



Nine-Month Memoir Intensive

**Writing the Memoir: 9-Month Intensive**

September 25, 2020 – May 21, 2022

Saturdays, 2:00 to 4:00 pm. 29 class meetings  
Online via Zoom

Class is limited to 10 students

Tuition: \$1450

Taught by Jay Ponteri

This class for experienced and dedicated writers meets 29 times over the course of 9 months. The class begins in September, with the goal of finishing a complete draft of a memoir by June.

Participants do not need to be published writers; however, they should have some experience with elements of memoir, including character, setting, dialogue and scene, and have a clear project in mind that they will devote nine months to. They should also be comfortable in a workshop setting, giving and receiving criticism on works in progress.

Students who have taken Memoir Boot Camp one or more times at Literary Arts should find this class an appropriate next step. Memoir Boot Camp is not a pre-requisite. This class is specifically designed for writers who will benefit from spending a year with a community of writers that will support you in goal setting, meeting deadlines, honing your craft and getting the work done.

Class structure: Class time will be spent on focused discussions of crafts and outside readings from writers like Joan Didion, Maggie Nelson and other masters of the memoir form, in-class writing exercises and workshopping pages in progress. Students can expect to have their own work workshopped six times over the course of the year.

General course outline:

September – December: **READY SET BEGIN**

Setting a writing schedule: rewards and punishments

Eyes on the prize: How to begin when you don't know the ending

Making the scene: techniques for writing compelling scenes

Keeping it real: Literal versus metaphorical truth

January – March: **STRUCTURING THE MEMOIR**

Getting past getting stuck

Yielding to detours: how to handle a shift in focus

The joy of outlining: how to make it work for you

I meant to do that: experimenting with form

April – May: **THE FINISH LINE, SORT OF**

Revising

Incorporating feedback without getting overwhelmed  
The path to publication