



Institute of Continuing Education

Undergraduate Diploma in Creative Writing: Advanced Non-Fiction

2019 – 2020

Course code: 1920DCR501

COURSE GUIDE

Welcome to the **Undergraduate Diploma in Creative Writing: Advanced Fiction and Non-Fiction**, a University of Cambridge award offered by the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE). The Diploma is taught and awarded at FHEQ level 5 (i.e. second-year undergraduate level) and attracts 60 credits. The award is completed in one academic year. For further information about academic credit please see our website: <http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/studying-with-us/information-for-students/qualifications-that-we-offer>.

The course offers three termly units and a syllabus and reading and resource list for each of these units are included in this course specification.

The programme aims to:

1. introduce students to a wide range of non-fiction styles in order to stimulate and develop their own creative writing;
2. develop students' critical skills in assessing the work of published authors and their own writing;
3. provide opportunities for students to experiment with their own work and to build their confidence;
4. extend students' knowledge of the transferability of techniques between different forms of non-fiction;
5. encourage students to contextualise their writing within a variety of traditions and styles;
6. provide opportunities for progression to further study in the area of creative writing.

Transferable skills for further study and employability

- The capacity for independent thought and judgement
- The development of independent learning, study and time management skills
- The deployment of skills in critical reasoning
- The development of competence in using IT to support one's work
- The ability to work with others, productively and equitably
- The qualities necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility and the demonstration of high levels of motivation and personal commitment through part-time study

Study hours

The award of academic credit is a means of quantifying and recognising learning and within the UK, one credit notionally represents 10 hours of learning¹. Each of the units in this course attracts 20 credits so students should expect to need to study for approximately 200 hours in total to complete each unit successfully. However, it is recognised that students study at different paces and use a variety of approaches, so this is a recommendation, rather than a hard-and-fast calculation.

¹ 'Academic credit in higher education in England – an introduction'. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2009

Teaching staff

Academic Director

Midge Gillies

Midge Gillies is the author of seven non-fiction books, including biographies of Amy Johnson and Marie Lloyd. In *The Barbed-Wire University* (Aurum Press, 2011) she explored what it was really like to be an Allied Prisoner of War in the Second World War. She is the author of *Writing Lives* (CUP, 2009) and co-author, with Sally Cline, of *Literary Non-Fiction: A Writers'*

& *Artists' Companion* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015). She studied History at Girton College and has written for a range of national, international and regional newspapers and magazines. Her book about army wives from the Crimean War to the present day was published in August 2016. For three years she was Royal Literary Fund Fellow at Magdalene College, Cambridge. Her PhD concentrated on the use of oral history in creative non-fiction.

Tutors

Miranda Doyle is part of the Life Writing Team at the University of Cambridge Creative Writing Centre based at Madingley Hall. She also teaches memoir and life writing at the Faber Academy, and creative writing as part of Hills Road's Sixth Form College Adult Education programme. She has a distinction in Creative and Life Writing from Goldsmiths and led the Philosophy Department's Autobiography: Self and Truth module for five years at Anglia Ruskin University. Her fascination with the form is longstanding, motivating classes that seek to explore a writer's relationship with the page. Through her workshops she hopes to build a mutually supportive foundation for all her students through which they can develop meaningful relationships with one another, which will support them throughout their writing lives. Her memoir, *A Book of Untruths*, was published in June 2017 by Faber & Faber.

Dr Lucy Durneen

Dr Lucy Durneen's short stories, poetry and non-fiction have been published and commended internationally in journals including *World Literature Today*, *Hotel Amerika*, and *Meniscus*. Her fiction has been Pushcart Prize nominated and Highly Commended in the Manchester Fiction Prize, while her non-fiction has been adapted for broadcast on BBC Radio 4, and listed as a Notable Essay in *Best American Essays 2017*. Her first short story collection, *Wild Gestures*, was published in 2017 with Australian press MidnightSun and won Best Short Story Collection at the Saboteur Awards in London in May of the same year. Her research interests include war writing, literatures of exile, migration and asylum, and graphic narratives, as well as short stories, creative non-fiction and hybrid forms of writing.

