LONS EEWL 107 Writing London



Class code

LONS EEWL 107

Instructor Details Dr Laurence Scott

Class Details

Summer 2012

Prerequisites

Class Description

London has been the home and inspiration of many of the best writers working in the English language for centuries. Although these writers often publish in a variety of literary forms, this course will focus on their career as essayists. The essay is widely considered to be a dying art, and yet it is one of the main forms of student evaluation in the humanities and social sciences. We will therefore use these great writers as guides to developing vibrant and coherent written work, while simultaneously learning how the city of London has been portrayed by thinkers old and new, from Thomas de Quincey to Zadie Smith.

This course offers a wonderful opportunity to refine your writing; portions of each seminar will be dedicated to the craft of composition. Students will gain practice both analysing the best contemporary essayists and undertaking exercises designed to improve technique. In addition, field trips to the sites that captured the imaginations of these acclaimed writers will bring London alive as a city of words. As Samuel Johnson wrote: "The happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it". During this course there will be class visits by writers whose work reflects the many-sided personality of the capital, and students will obtain invaluable skills in written expression that will serve them for the rest of their careers.

Desired Outcomes

To gain an appreciation for the great variety of essayists, past and present, who have lived and worked in London.

To understand the mechanics and craft of good writing.

To improve written composition using weekly short writing exercises analysed in a workshop environment.

To gain experience in giving non-assessed, short oral presentations on contemporary essayists and their work.

Assessment Components

Compilation of workshop writing: 15%

Essay 1 (1500 words): 25%

Essay 2 (2500 words): 50%

Class Preparation: 10%

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

Assessment Expectations

Please refer to your Arcadia University student handbook for information regarding the London Study Centre's general marking criteria and assessment expectations.

Grade conversion

Please refer to your Arcadia University student handbook for the most up-to-date scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

Degree Class	Numerical Grade	Arcadia Letter Grade
First Class 1 st	75-100 68-74 65-67	A+ A A-
Upper Second Class 2.1	60-64 55-59 50-54	B+ B B-
Lower Second Class 2.2	47-49 43-46 40-42	C+ C C-
Third Class 3 rd	35-39	D
Fail	0-34	F

Attendance Policy

ARCADIA has a strict policy about course attendance. Only one unexcused absence is allowed. Illness or family emergencies may require a student's absence. Such an absence must be documented by a physician's note or by consultation with the Arcadia University London Office prior to the absence. The Office will inform the Director of the circumstances requiring the absence. The Director will have the final decision on the disposition of an absence. The absent student is always responsible for assignments missed.

Unexcused absences from exams are not permitted and will result in failure of the exam. If you are granted an excused absence from examination (with authorisation, as above), your lecturer will decide how you will make-up the assessment component, if at all (by make-up examination, extra coursework, or an increased weighting on an alternate assessment component, etc.).

Arrival at work or class more than ten minutes late or leaving the class early will be considered an absence.

Please note that for classes involving a **field trip or other external visit,** transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive at an agreed meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Late Submission of Work

Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.

Required Text(s)

A course pack of essays will be provided. In addition, students will be expected to buy: Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* George Orwell, *Down and Out in London and Paris*

Thomas de Quincey, Confessions of an English Opium-Eater

Supplemental Texts(s) (not required to purchase as copies will be purchased by ARCADIA)

Internet Research Guidelines

Additional Required Equipment

Session 1

Introduction to the course.

Week 1 Andrew O'Hagan: excerpts from *The Atlantic Ocean*

Group exercise: What is an essay?

Session 2 Thomas De Quincey: Confessions of and English Opium-Eater

Week 1 Student Presentation & Composition Workshop

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450 S. Easton Rd., Glenside, PA 19038-3295 toll-free: 1-866-927-2234 telephone: 215-572-2901 fax: 215-572-2174

Session 3 Virginia Woolf: A Room of One's Own

Week 2 Student Presentation & Composition Workshop

Session 4 Virginia Woolf: "Street Haunting: A London Adventure" and Walking Tour

Week 2

Walking tour through Woolf's London

Session 5 William Hazlitt: excerpts from Selected Essays of William Hazlitt

Week 3 Student Presentation & Composition Workshop

Session 6 Zadie Smith: excerpts from *Changing My Mind*.

Week 3 Student Presentation & Composition Workshop

Essay 1 due at beginning of class.

Session 7 Doris Lessing: selections from A Small Personal Voice

Week 4 Student Presentation & Composition Workshop

Session 8 George Orwell: *Down and Out in London and Paris*

Week 4 Student Presentation & Composition Workshop

Session 9 (TBC) Evening lecture: An audience with Andrew O'Hagan and Colm Toibin, discussing the pleasures

and importance of the essay.

Week 5

Session 10 Samuel Johnson: excerpts from *Essays from the Rambler, Adventurer, and Idler*

Week 5
Visit to Samuel Johnson House.

Session 11 Craig Taylor: excerpts from *One Million Tiny Plays About Britain*

Week 6 Class visit from Craig Taylor, author and editor of literary magazine, *Five Dials*.

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Session 12 Recap: What *is* an essay?

Week 6 Student Presentation & Workshop: "Perfecting the introductory paragraph"

Final essay consultations.

NB: Essay 2 due Week 13 (in lieu of exam)

Classroom Etiquette Eating is not permitted in any classrooms. Please kindly dispose of rubbish in the bins provided.

Required Cocurricular Activities Virginia Woolf Walking Tour Visit to Samuel Johnson House

Lecture: Great Living Essayists

Visit from author and editor Craig Taylor

Suggested Cocurricular Activities

Evening events at the London Review of Books Bookshop

LSE lecture series

Lectures at the British Library