Writing the City: London

COURSE DESIGNATOR LNDN 3217

NUMBER OF CREDITS 3

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION English

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The course looks at the impact of the city on the craft of creative writing. It explores how various subjects like the river, urban spaces, solitude, ethnicity or particular districts function in London narratives, and examines the role of memory and experience in literary psychogeographic accounts of the metropolis.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
The course aims to provide a theoretical and practical platform to enable you to develop your understanding of London, and utilize the city as a character in your own creative writing. Through extensive reading and writing practice including rewriting, and an overview of various styles and narrative devices, you will develop your grasp of literary technique and explore and improve your own writing. The course seeks to enable students to ‘write the city’ for themselves.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
At the end of the course you should be able to:

• Identify and utilize various writing styles and narrative devices;
• Locate and critically evaluate various types of writing about the city of London;
• Communicate effectively about your own writing and provide constructive feedback to others in the class about their writing;
• Gain a deeper understanding of the diversity of London;
• Improve your creative writing skills.

DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES
Students should demonstrate: responsibility & accountability, independence & interdependence, goal orientation, self-confidence, resilience, appreciation of differences.

METHODOLOGY
Lecture, workshop, discussion, groupwork, fieldwork, class exercises, weekly writing assignments and analysis of published London authors' work.

The course includes field visits to select London institutions and encourages the use of various archives, theatres, galleries and cultural institutions as well as some religious institutions. Please dress with respect.

MY EDUCATION
1. Field trip to the Thames (LESSON 3) Details will be given in class
2. Two Interviews with Londoners to be carried out in students own time. Details will be given in class.

REQUIRED READING AND RESOURCES

Granta no. 65 (Spring 1999) [this issue, edited by Ian Jack, is devoted to London and is a kind of mini-anthology of contemporary writing about the city

Nick Rennison, Waterstone's Guide to London Writing, 1999
Raymond Williams The Country and the City esp. chapters 15, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25 (1973)


Burton Pike 'The city as image' in The Image of the City in Modern Literature (1981)

Christine Sizemore A Female Vision of the City : London in the Novels of Five British Women (1989)


Brunsdon, Charlotte (2007) London in Cinema, the Cinematic City since 1945 (London: BFI)


ONLINE RESOURCES

London Journal (History of London journal) home page
http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/cmh/londonjournal/

Museum of London - wide-range of resources and links on London history
http://www.museum-london.org.uk

LSE Urban and Metropolitan Research Unit - mainly concerned with contemporary political and economic issues in the city.
http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/london/

Mayor of London and the GLA
http://www.london.gov.uk/

City of London (Includes results of comparative study on London and New York as World Cities and report on the possibilities for a 24 hour city.)
http://www.corpoflondon.gov.uk

http://www.bbc.co.uk/londonlive/

London First: Business-led group promoting London as a sustainable city.
http://www.london-first.co.uk
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>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60-66</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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GRADING FOR ASSIGNMENTS
Homework Assignments 30%
My Education participation 20%
Personal Presentation of London Walk 10%
Short Story/Creative Non-Fictions 20%
Self Reflective Essay 20%
Overall Grade 100%

SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Topics</th>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Week 3</th>
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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Week 8</th>
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<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>What is the definition of a modern city? Assignments given. Go through course syllabus.</td>
<td>ARRIVAL</td>
<td>What are your expectations of London? Grisly murders, gentlemen detectives, tea and crumpets, eccentric ladies, bowler hats and brollys, fairytale Royal weddings. Does this London exist? How far does the reality of London fit with your idealised perceptions of London?</td>
<td>RIVER</td>
<td>What is the importance of a river to a city and in London why have writers, poets and painters been so beguiled and inspired by it?</td>
<td>SPACE</td>
<td>Parks, Markets, Suburbs. We will take a tour of Lavender Hill and Battersea. Public spaces are a big part of London Life.</td>
<td>CONGESTION</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>SIGHTS</td>
<td>March 18th Presentation of your personal walk</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>MARGINS</td>
<td>How do we experience those marginalised from society? The homeless guy outside the tube. The old lady who goes unnoticed in a café. The night cleaners. Stories are everywhere, but as writers we need to get to the complex heart of the city, to discover the Why and the How of the ‘invisible’ citizen.</td>
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<td>Hand in short story/creative non fiction</td>
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<td>Screening: Dirty Pretty Things</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>NEVERLAND – NOTTING HILL</td>
<td>the changing uses of London landscapes</td>
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<td>Field Trip: Meet at Bayswater Tube 9.30am/ 2pm</td>
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<td>Short story/creative non fiction returned</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Excess</td>
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<td>Bring in Souveniers/found objects</td>
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<td>Screening Kind Hearts and Coronets</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Each student will read out two pieces. You will be given tips on public reading and be expected to discuss your process of work focusing on the two pieces you have chosen. No Final exam. Hand in Self Reflective Essay</td>
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