

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Introduction to Creative Writing

CRWRI-UA9815L01

NYU London: Spring 2022

Instruction Mode: In-person

Instructor Information

- Dr. Keith Jarrett
- Office Hours: Mondays, 4-5pm. Where possible, email me to make an appointment in advance.

Course Details

- Mondays, 1-3.45pm
- Location: Classrooms are provided in Albert
- [Remote Participants: Zoom links are provided in Brightspace].
- Seat Assignments: If you are attending in person, you will be assigned a seat on the first day and are expected to use that seat for the entire semester due to NYU COVID-19 safety protocol.

Course 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.

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

We will take a 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, using 'close reading' as our 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. Special emphasis will be placed on experimentation with form and language.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

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.

Course Objectives

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able 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.
- Identify and use a range of writing craft techniques.
- Structure their work through a variety of different voices and forms.

Assessment Components

If you are an NYU London study-away student, you are expected to attend in person. If you are accessing the class remotely, you must attend synchronously.

Assignments / Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
Class participation	<p>Class participation includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leading class discussions and presentations.• Informed, lively, and insightful contributions to discussions and to Q&A sessions.• 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. <p>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.</p>	30%	Ongoing. Workshop and peer critique schedules will be provided.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Assignments / Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
Final Portfolio	<p>The final portfolio must include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x 1500-2000-word complete redrafted short story (35%) • 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 (35%) <p>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.</p>	70%	<p>1pm, 16 May 2022.</p> <p>Draft submission schedules will be provided.</p>
Midterm assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A redrafted in-class or homework poem and a redrafted in-class or homework prose exercise. Please consult NYU classes for details of word/line lengths and suitable exercises. • In ordinary circumstances, the mid-term grade will be advisory only but failure to submit on time all or part of the homework exercises will result on each occasion in at least half a letter grade 	0%	Due by 1pm, February 21 2022.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Assignments / Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
	being docked from the final portfolio grade.		

Assessment Expectations

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage	Description
A	89.5% and higher	<p>To receive an “A” in Creative Writing, students must fully engage with the coursework by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitting all written exercises and assignments on time • Making an effort to apply “craft” concepts to creative work and critiques • Coming to class prepared to discuss assigned readings and student work • Actively contributing to class discussions and providing thoughtful, constructive feedback as part of the workshop • Refining and revising creative work as required for the final portfolio, demonstrating improvement/growth over the course of the term. <p>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.</p>

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage	Description
B	79.5% - 89.49%	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.
C	69.5% - 79.49%	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.
D	64.5% - 69.49%	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.
F	64.49% and lower	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.

Course Materials

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Required Text(s) & Materials

- Hensher, Philip (Ed.), *The Penguin Book of the British Short Story II: from P.G. Wodehouse to Zadie Smith*, Penguin, London 2016. ISBN: 0141396024
- Ross, Jacob (Ed.), *Closure: Black British Short Stories*, Peepal Tree Press, Leeds 2015. ISBN: 1845232887
- Parkes, Nii (Ed.), *Filigree: Contemporary Black British Poetry*, Peepal Tree Press, Leeds 2018. ISBN: 1845234263
- Alland, Barokka and Sluman (Eds.), *Stairs and Whispers: D/deaf and Disabled Poets Write Back*, Nine Arches Press, Rugby 2017. ISBN 1911027195
- Evaristo, Bernadine, *Girl, Woman, Other*, Penguin, London 2020. ISBN: 0241984994

Optional Textbooks & Materials

- Aaron, Jane E. *The Little, Brown Compact Handbook with Exercises*, Little Brown, New York 2007. ISBN: 0205701981
- Bell, Julia and Magrs, Paul eds., *The Creative Writing Coursebook*, Macmillan, London 2019. ISBN: 1509868278
- Chee, Alexander, *How to Write an Autobiographical Novel*, Bloomsbury, London 2018. ISBN: 1526609113
- Graham, Robert. *The Road to Somewhere: a creative writing companion*, Palgrave, Basingstoke 2013. ISBN: 1137263563
- Humphreys, Ian ed., *Why I Write Poetry*, Nine Arches Press, Rugby 2021. ISBN: 1913437299
- King, Stephen. *On Writing*, New English Library, London 2001. ISBN: 0340820462
- Mandelbaum, Paul ed. *12 Short Stories and Their Making*, Persea Books, New York 2005. ISBN: 089255312X
- New York Writers Workshop, *The Portable MFA in Creative Writing*, Writer's Digest Books, Ohio 2006. ISBN: 1582973504
- Duffy, Carol Ann ed. *Answering Back: Living Poets Reply to the Poetry of the Past*, Picador, London 2008. ISBN: 0330448242
- Saphra, Jacqueline, *One Hundred Lockdown Sonnets*, Nine Arches Press, Rugby 2021. ISBN: 1913437312
- Sieghart, William ed., *100 Prized Poems: Twenty-Five Years of the Forward Books*, Forward Worldwide, London 2016. ISBN: 0571333172

