WRTNG-UG 9501.SY1 or CRWRI-UA 9815.SY1
Creative Writing
Spring 2019

Instructor Information

- Dr Roanna Gonsalves
- Consultation by appointment.
- roanna.gonsalves@nyu.edu (Please allow at least 24 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails)

Course Information

- Pre-Requisite: None
- Tuesday: 9:00am – 12:00pm

In this class students are encouraged to consider the intersectional environments (natural, urban, cultural, historical etc.) that they interact with and within, and how their sensibilities differ living away from home to contemplate how a sense of place and identity can be conveyed through writing.

We will engage with a diverse range of readings – featuring many Australian authors – and discuss technical elements, literary techniques, and affective poetics to learn how to develop writing craft and explore creativity. Weeks are devoted to prose and poetry. Students will complete weekly ‘microfiction’ homework exercises based upon images they take or find, and participate in in-class exercises to refine their writing practice.

Students workshop their drafts during the course, learning how to effectively communicate critical feedback and how to be receptive to constructive critique. This takes the form of a discussion in-class and students are required to submit written critical feedback on their classmates’ drafts in an online forum. At the end of the course students will have the opportunity to showcase their work at a reading night to the rest of the NYU Sydney student body and invited faculty.
Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials
It is a course expectation that you have done the readings and prepared sufficiently to discuss them in class.
Weekly readings are available on NYU Classes in Resources.

Course Overview and Goals

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Sharpen analytical skills and abilities to identify the formal elements of texts in order to enhance their own writing and experience of literature.
- Develop ability to produce, draft, edit and polish their own creative work, and equip them with the skills to critique each other’s writing within a supportive workshop environment.
- Deepen knowledge of Sydney’s cultures and histories and synthesise their own experience of place and identity through their writing.

Course Requirements

Homework, workshop participation, and online forum peer draft critique
Details provided in class.

Submission of three (3) developed and edited writing exercises
Drawn from homework and/or in-class exercises.

Textual analysis (1000 words)
This brief essay will take the form of a reflection on literary techniques in your choice of one (1) of the weekly readings.

Final Work
Either 1 short story (4000 words maximum) OR a suite of poems approx. 20 pages due in Week 15 OR experimental work by negotiation.
Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments/Activities</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework, workshop participation and online forum peer draft critique</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three developed and edited writing exercises</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3:30pm, Tue 12 Mar (Wk 6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textual analysis (1000 words)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3:30pm, Tue 26 Mar (Wk 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Work</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>3:30pm, Tue 14 May (Wk 15)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this course, your total numerical score, calculated from the components listed above, is converted to a letter grade without rounding.

Extra credit: Site policy does not allow grading of work outside of the assignments included in the syllabus. The final grade will only be calculated from the assessment components listed here and no other work, whether additional or substituted, is permitted.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Explanation of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course; all work includes clear, logical explanations, insight, and original thought and reasoning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics; all work includes general analysis and coherent explanations showing some independent reasoning, reading and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory performance with some broad explanation and reasoning; the work will typically demonstrate an understanding of the course on a basic level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course’s topics; work lacks satisfactory insight, analysis or reasoned explanations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Work is unfinished or unsubmitted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grade Conversions

For this course your total numerical score, calculated from the components listed above, correspond to the following letter grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94 to 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 to &lt; 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 to &lt; 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 to &lt; 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 to &lt; 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 to &lt; 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74 to &lt; 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 to &lt; 74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67 to &lt; 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65 to &lt; 67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 to &lt; 65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course Schedule

Week 1: 5-Feb-19

Sydney Beginnings

Required Reading:

- Excerpt from *Sydney* – Delia Falconer (University of New South Wales Press, 2010)
- Excerpt from *Home* – Larissa Behrendt (University of Queensland Press, 2004)

Class Activities:

- Introduction to the course
- Create student workshopping schedule (workshops begin Session 3)

Discussion of readings:

- Discussion and comparison of examples of narrative openings: How do I begin?
- Discussion of microfiction with examples
Week 2: 12-Feb-19
Styles of Narration

Required reading:

- ‘Poinsettias’ – Myfanwy Collins (in *Pank* 6.06/June, 2011)
- ‘Write What Your Know’ – Rebecca Schiff (in *The Bed Moved*, JM Originals, 2016)
- ‘Fight or flight’ – Melissa Lucashenko (in Blak Brow, Issue 40, Dec 2018)

Class Activities:

- Workshop homework
- In-class writing exercises
- Discussion of readings

Week 3: 19-Feb-19
Plot: Conflict and Suspense

Required reading:

