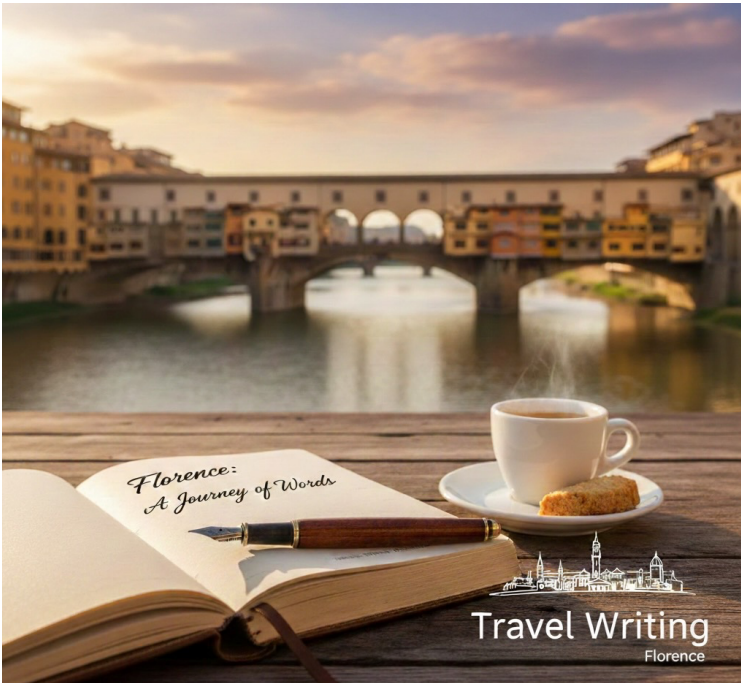


# English 306: “Travel Writing”



**Instructor:** P. Darin Payne

**Email:** darinp@hawaii.edu

**Semester:** Spring 2027

**Class Day/Time:** TBA

**Office Hours:** TBA

**CRN:** TBA

**Credits:** 3

**GenEd Designations:** WI

**Prerequisites:** ENG 100, plus one DL or ENG 200, or consent

**Location:** Study Abroad:  
Florence, Italy

## Course Overview (Rationale and Purpose):

ENG 306 is a popular and commonly required course in writing and rhetoric. It is taken by students in Journalism, English, Education, Business, Psychology, and many other disciplines in both the humanities and the social sciences, giving students both diversification in literature (DL) and writing intensive (WI) designations. Its primary goal is to strengthen writing skills overall, with a particular emphasis on writing as a rhetorical practice—that is, as a communicative activity shaped by purpose, context, and audience. Students in 306 learn that any writing task should be informed by the genre that is called for, the medium in which the writing occurs, the reading community’s expectations, and of course the writer’s stated and unstated goals.

Differing sections of 306 offer differing themes, each of which can help frame the course’s content and provide a focal point for exploring relations among rhetoric and writing. In the case of this particular study abroad section, the guiding theme is “travel writing.” As a student in this section, you will read and analyze popular nonfiction travel narratives, examining them for the ways in which they represent—and re-present—places, peoples, cultures, and perspectives. In addition to extensive readings of and about travel writing as a genre, you will also practice writing your own travel narratives based on your experiences in and around Florence, Italy. The course’s learning activities will be deeply integrated with the explorations of the city and its history; you will have opportunities to explore (and write about) famous landmarks such as the Duomo di Santa Maria del Fiore and Ponte Vecchio as well as nearby historical sites such as the Boboli Gardens and Piazzale Michelangelo. In addition, many students will no doubt travel outside the city to locations like Rome, The Vatican, Pisa, Milan, and Venice—all sites that inspire reflection, analysis, and narratives of personal experience.

The class will function as a writing community; you will read and respond to each other's works in progress, and you will collaboratively develop a travel blogsite that will provide publication opportunities for those of you wishing to write for a real-world public audience. (There will be options for students to contribute with bylines or anonymously, as well as the option to restrict writing to just the private classroom space.) Finally, as part of such collaborative work and real-world engagement, you will be asked not just to write but also to reflect on your own positionings as a writer—be those social, cultural, geographical, or linguistic—and to consider the ways in which your perspectives are shaped by such positionings, especially as they are rendered more explicit amidst unfamiliar contexts and new-to-you forms of cultural diversity.

### **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):**

Based on the curricular content of the course, the setting of the Study Abroad program, and the global/international mix of students in this course, the following SLOs are anticipated:

1. Students will learn to adapt their writing to a clearly identified purpose and audience, in this case educated readers of nonfiction travel genres online.
2. Students will demonstrate awareness of their own cultural values and biases and how these impact their ability to work with others. Moreover, they will learn to negotiate such cultural values and biases in a global context.
3. Students will learn to collaborate and communicate effectively with others in ways that acknowledge diverse individuals' and groups' differing perspective and experiences, grounded as those are in geography, history, language, and belonging.
4. Students will demonstrate an increased capacity to analyze public issues with appreciation for disparate viewpoints.
5. Students will learn to consider the ethics of representation embedded in acts of travel, intercultural communication, and writing about selves, others, and places.

The next section explains the assignments that meet the primary SLOs and their respective point values.

### **Assignments and Evaluation:**

- **Italy News Updates (10/100)** At least weekly, you will be required to post informal updates about the news in Florence and/or in Italy and Europe overall; this will include a link to a news story from the week, plus your own commentary about it. This is individual posting that you will do on our class website, using a "Discussions" forum. You'll do this as a means of recording and reflecting on current events in Italy and its larger European context, which you'll be reading about in online news sources on a near-daily basis as a way to better understand the broader social and political settings in which your Study Abroad experience is occurring. These will be graded as an overall collection. (SLOs cultivated: #2,3, and 4.) (*Note: this assignment is required in this class as well as ENG 276; if you are a student taking both courses, you may use the same post for each course.*)
- **Participatory Projects (30/100)** As part of the active learning processes of this course, you will routinely be required to produce informal written reflections, analyses, explorations, and personal narratives. Sometimes these might be short, semi-formal

essays that you will post to the "Discussions" page on our class website. At other times, you might work individually or collaboratively to produce digital materials for the class. (For one example, you might contribute to a collection of photographs to supplement the travel writing site online that the class will be developing together.) These will be graded as an overall collection. (SLOs cultivated: #2, 3, 4, and 5.)

- **Travel Writing (60 points)** You will produce a series of three travel writing essays during the semester, each based on individual and/or group excursions/visits in and around Florence. These will be multimodal essays that involve integrations of text, images, and video. You will have the opportunity to publish these—anonously or with your own byline—to a collaborative online travel site that we will build together; please note, however, that you will not be *required* to publish any of your own writings. As a class, we will explore the value, challenges, and potential pitfalls of writing to real public audiences. These will be graded at 20 points each. (SLOs cultivated: #1,2,3, and 5)

### Breakdown of Grades:

The following is a tentative list of all graded assignments and their point values. The total points for the course are 100. The following are course-total grade point conversions:

A+ 98-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 0-59
A 94-97	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-93	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

### Readings:

In addition to regular online readings on global and local issues in Florence and Italy, accessed through sites such as *The Florentine*, *The American*, *Florence is You!*, *Euronews*, and *Politico.eu*, the following *likely* texts will be provided for free as PDF documents, found under the Resources page of our class site. Many of these texts will not be read in full but will be selected from:

- De Botton, Alain. *The Art of Travel*. 2002.
- Farley, David G., *Modernist Travel Writing: Intellectuals Abroad*. Columbia and London: Missouri University Press, 2010.
- Leavitt, David. *Florence: A Delicate Case*. 2008.
- Mayes, Frances. *Under the Tuscan Sun: At Home in Italy*. 1996.
- Micallef, Roberta (ed.), *Illusion and Disillusionment: Travel Writing in the Modern Age*. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. 1992.
- Quigg, Agnes. "Kalakaua's Hawaiian Studies Abroad Program." *The Hawaiian Journal of History*.

### Other Required Materials:

- An Email account that you can easily access on a daily basis.

- A computer that can handle web browsing and cloud-based computing (such as working on blogs, uploading and downloading attachments, viewing YouTube, etc.).

## Course Policies:

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is critical to this course. Much of your work will involve class discussions, group workshops, and in-class writing. If you miss more than six f2f class sessions, your final grade for the course will be reduced by 2.5 points per class session over six that you miss. Importantly, there is no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences—they are all absences, and they all count the same way. In the event that you do miss a class session, you are responsible for making up any in-class work. You are also responsible for finding out about any homework assignments and completing them on time. *Do not expect to be able to hand in something late or not do an assignment simply because you were absent on the day it was assigned or due; it still needs to be submitted on time.*

**Grading:** To receive full credit, all assignments must be submitted on time in the proper format. Missing or late assignments will result in penalties from your course grade overall, as is explained in more detail on their assignment sheets (under "Assignments").

