



CW/LT 358 WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW: AN INTRODUCTION TO IMMERSION WRITING

IES Abroad Dublin

DESCRIPTION: Over twelve weekly sessions, this course will facilitate student engagement with a genre of writing that merges the boundaries between literary art and research nonfiction. Creative nonfiction is the writing of the real. Practitioners explore both the world around them and the world within. Although it employs many of the same literary devices as fiction, creative nonfiction allows the writer to engage with moments and events from real life, and in so doing, to seek a new understanding of these experiences. As part of their study abroad experience, students will experiment with approaches such as Travel Writing, Immersion Journalism, and Immersion Memoir, with authenticity and inventiveness serving as keystones in the process.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45 hours

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

- Students will engage with weekly topic areas through short presentations, guided discussion, group work, and research and writing exercises that will focus on experimentation, craft and the nurture of individual style. Students will also be introduced to some classics of Irish creative non-fiction.
- Guest speakers such as travel writers, and journalists and other creative non-fiction practitioners, field trips to sites of cultural, historical, and artistic significance, attendance at public readings, exhibitions, and film screenings will complement and augment the students' experience of this course.
- Moodle will be used to facilitate student engagement with primary and secondary resources.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Attendance – 10%
- Short Writing Assignments – 40%
- Portfolio Work – 50%

Participation:

The ambition in including a participation component is to facilitate students learning from each other and to give them the opportunity to practice and develop listening, speaking, and persuasive skills. A set of simple guidelines will be introduced at the start of Session 1. These guidelines will be discussed in detail so that students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Below is an outline of these guidelines:

- **Outstanding Participant:** Contributions in class reflect exceptional preparation. Ideas are consistently substantive and insightful, and persuasively presented. Absence would significantly diminish the quality of class discussion.
- **Good Participant:** Contributions in class reflect thorough preparation. Ideas offered are usually substantive and insightful, and often persuasively presented. Absence would diminish quality of class discussion.
- **Adequate Participant:** Contributions in class reflect satisfactory preparation. Ideas are sometimes substantive and insightful, but seldom offer a new direction for the discussion. Absence would diminish quality of class discussion.
- **Non-Participant:** Little or no contribution in class. Subsequently, there is limited basis for evaluation. Absence would not affect the quality of class discussion.
- **Unsatisfactory Participant:** Contributions in class reflect inadequate preparation. Ideas offered are seldom substantive, provide little insight, and are rarely constructive. Absence would improve the quality of class discussion.

Travel Writing: Place, Self and Experience

1. 'Travelogue'

This sub-genre of travel writing includes the writer's perceptions, impressions and comments on the travel experience in a way that engages the reader as an 'armchair traveller'.

2. 'Journeys of (Self)Discovery' - Travel Writing as Personal essay

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This is a form of essay that explores how exposure to an unfamiliar environment and/or the experience of travel reveals new aspects of the self or brings new perspectives to familiar or unexplored questions.

Journalism: Experience, Assess, Critique

1. Review

All students will visit, experience and write a critical assessment of an exhibition, festival or other cultural event (this does not include theatre or film).

Or

2. Immersion Feature

Students will write an immersion feature piece on a topic which piques their interest. Students should select their own topics which will be discussed in class in advance of the assignment due date.

Memoir: Recall, Reflect, Write

1. Students will write a personal narrative based on a significant life experience.

Or

2. Students will explore how to write linked memory fragments or vignettes from their lives which may have no obvious significance, but which have remained in the memory.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Recognize that creative nonfiction encompasses a variety of genres and approaches
- Understand the potential of applying the tools of fiction to real life experiences and events
- Write candidly and clearly about personal experience and their experience of the world around them
- Appreciate and articulate how immersion writing can serve as a means of responding to and making sense of a new culture
- Analyze and critique their own work and the work of others in a proactive context
- Remain mindful of the need to re-imagine aesthetic possibilities rather than merely revise texts
- Present their work in a professional manner

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

IES Abroad courses are designed to take advantage of the unique contribution of the instruction and the lecture/discussion format, regular class attendance is mandatory. Any missed class, without a legitimate reason will be reflected in the final grade. A legitimate reason would include documented illness or family bereavement. Travel, (including travel delays) is not a legitimate reason.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Required Readings and Resources:
Week 1	<p>Exploring the Genre: Purpose and Practice Introduction to the course syllabus</p> <p>Introduction to Travel Writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected Travel Essay from Synge, J.M. <i>Travelling Ireland: Essays 1898-1908</i>, ed. Nicholas Grene. Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2009 • ‘Introduction to Immersion Writing’ in Hemley, Robin. <i>A Field Guide for Immersion Writing: Memoir, Journalism, and Travel</i>. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012. • Introduction: ‘An Introduction to Immersion Writing’ pp 1 – 10 in Hemley, Robin. <i>A Field Guide for Immersion Writing: Memoir, Journalism, and Travel</i>.
Week 2	<p>‘The Strange Happiness of Being Abroad’: Introduction to Travelogue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Letter to Graham and Anne Shephard’ by Louis MacNeice from W.H. Auden and Louis