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

- Simpson, Kate ed., *Out of Time: Poetry from the Climate Emergency*, Valley Press, Scarborough 2021. ISBN: 1912435513
- Strunk, William Jr. and White, E.B., *The Elements of Style (Fourth Edition)*, Longman, New York 2000. ISBN: 020530902X
- Royle, Nicholas. *The Best British Short Stories 2018*, Salt, Cromer 2018. ISBN: 1784631361
- Truss, Lynne. *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*, Harper Collins, London 2009. ISBN: 0007329067

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [Brightspace](#)
- **NYU London and Living in London Info:** [LDN](#)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](#)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](#) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](#)

Course Schedule

Topics & Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1 Friday January 28, 2022	Introductions, Inspiration and Imagination	Readings provided in class	Beginning of next class
Session 2 Monday, January 31	Character/isation	<i>Girl, Woman, Other</i> : 'Chapter 1: Amma' <i>Closure</i> : 'Contrary Motion' by Monica Ali <i>Filigree</i> : 'MBA – Mombasa International' by Nick Makoha	Beginning of next class

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 3 February 7	Lists	<p><i>Closure</i>: 'Here Be Monsters' by Karen Onojaife</p> <p>'Inventory' by Carmen Maria Machado (reading provided on Brightspace)</p> <p>'For I Will Consider My Cat Geoffery' by Christopher Smart and 'For I Will Consider my Boyfriend Jeffery' by Chen Chen (both readings provided on Brightspace)</p>	Beginning of next class
Session 4 February 14	Dialogue and Dialect	<p><i>Girl, Woman, Other</i>: Chapter Three 'Shirley'</p> <p><i>The Penguin Book of The Contemporary British Short Story II</i>: 'A Nice Bucket' by David Rose</p> <p><i>Stairs and Whispers</i>: 'Am I Mentally Ill...?' by Jackie Hagan</p>	Beginning of next class
Session 5 February 21	Forms and Structure	<p><i>The Penguin Book of the Contemporary British Short Story II</i>: 'The Universal Story' by Ali Smith</p> <p><i>Filigree</i>: 'Grenfell' by Joshua Idehen</p>	<p>Midterm assignment: A redrafted in-class or homework poem and a redrafted in-class or homework prose exercise. Please consult NYU classes for details of word/line lengths and suitable exercises.</p> <p>Due date: 1pm Monday February 21</p>

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
		<i>Stairs and Whispers:</i> 'Tin Eaters #7' by Aaron Williamson 'The Golden Shovel' by Terrance Hayes (reading provided on Brightspace)	
Session 6 February 28	(Guest speaker: Raymond Antrobus)	Handouts to be provided	Beginning of next class
Session 7 March 7	Trip: Old St Pancras Churchyard Exploring history as a reader and writer	Handouts to be provided	Beginning of next class
SPRING BREAK			
Session 8 March 21	Workshop 1	Groups and schedules to be provided	To be announced
Session 9 March 28	Workshop 2	Groups and schedules to be provided	To be announced
Session 10 April 4	Workshop 3	Groups and schedules to be provided	To be announced
Session 11 Friday, April 8	Workshop 4	Groups and schedules to be provided	To be announced
Session 12 April 11	Workshop 5	Groups and schedules to be provided	To be announced
Session 13 April 25	Workshop 6	Groups and schedules to be provided	To be announced

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 14 May 9	Next steps	Handouts to be provided	To be announced
Final Assessment May 16	Final Portfolio	Not applicable	1pm Monday May 16

Co-Curricular Activities

- Please see Brightspace for suggested additional co-curricular activities

Course Policies

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.

Academic Honesty, Plagiarism and Late Work

Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the [University and school policies](#). You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL website (<https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>) and on the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website for students studying away at global sites (<https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html>).

Attendance

Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our [website](#) (<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>)

To ensure the integrity of the academic experience, class attendance is required and expected promptly when class begins. These rules apply to class excursions and activities as well.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations, but must follow NYU London's absence reporting procedure. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)

You can edit your pronoun and name pronunciation information on your Albert account, making it visible for faculty and staff. Information on how to do this can be found on the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation web page](#), and for more information on how to make these changes in Zoom, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

Bias Response

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community. For more information, including how to report an incident, visit the [Bias Response Line website](#).

Your Lecturer

Keith Jarrett's writing and research spans poetry, fiction and the essay form to interrogate British and Caribbean history, religion and sexuality.

Keith is an international poetry slam champion and was selected for the International Literature Showcase as one of 10 outstanding LGBT writers in the UK. *Selah*, his debut poetry collection, was published in 2017. His play, *Safest Spot in Town*, was performed at London's Old Vic and filmed for BBC Four, and his poem 'From the Log Book', was projected onto the façade of St Paul's Cathedral as a commemorative art installation. He has also been commissioned for written and performed work at the Royal Festival Hall, Madrid's Matadero and Centro Azkuna in Bilbao, both in English and Spanish.

Keith has judged the Commonwealth Short Story Prize, the Polari Prize and the Foyle Young Poets Award. He is the poet-in-residence at Imperial Healthcare Trust and is a supervisor on Birkbeck University's Creative Writing MFA.