid out by means of geomantic principles, the huge complex includes the once ruined Imperial Palace, five Buddhist temples, a Shinto shrine, and the spiritually potent Kasugayama Primeval Forest. The stunning architectural treasures of the sacred site testify to the interaction of medieval Japan with China and Korea, as well as the integration of religion, political rule, and landscape in Nara’s built environment. Intricate pagodas, fierce and compassionate divine statuary, lanterns, carvings, prospects, gorgeous pattern and sober simplicity in construction, there is much to experience at Nara. The complexity of the site will present us with challenges in creating a narrative route through it for our own writing audiences; the antiquity of the buildings will challenge us to imagine a culture long past. Temperatures may be in the 40s or colder, and we will

be walking outside, so dress warmly.

**Field Lab Goals:** our mission will be to experience a World Heritage Site as travellers together and to test the model we've created for our work by 1. assessing the site according to the readings in the first weeks, 2. producing an online guide to the site that consists of personal narratives, guidebook information, and cultural analysis, and 3. getting our teamwork to gel. See the ASSIGNMENTS section above for how our lab work will fit into the whole.

### **METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC**

Participation in seminar, including quizzes and especially the presentations (15%)

Participation in the collective field lab (10%)

Three field notebook entries for the lab, one of each kind (10%)

The field notebook overall (10%)

Three individual essays (cultural analysis 15%; guidebook article 15%; personal narrative 15%).

The grade given to the collaborative team production will make up a further 10% of the individual student's grade.

### **RESERVE BOOKS AND FILMS FOR THE LIBRARY**

AUTHOR: UNESCO

TITLE: WORLD HERITAGE SITES: A COMPLETE GUIDE TO 981 UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

PUBLISHER: FIREFLY BOOKS

ISBN #: • ISBN-10: 1770852530

• ISBN-13: 978-1770852532

DATE/EDITION: 2014 OR THE MOST RECENT IF A NEWER ONE ARRIVES BUT REALLY ANY SOMEWHAT RECENT ONE (AS WELL AS MULTIPLE COPIES) WOULD BE VALUABLE

### **ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS**

AUTHOR: Edward Bruner

ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: Tourism in Ghana

JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: Tourists and Tourism: A Reader, ed. Sharon Gmelch

VOLUME:

DATE: 2009 (Waveland)

PAGES: 495-498 plus notes to those pages if in back

AUTHOR: Amareswar Galla

ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: World Heritage in poverty alleviations

JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: World Heritage: Benefits Beyond Borders, ed. Galla

VOLUME:

DATE: 2012

PAGES: 107-120 plus notes to those pages if in back

AUTHOR: Elizabeth Fowler  
ARTICLE TITLE: Art and Orientation  
JOURNAL: New Literary History  
VOLUME: 44 no. 4  
DATE; Autumn 2013  
PAGES: 597-618

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

The UNESCO World Heritage Website. <http://whc.unesco.org/>

### **HONOR CODE**

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating (including plagiarism), and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense. You may be expelled from the voyage for violations.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]." Professor Fowler decrees that the pledge does not refer to the collaborative work she has encouraged and required you to do.