NYU Madrid
WREX-UF 9101
Sections M01, M02 and M03

Writing as Exploration
Instruction Mode: In-Person
Fall 2021

Lecturer Contact Information
● Office hours and location: Tuesdays 12.15-2.15 pm and Thursdays 12.15-1.15 pm in Room 306E

Units earned
4

Course Details
● Tuesdays and Thursdays
  Section M01: 9:00 to 10:30 am
  Section M02: 10.45 am to 12.15 pm
  Section M03: 3.30 to 5 pm
● All times are GMT+2:00 Madrid (Daylight Saving Time ends October 31st).
● Location: Room 305.

○ COVID-related details: In the interest of protecting the NYU Madrid community, we are closely following CDC guidance around COVID-19 and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being is our top priority.
  ○ Since 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. Please note that you are expected to attend every class meeting in-person.

Course Description
This course tackles the practice of writing as a tool for thinking about the most diverse subjects. We will focus on nonfiction texts but will always address the essay genre as a form of literature that must combine observation and accuracy, but also creativity and even beauty. By examining the work of different authors, genres and formats we will discover how flexible is the essay genre: we can write about whatever we want, no subject is too weird or too trivial and we may address it with the most innovative gaze. The form of an essay can be so elastic that everything can fit on it.

We will undertake an exploration -in a kind of zoom out- from the self to the world around. Therefore the course is divided in 3 parts:
1. Writing in first person, examining different approaches to personal matters that will be also the excuse to address other questions: identity, gender, race, loss or family.

2. The world around: How to observe and tell reality through writing. Travel writing and Journalism and its hybridization with the essay.

3. The quest: the essay as a way to develop critical thinking. The academic and the creative essay to tackle the divine and the human, the philosophical but also the everyday stuff.

Having Madrid as a territory to explore, the students will be encouraged to use their experience living in Spain as material for their writing. Their curiosity about this new environment will be the fuel for constant inquiry about Spain and Spaniards.

We will learn how to think about ourselves and about the world we live in through the practice of writing, as a tool not just for exploration but also for action. Above all, the main goal of this course is enjoying the writing process.

**Course Objective / Outcomes**

A student's successful completion of the course should demonstrate:

- An understanding of the essay as a wide-ranging form used both within and beyond academia to dramatize thinking and to make discoveries through the work of analysis.
- An ability to identify fertile occasions for writing—such as an object, experience, or event that presents a challenging question or problem—and to distinguish such occasions from formulaic, predictable, or otherwise unremarkable writing motives.
- An understanding of and facility with critical inquiry, narrative, analysis, interpretive summary, and close reading as skills central to thinking, reading, and writing within and beyond academia.
- An understanding of the role of concrete subject matter in writing and an ability to base inquiry and analysis in the observable world of texts, objects, events, and people.
- An ability to reflect upon, craft, and analyze a variety of subjects, such as personal experiences, written and visual texts, objects, public events, and/or social phenomena.
- An understanding of the multiple uses of texts in writing—for example, as evidence, as conceptual lens, and as occasion to expand or qualify another writer’s analysis.
- An ability to place subjects and analyses in relevant personal, cultural, and/or social context, and account for perspectives—including non-Western perspectives—other than the student’s own.
- An ability to engage and manage challenging questions and problems in his or her reading and writing.
- An ability to discuss and evaluate the formal qualities of his or her own writing along with that of peers and published writers.
- An ability to both independently revise his or her own work and incorporate others’ feedback in revision.
Assessment Components
Students are required to write 3 essays of 1200 words of polished, graded writing. Each one will be 20% of the final grade. They should be typewritten using 12-point Times New Roman or similar. They should be double-spaced, and each page should have a 1” margin on all sides. We will follow the Citation guide style of NYU (https://guides.nyu.edu/citations). There is no final exam for this course.

There will three stages in the writing of each essay. The very first version will be peer-reviewed by three of your classmates (Writing workshop), then you will send a first draft to the professor, and after her corrections and comments you will submit a final version of your essay. All the due dates all marked on the class calendar. The groups of students for peer-review will change for each of the three essays. You are expected to make an in-depth reading of your classmates' work and make comments and suggestions to improve their essays. Please take the time to do it thoroughly, they will do the same for you. You will have a document with the instructions to help you to give them a good feedback in Brightspace.

You must do all the readings assigned for every session in advance, bring your notes and participate actively in the discussion about them. Throughout the course there will be writing exercises proposed in class based on the readings and prompts given by the professor. Participation in both class conversation and writing exercises are fundamental for this course.

