

School of English: Summer School 2021

Creative Writing: Place, Travel, Movement



Module Code: Q31M06

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Module Outline

‘Comes over one an absolute necessity to move...’ (D.H. Lawrence)

The experience of travel, and attention to place and space, is a key component of both fiction and creative non-fiction.

This module, which follows the specifications of our core undergraduate class, is led by writing faculty from Malaysia’s first Creative Writing programme – the University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus undergraduate ‘English with Creative Writing’ degree. We engage in a variety of forms of reading and writing practice in order the better to express our relation to the many experiences and forms of movement. Activities include creative and analytical responses to published works, writing exercises in creative non-fiction and poetry, and revision and review of work written in the course of the Summer School. This is an intensive programme, presupposing existing experience and commitment to creative writing.

Creative Writing: Place, Travel, Movement is an introduction to the art and craft of Creative Writing with a specific focus on creative non-fiction and poetry. This is a writing-intensive course, which will be conducted as a workshop or studio, where students will be expected to write and read out their own work on a daily basis. This course will look at a range of classical and contemporary work in creative non-fiction, poetry to help students create their own distinct voices and way of writing. Students will be expected to engage in critical discourse, and develop a way of using writing as a way of looking at the world, a way of seeing and expressing the human condition through words.

Aims

To guide students in the practice of the process of writing, developing their skills in writing, and reading to develop an awareness of literary contexts and creative and aesthetic possibilities.

Learning outcomes

At the end of the module you should have knowledge and understanding of:

- some elements of fiction, including character, narrative and point of view
- the process of using notebooks for creative compositions and revisions.

Intellectual skills

- aesthetic perspectives on writing
- creative perspectives on writing
- the ability to edit one's writing

Professional skills

- the ability to develop work in progress through discussion with others
- the ability to contextualise writing

Transferable skills

- the ability to reflect on progress
- the ability to respond to peer criticism

Coursework

All written work must be typed, in at least a 12-point font, double-spaced, and with margins of at least 1".

If coursework is submitted after the official deadline without an extension having been obtained, five percentage points will be deducted for each working day (or part thereof after 2pm) that the coursework is late. This is a general University regulation applied equally across all Schools and Faculties and is not open to student negotiation.

Please see the School Handbook for the full details and procedures of coursework submission, extensions and marking.

Department policy is that plans/outlines can be discussed with lecturers but not essay drafts.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by the University as an academic offence in which a student uses another person's work and submits it with the intent that it should be taken as his or her own work. Plagiarism would consist of any of the following:

- Quoting any part of a printed or electronic source without enclosing the quotation in quotation marks and providing the reference for the source.
- Paraphrasing any part of a printed or electronic source without acknowledging the source.
- Presenting the point of view stated in a printed or electronic source without acknowledging your reliance on the source.
- Copying phrases and sentences from a printed or electronic source that is paraphrased without enclosing the cited text directly in quotation marks.
- Copying work submitted by another student. Submitting work written by someone else as if it is your own.

Unintentional plagiarism can occur when writing up an essay from notes or even memory, by reproducing sentences, phrases, or a general line of discussion or point of view from the sources you have studied as if they are your own work, though these passages are in fact borrowed from other sources. To avoid suspicion of plagiarism under these circumstances, it is advisable to take care when taking notes to enclose any text copied verbatim from a source in quotations marks (making a note of the page number).

Unlike the corporate sphere, universities are responsible for creating knowledge for the sake of knowledge itself, rather than for a personal or purposeful gain. Because of this, scholars have a profound ethical responsibility to academic integrity. Knowledge is an additive process. This means that in order to build knowledge, one must "stand on the shoulders of giants" as Isaac Newton once said. This process of knowledge-building is the fundamental core of a university and of your scholastic development. When building your own base of knowledge, you cite sources in order to give credit to those who have done the original research and also to allow others to examine these primary materials in their own process of learning. Citations also allow others to confirm that you have used your cited information properly. As a student at this university, you are a "scholar in training" and must adhere to these strict codes of integrity. This reflects not only upon you, but also upon this university.

Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. The penalties for an academic offence such as plagiarism range from receiving a written warning to being awarded a mark of 0 for your work. In extreme cases, plagiarism can even lead to being excluded from the University.

Class Schedule

Session 1	This is an Introduction 'For Young Writers' by Joyce Carol Oates and 'Creative Nonfiction' by Theodore A. Rees Cheney
Session 2	Grounding Your Story 'To Fashion a Text' by Annie Dillard
Session 3	Finding Your Voice 'The White Album' by Joan Didion
Session 4	On Diction, Tone, Imagery <i>A Poetry Handbook</i> by Mary Oliver
Session 5	On Point of View 'A stranger at the family table' by Tash Aw and excerpts from George Orwell's <i>Down and Out in Paris and London</i> .
Session 6	Writing about Place <i>Notes from a Small Island</i> by Bill Bryson
Session 7	Peer Feedback
Session 8	Thinking about Space A selection of creative nonfiction texts and poems will be provided for discussion
Session 9	Now what, now where? – Wrapping Up

Each session we will briefly discuss the topics stated above. The main focus of our classes will be on writing exercises and group feedback. Each student is expected to complete writing exercises, read their work to the class and provide feedback to their classmates' work. I will provide the various excerpts, stories and poems listed on the schedule above. However, you are also expected to do your own reading.

There are some excellent websites that feature creative non-fiction texts and poems and, of course, do pay visits to libraries and bookstores. Below are some suggestions to get you started on finding stories and information about writing. There are many, many more resources online so please do spend some time searching for material.

Creative Non-Fiction (general)

Brevity: <https://brevitymag.com/> (a website that includes personal narratives or memoir essays)

The Guardian: www.theguardian.com/books (essays, articles and reviews of books; short stories under 'Original Writing' section)

The New Yorker: www.newyorker.com (short stories, essays, articles and reviews of books)

Poetry (general)

The Poetry Foundation: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/> (an independent literary organization committed to discover and celebrate the best poetry and to place it before the largest possible audience)

Poets.org: <https://poets.org/> (The website offers 'Poem-a-day', the original daily poetry series publishing new work by contemporary poets)

PennSound Daily: <http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/> (The website offers over 1500 full-length and single-poem recordings, the largest collection of poetry sound-files on the internet, all of which are available free for download.)

UbuWeb: <http://ubuweb.com/> (an online repository for concrete and visual poetry scanned from aging anthologies and re-imagined as back-lit transmissions from a potential future)

Split This Rock – Poetry Database: <https://www.splitthisrock.org/poetry-database> (a searchable collection of over 500 poems by a diverse array of contemporary socially engaged poets, published by Split This Rock since 2009)

Literary Magazines

Cha: An Asian Literary Journal: <http://asiancha.com/> (mainly publishes Asian-themed fiction, poetry and non-fiction)

Open Road Review: <http://www.openroadreview.in/> (based in India, publishes fiction, poetry and non-fiction from around the world)

Creative Non-Fiction: <https://www.creativenonfiction.org/> (publishes creative non-fiction)

The Paris Review: <http://www.theparisreview.org/> (publishes short stories, poetry and interviews)

Granta: <http://www.granta.com/> (publishes fiction, non-fiction and poetry by new and established writers)

Asymptote: <http://asymptotejournal.com/> (the premier site for world literature in translation. Rolling deadline for poetry submissions)

Mekong Review: <https://mekongreview.com/> (a literary magazine from Southeast Asia. Publishes book reviews, essays, interviews, profiles, poetry and fiction from Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, the Philippines and beyond)

Asiatic: An International Journal of Asian Literatures, Cultures and Englishes: <https://journals.iium.edu.my/asiatic/index.php/ajell/index> (features writings by Asian writers and writers of Asian origins. Publishes biannually in June and December)

Guidance for Writers

Poets & Writers: <http://www.pw.org/> (articles about writing, information about magazines, tips for writing and for finding agents)

Writer's Digest: <http://www.writersdigest.com/> (articles about writing, information about magazines, tips for writing and for finding agents)

Daily Writing Tips: <http://www.dailywritingtips.com/> (useful articles about grammar and language)

Interviews with Poets and Writers

The Paris Review: <https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews>