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<th>Location</th>
<th>NYU London</th>
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<td>Class code</td>
<td>CRWRI-UA9815L04</td>
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<td>Instructor Details</td>
<td>Emma Claire Sweeney</td>
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**Class Details**
Introduction to Creative Writing

**Prerequisites**
Not applicable

**Class Description**
The literary-steeped surroundings of London provide the perfect backdrop for students to develop their own creative skills. This course therefore provides students with the rare opportunity to develop their own work within the context of UK and international writing in English.

We will take a decidedly practical approach to the drafting of short stories and poetry as we learn to read as writers, gleaning tips on the craft. Our textual analysis will provide a springboard for our own writing, with ‘close reading’ forming the usual method of critiquing both published works and the writing of class members. We will develop our own powers of imagination, self-criticism and craft through a combination of structured creative writing exercises and independent assignments.

Writing workshops will be simultaneously rigorous and nurturing, providing students with the perfect forum for collective and constructive critique. The approach will focus on imaginative task setting, scrupulous analysis, sincere encouragement and constructive criticism. By the end of the course, each class member will have collected a portfolio of work consisting of both poetry and prose.

This course will consist of tutor-led discussions, student-led discussions, creative-writing exercises, field trips, group feedback and creative-writing workshops.

**Desired Outcomes**
Students will learn to read as writers, developing their critical faculties and their confidence so that they can analyze their own writing as well as that of others. The creative writing exercises will allow them to work on the technicalities of writing, helping them to identify the intricacies of the craft. By the end of the course they will have learnt to structure their work through a variety of different voices and forms.

**Assessment Components**
In ordinary circumstances, the mid-term grade will be advisory only but failure to submit on time all or part of the homework exercises and/or mid-term submission will result on each occasion in at least half a letter grade being docked from the final portfolio grade.

1 x Final Portfolio (worth in total 90% of final overall grade) This must include the following:
- 1 x 1500-2000-word complete redrafted short story (45%)
• 30-60 lines of poetry, comprising at least 3 redrafted homework/in-class exercise poems. In special circumstances, and with express permission from the professor, you might replace one of the homework or in-class exercise poems with another of your poems written during this course (45%)

• Class participation (including peer critiques to be submitted on their due dates) (10%)

Turnitin submission date: Thursday May 10 2018, 9am.

Drafts

Drafts will be considered as part of all the writing assignments and will be collected on their due dates. Failure to submit each draft on its due date will result in at least half a letter grade being docked from the final portfolio grade.

Class participation

Class participation includes the following:

• Leading class discussions and presentations

• Informed, lively, and insightful contributions to discussions and to Q&A sessions.

• Peer critiques of your classmates’ drafts, a copy of which must be submitted to me on its due date. Failure to do so will result in at least half a letter grade being deducted from class participation grade.

• Arrival at the workshops on time, well prepared and willing to engage in discussions and writing exercises.

• Your willingness to challenge yourself and support others.

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

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: To receive an “A” in Creative Writing, students must fully engage with the coursework by:

1. Submitting all written exercises and assignments on time

2. Making an effort to apply “craft” concepts to creative work and critiques

3. Coming to class prepared to discuss assigned readings and student work

4. Actively contributing to class discussions and providing thoughtful, constructive feedback as part of the workshop

5. Refining and revising creative work as required for the final portfolio, demonstrating improvement/growth over the course of the term.

Assignments in this category will be outstanding. There will be a sense of a distinctive writer’s ‘voice’ emerging. The writing will show a combination of strong imagination and technical sophistication and control. Tone, style, structure and pace will be appropriate. There will be some degree of originality in the subject matter or approach. The language will be alive and supple or otherwise appropriate to the writer’s purpose. The level of achievement will be sustained throughout. Work will be astutely edited and professionally presented in terms of layout, correct grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Grade B: These assignments will show a great deal of promise and technical expertise. They will be a ‘good read’ but the overall piece of writing may be less consistent or fully achieved. The use of
language will show some flair and clarity but may falter at times. Tone, style, structure and pace will be appropriate for the most part. Good editing and redrafting practice will be in evidence. The assignments will be well presented with correct layout and a high level of accuracy in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**Grade C:** These assignments will be competently conceived and written, showing a grasp of relevant concepts, but they may be somewhat unoriginal or underdeveloped. There may be gaps, omissions or implausible elements. The language may sometimes be striking, but sometimes also stale and unfocused. Tone, style, structure and pace will sometimes be inappropriate. Some editing will have been undertaken though this may not be complete. Presentation will attain a general good standard, with some inconsistencies.