The students are required to keep a journal where they write their impressions and experiences living in Madrid but also their reactions to the materials that we will read and watch during the course. Those notes will be the fuel for their essays and their comments for the discussion in class. Writing exercises should be also included in this journal.

These journals, either handwritten or typed, can also have photos, drawings… or collages with any material to record the student's experience in Madrid and in this course. The completion of these journals, will be the 15% of the final grade.

1. Class Participation 25%
2. First essay 20%
3. Second essay 20%
4. Third essay 20%
5. Journal 15%

You are expected to attend class in person or remote synchronously, if COVID-19 contingency plans are announced by NYU Madrid. Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

Required Text(s)
All resources will be available on Brightspace unless indicated otherwise.
Course Schedule
The calendar will be flexible depending on the needs of the students, the availability of the guest speakers, and the final date of the visits. It could be possible adding more sessions for peer review and commenting their essays in class if the students need it. The updated version of the course schedule is posted in brightspace.

Topics and Assignments

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1,</td>
<td>Objective/Expectations. Introduction to the course and</td>
<td>Read the syllabus and bring your questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>timeline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2nd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session 2,</td>
<td>The First Person: The Journal</td>
<td>Joan Didion <em>On keeping a notebook</em></td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Casey Cep <em>A Thousand Words</em></td>
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<td>September 7th</td>
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<td>Session 3,</td>
<td>The First Person: Memoir</td>
<td>Alison Bechdel <em>Fun Home</em> (Graphic novel) (2 first chapters)</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie <em>The Danger of a Single Story</em> (Ted talk)</td>
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<td>September 9th</td>
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<td>Session 4,</td>
<td>The First Person: Yo y mi circunstancia</td>
<td><em>Notes on Grief</em></td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Chimamanda Ngozi Achidie</td>
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<td>September 14th</td>
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<td>Session 5,</td>
<td><em>Writing Workshop Essay 1: &quot;Me, Myself and I&quot;</em></td>
<td>Draft versions of the Essay 1 of three classmates for peer-review and</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>bring your pitch to present your essay 1 in class</td>
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<td>September 16th</td>
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<td>Session 6,</td>
<td>The First Person: Autobiography/Autofiction</td>
<td>Leon Siminiani <em>Limites primera persona</em> (short film)</td>
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<td>Tuesday</td>
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<td>Patti Smith <em>Just Kids</em> (First Chapter)</td>
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<td>September 21st</td>
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<td>Session</td>
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<td>Session 7, Thursday September 23rd</td>
<td>The First Person: Identity</td>
<td>*Submission 1st draft Essay 1: &quot;Me, Myself and I&quot;</td>
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<td>Session 8, Tuesday September 28th</td>
<td>The First Person: Dealing with Personal Writing</td>
<td>Guest Speaker: Soledad Marambio</td>
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<td>Session 9, Thursday September 30th</td>
<td>The World Around: The Travel Writing.</td>
<td>Jan Morris <em>Fun City, Las Vegas</em></td>
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<td>Session 10, Tuesday October 5th</td>
<td>The World Around: The Personal is Political</td>
<td>James Baldwin <em>Notes of the Native Son</em></td>
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<td>Session 11, Thursday October 7th</td>
<td>The World Around: Cultural Objects</td>
<td>Dolly Parton’s America (Podcast)</td>
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<td>Session 12, Thursday October 14th</td>
<td>The World Around: Writing as Resistance</td>
<td>Valeria Luiselli <em>Tell Me How it Ends</em></td>
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<td>Session 13, Tuesday October 19th</td>
<td>The World Around: Exploring the World in Madrid</td>
<td>VISITA Lavapiés</td>
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<td>Session 14, Thursday October 21st</td>
<td>The World Around: Narrative Journalism: The Chronicle as a Platypus</td>
<td>Leila Guerriero <em>The Trace in the Bones</em></td>
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<td>Session 15, Tuesday October 26th</td>
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<td>Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Thursday October 28th</td>
<td><strong>Writing workshop Essay 2: “The World Around”</strong></td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Thursday November 4th</td>
<td>Genres and different approaches and formats for literary and academic essays. Discussion in class. The close reading and tools for academic and literary writing.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Friday November 12</td>
<td><em>The Quest</em>: Exploring Spain</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Tuesday November 16th</td>
<td><strong>The Quest</strong>: Humor and Essay</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Tuesday November 16th</td>
<td>Guest speaker: Mercedes Cebrián <em>Burp: Adventures in Eating and Cooking</em> (excerpts)</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Tuesday November 23rd</td>
<td><strong>The Quest</strong>: Words Versus Images</td>
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<tr>
<td>Session</td>
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<tr>
<td>23, Tuesday</td>
<td>November 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>Writing workshop Paper 3: The Quest</strong></td>
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<td>24, Thursday</td>
<td>December 2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The Quest: Everything can be explored</td>
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<td>25, Tuesday</td>
<td>December 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The Quest: The Literary Essay</td>
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<td>26, Thursday</td>
<td>December 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>The Quest: From Academia</td>
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<tr>
<td>27, Tuesday</td>
<td>December 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Why We Write</td>
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<tr>
<td>28, FRIDAY</td>
<td>December 17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>“The Quest” Wrap up session. Last day of classes</td>
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**Online Classroom Etiquette**

