



Institute of Continuing Education

Undergraduate Diploma in Creative Writing: Advanced Fiction and Writing for Performance

2019 – 2020

Course code: 1920DCR401

COURSE GUIDE

Welcome to the **Undergraduate Diploma in Creative Writing: Advanced Fiction and Writing for Performance**, 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 different literary genres and 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 genres;
5. encourage students to contextualise their writing within a variety of traditions and genres;
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

Course Director

Elizabeth Speller

Elizabeth Speller has a Cambridge MA and MPhil. Her work includes *The Return of Captain John Emmett* (Orange Book of the Month) and *At Break of Day* (CNY State One Read 2015). Her non-fiction includes *Following Hadrian* (Hodder/OUP) and a memoir, *The*

Sunlight on the Garden (Granta). She was short-listed for the Forward Prize for Poetry in 2009 and provided the libretto for Michael Berkeley's work *Farewell*, written in memory of Sir Paul McCartney's wife Linda. Journalism includes *The Independent*, the *Financial Times*, the *TLS*, and *Vogue*. She has taught at Cambridge, Bristol and Birmingham Universities and the U3A and her local poetry and novel workshops draw participants from diverse backgrounds and a range of experience. She was Royal Literary Fund Fellow at the University of Warwick and is currently completing a further novel for Virago.

Tutors

Craig Baxter

Craig is a dramatist writing primarily for the stage but also for screen and radio. Most recently: Trumpington Voices (community verbatim play), The Little Big Band (musical book, Netherhall School), Eight Days That Made Rome (Channel 5), Lady Anna: All at Sea (Cambridge Arts Theatre, Bath Theatre Royal and Number One Tour), Pictures of You (Cambridge Science Festival), The Man Who Walked Through Walls (Perse Girls), Somniloquy (Hotbed Festival, Soho Theatre), Let Newton Be! (Faraday Institute, Cambridge, El Paso), Re:Design (Darwin Correspondence Project, Madrid, Berlin, Istanbul), Like Confessing a Murder (BBC Radio 3), Monogamy (Riverside Studies, BBC Radio 4). His play The Altruists won the fourth international Stage Script Competition for Best New Play About Science or Technology.

Rick Harvey

Rick Harvey is a screenwriter, story design consultant, lecturer and mentor. Since gaining an MA Screenwriting & Research qualification from the London College of Communication in 2001, he has storylined for *Family Affairs* (Talkback Thames/Channel 5), developed projects for Hewland International and Frenzy Films, written a slate of short films and "spec" features, mentored on First Light, Media Box and BFI projects and written and developed feature screenplays for EON Productions. He was trained by the UK Film Council to devise, develop and deliver industry-standard courses on screenwriting and cross-platform story design, and he lectures regularly on various aspects of the writing process. Rick is currently adapting one of his screenplays, *Shadowplay*, into a six-part serial for TV, writing and developing an interactive conspiracy Thriller, *Heretic[s]* for TELL/Settle Stories, and working as a module leader/mentor at Raindance and as a mentor for BCre8ive.

Emily Winslow

Emily Winslow is an American living in Cambridge. She's written a series of Cambridge-set crime novels (*The Whole World*, *The Start of Everything*, *The Red House*, and, in 2018, *Still Life* about which *The Washington Post* has written: "[Winslow is] brilliant at portraying the ragged fragments of these lives). What emerges isn't a single killer with motive and means, but a tangle of stories crossing and colliding, stray intersections of incidents and accidents, misunderstandings and misreadings, all thanks to the myopia of individual perspectives and the self-centeredness of individual desires." She is also the author of the memoir *Jane Doe January*, which has been called "powerfully redemptive" (and "potently rendered" (Kirkus). She's written personal essays for *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, and for six years was a logic puzzle designer for *Games* magazine in the US.

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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University of Cambridge
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Cambridge
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creativewriting@ice.cam.ac.uk

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 07 August 2019

Syllabus for first unit
Michaelmas term 2019

Introduction to Fiction

Start date	5 October 2019	End date	7 December 2019
Day	Saturday	Time	10.00am – 5.00pm
Venue	Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ		
Tutor	Elizabeth Speller	No of meetings	4 Saturday day-schools on 5 October, 19 October, 23 November and 7 December 2019

Aims

- To expand students' knowledge of different approaches to writing prose fiction in order to inform their own choices and augment their technical skills.
- To explore what a writer can learn from the works of very different authors and from several periods by analysing a range of novels, or extracts from fiction.
- To encourage confidence in experimentation and the development of strategies to meet potential technical challenges in creative work.