If you email me any kind of written material as a submission of work for a grade, an email that fails to reach me or has a “missing” or “non-functioning” attachment will not be excused. This means that you need to ‘cc yourself whatever you email me and test the attachment to ensure successful delivery. It also means that you have to maintain a “sent-mail” folder with all work sent to me via email; if ever I don’t receive an email from you, one that you claim to have sent to me on time, I will ask that you do the following: 1) open the original from your sent-mail folder; 2) either take a screenshot or create a pdf of that original e-mail in its original e-mail format, not a Word document; 3) e-mail me the pdf or the screenshot as an attachment. This process will ensure that you receive credit for it having been sent on time. If you do not have such a copy to attach, I simply will have no choice but to penalize your assignment according to the date that I actually receive it. This is a non-negotiable policy; your UH email accounts have nearly infinite amounts of storage space, so there is basically no reason whatsoever to not keep a sent-mail copy of all emails and all attachments for the duration of the semester. It’s simply your responsibility. Relatedly, in addition to keeping copies of all sent emails and attachments, you must also maintain copies of all your projects. If you do not keep a copy and your project gets lost or misplaced (or a server hosting the work you produced crashes), you will have to rewrite it, and if you cannot provide rock solid evidence of it having been produced and submitted on time, you will have to take the requisite penalties.

The (long-winded) advice above about how to protect yourself when it comes to emailing materials for grade also applies to anything you post on Lamaku or any other platform: you must double-check an item after it's been submitted to ensure that what you posted was properly posted and is accessibly by other users. Just take the extra thirty seconds to re-open the app, or the sent-mail box, or the platform, and click on the item you submitted. Make sure it's there and is functioning.

**Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:** Hiring ghost writers, submitting papers written by others, and using textual materials as if they were yours are all contrary to University regulations as published in the UHM catalog. This includes using an AI program (such as

ChatGPT or Gemini or any others deemed AI) to write any of your materials--unless explicitly allowed by the instructor as part of an assignment. (If/when it's allowed, it will be explicitly noted on the assignment sheet.) More on this below:

**Generative AI Policy:** If the use of AI has *not* been explicitly allowed for an assignment, you must assume it is entirely off limits as a tool. In addition to relying on his own professional research work on generative AI to assess whether this policy has been violated, the professor may use a UH-recommended AI-detector. While AI-detectors are not 100% accurate, they are rapidly improving, and arguments that they are radically unreliable are fast becoming obsolete. Thus the regular use of a sanctioned AI-detector, combined with the professional expertise of this class's writing instructor, who has read literally *thousands* of student essays, will likely result in your being identified as having used AI if you choose to do so; moreover, as per UHM's English Department guidelines, anyone's illicit use of AI will be noted and forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct.

**Copies of departmental statements on plagiarism, AI, and documentation of sources are available from the ENG department, in Kuykendall 402.** Additionally, all UH students are responsible for upholding the codes of academic integrity available through the Office of the Dean of Students. If you engage in academic dishonesty or plagiarism, the consequences can be severe: depending on the nature of the offense(s), the results can range anywhere from receiving a grade of zero on an assignment to failing the class to being expelled.

**Student Conduct/Respect for Others:** All class activities and discussions will be conducted with courtesy and respect for each individual in the course. Any student conducting him/herself outside of this policy may be in violation of the UH Student Conduct Code (please refer to the Student Conduct Code here: [http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/policies/conduct\\_code](http://studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu/policies/conduct_code)).

**Provisions for Disabilities:** If you have or think that you may have a disability and therefore need some support, you are encouraged to contact the KOKUA Program for students with all disabilities including learning, mental health, and physical disabilities. Contact KOKUA at 808-9567511 (V/T), email KOKUA at [kokua@hawaii.edu](mailto:kokua@hawaii.edu), visit KOKUA in Room 013 Queen Lili'oukalani Center for Student Services, or visit the KOKUA web site at <http://www.hawaii.edu/kokua/> for further information. KOKUA services are confidential and there is no charge to students.

**Sexual Harassment and Violence:** Sexual harassment is one type of sex discrimination under Title IX, United States Education Amendments of 1972. The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) states that sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual Violence is a severe form of sexual harassment. Some examples of sexual violence include threatening someone into unwanted sexual activity; sexual contact with someone who is drunk, drugged, unconscious, or otherwise unable to give a clear, informed "yes" or "no"; and rape or attempted rape. For more examples, visit the Office of Gender Equity website. Under Title IX, responsible employees cannot ensure confidentiality. **Responsible employees must report any instance or disclosure of alleged sexual harassment.** If you would like to speak to someone confidentially about your options regarding something you have experienced or witnessed, please contact: The UH Office of Gender Equity, a confidential resource that provides information about options regarding University policies and procedures to potential complainants of gender-based discrimination, sexual violence, stalking, dating, violence, or intimate partner violence.

**Incompletes:** Incompletes may be given to students who fail to complete a small but important part of a semester's work before the semester grades are determined if the failure was caused by conditions beyond the student's control.