**Grade D:** Assignments in this band show some attempts at using appropriate methods or concepts, but there will be too many gaps and confusions. Language and/or tone, style and structure may be muddled. Some editing may be in evidence, though parts may be seriously over-written or under-developed. Presentation will be variable, inaccurate at times in layout or in basic grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**Grade F:** There may be some evidence of familiarity with appropriate methods or concepts but quite a lot of confusion and misunderstanding, and few coherent attempts at using suggested methods. Parts will be in need of greater development, redrafting and editing. Presentation will be inconsistent or poor.

**Required Text(s)**


**Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU Library)**

Internet Research Guidelines
While the internet proves an invaluable resource for creative writers, it is important to view any information discovered online with a critical eye, questioning the validity of the source. The internet should usually form the starting point for a creative writer’s research rarely the ending point.

Additional Required Equipment
Digital Folder: All completed in-class work, homework exercises, drafts and graded papers must be kept together in a hardcopy and flashdrive/online folder, which may be collected periodically during the term (and possibly without prior warning) for review by the professor.

A notebook for your dedicated writer’s journal: You will use your journal outside class for informal writings, including free writings, notes, observations, lists, quotations, contemplations etc. You may be asked to use/refer to your journal in any class and should be writing in it regularly during your own time (at least twice per week). I will not collect these journals but I may ask you to share writing from it from time to time. The journal provides a space for reflection about writing and the course without the burden of assessment.

A good dictionary and thesaurus.

Session 1
Introductions and Inspirations
The first session will allow students to introduce themselves and engage in exercises designed to encourage trust within the group. The emphasis will be on experimentation and play.

- We will start the course with a structured discussion about inspiration, touching upon subjects such as keeping a writer’s notebook, redrafting, discipline, reading as a writer, developing as a critic, living as a writer, and the role of the subconscious.
- We will then look at various definitions by writers of poetry and short stories. We will discuss the differences between the forms and those aspects that bind them.
- The class will include creative writing exercises, designed to help overcome the fear of the blank page.
- Homework exercises: provided in class
• Homework reading:

Closure: ‘A Bad Day for a Good Man in a Hard Job’ by Fred D’Aguire

Poems of the Decade: ‘To My Nine-Year-Old Self’ by Helen Dunmore

Session 2
Characterization and Voice

• Class discussion about characterization and voice issues emerging from the homework readings.
• Creative writing exercises and feedback
• Tutorials
• Homework exercises: provided in class
• Homework reading:

The Penguin Book of the British Short Story II: ‘Phonefun Limited’ by Bernard Mac Laverty

Out of Bounds: ‘Look We Have Coming to Dover’ by Daljit Nagra

Session 3
Scenes and Senses

• Class discussion about scenes and senses emerging from the homework readings.
• Creative writing exercises and feedback
• Tutorials
• Homework exercises: provided in class
• Homework reading:

Closure: ‘Yoruba Man Walking’ by Bernadine Evaristo

Out of Bounds: ‘Western Ferry’ by Tariq Latif

Session 4
Form and Structure

• Class discussion about form and structure emerging from the homework readings.
• Creative writing exercises and feedback
• Tutorials
• Homework exercises: provided in class
• Homework reading:

The Penguin Book of the British Short Story II: ‘Last Thing’ by Janice Galloway

Poems of the Decade: ‘Poems to My Mother’ by Hugo Williams

Session 5
Narrative and Poetic Perspective: first and second person

• Class discussion about narrative and poetic perspective emerging from the homework readings.
• Creative writing exercises and feedback
• Tutorials
• Homework exercises: provided in class

• Homework reading:

Closure: ‘Day Trippers’ by Raman Mundair

Out of Bounds: ‘Sausages’ by Hannah Lowe

Session 6

Narrative and Poetic Perspective: third person

• Class discussion about narrative and poetic perspective emerging from the homework readings.

• Creative writing exercises and feedback

• Tutorials

• Homework exercises: provided in class

• Homework reading:

The Penguin Book of the British Short Story II: ‘The 40-Litre Monkey’ by Adam Marek

Poems of the Decade: ‘Wa, Harmony’ by Judy Kendall

Session 7

Dialogue

• Class discussion about dialogue emerging from the homework readings.

• Creative writing exercises and feedback

• Tutorials

Handouts of ‘Documentary at Clareville Lodge’ by Susie Boyt and an extract from Peculiar Ground by Lucy Hughes Hallet to be provided.