Derek Niemann is a freelance writer and editor specialising in natural history. In 2012, he interrupted a career writing about bees and butterflies to begin researching and writing a family history story that was published in 2015 as *A Nazi in the Family* (Short Books), based on the SS grandfather he never knew. His most recent non-fiction book *A Tale of Trees: The battle to save Britain's ancient woodland* was published in October 2016 (Short Books). Derek's other non-fiction title was *Birds in a Cage* (Short Books, 2011), telling the story of four Prisoner of War birdwatchers in World War II. Derek is a country diary columnist for the Guardian, and edits the magazine of the Small Woods Association. Formerly he was children's magazines editor for the RSPB (1998-2014) and has written a number of wildlife books for children.

Jeremy Seal a travel writer with a profound interest in Turkey. His books include *A Fez of the Heart* (1995), *The Snakebite Survivors' Club* (1999), *The Wreck at Sharpnose Point* (2001), *Santa: A Life* (2004) and *Meander* (2012). He also contributes to a wide range of publications including the Sunday Times, Daily Telegraph and the Australian. He has taught creative writing courses for the Arvon Foundation and was a writing fellow for the Royal Literary Fund at the University of Bath from 2009-2011. Jeremy has also worked in TV presenting, and runs cultural tours to Turkey.

Administrative staff

Head of Academic Centre Administration: Katherine Roddwell, Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ, 01223 746223, katherine.roddwell@ice.cam.ac.uk

Academic Centre Co-ordinator: Lisa Hitch, Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ, 01223 746212, lisa.hitch@ice.cam.ac.uk

Academic Centre Administrator: Olivia Desborough, Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge, Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ, 01223 761278, olivia.desborough@ice.cam.ac.uk

Venue

Madingley Hall is an historic Tudor mansion on the outskirts of Cambridge with one of the finest gardens in the region and will be the venue for your classes unless otherwise specified.

The Hall is situated in the village of Madingley, three miles west of Cambridge with easy access from the M11 and the A14. Full directions are given on our website at www.ice.cam.ac.uk/directions.

Workshops are held at Madingley Hall, which has a variety of teaching rooms ranging from the newly refurbished Courtyard Suite to rooms in the historic Hall. Workshops may be scheduled in different teaching rooms each term.

Contact details of ICE

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Please also refer to the 'information for students' section on our website <http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/studying-with-us/information-for-students> and the 18/19 Student Handbook for further information and guidance relating to all aspects of the course including study skills, assignments, assessment and moderation. The Course Information and Help and Guidance section of the ICE VLE will also contain valuable information specific to your course.

Information correct as at 09 May 2019

Syllabus for first unit
Michaelmas term 2019

Creative Non-Fiction: People

Start date	6 October 2019	End date	8 December 2019
Day	Sunday	Time	10.00am – 5.00pm
Venue	Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ		
Tutor	Miranda Doyle and Midge Gillies	No of meetings	4 Sunday day-schools on 6 October, 20 October, 24 November and 8 December 2019

Aims

- To introduce students to creative non-fiction, with a focus on biography and memoir.
- To analyse various techniques of organising a fragmented, overcrowded life.
- To encourage students to experiment with their own writing.
- To enable students to write in ways that harness established literary traditions.

Content

What is Creative Non-fiction, or some people prefer: Narrative Non-fiction? The American writer Lee Gutkind, who helped coin the phrase, defines it as true stories, well told. Whether journal article, memoir, biography, essay, what readers are looking for in non-fiction is factually accurate prose about real people and real events that is compelling.

The word 'creative' has attracted many dissenters, but crafting stories, wherever we find them, needs writerly solutions so that our readers can be as enthralled by memoir as they are by the novel. Encouraging us, as writers, to find our place in the story, creative non-fiction has a flexibility that enables us to be both poetic and journalistic so as to tell those larger truths.

