Travel Writing

COURSE DESIGNATOR LNDN 3212W

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION English

NUMBER OF CREDITS 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to offer you the opportunity to study and practice the art of travel writing. There will be a variety of readings, many of them focused on London and its environs, and most, but not all, from contemporary travel writers. And there will be weekly writing assignments, some designed to send you out into the city to find a story, some designed for you to draw upon your own independent travel schedule.

You can think of this course as providing the occasion for you to stop, think, reflect and process all that you will be learning and experiencing as a traveller during your semester abroad. At the end of the semester you will have a collection of short essays that will have captured places and moments in time, something you can share with family and friends—and set aside for a future bookshelf.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Each week you will have a reading assignment (around 20-25 pages). Each week, students will write (or revise) a short travel essay, something appropriate for a magazine. First drafts are expected to be 2-3 pages and the revised drafts to be longer (4-6 pages for a second draft). Students will give one oral presentation to introduce the class to something interesting that you have found in London.

The required readings will be provided as pdf files in a zip drive). Please either print out a copy or bring your laptop to class.

The required readings will all be pieces of travel writing, loosely defined. Some will come from travel guides or travel magazines; some will come from memoirs or novels or other sources. All will be appropriate models for your own written work. Students will begin each class with a discussion of the readings.

Students are expected to come to class with a “story idea”—thoughts, notes, scenes, images, a piece of conversation—something that sticks with you and that can initiate a short essay. You’ll be drawing upon your previous week’s experience on the road or in the streets. You should think of your travels as fieldwork. You should carry a small notebook or journal—a place to take notes, record details and, in the evening, a place to try out some initial sentences. (This can become a valuable tool once you are home and trying to remember names, dates, and places.)

During the second half of the period, students will turn their attention to one or two examples of their writing from the previous week. You’ll talk about these as “work in progress.” And you will also have a chance to write—something brief and experimental. You’ll be asked to think of the classroom space as a workshop. At the end of the period, students will be asked to read aloud. Ideally, the writing you do in class will provide the kernel for the short essay due the following week.

LONDON TIP SHEET: FIELD WORK AND PRESENTATION
Students will give a brief presentation (5-8 minutes) on some site or event in London. This presentation should focus on something out of the way, something ferreted out by clever research or uncanny instinct, something we would all have missed if left to our own devices.

Students should follow some particular area of interest throughout the time their in London, as though you were a “beat” reporter: the music scene, the art scene, sports, cinema, theater, politics, graffiti, restaurants, parks, architecture, whatever. Let this focus define your fieldwork and lead you to your subject. (The report you prepare may certainly serve as the
subject of your paper that week.) Your presentation should include a handout suitable for posting, something useful to the rest of us in the class.

REQUIRED READING AND RESOURCES

STUDENT WRITING

- Lisa Brunner, “Silences”
- Lisa Brunner, “A Kite that Couldn’t Be Tied Down”
- Suzanne Cake, “In Buenos Aires”
- Suzanne Cake, “On Toes”
- Rene Lloyd, “Buenos Aires”
- Rene Lloyd, “Historians of Cape Town”
- Corey Black, “Welcome to Cape Town”
- Clara Heck, “The English Corner”
- Caitlyn Beck, “Chengdu”
- Andy MacDonald, “The Great Safari”
- Colleen Moroney, “The Five Phases of Culture Shock”
- Garove, Brittany, “Foreign Innocence”
- Racheli Shoenburg, “Circling Beijing”

LONDON TRAVEL

- Charly Wilder, “A Fresh Face in South London” from New York Times
- Joshua David Stein, New Home for Arts Refugees,” from New York Times
- Maria Shollenbarger, “London’s New East End,” from T&L.
- Mark Ellwood, “Touring London’s Fitzrovia Neighborhood” from T&L.
- Alice Rawsthorn, “London’s Art Scene,” from T&L.
- Christopher Hitchens, “Londistan Calling” from Vanity Fair
- Pico Iyer, “A Life in the World,” from Conde Nast Traveler
- Pico Iyer, “Why We Travel” from Salon Travel
- Seth Kugel, “Richmond,” from New York Times
- Anna Quindlen, “Chapter One: Arrival” and Chapter Eleven: Southwark” from Imagined London: A Tour of the World’s Greatest Fictional City

TRAVEL WRITING FROM AROUND THE WORLD

- Kristen Naca, “In Mexico City”
- Stephanie Elizondo Griest, “Beijing” from Around the Bloc
- Miranda France, “Bad Times in Buenos Aires” from Women Travel
- Pico Iyer, “La Dolce Vita Meets ‘The Hyper’” from Falling Off the Map
- Michael Meyer, “Through the Front Gate” from The Last Days of Old Beijing
- Seth Kugel, “Aphrodite,“ from New York Times
- Seth Kugel, “Gender Gap,” from New York Times
- Seth Kugel, “First Day Blues,” from New York Times
- Seth Kugel, “How To Be a Frugal Traveller,” from New York Times
- Seth Kugel, “In Brazil,” from New York Times

OTHER

- Virginia Woolf, “St. Paul’s” from London Sketches
• Virginia Woolf, opening scene, Mrs. Dalloway
• Nick Hornby, “Graduation Day,” from Fever Pitch
• Thomas Platter, “London” from London in the Age of Shakespeare
• Virginia Tuft, from Artful Sentences
• Mary Louise Pratt, from Imperial Eyes
• Clifford Geertz, Opening scene, “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight”
• Everett, Daniel, “Prologue,” Don’t Sleep, There are Snakes

GRADING
CAPA PROGRAM AND INSTRUCTOR POLICY
The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic course depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work and class behavior. This means to gain full attendance you must attend all classes, you must not be late (unless with a valid reason) and you must be respectful of the professor and of other students by not talking/whispering in class when others are talking or presenting. Persistent lateness or lack of attention in class, i.e., reading materials other than the work assigned, may result in a low or zero grade for participation, and possible referral to the CAO. **No electronic equipment will be used in class,** including laptops, phones, ipods, cell phones, etc, unless you have written permission from the Chief Academic Officer prior to the course. If you are caught using any electronic equipment, you may receive a zero grade for participation.

Plagiarism will be dealt with very seriously, and will be referred to the Chief Academic Officer in London. You may receive an F for the course. If all work is not submitted by the end of the program, you will receive an F for the course.

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE
Attendance at all classes is mandated by CAPA; students who miss a class without permission from CAPA’s Chief Academic Officer will have their grade for the course lowered. Informed participation is expected in every class, so students must have read the full assignment carefully before coming and be ready to discuss it if called upon. At any meeting there may be a brief, pass-fail two-minute quiz on some utterly obvious fact in the assigned reading. Students will also be asked to complete informal in-class writing assignments on a regular basis, which will require them to demonstrate their familiarity with the assigned materials. Students who repeatedly demonstrate unsatisfactory performance on these quizzes and exercises will be penalized in the participation grade.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING AND GRADING STANDARDS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93+</td>
<td>Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60-66</td>
<td>Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;59</td>
<td>Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I.</td>
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ATTENDANCE POLICY
Regular attendance and punctuality are mandatory in order to earn full marks. The final grade will take into consideration preparation required for class (i.e. readings) and participation in class discussions. If you miss any meetings without an
excused absence from the on-site director, your final grade will be dropped accordingly. In the case of absences, it is the student’s responsibility to find out what information was given in class including any announcements made.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY
Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

STUDENT CONDUCT
The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct and student needs. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.