Content

This course assumes some experience of writing and basic writing skills and a reasonable breadth of reading. The course will focus on novels and short stories to help students develop a lively and original style. Fiction writing is a craft which brings together the psychology and creative experience of each individual with a range of techniques and approaches that can be taught, and also amplified by critical reading. The course will include mini lectures, writing tasks, discussions about homework and workshops, where students' work can be explored in smaller groups.

Seminar style exploration of individual topics usually fill the morning sessions, with writing exercises and discussion of individual experiences in creative writing. In the afternoon we shall discuss the set books for the day and, on some days, have a visiting speaker.

Classes will build on the foundation of students' existing writing skills to explore more complex techniques for identifying a potential story: choosing its form, and establishing its unique voice, creating a coherent sense of time and place, keeping dramatic control, and creating pace, conflict, mood. This includes drawing on a wider creative imagination, including music, sound and art. A visit to the Fitzwilliam Museum is usually included in one of the day schools.

Presentation of the unit

This unit will offer informal, collaborative, tutor-led workshops and seminar/discussions in the practical techniques of advanced fiction-writing. In considering already-published novels, in

discussion, exercises, and tutorial and peer feedback, students will be able to extend their existing skills in identifying and resolving the technical and practical challenges presented by the art of fiction. There will be opportunities for productive peer feedback in classes, in workshops, and in the Virtual Learning Environment.

Provisional lecture list

Date	Session	Indicative content
Saturday 5 October 2019	<p>Day-school one: Fiction or Lies</p> <p>Please read in advance: Elizabeth Taylor, <i>Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont</i> and Melissa Harrison, <i>All Among the Barley</i></p>	<p>'We know what a person thinks not by what he tells us he thinks, but by his actions' — Isaac Bashevis Singer. How does this transfer to the writing and reading of fiction?</p> <p>Why might an author choose fiction to explore an idea rather than, say, creative non-fiction or poetry? What motivates a writer to weave a web of lies or affirm, through fiction, an essential truth? Where are the boundaries?</p> <p>What are the disciplines and skills needed to write <i>and keep on writing</i>? And who are we writing for?</p> <p>We will discuss the above tactics in the context of novels, short stories and flash fiction. What can short stories take from long fiction (novels) or poetry and what can they do that other forms can't?</p> <p>Characters lie at the core of fiction but they can be a curse or a perplexity to the author. Are writers led by characters or do they lead them? We shall also start to look at how characters can be fleshed out, how an author can make readers love or hate their characters and, crucially, become engaged with their fate.</p>
Saturday 19 October 2019	<p>Day-school two: Creating Worlds</p> <p>Please read in advance: Kevin Brockmeier, <i>The Brief History of the Dead</i> and Esi Edugyan, <i>Washington Black</i></p>	<p>Historical fiction is, increasingly, a major presence in best seller and literary prize lists. We shall explore why this might be and where the boundaries are. We will discuss the fictional diary, the imaginary biography, fake reportage and the epistolary novel, even e-mail exchanges, as well as actual historical characters or events set in an imagined past.</p> <p>In this session we shall consider novels set in the past, the future, or other worlds that may, or may not,</p>