By holding the story ourselves, as narrators, we can navigate conflicting stories, and by being honest with the reader earn their trust.

Presentation of the unit

The unit will take a practical approach to writing. It will aim to demystify the techniques and tools associated with non-fiction and encourage students to feel more confident about their own writing voice.

Students will discuss different techniques in seminars and experiment with their own writing through a range of exercises. They will also be given the chance to workshop their writing in the constructive and supportive environment of the day schools.

Provisional lecture list

Date	Session	Indicative content
Sunday 6 October 2019	<p>Day-school one: Creative Non-Fiction and Life Writing (Miranda Doyle)</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>The Woman Warrior</i>, Maxine Hong Kingston</p>	<p>Writing Life and creative Non-fiction we are often dealing with chaos, seeking out the threads that can hold a story together from the mess that telling the real and the true often creates.</p> <p>We'll look at the blurring between fiction and non-fiction and how structuring our stories can liberate us from the anxiety that may often hold us back.</p> <p>Together we'll visit the Cambridge Museum to explore its collection and its resources, and take a guided walk to see how, together, the Museum team have made the chaotic real both enjoyable and accessible. How might we do the same for ourselves?</p>
Sunday 20 October 2019	<p>Day-school two: Writing about Self</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>Tell me How it Ends</i>, Valeria Luiselli and Maggie Nelson's <i>The Argonauts</i></p>	<p>We'll explore subjectivity. How a narrator can hold together the fragmented stories of others, but also how writing the other provokes understandable protest from those who may find themselves peopling another's text. How can we be ethical?</p> <p>Guest speaker and writer, Joanne Limburg, writer of <i>The Woman who Thought too Much</i>, <i>Small Pieces</i> and <i>A Want of Kindness</i> will explore with us the ethics of writing about others.</p>
Sunday 24 November 2019	<p>Day-school three: Biography (Midge Gillies)</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>The Cut Out Girl</i> by Bart van Es</p>	<p>In this day school we will discuss what elements make it possible to write about a life. Are some lives easier to write about than others and who "owns" a life story.</p>
Sunday 8 December 2019	<p>Day-school four: Research Tools (Miranda Doyle)</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>The House by the Lake</i>, Thomas Harding</p>	<p>Whatever kind of life we are writing, biography, essay, memoir, script, poem we need to invest in the lives, places and times that we are telling.</p> <p>Guest speaker and dramatist, Fraser Grace, writer of <i>Breakfast with Mugabe</i>, produced by the RSC, <i>Kalashnikov</i> and <i>Don't Breathe a</i></p>

		<p><i>Word</i> will reveal how he selects from a wide scope of research to build dramatic stories that to the audience feel effortless.</p> <p>This day school will also give students a chance to workshop their developing assignments, allowing them to roadtest their writing with others in the group under tutorial guidance.</p>
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Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- (i) show an awareness of how to structure and develop an extended piece of life writing;
- (ii) develop skills to manage the structuring of life stories;
- (iii) assess the merits of different treatments of memoir and biography;
- (iv) demonstrate an understanding of the link between different creative forms and ideas and how aspects of them may be used within their work.

As this is a Diploma course, equivalent at least to second-year undergraduate standard, students are required to carry out tasks between day schools to make the most of the course. These tasks include reading books relevant to ideas to be explored in the following day school and completing written exercises or small pieces of research.

All students are encouraged to maintain a private journal or commentary on their own writing and thoughts throughout the course. Although this will not be marked it will provide a useful resource when the student plans their critical commentary (see below).

Most seminars will encourage discussion and students should expect to contribute to these and it is hoped they will be willing to show or read out examples of their own writing.

The end-of-term assignment will be made up of two elements:

1. A creative piece of writing of between 2,500 and 3,000 words, **the title of which must be agreed with the tutor**. The assignment may be a chapter or section of a work of creative non-fiction, This may be a piece of nature or travel writing, part of a memoir or biography, or a piece of narrative history. It must be an original piece of work and, ideally, developed in response to issues explored in the course.