To optimize the experience in a blended learning environment, please consider the following:

- Please be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. Ambient noise and some visual images may disrupt class time for you and your peers.
- Please do not eat during class and minimize any other distracting noises (e.g. rustling of papers and leaving the classroom before the break, unless absolutely necessary).
- If you are not using your cell phone to follow the lesson, cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class time.
- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class.
- Make sure to let your classmates finish speaking before you do.
If deemed necessary by the study away site (ie COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.

Academic Policies

Assessment Expectations:

- **Grade A**: The student’s work demonstrates an understanding of the subject that goes beyond assigned course readings. The student writes essays/exam questions that are an original synthesis of source materials, demonstrating the ability to evaluate source material critically. Written arguments are clear, well-organized and well-presented; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student has distinguished themselves throughout the course of the semester for his/her contributions to class discussion.

- **Grade B**: The student’s work shows a clear understanding of assigned readings and materials covered in class. The student writes clear, well-organized and well-presented essays/exam questions; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student is prepared in class and asks relevant questions.

- **Grade C**: The student’s work shows a basic understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. However, written and/or oral work is deficient in one or more of the following areas: clarity, organization or content. The student’s work is generally in need of improvement.

- **Grade D**: The student’s work shows occasional understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work is deficient in one of more of the follow areas: clarity, organization or content. The student does not participate in class discussion and has not frequented the instructor’s office hours.

- **Grade F**: The student’s work does not demonstrate understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work are either insufficient or are not submitted. The student appears unprepared in class and has not frequented the instructor’s office hours.

Grade Conversion

Your lecturer may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

- A: 100–94
- A−: 93–90
- B+: 89–87
- B: 86–84
- B−: 83–80
- C+: 79–77
- C: 76–74
- C−: 73–70
- D+: 69–67
- D: 66–64
- D−: 63–60
- F: 59–0

Attendance Policy

Studying at Global Academic Centers 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 centers, or online through NYU
Brightspace if the course is remote synchronous/blended, is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to write to madrid.academics@nyu.edu to see if you can take your remote class at the Academic Center.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academics team by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or site staff is entitled to require you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from an NYU Staff member as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances that you wish to be treated confidentially must be presented to staff. Doctor's notes must be submitted by e-mail to your professor and the Academics team (madrid.academics@nyu.edu), who will inform your professors.

Unexcused absences may be penalized with a five percent deduction from your total participation grade. Five unexcused absences in one course will lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequently joining the class late.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to your professor and the site staff by e-mail (madrid.academics@nyu.edu); until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

**Final exams**

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team (madrid.academics@nyu.edu). Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

**Late Submission of Work**

1. Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (including weekends and public holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of your professor and NYU Madrid Staff (madrid.academics@nyu.edu), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.

2. Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (including weekends and public holidays) following the submission date receives an F.

3. Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days late (including weekends and public holidays) without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for
work during finals week must be discussed with the Site Director, James D. Fernández (jf2@nyu.edu).

(4) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

(5) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**

As the University's policy on "Academic Integrity for Students at NYU" states: “At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offences against academic integrity.

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 also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

**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.
**Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays**
Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU Madrid’s Academics Office in writing via e-mail (madrid.academics@nyu.edu) one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. 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](#).

**Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)**
Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, NYU LMS Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website](#).

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

**Moses Accommodations Statement**
Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Madrid.

**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.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University’s existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.
To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the [Web Form (link)]
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- Phone: 212-998-2277
- Local Phone Number: +34 91 904 42 58