Session 8

Setting

• Class discussion about setting emerging from the homework readings.

• Creative writing exercises

• Homework reading:

Homework: Prepare for workshops. Details provided in class.

Session 9

Oxford Literary Festival

• Talk One: Lucy Hughes-Hallett, 12:00-1.00pm, Oxford Martin School: Seminar Room

• Class on location to include site-specific creative writing exercises

• Talk Two: Susie Boyt, 4.00-5.00pm, Lincoln College: Oakeshott Room

Travel arrangements to be confirmed.

Session 10

First Draft Short Story Workshop

Groups and schedules to be provided
Session 11  **First Draft Poetry Workshop**

Groups and schedules to be provided

Session 12  **Redraft Short Story Workshop**

Groups and schedules to be provided

Session 13  **Literary Club Readings Event**

**Redraft Poetry Workshop**

Groups and schedules to be provided

Session 14  **Masterclass and moving forwards**

- Class discussion about moving forwards
- Creative writing exercises and feedback
- Details of masterclass to be announced.

**Turnitin submission date: Thursday May 10 2018, 9am.**

Session 15  **There is no exam for creative writing and therefore no session is held during exam week. This session is replaced by compulsory attendance at New York University’s literary event. Details to be provided.**

**Classroom Etiquette**

- In order to focus intensively on literary conversations, the creative writing workshop will – for the most part – be a device free zone. As such, mobile phones should be set on silent or should be switched off and laptops, tablets etc. are only to be used with the express permission of the professor.
- Toilet breaks should be taken before or after class or during class breaks.
- Food & drink, including gum, are not to be consumed in class.
- Please kindly dispose of rubbish in the bins provided.
Required Co-curricular Activities

DATE: Sunday, March 25
TIME: All day
PLACE: Oxford Literary Festival
TRANSPORT: To be confirmed

Estimated Travel Costs

NYUL Literary Event – Wednesday May 02, 5.15pm

Room in Bedford Square to be confirmed

Suggested Co-curricular Activities

Please find below a list of potential co-curricular activities to get you out of the student residences and tourist centres, allowing you make the most of all that literary London has to offer.

1) Bloomsbury Institute: Regular literary salons on our doorstep at the prestigious Bloomsbury publishing house. Student discounts available and refreshments included in the ticket price (http://www.bloomsburyinstitute.com/about-us).

2) Liars’ League: A monthly event when short stories are read by professional actors. Held at 7pm on the second Tuesday of each month in a central London pub. See their website for further details (http://liarsleague.typepad.com). You might even consider submitting a story of your own?

3) The Poetry Café: Take a look at their website for a jam-packed schedule of literary events (http://www.poetrysociety.org.uk/content/cafe/).

4) The Southbank Centre: Check out what the Southbank Centre has on offer: (http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/all-events).

5) The Royal Society for Literature: The events hosted by this prestigious society are open to the public. Take a look at its website for details of their upcoming programme: (http://www.rslit.org/).

6) Literary Festivals: Feel like escaping the big smoke? There are thriving literary festivals throughout the UK. www.literaryfestivals.co.uk

Your Instructor

Emma Claire Sweeney has won Arts Council, Royal Literary Fund, Escalator and Nudge Book Awards. She was also named as a Hive Rising Writer and an Amazon Rising Star.

Emma publishes literary features and pieces on disability for the likes of TIME, the Washington Post, and the Paris Review, as well as all the major UK broadsheets.

Owl Song at Dawn, a prize-winning novel inspired by her autistic sister, was published by Legend Press in 2016 and is forthcoming in Germany and China.

A Secret Sisterhood: The Hidden Literary Friendships of Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, George Eliot and Virginia Woolf, which Emma co-wrote with her own friend and NYU colleague, Emily Midorikawa (with a foreword by Margaret Atwood), came out in 2017 with Aurum Press in the UK and Houghton Mifflin Harcourt in the USA.

Here’s Emma’s website. Emma is represented by Veronique Baxter at David Higham Associates and you can follow her on Twitter with @emmacsweeney.

NYU GLOBAL ACADEMIC POLICIES
Policies and procedures for Global Academic Centres, including policies on academic integrity and the Study Away Standard, can be found here: 
https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/student-services.html

Absences: Key information on NYU London’s absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found here: http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html

NYU London work submission policies can be found here: http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html

Classroom conduct: Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services.

Please refer to the NYU London Disruptive Student Behaviour Policy at https://goo.gl/Nvt5Vu for examples of disruptive behaviour and guidelines for response and enforcement.