Assignment length: 2,500- 3,000 words. Weighting: 80% of unit grade.

2. A critical commentary on the creative work submitted by the student for this module. This will give the student the opportunity to reflect on the choices made when writing their creative piece and help them to understand the process of writing. By writing the commentary the student will have a clearer idea of the extent to which they achieved what they set out to achieve and how they have been influenced by other writers. Advice about how to write a successful critical commentary will be offered during the course.

Assignment length: 1,500 words. Weighting: 20% of unit grade.

Please note that not every learning outcome will apply to **both** the creative assignment and the critical commentary.

Closing date for the submission of assignments: **Monday 6 January 2020 by 12.00 noon GMT***

*Greenwich Mean Time

Reading and resource list

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Carew, K	<i>Dadland</i>	London: Vintage, 2016
van Es, Bart	<i>The Cut Out Girl: A Story of War and Family, Lost and Found*</i>	London: Penguin, 2019
Farley, P & Symmons Roberts, M	<i>Deaths of the Poets</i>	London: Cape, 2017
Gidla, S	<i>Ants Amongst Elephants</i>	London: Daunt Books, 2018
Grant, C	<i>Babeye at the Wheel</i>	London: Vintage, 2013
Harding, T	<i>The House by the Lake*</i>	London: Penguin, 2015
Hong Kingston, M	<i>The Woman Warrior*</i>	London: Picador, 1981
Hughes, K	<i>Victorians Undone</i>	London: Harper Collins, 2017
Kraus, C	<i>I Love Dick</i>	London: Profile, 2015
Lee, H	<i>Body Parts</i>	London: Pimlico, 2008
Limburg, J	<i>Small Pieces: A Memoir of Loss and Consolation</i>	London: Atlantic, 2018
Luiselli, V	<i>Tell Me How it Ends*</i>	Coffee House Books, 2017
Malcolm, J	<i>The Journalist and the Murderer</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 1991
Nelson, M	<i>The Argonauts*</i>	London: Melville House, 2016
Stott, R	<i>Darwin and the Barnacle</i>	London: Faber, 2004

Summerscale, K	<i>Mrs Robinson's Disgrace</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 2012
Westover, T	<i>Educated</i>	London: Random House, 2018

* indicates required reading

Syllabus for second unit
Lent term 2020

Writing about Place

Start date	19 January 2020	End date	15 March 2020
Day	Sunday	Time	10.00am – 5.00pm
Venue	Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ		
Tutor	Derek Niemann and Jeremy Seal	No of meetings	4 Sunday day-schools on 19 January, 2 February, 1 March and 15 March 2020

Aims

- To introduce students to a range of different ways of writing about place;
- To analyse various techniques of writing about place – both rural and urban;
- To encourage students to experiment with their own writing;
- To enable students to write in ways that harness established literary traditions.

Content

Establishing a sense of place is an important component of much creative non-fiction writing. This unit will set out to show that 'place' can serve far more functions than simply as a backdrop to a narrative. We will look at how different writers with a strong sense of place bring locations to the fore, so that they are fundamental to the author's work, setting its tone, content and character.

Students will be encouraged to explore both the breadth and depth of subjects and techniques that combine to create a sense of place. The group will explore approaches to travel and family memoir writing that capture the feel of faraway destinations, as well as grounding themselves in the local by using both Madingley Hall itself and Cambridge as source material for their own experimental writing. Students will also study examples of various nature writers' non-fiction in embodying place within their work. In the final session, the group will – with the help of a guest speaker – address often under-used aspects of place writing by examining the role of food and human senses in capturing the essence of a location.

Presentation of the unit

The unit will take a practical approach to writing. It will aim to demystify the techniques and tools associated with non-fiction and encourage students to feel more confident about their own writing voice.

Students will discuss different techniques in seminars and experiment with their own writing through a range of exercises. They will also be given the chance to workshop their writing in the constructive and supportive environment of the Saturday schools.