- ‘The Lottery’ – Shirley Jackson (in *The New Yorker*, 1948)

Class Activities:

- Student workshop
- Workshop homework
- In-class writing exercises
- Discussion of readings

Week 4: 26-Feb-19
Character

Required reading:

- ‘A Bruise the Shape and Size of a Door Handle’ – Daisy Johnson (in *Fen*, Jonathan Cape, 2016)
• ‘Solid Objects’ – Virginia Woolf (in That Glimpse of Truth, Head of Zeus, 2014)

Class Activities:
• Student workshop
• Workshop homework
• In-class writing exercises
• Discussion of readings

Week 5: 5-Mar-19
Language
Required reading:
• ‘The Thing Around Your Neck’ – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (in The Thing Around Your Neck, Fourth Estate, 2009)
• ‘This Condition’ – Lydia Davis (in The Collected Stories, Picador, 2009)

Class Activities:
• Student workshop
• Workshop homework
• In-class writing exercises
• Discussion of readings

Week 6: 12-Mar-19
Beyond Realism: Speculative Fiction, the Extraordinary, and the Weird
Required reading:
• ‘Forgiveness’ – Rebecca Brown (in The New Fuck You, Semiotext(e), 1995)
• ‘A Hunger Artist’ – Franz Kafka (in That Glimpse of Truth, Head of Zeus, 2014)
• ‘The whore raft’ – Kuzhali Manickavel (in Things We Found During The Autopsy, Blaft Publications, 2014)

Class Activities:
• Student workshop
• In-class writing exercises
• Discussion of readings
Week 7: 18 – 22 Mar
FALL BREAK – No Class

Week 8: 26-Mar-19
Writing the city
Required reading:
- Excerpt from *Swallow the Air* – Tara June Winch (University of Queensland Press, 2006)
- Excerpt from *Island Home* – Tim Winton (Penguin, 2015)

Class Activities:
- In-class writing exercises
- Discussion of readings
- Audio recording of ‘Five Bells’ – Kenneth Slessor
- Video viewing of ‘Night Cries’ – Tracey Moffatt
- Video viewing of ‘City of Shadows: Interviews’ – Peter Doyle

Week 9: 2-Apr-19
Writing about art: Field Trip to the Art Gallery of NSW
Required Reading:
- ‘Ode to a Grecian Urn’ – John Keats
- ‘Study of an Ox’s Heart c.1511-13’ – Sylvia Legris
- ‘Empty Chairs’ – Liu Xia
- ‘Drifting’ – Shirley Kaufman
- ‘Narrative in Gija Art: Four Women, Four tories’ – Frances Kofod (in *Telling Tales: Excursions in Narrative Form*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Australia, 2016)

**Required field trip/excursion:** We will be looking at the exciting new exhibition ‘The National 2019: New Australian Art’ at the AGNSW and undertaking writing exercises to augment our discussion of *ekphrasis*: writing about art.
Week 10: 9-Apr-19
Poetic Techniques

Guest Lecturer: TBA

Required reading:

- Excerpt from *City of Bones* – Kwame Dawes (TriQuarterly Books, 2017)
- Excerpt from *New American Best Friend* – Olivia Gatwood (Button Poetry, 2017)

Week 11: 16-Apr-19
Performance Poetry, Slam, & Spoken Word

Required reading:

- READINGS FOR THIS WEEK WILL BE PROVIDED IN CLASS

Class Activities:

- Student workshop
- Discussion of readings
- Video viewings and discussion

Week 12: 23-Apr-19
Plot: Compression and Epiphany

Required reading:

- ‘A Romantic Weekend’ – Mary Gaitskill (available online)
- ‘Tricks’ – Alice Munro (available online)
- ‘The Ambush’ – Donna Tartt (available online)

Class Activities:

- Student workshop
- Discussion of readings

Week 13: 30-Apr-19
Affect: Impressions, Resonance

Required reading:

Week 14: 7-May-19
The Heart of the Story

Required reading:

- ‘Not-Knowing’ – Donald Barthelme (available online)
- Excerpt from The Future of Nostalgia – Svetlana Boym (Basic Books, 2008)

Class Activities:
- Student workshop
- Discussion of editing techniques
- In-class editing exercises
- Self-assessment

Week 15: 14-May-19
Sydney Endings

Required reading: Readings distributed in class

Class Activities:
- Course reflection
- Masterclass on writing and publishing opportunities
- Discussion of final assessment

Course Policies

Submission of Work

Assignments (excluding in-class presentations and exams) must be submitted electronically via NYU Classes. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm that the work has been successfully uploaded. In the unlikely event that a submission to Classes fails, students must immediately submit the work to the Academic Programs Coordinator via email before the original submission deadline accompanied by an explanation of the issue. All in-class
presentations and exams must be completed during the scheduled class time. An assessment component is considered completed when the student has met all the terms for that assessment component as outlined by the instructor.