		<p>touch or share some resemblance to our own.</p> <p>We will also touch on alternative history, science fiction, fantasy, the fictional diary, the imaginary biography, fake reportage and the epistolary novel.</p> <p>Visiting speaker: TBA</p>
Saturday 23 November 2019	<p>Day-school three: Taking a View</p> <p>Please read in advance: Kate Atkinson, <i>A God in Ruins</i> and William Boyd, <i>the Dreams of Bethany Mellmoth</i></p>	<p>A novel can have multiple points of view or just one. This choice will have a strong influence on the sort of book it will be. Do we choose, for example, an omniscient narrator, an unreliable narrator, or the interesting restrictions of the first person narration? Currently, best-selling novels often play with alternating points of view.</p> <p>The class will look at the advantages and disadvantages of writing in either first person or third person and how many storylines or voices can be managed within a novel.</p> <p>Dialogue is a crucial (and often problematic) aspect in most novels. We will explore how to make dialogue work, to avoid potential pitfalls, and make choices in presentation of dialogue on the page. How can dialect, non-standard speech or the speech of those for whom English is not their mother tongue - or dialogue between two characters of different backgrounds and range of vocabulary, be handled without becoming caricature?</p> <p>Sound and silence. How can we build a soundscape? How do we put silence into words? How might it look on the page, or exist within dialogue?</p>
Saturday 7 December 2019	<p>Day-school four: Turning the page</p> <p>Please read in advance: William Golding, <i>The Lord of the Flies</i> and Sarah Hall, <i>Madame Zero</i></p>	<p>AM: A visit to the Fitzwilliam Museum to see the the Frua-Valsecchi Collection TBA</p> <p>The clichés unputdownable' or a 'good read' do, despite the clumsiness of the words, define a dynamic and compelling engagement with the reader of some books. In this session we will deal with some of the components of that dynamic, for example: creating narrative pace, building emotional tension, and</p>

		<p>jeopardy — the power that drives a plot. We shall examine techniques such as structuring chapters so that each entices the reader into the next.</p> <p>Why is violence so hard to write and often so hard to read and, yet, so often represented in fiction? Why do many authors cringe at the idea of writing about a sexual encounter?</p> <p>Why is it sometimes hard to be funny?</p> <p>Speaking in images. We will look at text, typography, imagery and movement. What can they teach us about writing for visual effect and relationships between different forms of creativity? How can writers describe and use colour? We will look at paintings, read some outstanding but very different extracts from novels and poetry, and observe how colour works as a narrative device. Can we learn from film or theatre? What can we use to inspire us: objects, music, seasons, photographs, a story read in a newspaper?</p> <p>There will be the chance to workshop work written during this term.</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 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. The best writers of fiction read widely and critically and although it may not be possible to obtain or read all the books suggested before each class, it is **essential** to read at least one.

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 fiction, or a short story or other single piece of fiction writing. 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.

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

*Greenwich Mean Time

Reading and resource list

As fiction writers the ideal is to read as many novels as possible from all periods; ones using a wide variety of literary techniques to tell many different and diverse stories. Some may delight you, some irritate you, some simply not work. I hope you will read most, or even all, the books on this bibliography. Books marked with an asterisk are essential reading.

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Atkinson, K	<i>A God in Ruins*</i>	London: Doubleday, 2015
Brockmeier, Kevin	<i>The Brief History of the Dead*</i>	London: John Murray, 2007
Burnet, Graeme Macrea	<i>His Bloody Project</i>	London: Contraband, 2015
Daniel, Defoe	<i>Journal of the Plague Year</i>	London: Penguin Classics, 2006
Edugyan, Esi	<i>Washington Black</i>	London: Serpent's Tail, 2018
Golding, W	<i>Lord of the Flies*</i>	London: Faber & Faber, 1954
Harrison, Melissa	<i>All Among the Barley</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 2018

Kneale, Matthew	<i>The English Passengers</i>	London: Penguin, 2001
MacEwan, Ian	<i>Sweet Tooth</i>	London: Vintage, 2013
McGrath, Patrick	<i>The Wardrobe Mistress</i>	London: Hutchinson, 2017
Saunders, G	<i>Lincoln in the Bardo</i>	London: Random House, 2017
Shamsie, Kamila	<i>Home Fire</i>	London: Riverhead Books, 2017
Strout, E	<i>Anything is Possible</i>	London: Viking 2017
Taylor, Elizabeth	<i>Mrs Palfrey at the Claremont*</i>	Virago Classics, 1971
Towles, Amir	<i>A Gentleman in Moscow</i>	London: Hutchinson, 2015
Whitehead, Colson	<i>The Underground Railway*</i>	London: Fleet, 2016
Woolf, Virginia	<i>Mrs Dalloway</i>	Wordsworth editions, 1996

Short stories:

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Boyd, William	<i>The Dreams of Bethany Mellmoth</i>	London: Penguin, 2017
Hall, Sarah	<i>Madame Zero*</i>	London: Faber and Faber, 2018
McGregor, Jon	<i>This Isn't the Sort of Thing That Happens to Someone Like You</i>	London: Bloomsbury, 2013

Suggested additional reading to support themes in the course or students' specific interests:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/mar/04/elizabeth-strout-my-writing-day>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/feb/04/john-burnside-writing-day-ashland-and-vine>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/dec/10/my-writing-day-sarah-perry>

<http://www.ibtimes.com/breaking-bad-color-theory-subtle-symbolism-meanings-behind-colors-amcs-hit-series-1411632>

Syllabus for second unit
Lent term 2020

Crime Fiction

Start date	18 January 2020	End date	14 March 2020
Day	Saturday	Time	10.00am – 5.00pm
Venue	Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ		
Tutor	Emily Winslow	No of meetings	4 Saturday day-schools on 18 January, 1 February, 29 February and 14 March 2020

Aims

- Introduce students to the techniques of writing crime fiction, and to enable them to use these skills in furthering their own writing;
- Analyse works from a broad spectrum of crime fiction, from the classic 'whodunit' to the psychologically nuanced 'whydunit';
- Examine the potential for crime fiction to explore social, political, and psychological issues, and to encourage students to make their own experiments with the form.

Content

The literary traditions of crime fiction will be considered as background for more contemporary developments in the genre, such as use of 'unreliable narrators' (as in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*) or subverting thriller conventions (Cormac McCarthy's *No Country for Old Men*). The course will introduce techniques that could apply equally to both the 'literary' crime novel and the more 'popular' variety. These include: researching and structuring a story; determining time and place; inventing convincing characters; using dialogue effectively; describing different geographical and historical settings; creating drama and sustaining suspense; writing arresting openings, and providing satisfying conclusions.

There will be an emphasis overall on ways of using language effectively, and on developing an individual style. The unit will consider what sets crime writing apart from – and, as importantly, what it has in common with – other forms of fiction.

Presentation of the unit

Students will be asked to read selected works in advance, and will be expected to take part in class discussion and writing exercises. Through close reading and guidance from the tutors and visiting speakers, students will analyse the methods, and their relative success, employed by various established authors. Guest tutors will focus on specific ideas or techniques within their own area of expertise. There will be the chance to share writing on the VLE and by classroom workshoping.

Provisional lecture list

Date	Session	Indicative content
Saturday 18 January 2020	<p>Day-School One - 'An inspector calls...' (the classical 'whodunit')</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>Plotting and Writing Suspense Fiction</i> by Patricia Highsmith, <i>The Murder at the Vicarage</i> by Agatha Christie, and <i>The Big Sleep</i> by Raymond Chandler.</p>	<p>After a brief historical overview of this broad genre (encompassing spy fiction, psychological thrillers, police procedurals, legal thrillers, noir...) we will consider (i) the perennial appeal of detective fiction, and (ii). how universal story dynamics are particularly prominent in the murder mystery.</p> <p>In the classic detective story, as in most fiction, the central character is key. We will look at some famous examples of the detective-as-hero (and heroine), from Miss Marple to Lord Peter Wimsey to Inspector Morse, analysing what makes these characters so compelling to the reader.</p> <p>The opening page is, arguably, the most important page in the story, because it is this that will determine if your reader reads on... We will look at a range of arresting openings to crime novels, considering how the author succeeds in getting our attention - and whetting our appetite for what is to come.</p> <p>Guest speaker (tbc)</p>
Saturday 1 February 2020	<p>Day-School Two – “<i>When I came into your life your life was over. It had a beginning, a middle, and an end. This is the end.</i>” Exploring (and subverting) the structural conventions of the thriller; analyzing dialogue in crime writing.</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>No Country for Old Men</i> by Cormac McCarthy, <i>The Lovely Bones</i> by Alice Sebold and <i>Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?</i> by Joyce Carol Oates (short story).</p>	<p>Structuring your plot: twists, turns and climactic endings. Having considered the key narrative conventions of crime fiction in Day-School One, we will examine how Cormac McCarthy surprises readers by deliberately abandoning the 'rules' of the crime thriller in <i>No Country for Old Men</i>.</p> <p>McCarthy is a master of dialogue. Looking at <i>No Country</i> as well as a selection of other novels/short stories, we will also consider how, in any crime story, good dialogue needs to do it all: show character, convey information, maintain pace, and enhance suspense. We will focus on ways of making dialogue work - and of keeping your reader gripped.</p> <p>Guest speaker (tbc).</p>