Provisional lecture list

Date	Session	Indicative content
Sunday 19 January 2020	<p>Creating a sense of place (Derek Niemann)</p> <p>Please read in advance: Dee (ed): <i>Ground work: writings on places and people</i> and Edemariam: <i>The Wife's Tale</i></p>	<p>In writing about places as “cultural landscapes”, author Tim Dee notes that “every description and every thought arises from someone being detained – by views, buildings, sculpture, weather, chairs, churches, trees, streets, people memories.”</p> <p>In this opening session we ask why should we stop to be “detained”? What magic lies in the delineation of a place that makes it essential to a piece of writing?</p> <p>What are the key elements involved in creating a sense of place and how do different writers master them?</p> <p>We'll carry out a practical experiment on drawing out some essentials within the four walls of Madingley Hall, and we will also travel to a different continent with guest speaker Aida Edemariam, who talks about how she helps the reader visualise life in early 20th century Ethiopia in her book <i>The Wife's Tale</i>.</p>
Sunday 2 February 2020	<p>Going places (Jeremy Seal)</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>The Way of the World</i> by Nicolas Bouvier and <i>The Bridge</i> by Geert Mak.</p>	<p>Travel writer Jeremy Seal leads a day featuring a field trip into Cambridge, where students can practice their skills on the city's popular sights What do we observe in our surroundings, and how do we deploy those observations to engage and hold the attention of readers? And to what extent should the author be present in his or her own narrative? Where and why are we going, in short, and what can we do to carry the reader with us? We'll explore these questions in the context of two books which evoke distant places in very different ways.</p>
Sunday 1 March 2020	<p>Nature writing (Derek Niemann)</p> <p>Please read in advance: Mark Cocker, <i>Our Place</i> and Kathleen Jamie, <i>Findings</i></p>	<p>What are the components that go together to make up the burgeoning genre that is titled ‘nature writing’? Can we and should we write about nature as if it is separate from our human experience? How do we render the great outdoors, nature itself, in non-fiction writing?</p> <p>We'll be scrutinising work by two of Britain's leading nature writers to</p>

		<p>understand the opportunities, challenges and limitations within modern nature writing.</p> <p>Students will also be encouraged to go on a field exercise, to head out (if possible) into Madingley's meadows, wood and around its lake, so that it can serve as an outdoor classroom, a source of inspiration for participants to experiment with their own nature writing.</p>
Sunday 15 March 2020	<p>Senses of place (Derek Niemann)</p> <p>Please read in advance: Elizabeth Collingham, <i>Curry: a tale of cooks and conquerors</i></p>	<p>A place can be a physical location: it can also be a sensual one and many writers have highly-developed abilities to render scenes more powerfully using the five human senses.</p> <p>We'll be studying the role of sound – and music in particular – as well as examining the treatment of touch, taste, sight and smell in non-fiction. How can each enhance creative writing about place?</p> <p>Food historian and writer Lizzie Collingham adds spice to this session, as our guest speaker for a day, revealing the ingredients that go to make good food writing.</p> <p>This day school will also give students a chance to workshop their developing assignments, allowing them to roadtest their writing with others in the group under tutorial guidance.</p>

Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- (i) show an awareness of how to structure and develop an extended piece of prose;
- (ii) develop skills to create a sense of place and/or time;
- (iii) assess the merits of different ideas and treatments for a fictional narrative;
- (iv) demonstrate an understanding of the link between different creative forms and ideas and how aspects of them may be used within their work.

Student assessment

As this is a Diploma course, equivalent at least to second-year undergraduate standard, students are required to carry out tasks between day-schools to make the most of the course. These tasks include reading books relevant to ideas to be explored in the following day-school and completing written exercises or small pieces of research.

All students are encouraged to maintain a private journal or commentary on their own writing and thoughts throughout the course. Although this will not be marked it will provide a useful

resource when the student plans their critical commentary (see below).

