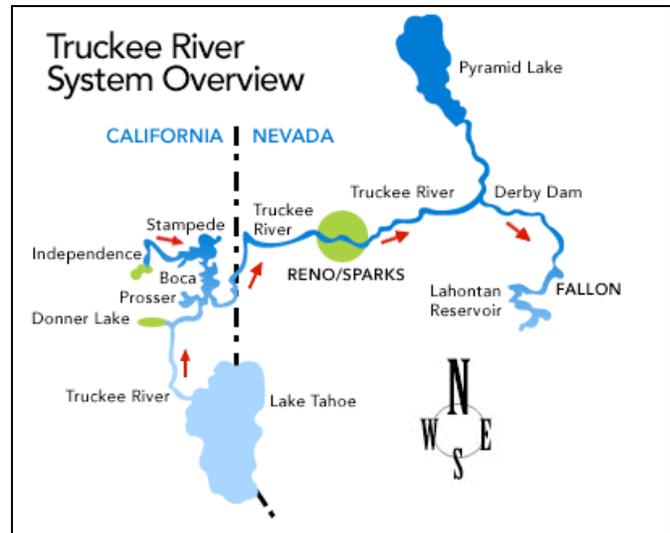


**English 102.052 Composition II Spring 2010**  
**Writing the Watershed**  
**TR 2:30-3:45, FH 019**

Professor: Cheryll Glotfelty  
Office: FH 028  
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Teaching assistant: Carolyn Collins



**Course Description**

We will undertake an ambitious, collaborative project: to write an online guidebook to the Truckee River watershed. We will begin by studying *Putah and Cache: A Thinking Mammal's Guide to the Watershed*. We will also read some bioregional theory as well as *A Doubtful River* (a book about the Truckee River) and *The Motel Life* (a novel set on 4<sup>th</sup> St. in Reno). Students will master MLA documentation skills by writing analyses of these texts. Then the seriously fun work begins as we embark on a collaborative, multi-disciplinary, guidebook type of project for the Truckee River watershed, possibly posting our researched articles to a wiki site, creating the beginning of what will become a multi-generational, student-led initiative to publish a “deep map” of the place where we live.

**Goals**

- To sharpen critical reading skills by analyzing a variety of texts
- To write, write, write—informally and formally, for a range of purposes and audiences
- To perfect your public speaking skills
- To work on project planning and time management
- To learn useful research skills, using UNR, internet, and community resources
- To master MLA documentation style for Works Cited and in-text citations
- To integrate sources into your writing effectively and without plagiarizing
- To upgrade your writing in strategic areas, transforming mediocre writing into strong writing
- To participate in a collaborative, published research project that will leave a legacy beyond the class

**Required Texts**

*Putah and Cache: A Thinking Mammal's Guide to the Watershed* (online text)  
<<http://bioregion.ucdavis.edu/book/Contents.html>>  
*A Doubtful River*, by Robert Dawson, Peter Goin, and Mary Webb  
*The Motel Life*, by Willy Vlautin  
*A Pocket Style Manual*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, by Diana Hacker  
Essays on WebCampus

**WebCampus**

Course materials, including assignments, will be posted to WebCampus (CE6).

### **Requirements and Grading**

- 25% Homework: a variety of written assignments and reading (sometimes checked by quizzes)
- 10% Essay 1: 900-word analysis of *A Doubtful River*
- 15% Essay 2: 1200-word argumentative essay on an issue raised in *The Motel Life*
- 25% Final research paper: 2400-word essay on a topic tied to the Truckee River watershed
- 10% Guidebook entry: a 300-word guidebook entry, with photo(s), for a public website
- 15% Participation: includes contributions to class discussion, one major service role (teaching or web team), and an oral presentation of your research

### **Attendance Policy**

Perfect attendance raises your final grade by one step (ex. B- to B). 1-3 absences has no effect. 4 or more absences lowers grade, the more absences, the lower the grade. 2 tardies = 1 absence.

### **Disabilities, Tragedies, and Trips**

If you have a disability and will be requiring assistance, please contact me and the Disability Resource Center (Thompson 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations. If you have a death in the family or other tragedy this semester, please tell me, and we will work out a plan. If you are on a sports team or have another legitimate reason to miss class, let me know in advance and in writing so we can make arrangements.

### **Participation** (15% total, consisting of 3 components)

- Contributions to class discussion: 5 = excellent contributions, 4 = good contributions, 3 = fine contributions, 2 = occasional contributions, 1 = respectful listening
- One major service role, either prepare an exercise for a Writing Upgrade unit or serve on the Web Design team: 5 = excellent job, 4 = good job, 3 = fine job, 2 = below average job, 1 = weak job
- 8-10 minute oral presentation of your research findings: 5 = phenomenal, 4 = great, 3 = solid and interesting, 2 = almost up to par, 1 = weak

### **Revision Policy**

On each essay, I will give you feedback and direction for improvement, and assign it a grade. You will be allowed to revise your first two essays once in order to improve your grade. Your final research paper is due at the end of the semester, so there will be no time to revise it for a changed grade (but we will workshop your draft, building revision into the process).