Saturday 29 February 2020	<p>Day-School Three – ‘Enter the monster’ (‘whodunit’ to ‘whydunit’). The murderer in crime fiction,.</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>In a Lonely Place</i> by Dorothy B. Hughes, <i>The Silence of the Lambs</i> by Thomas Harris and <i>The Secret History</i> by Donna Tartt.</p>	<p>Humbert Humbert ... Dr Hannibal Lecter ... Milton’s Satan...If a story is only as compelling as its antihero, this is doubly true for crime fiction.</p> <p>We will consider technical and other challenges of creating successful criminal antagonists, from the ‘good person who kills’ to the charismatic psychopath,.</p> <p>Student Workshop Part I</p> <p>Guest speaker (tbc).</p>
Saturday 14 March 2019	<p>Day-School Four – ‘Trust the tale not the teller...?’ Crime Fiction Narrative Strategies</p> <p>Please read in advance: <i>The Talented Mr Ripley</i> by Patricia Highsmith, <i>In the Lake of the Woods</i> by Tim O’Brien and <i>Gone Girl</i> by Gillian Flynn</p>	<p>How does altering the narrative point of view (POV) make a difference in crime writing? We will examine a range of storyteller perspectives - from the old-fashioned omniscient narrator to more modern ‘unreliable narrators’, as well as the comparative advantages of first versus third person POV.</p> <p>We will consider ways of concluding your story so that it is satisfying, both for author and reader. Examples of “open” and “closed” endings will be looked at.</p> <p>Student Workshop Part II</p> <p>Guest speaker (tbc).</p>

Learning Outcomes

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

- (i) show an understanding of the strategies within both genre and ‘literary’ crime fiction by which the reader’s interest can be sustained through suspense, point of view and effective characterisation;
- (ii) demonstrate that they can employ these strategies effectively in their own writing; and
- (iii) analyse how the essential storytelling dynamics in crime writing (and particularly the murder mystery) are present at some level in all fiction.

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 should 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 in a workshop situation.

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 from a crime novel or true crime book, or a short story. 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.

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
Busby, Sian	<i>The Cruel Mother</i>	Short Books, 2013
Chandler, Raymond	<i>The Big Sleep</i> *	Penguin, 1939
Christie, Agatha	<i>The Murder at the Vicarage</i> *	Harper Collins, 1930
Flynn, Gillian	<i>Gone Girl</i> *	W&N, 2014
Harris, Thomas	<i>The Silence of the Lambs</i> *	Penguin, 1988
Highsmith, Patricia	<i>The Talented Mr Ripley</i> *	Vintage (New Ed) 1999
Highsmith, Patricia	<i>Plotting and Writing Suspense Fiction</i> *	Sphere (reprint) 2016
Hughes, Dorothy B.	<i>In a Lonely Place</i> *	Penguin Classics, 2010
Larson, Erik	<i>Devil in the White City</i>	Bantam, 2004
McCarthy, Cormac	<i>No Country for Old Men</i> *	Picador

Oates, Joyce Carol	<i>Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?*</i> (short story)	W. W. Norton & Company; Reissue edition (2012)
O'Brien, Tim	<i>In the Lakes of the Woods*</i>	Fourth Estate (reprint) 2015
Rendell, Ruth	<i>Heartstones</i>	Arrow, 1991
Rule, Ann	<i>Small Sacrifices</i>	Signet, 1987
Rule, Ann	<i>The Stranger Beside Me</i>	Sphere, 1994
Sebold, Alice	<i>The Lovely Bones*</i>	Picador, 2003
Shapiro, B A	<i>The Art Forger</i>	Algonquin Books, 2013
Tartt, Donna	<i>The Secret History*</i>	Penguin, 1993
Vine, Barbara	<i>A Fatal Inversion</i>	Penguin, 2009

* indicates required reading

Syllabus for third unit Easter term 2020

Writing for Performance

Start date	25 April 2020	End date	20 June 2020
Day	Saturday	Time	10.00am – 5.00pm
Venue	Madingley Hall, Madingley, Cambridge, CB23 8AQ		
Tutor	Craig Baxter Rick Harvey	No of meetings	4 day-schools on 25 April, 2 May, 23 May and 20 June 2020

Aims

This unit aims to:

- introduce students to the techniques required to write for screen, radio, theatre and other platforms;
- encourage students to apply, and to experiment with, these techniques and strategies to further their own writing;
- explore strategies for students to develop their own short-form dramatic scripts;
- enable students to appraise and assess aesthetic and practical issues of adapting work for a performance-based medium.