Most seminars will encourage discussion and students should expect to contribute to these and it is hoped they will be willing to show or read out examples of their own writing.

The end-of-term assignment will be made up of two elements:

1. A creative piece of writing of between 2,500 and 3,000 words, **the title of which must be agreed with the tutor**. The assignment may be a chapter or section of a work of non-fiction that focuses on place. This may be a piece of nature or travel writing, part of a memoir or biography, or a piece of narrative history in which place plays a key part. It must be an original piece of work and, ideally, developed in response to issues explored in the course.

Assignment length: 2,500- 3,000 words. Weighting: 80% of unit grade.

2. A critical commentary on the creative work submitted by the student for this module. This will give the student the opportunity to reflect on the choices made when writing their creative piece and help them to understand the process of writing. By writing the commentary the student will have a clearer idea of the extent to which they achieved what they set out to achieve and how they have been influenced by other writers. Advice about how to write a successful critical commentary will be offered during the course.

Assignment length: 1,500 words. Weighting: 20% of unit grade.

Please note that not every learning outcome will apply to **both** the creative assignment and the critical commentary.

*Closing date for the submission of assignments: Monday 6 April 2020 by 12.00 noon BST**

*British Summer Time

Reading and resource list

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Atkins, W	<i>The Moor: a journey into English wilderness</i>	London: Faber and Faber, 2014
Blackburn, J	<i>Threads: The Delicate Life of John Craske</i>	London: Vintage 2017
Bouvier, Nicolas	<i>The Way of the World*</i>	Eland Publishing Ltd, 2007
Bunting, M	<i>The Plot: A biography of an English acre</i>	London: Granta, 2009
Clare, H	<i>The Light in the Dark: a winter journal</i>	London: Elliott & Thompson, 2018
Collingham, L	<i>Curry: a tale of cooks and conquerors*</i>	Chatto & Windus, 2005

Cocker, M	<i>Our Place: can we save Britian's wildlife before it is too late?*</i>	London: Jonathan Cape, 2018
Dee, T (ed)	<i>Ground Work: writings on places and people*</i>	London: Jonathan Cape, 2018
Deakin, R	<i>Wildwood: a journey through trees</i>	London: Penguin, 2007
Edemariam, Aida	<i>The Wife's Tale*</i>	Fourth Estate, 2018
Griffiths, J	<i>Wild: an elemental journey</i>	London: Penguin, 2007
Laing, O	<i>The Lonely City: adventures in the art of being alone</i>	Edinburgh: Canongate, 2016
Jacobs, Michael	<i>The Robber of Memories</i>	Granta, 2012
Jamie, K	<i>Findings*</i>	London: Sort of Books, 2005
Macfarlane, R	<i>The Wild Places</i>	London: Granta, 2007
Mak, Geert	<i>The Bridge: A Journey Between Orient and Occident*</i>	Vintage, 2009
Matthieson, P	<i>The Snow Leopard</i>	London: Pan, 1980
Nicolson, A	<i>The Seabird's Cry</i>	London: William Collins, 2017
Solnit, R	<i>A Field Guide to Getting Lost</i>	Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006
Norbury, K	<i>The Fish Ladder: a journey upstream</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 2015

* indicates required reading

Syllabus for third unit
Easter term 2020

Creative Non-Fiction: Objects

Start date	26 April 2020	End date	20 June 2020
Day	Sunday	Time	10.00am – 5.00pm
Venue	Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ		
Tutor	Dr Lucy Durneen and Miranda Doyle	No of meetings	4 Sunday day-schools on 26 April, 3 May, 24 May and 21 June 2020

Aims

- To introduce students to a range of different ways of writing about objects.
- To analyse various techniques of writing about objects and their connection to different forms of creative non-fiction.
- To encourage students to experiment with their own writing.
- To enable students to write in ways that harness established literary traditions.
- To evaluate our understanding of the 'fourth genre' of Creative Non-Fiction.