An assessment component completed after the deadline without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100-point scale (for the assignment) for each day the work is late. Work completed beyond five weekdays after the due date without an agreed extension receives a mark of zero, and the student is not entitled to feedback for that piece of work. Because failure to submit or fulfil any required assessment component will result in failure of the course, it is crucial for students to complete every assignment even when it will receive a mark of zero.

Plagiarism Policy
The academic standards of New York University apply to all coursework at NYU Sydney. NYU Sydney policies are in accordance with New York University’s plagiarism policy. The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

It is a serious academic offense to use the work of others (written, printed or in any other form) without acknowledgement. Cases of plagiarism are not dealt with by your instructor. They are referred to the Director, who will determine the appropriate penalty (up to and including failure in the course as a whole) taking into account the codes of conduct and academic standards for NYU’s various schools and colleges.

Attendance Policy
Study abroad at Global Academic Centres is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centres is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades. The class roster will be marked at the beginning of class and anyone who arrives after this time will be considered absent. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalised by a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to two unexcused absences. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

Faculty cannot excuse an absence. Requests for absences to be excused must be directed to the Academic Programs Coordinator. Students must provide appropriate documentation for their absence. In the case of illness, students must contact the Academic Programs Coordinator on the day of absence. They must provide medical documentation to Academic Programs Coordinator within three days of the absence in order to be medically excused. The note must include a medical judgement indicating that the student was unfit to attend class/work on the specific day or dates of the absence. Faculty will be informed of excused absences by the Academic Programs staff.
Religious Observance
Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their professor and the Academic Programs Coordinator in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose.

Classroom Expectations
This is a seminar subject and requires the active participation of all students. It also requires engaged discussion, including listening to and respecting other points of view. Your behaviour in class should respect your classmates’ desire to learn. It is important for you to focus your full attention on the class, for the entire class period. In all classes we expect that students will follow the common classroom expectations outlined here in order to support constructive and effective classroom experience.

- Arrive to class on time.
- Once you are in class, you are expected to stay until class ends. Leaving to make or take phone calls, to meet with classmates, or to go to an interview, is not acceptable behaviour.
- Phones, digital music players, and any other communications or sound devices are not to be used during class. That means no phone calls, no texting, no social media, no email, and no internet browsing at any time during class.
- Laptop computers and tablets are not to be used during class except in rare instances for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor.
- The only material you should be reading in class is material assigned for that class. Reading anything else, such as newspapers or magazines, or doing work from another class, is not acceptable.
- Class may not be recorded in any fashion – audio, video, or otherwise – without permission in writing from the instructor.
- Be mindful of the space you take up in class and make space for others.
- Listen actively and be engaged and present when others are speaking.
- Do not use profanities in class discussion (they may still occasionally appear in course readings and assignments where considered appropriate)
- Criticise ideas, not people (groups and individuals).
- Use ‘I’ statements when giving opinions. Don’t try to speak for any group with which you identify.

You will be advised if there are additions to these common procedures for participation in this class.

Inclusion, Diversity, Belonging and Equity
NYU is committed to building a culture that respects and embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity, believing that these values – in all their facets – are, as President Andrew Hamilton has said, “…not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities.” At
NYU Sydney we are committed to creating a learning environment that:

- fosters intellectual inquiry, research, and artistic practices that respectfully and rigorously take account of a wide range of opinions, perspectives, and experiences; and
- promotes an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and every member feels they have a rightful place, is welcome and respected, and is supported in their endeavours.

**Provisions to Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Centre for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**Instructor Bio**

Dr. Roanna Gonsalves (Ph.D., UNSW) is the author of The Permanent Resident (published in India as *Sunita De Souza Goes To Sydney*) which won the NSW Premier’s Literary Awards Multicultural Prize 2018, and was longlisted for the Dobbie Award. Her work *On the tip of a billion tongues* (ABC RN Earshot) is a radio series on multilingual Indian writing. She received the Prime Minister’s Australia-Asia Endeavour Award, an Australian Writers’ Guild Award, and fellowships at Varuna and Bundanon. Roanna was the UNSW CAL Writer-in-Residence 2018, is founding co-editor - *Southern Crossings*, and sits on the Board of Writing NSW.