Rationale: Writing, like any other activity, can only be improved through repetitive practice. Revision, therefore, is one of the most important skills a writer must learn.

Revisions that do not meet the guidelines specified below will be returned to the author unread.

1. Mark and explain any additions you make to the text on your new, revised draft.
2. Mark and explain on the old draft, any deletions made to the text.
3. Hand-number corrections in grammar and punctuation and, on a separate sheet of paper, write the grammar/punctuation rule that applies to each correction you made. (If you become aware of the rule, you are less likely to make the mistake again in the future.)
4. Write a ½ to 1-page revision explanation, describing what changes you made, why, and how they improve the paper.
5. Hand in all previous drafts, notes, and comments in a manila folder with your name on the tab.
6. Each revised essay is due no later than **one week** after I return the papers to the class.
7. Revisions turned in WITHOUT following these guidelines will be returned to the author UNREAD, and you will have LOST your chance to revise that essay.

### **Writing Upgrades**

Professional writers will tell you that there are a handful of “quick fixes” that you can do to your writing that will *dramatically* strengthen it. We will focus on six important upgrades this semester. One of your earliest pieces of writing for the class will become your upgrade “sample paper,” and you will upgrade it six times, then compare results. For each upgrade clinic, I will explain the principle and give you time to

apply the lesson to your sample paper. The next time we meet, a student will administer and teach a worksheet that he or she has prepared to reinforce the upgrade principle with several examples. Once we have covered an upgrade in class, I will *downgrade* your work if you fail to employ the upgrade.

#### The upgrades:

1. Change nominalizations to active verbs.
2. Put passive voice constructions into active voice.
3. Make pronoun reference clear. (Ban the “lonely *this*.”)
4. Employ alternatives to *says*.
5. Recognize and fix the most commonly made usage mistakes.
6. Use transitions to logically link ideas.

#### Web Team

Making our guidebook to the Truckee River Watershed publically available on the web will require some computer skills that I do not yet possess! I will be relying on you computer-whizzes to figure out (and explain to the class) how to create our website (probably a wiki site) and link the guidebook entries to a Google map, and to make it happen. We will consult and collaborate often throughout the semester, with students on the web team leading the way and doing some behind-the-scenes work.

#### Format for work

- All work for this class is public; be prepared to share your piece with the class.
- Unless otherwise noted, all assignments should be typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt. font, 1” margins, pages numbered (except the first page), and stapled.
- On the first page, single-spaced, include your name, the date, the class, and the name of the assignment.

Example: Esperanza Dust  
January 21, 2010  
English 102  
“From the Editors” assignment

- For essays, place the essay (on top) and all notes, drafts, and revisions in a manila folder with your name written on the tab. Extra copies of the paper may be due for some workshop days.

#### Late Assignment Policy

Papers are due at the **beginning** of class on the scheduled due date, unless we make alternative arrangements prior to the due date. As a general rule, **no late papers will be accepted, resulting in an F on that paper.** If you are aware of a problem in meeting a deadline, it is your responsibility to speak with me **before** the paper is due, in order to make other arrangements.

#### Formal Documentation Styles and Plagiarism

In this course we will use the Modern Language Association’s (MLA) style for citing and documenting all sources. We will go over MLA style in class. You may also refer to *A Pocket Style Manual* or go to the Bedford St. Martin’s documentation tutorial web page at <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/> and click on the Humanities discipline for directions on in-text citations and works cited pages. You will not be able, or expected, to memorize this stuff, but you must know where to go in order to do it correctly. Should you wish to use some other formal documentation method (APA, etc.) see me in person for permission before writing your paper. We will define and discuss plagiarism in detail in class, but for now consider the following: Any time you use anyone else’s words (either a paper, paragraph, sentence, or short fragment) or ideas and do not give credit to the original author you are committing plagiarism. Depending on the severity of the offense you may receive an “F” on a plagiarized paper or even an “F” in the course and have charges of academic dishonesty brought against you.

## Tentative Schedule

T 1/19 Introduction

R 1/21 “From the Editors” reading—Clear up questions about syllabus

T 1/26 Review of course texts—MLA-style annotated bibliography

R 1/28 Gary Snyder and Bioregional Perspectives

T 2/2 Michael P. Branch, “V.E.C.T.O.R.L.O.S.S.” and vernacular stories of place

R 2/4 *Putah and Cache: A Thinking Mammal’s Guide to the Watershed*

T 2/9 *A Doubtful River*

R 2/11 “

T 2/16 “

R 2/18 “

T 2/23 **Essay 1 due**—walking tour of 4<sup>th</sup> St., taking notes

R 2/25 *The Motel Life*

T 3/2 “

R 3/4 “

T 3/9 “

R 3/11 **Essay 2 due**

T 3/16 no classes—Spring Break

R 3/18 no classes—Spring Break

T 3/23 **Truckee River Watershed project begins!**

R 3/25

T 3/30

R 4/1

T 4/6

R 4/8

T 4/13

R 4/15

TBA
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T 4/20

R 4/22

T 4/27

R 4/29

T 5/4

R 5/6 2:15-4:15 p.m. Final Exam