Content

Simple objects can tell a multitude of stories – personal, collective, geographic, scientific. This unit aims to explore not only a variety of examples of texts with a central focus on a particular object, specimen or 'thing', but also to analyse the different narrative means of expressing these stories, in both short and long form. We will look at texts that blend genres, lyric essays, and medical writing, amongst others. We'll explore the wealth of objects held in the city's museum collections to provide source material for writing tasks. We'll also revisit the core idea of what creative non-fiction might be, its challenges, possibilities, and surprises, and consider whether or not our perceptions of its 'hard borders' - our understanding of what it means to write '(re)creatively' - might have changed over the course of the Diploma.

Presentation of the unit

The unit will take a practical approach to writing. It will aim to demystify the techniques and tools associated with non-fiction and encourage students to feel more confident about their own writing voice.

Students will discuss different techniques in seminars and experiment with their own writing through a range of exercises. They will also be given the chance to workshop their writing in the constructive and supportive environment of the Saturday schools.

Provisional lecture list

Date	Session	Indicative content
Sunday 26 April 2020	<p>Day-school one: Discovering the Unrecorded.</p> <p>Please read in advance <i>Strands: A Year of Discoveries on the Beach</i>; Jean Sprackland</p>	<p>How can “things” help to uncover the missing people of history and contemporary life? What might a carpenter’s tool tell us about the carpenter’s life? How might clothes and accessories help paint a picture of a person? We’ll take a ‘beachcombing’ approach here, examining the ‘flotsam and jetsam’ of daily life to think about what we might overlook, and what we can rediscover, when we take the time to reflect on the significance of objects.</p> <p>This day school will focus on description as well as exploring the ways in which we can unpack the hidden stories inside the most seemingly ordinary of objects.</p>
Sunday 3 May 2020	<p>Day-school two: Narrative History</p> <p>Please read in advance <i>The White Road</i>, Edmund de Waal</p>	<p>There’s never just one story....</p> <p>How can objects help the writer to tell a story? And how might writing about objects intersect with other forms of creative non-fiction, such as life or travel writing? This day school will focus on structure, but will also consider the ways in which we can blend forms to ‘braid’ together different elements of a story.</p> <p>Guest Speaker tbc.</p>
Sunday 24 May 2020	<p>Day-school three: Lyric Essays</p> <p>Please read in advance ‘The Lustres’ and ‘Against Gun-Metal’; Lia Purpura, ‘The Blue of Distance’; Rebecca Solnit, ‘Light’; Kathleen Jamie, ‘Collage. Montage. Mosaic, Vignette, Episode, Segment’; Robert Root, and ‘We might as well call it the lyric essay’; John D’Agata (all provided in a Reader.)</p>	<p>Colours: This day will focus on the exciting and versatile hybrid genre that is the lyric essay, as a ‘vehicle’ for writing short form creative non-fiction, using a uniting theme of writing about colour. We’ll think particularly about language, and also the way in which a singular idea or metaphor can open up the possibility of exploring a number of concepts, themes, or stories.</p> <p>We’ll pay close attention to form in this day school, examining structure, and the shape of a story, as well as its content.</p>

Sunday 21 June 2020	<p>Day-school four: Science & Medical Writing (Miranda Doyle)</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>Darwin & The Barnacle</i>, Rebecca Stott</p>	<p>We'll explore how the people who inhabit what can sometimes feel like difficult and dry technical stories to bring creative, and revolutionary, discoveries to life through a focus on specific objects or specimens.</p> <p>Together we'll visit a laboratory in the University's Zoology Department, look down microscopes and take a tour of its museum, where specimens of the famous Galapagos finches from the Beagle journey, and the microscope slides that Darwin prepared during his study of barnacles (Cirripedia) can be found.</p> <p>This day school will also give students a chance to workshop their developing assignments, allowing them to roadtest their writing with others in the group under tutorial guidance, and to revisit the idea of what constitutes Creative Non-Fiction.</p>
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Learning Outcomes

As a result of the unit, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- (i) show an awareness of how to structure and develop an extended piece of creative non-fiction;
- (ii) develop skills to manage the structuring of long and short form CNF;
- (iii) assess the merits of different methods of expanding the 'stories' of specific objects;
- (iv) demonstrate an understanding of the link between different creative forms and ideas and how aspects of them may be used within their work.