Content

The term “performance-based medium” encompasses a broad range of writing from traditional formats, such as film, TV, radio and the stage, to more recent platforms such as interactive stories, video games and web series. This unit will introduce students to the different conventions involved in writing for each. Students will discuss the pros and cons of each medium and how the same story may be interpreted in different ways.

Examples taken from stage, screen, radio and new media works will be used to highlight and examine the techniques used by writers, and students will be encouraged to experiment with these in their own work.

We will discuss the importance of theme, character, form and dialogue, to explore imaginative ways of transferring from a textual to a performance medium. This may involve changing aspects of the original text, such as point-of-view, thematic focus, number and nature of characters, location, period, etc.

Students will be given the opportunity to develop an original short-form work or adapt an existing work from a textual medium (i.e. short story, poem, or monologue) to a performance-based one.

Presentation of the unit

The unit will take a practical approach to writing for performance and adaptation. It will aim to demystify the techniques and tools associated with both and encourage students to experiment with developing their ideas and work across different platforms.

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.

As each form of writing for performance has its own conventions, students will be given extra resources – in the form of reading and links to useful sites to complement classroom learning.

Provisional course structure

Date	Session	Indicative content
Saturday 25 April 2020	<p>Day-School One – Introduction to Writing for Performance and Adaptation (Rick Harvey)</p> <p>Please read in advance the Short Screenplay pack (to be provided)</p>	<p>Making movies has become big business, but short films can also be artistically satisfying for both filmmaker and audience. This study day will give you an overview of the screenwriting process and the essential elements of a screenplay. We will discuss the importance of theme, character as story (creating a three-dimensional protagonist) and genre as a developmental tool within the short form (15 mins or under).</p> <p>We will analyse examples of good practice by viewing award-winning short films and reading short screenplays, and we will examine the development process from crafting a premise through to writing a first draft screenplay.</p> <p>We will look at three types of adaption: reconstruction; poetic-reimagining; self-aware deconstruction. We will, briefly, consider the main factors in deciding whether to adapt a work for the screen, the stage and radio.</p> <p>You will have the opportunity to “pitch”, test, and discuss an idea for a film or potential material for an adaptation project</p> <p>Guest speaker: tbc</p>
Saturday 2 May 2020	Day-School Two – Writing for Radio (Craig Baxter)	<p>We will discuss when, where, why and how we experience radio drama, and consider how we paint pictures in sound: how we hear, how we write and what makes the radio experience different to film, theatre, TV and books. We will investigate how we celebrate and fully utilize the medium, explore all the creative possibilities in order to grab</p>

		<p>a listener's attention, draw them in and keep them listening to the end.</p> <p>We will examine how we occupy the minds of the listener; how radio drama dialogue differs from that in theatre and on screen; how we establish scene and setting, create characters and mood using words and sound; and how we tell and structure stories with clarity, energy and emotional power.</p> <p>We will explore the ways in which radio plays are commissioned, produced and broadcast and how these influence the ways in which we develop and create radio scripts.</p> <p>Guest speaker: tbc</p>
Saturday 23 May 2020	<p>Day-School Three – Writing for the Stage (Craig Baxter)</p> <p>Please read in advance: One-act plays by Anton Chekhov: <i>On the Harmfulness of Tobacco</i>, <i>The Bear</i> and <i>The Proposal</i></p>	<p>Focussing particularly on short-form (or one-act) plays, and considering a variety of theatrical styles and formats, we will explore the possibilities available for the writer of live theatre scripts.</p> <p>We will consider the sorts of relationship that can be established between a play and the live audience experiencing it, and the various ways of respecting and exploiting this relationship. We will look particularly at the means by which information about character and story can be communicated (or dramatically withheld) through words and action, text and subtext.</p> <p>We will discuss how scenes are constructed from dramatic situations (taking account of the importance of character agendas in establishing these) and how acts and plays are constructed from scenes.</p> <p>We will examine how prose fiction, history, biography or journalism can be adapted for the stage and discuss the unique features of live theatre to which a present and engaged audience contributes in real time.</p> <p>Guest speaker: tbc</p>