## ENG 306 Schedule | Study Abroad in Florence | Spring 2027

### Week 1: Introduction to Travel Writing

- Reading: "Departure" from *The Art of Travel* by Alain de Botton
- Reading: Quigg, Agnes: "Kalakaua's Hawaiian Studies Abroad Program."
- Writing (Participatory Project): Personal reflection on why you want to travel, study travel writing, and/or one of your favorite travel experiences

### Week 2: Cultural Immersion and Sensory Detail

- Reading: selections from Mayes.
- Writing (Participatory Project): Embark on a cultural immersion exercise in a neighborhood in Florence, then write a descriptive piece about the sights, sounds, and tastes you experienced.

### Week 3: The Travelogue

- Reading: selections from Leavitt
- Writing (Participatory Project): Research and write a traditional travelogue about a day trip from Florence; include photographs.
- Reading and Writing (News Update): Post a news update based on your readings in *The Florentine*, *The American*, *Florence is You!*, *Euronews*, and *Politico.eu*.

### Week 4: The Cultural Comparison

- Reading: selection from Pratt and from Farley
- Writing (Participatory Project): Compare and contrast a specific aspect of Italian culture with an aspect of American and/or Hawaiian culture.
- Reading and Writing (News Update): Post a news update based on your readings in *The Florentine*, *The American*, *Florence is You!*, *Euronews*, and *Politico.eu*.

### Week 5: The First Formal Travel Piece

- Writing: Develop one of the informal PP travel pieces written so far into the first of the three major travel pieces (20 points). Due in one week. Peer workshop process included.

### Week 6: The Profile Piece

- Reading: selection from Leavitt.
- Writing (Participatory Project): Profile a local person in Florence and their experiences

living in the city. Take photos (only with consent).

- Reading and Writing (News Update): Post a news update based on your readings in *The Florentine*, *The American*, *Florence is You!*, *Euronews*, and *Politico.eu*.

### **Week 7: The Food and Travel Piece**

- Reading: Micallef plus selections on food and travel in Leavitt
- Writing (Participatory Project): Visit a local restaurant in Florence and write a review of the food and atmosphere; take photos.
- Reading and Writing (News Update): Post a news update based on your readings in *The Florentine*, *The American*, *Florence is You!*, *Euronews*, and *Politico.eu*.

### **Week 8: The Historical Travel Piece**

- Reading: Micallef plus selections on history and travel in Leavitt
- Writing (Participatory Project): write about an historical site in/near Florence.
- Reading and Writing (News Update): Post a news update based on your readings in *The Florentine*, *The American*, *Florence is You!*, *Euronews*, and *Politico.eu*.  
Writing: Develop one of the informal PP travel pieces written so far into one of the three major travel pieces (20 points): due in one week; collaborative workshop process involved.

### **Week 9: The Second Formal Travel Piece**

- Writing: Develop another of the informal PP travel pieces written so far into the second of the three major travel pieces (20 points). Due in one week. Peer workshop process included.

### **Week 10: Filming the Digital Vlogging Travel Short**

- Viewing: travel shorts/reels/stories on social media
- Viewing: Anthony Bourdain; Phil Rosenthal; Eugene Levy
- Writing/composing collaboratively: In teams, visit a natural location in/near Florence and film a short piece about its history, culture, geography, etc.
- Reading and Writing (News Update): Post a news update based on your readings in *The Florentine*, *The American*, *Florence is You!*, *Euronews*, and *Politico.eu*.

### **Week 11: Editing the Digital Vlogging Travel Short**

- In class editing workshop with freemium video editing tools
- Editing: Teams edit your short films
- Video generation with AI and prompting: Using Sora, generate a similar film and write a reflection/comparison between your own edited product and Sora's Generative AI product.
- Reading and Writing (FINAL News Update): Post a news update based on your readings in *The Florentine*, *The American*, *Florence is You!*, *Euronews*, and *Politico.eu*.

### **Week 12: The Opinion Piece from a Visitor**

- Reading: selection from Leavitt
- Writing (FINAL Participatory Project): write a positioned opinion piece about a

Florentine/Italian/European public issue in the news presently, from the vantage point of a student studying from abroad.

**Week 13: The Third Formal Travel Piece**

- Develop your *favorite* informal travel piece (or generate a new one from scratch) into your formal third travel piece. (Worth 20 points.) It can be any focus already covered; it can also be a video short. Collaborative feedback and peer workshop required.

**Week 14: Collaboratively Publishing Projects to Travel Site**

- Develop essays/videos for web publication in class travel site (using a Wordpress, Weebly, or Wix site developed by the professor). Collaborative workshopping involved. Celebrate writings and experience.