Student assessment

As this is a Diploma course, equivalent at least to second-year undergraduate standard, students are required to carry out tasks between day-schools to make the most of the course. These tasks include reading books relevant to ideas to be explored in the following day-school and completing written exercises or small pieces of research.

All students are encouraged to maintain a private journal or commentary on their own writing and thoughts throughout the course. Although this will not be marked it will provide a useful resource when the student plans their critical commentary (see below).

Most seminars will encourage discussion and students should expect to contribute to these and it is hoped they will be willing to show or read out examples of their own writing.

The end-of-term assignment will be made up of two elements:

1. A creative piece of writing of between 2,500 and 3,000 words, **the title of which must be agreed with the tutor**. The assignment may be a chapter or section of a work of non-fiction that focuses on place. This may be a piece of nature or travel writing, part of a memoir or biography, or a piece of narrative history in which place plays a key part. It must be an original piece of work and, ideally, developed in response to issues explored in the course.

Assignment length: 2,500- 3,000 words. Weighting: 80% of unit grade.

2. A critical commentary on the creative work submitted by the student for this module. This will give the student the opportunity to reflect on the choices made when writing their creative piece and help them to understand the process of writing. By writing the commentary the student will have a clearer idea of the extent to which they achieved what they set out to achieve and how they have been influenced by other writers. Advice about how to write a successful critical commentary will be offered during the course.

Assignment length: 1,500 words. Weighting: 20% of unit grade.

Please note that not every learning outcome will apply to **both** the creative assignment and the critical commentary.

*Closing date for the submission of assignments: **Monday 13 July 2020 by 12.00 noon BST****

*British Summer Time

Reading and resource list

A Reader of Short Essays will be provided for Day-School Three, but the texts from which these essays are taken are listed here, and students are encouraged to read the full text if they wish.

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Bywater, Michael	<i>Lost Worlds: What have we lost and where did it go?</i>	London: Granta, 2005
De Waal, Edmund	<i>The White Road</i>	London: Chatto & Windus, 2015
De Waal, Edmund	<i>The Hare With Amber Eyes</i>	London: Vintage, 2011
Jamie, Kathleen	<i>Sightlines</i>	London: Sort Of Books, 2012
Jamison, Leslie	<i>The Empathy Exams</i>	London: Granta, 2014
Lopate, Philip	<i>The Art of the Personal Essay</i>	New York: Anchor, 2011
Purpura, Lia	<i>Rough Likeness</i>	Louisville: Sarabande, 2011
Solnit, Rebecca	<i>A Field Guide to Getting Lost</i>	Edinburgh/London: Canongate, 2006
Sprackland, Jean	<i>Strands: A Year of Discoveries on the Beach</i>	London: Vintage, 2013

Stott, R.	<i>Darwin & the Barnacle</i>	London: Faber, 2004
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TIMETABLE

Michaelmas 2019: Introduction to Creative Non-Fiction

Day-school 1	6 October 2019
Day-school 2	20 October 2020
Day-school 3	24 November 2020
Day-school 4	8 December 2020

Lent 2020: Writing about Place

Day-school 1	19 January 2020
Day-school 2	2 February 2020
Day-school 3	1 March 2020
Day-school 4	15 March 2020

Easter 2020: Research Tools

Day-school 1	26 April 2020
Day-school 2	3 May 2020
Day-school 3	24 May 2020
Day-school 4	21 June 2020

Assignment submission dates are normally 3 weeks after final teaching session of term.

Whilst every effort is made to avoid changes to this programme, published details may be altered without notice at any time. The Institute reserves the right to withdraw or amend any part of this programme without prior notice.

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