Saturday 20 June 2020	Day-School Four – An Introduction to Serial Drama (Rick Harvey)	<p>We will begin by identifying serial formats for TV and web-based drama, and examining the differences between writing for the two platforms.</p> <p>We will progress to look at the process of devising and developing an original series idea from concept to creating the “series bible”. As part of this process, we will look specifically at writing a compelling introduction to the Dramatic World, crafting effective character profiles and storylines, identifying a target audience, and determining potential platforms.</p> <p>We will discuss what makes a compelling pilot episode by examining two case studies: ‘Modern Family’ and ‘Ren’. We will discuss the pitching process, with a particular emphasis on creating an ‘elevator pitch’.</p> <p>You will have the opportunity to pitch, test, and discuss potential ideas for a 15-20 minute TV / web-series.</p> <p>Guest speaker: tbc</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) demonstrate an understanding of the demands of writing for the stage, screen or radio;
- (ii) show understanding of the techniques and strategies for creating original work or adapting work for a performance-based medium;
- (iii) experiment with and apply techniques and strategies for writing for performance to further their own writing;
- (iv) Show awareness of aesthetic and practical issues in choosing material for a performance-based medium.

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 or scripts 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 should 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 in a workshop.

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

1. An adaptation, or an original work, of between 2,500 and 3,000 words (or the equivalent, appropriate to the form), written by the student, **the title of which must be agreed with the tutor**. The assignment may take the form of a short radio play, stage play, screenplay, interactive story etc., or constitute the opening / first act, or section, of a longer work.

Assignment length: 2,500- 3,000 words (or the equivalent, appropriate to the form).
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 practitioners. 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

Editor	Title	Publisher and date
Barber, Lynne	<i>An Education</i>	Penguin
Chekhov, Anton	<i>On the Harmfulness of Tobacco*</i>	Various publishers, 1886
Chekhov, Anton	<i>The Bear*</i>	Various publishers, 1888
Chekhov, Anton	<i>The Proposal*</i>	Various publishers, 1889
Egri, Lajos	<i>The Art of Dramatic Writing</i>	Simon & Schuster, 1960
Frensham, Raymond	<i>Teach yourself Screenwriting</i>	National Textbook Company, 1997
Grace, Fraser & Byley, Clare	<i>Playwriting (Writers' and Artists' Companions)</i>	Bloomsbury Academic, 2015
Grove, Claire & Wyatt, Stephen	<i>So you want to write Radio Drama?</i>	Nick Hern Books, 2013

Handler Miller, Carolyn	<i>Digital Storytelling: A Creators' Guide to Interactive Entertainment</i>	Focal Press, 2014
Jeffreys, Stephen	<i>Playwriting</i>	Nick Hern Books, 2019
Krevolin, Richard	<i>How to Adapt Anything Into a Screenplay</i>	Wiley, 2003
McKee, Robert	<i>Story: Style, Structure, Substance, and the Principles of Screenwriting</i>	Methuen Publishing, 1998
Parker, Philip	<i>The Art & Science of Screenwriting</i>	Intellect, 1998
Pratten, Rober	<i>Getting Started in Transmedia Storytelling: A Practical Guide for Beginners</i>	CreateSpace, 2015
Seeger, Linda	<i>The Art of Adaptation: Turning Fact and Fiction Into Films</i>	Henry Holt & Co, 1992
Teddern, Sue & Warburton, Nick	<i>Writing for TV and Radion (Writers' and Artists' Companions)</i>	Bloomsbury Academic, 2015
Waters, Steve	<i>The Secret Life of Plays</i>	Nick Hern Books, 2010
Yorke, John	<i>Into the Woods</i>	Penguin, 2013

TIMETABLE

Michaelmas 2019: Advanced Fiction

Day-school 1	5 October 2019
Day-school 2	19 October 2019
Day-school 3	23 November 2019
Day-school 4	7 December 2019

Lent 2020: Advanced Crime Writing

Day-school 1	18 January 2020
Day-school 2	1 February 2020
Day-school 3	29 February 2020
Day-school 4	14 March 2020

Easter 2020: Advanced Writing for Performance

Day-school 1	25 April 2020
Day-school 2	2 May 2020
Day-school 3	23 May 2020
Day-school 4	20 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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