	Approaches to travelogue	<p>MacNeice, <i>Letters from Iceland</i>. London: Faber & Faber, 1937</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Memory of War' from <i>The Sign of the Cross: Travels in Catholic Europe</i> by Colm Tóibín. London: Picador, 2001 • Chapter 10, 'Writing Travel' from <i>The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing</i> by Tim Youngs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
Week 3	<p>Travel Writing - Gender and Sexuality (followed by Guest Speaker) Women and Travel Writing</p> <p>Travel and Sexuality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'J.J. Smythe's' in <i>Whoredom in Kimmage: Irish Women Coming of Age</i> by Rosemary Mahoney. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.
Week 4	<p>Travel as Quest or Inner Journey (1) Travel and self-exploration</p> <p>Approaches to writing a travel personal essay</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Validate Me?' by John Butler'; 'F is for Fone' by Claire Kilroy from <i>Winter Papers</i> Vol. 1, eds. Kevin Barry and Olivia Smith. Roscommon: Curlew Editions, 2015.
Week 5	<p>Journalism: Function and Practice Journalism and its components</p> <p>Immersion Journalism 1 (key components)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extract from 'Immersion Journalism' in <i>A Field Guide for Immersion Writing</i> by Robin Hemley. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012; selected feature pieces • Reading and discussion of selected student travelogues
Week 6	<p>Journalism: Reviews and Features Approaches to Writing Reviews 1 (key components)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extract on writing reviews from <i>Writing for Journalists</i> by Hicks, Wynford with Sally Adams, Harriett Gilbert, Tim Holmes and Jane Bentley. <i>Writing for Journalists</i> (3rd edition). London: Routledge, 2016 • Selected contemporary reviews • Reading and discussion of selected student travelogues
Week 7	Immersion Journalism: Guest Speaker	Readings will be nominated by the guest speaker
Week 8	<p>Travel as Quest or Inner Journey (2): The Personal (Travel) Essay The first half of this session will focus on how to approach writing a (travel) personal essay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extract from <i>The Situation and the Story: the Art of Personal Narrative</i> by Vivian Gornick. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002. • 'The Personal Essay: A Form of Discovery' by Joseph Epstein in <i>The Norton Book of Personal Essays</i>. NY: W.W. Norton, 1997. • Reading and discussion of selected student journalism pieces

<p>Week 9</p>	<p>Notions of the Self: Immersion Memoir Introduction to Memoir</p> <p>Memoir and Autobiography</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chapter 1 (pp. 11- 20) of 'Immersion Memoir' in A Field Guide to Immersion Writing</i> by Robin Hemley. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012 • Extract (pp. 77-83) from <i>The Migrant Heart</i> by Denis Sampson. Montreal: Linda Leith Publishing, 2014. • Reading and discussion of selected student personal essays
<p>Week 10</p>	<p>Memoir: Alternative Approaches (followed by Guest Speaker) Memory Fragments</p> <p>Hybrid forms of Life Writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Some Notes on Names and Deeds' by Kevin Barrv. <i>The Stinging Fly: in the Wake of the Rising</i>. 33.2 2016. • Introduction and Chapter 1 of <i>Girls will be Girls</i> by Emer O'Toole London: Orion, 2015. • Chapter 3 (pp. 21-33) in <i>Ghostwriting</i> by Andrew Crofts • Chapter One of <i>An Act of Love</i> by Marie Fleming (with Sue Leonard)
<p>Week 11</p>	<p>Memoir and Truthfulness Issues of honesty and authenticity in life writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The Graduate Society' from <i>Confessions of a Catastrophist</i> by Carlo Gébler. Derry: Lagan Press, 2015 • Extract from <i>Notes to Self</i> by Emilie Pine. Dublin: Tramp Press, 2018. • Reading and discussion of selected student personal essays
<p>Week 12</p>	<p>Reading and Discussion of Nominated Portfolio pieces Students will nominate one of their draft portfolio pieces to be work-shopped in class.</p>	

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Abbott, H. Porter. *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Banville, John. *Time Pieces: A Dublin Memoir*. Dublin: Hachette Books, 2016.
- Barry, Kevin. 'Some Notes on Names and Deeds'. *The Stinging Fly: in the Wake of the Rising*. 33.2, 2016.
- Brown, Terence. *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History, 1922-2002*. London: Harper Perennial, 2004.
- Butler, John. 'Validate Me?' *Winter Papers Vol 1*, eds. Kevin Barry and Olivia Smith. Roscommon: Curlew Editions, 2015.
- Crofts, Andrew. *Writing Handbooks: Ghostwriting*. London: A & C Black, 2004.
- de Nie, Michael and Karen Steele, eds. *Ireland and the New Journalism*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Fleming, Carole, Emma Hemmingway, Gillian Moore and Dave Welford. *Introduction to Journalism*. London: Sage, 2006.
- Fleming, Marie with Sue Leonard. *An Act of Love*. Dublin: Hachette Books, 2014.
- Gornick, Vivian. *The Situation and the Story: the Art of Personal Narrative*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002.
- Gutkind, Lee. *You Can't Make This Stuff Up: The Complete Guide to Writing Creative Nonfiction – From Memoir to Literary Journalism and Everything in Between*. New York City: De Capo Press, 2012.
- Gébler, Carlo. 'The Graduate Society'. *Confessions of a Catastrophist*. Derry: Lagan Press, 2015.
- Hamilton, Hugo. *The Speckled People*. London: Fourth Estate, 2003.
- Healy, Dermot. *The Bend for Home*. New York City: Random House, 2012.

- Hemley, Robin. *A Field Guide for Immersion Writing: Memoir, Journalism, and Travel*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012.
- Hicks, Wynford with Sally Adams, Harriett Gilbert, Tim Holmes and Jane Bentley. *Writing for Journalists* (3rd edition). London: Routledge, 2016.
- Kilroy, Claire. 'F is for Fone'. *Winter Papers Vol 1*, eds. Kevin Barry and Olivia Smith. Roscommon: Curlew Editions, 2015.
- Fleming, Marie (with Sue Leonard). *An Act of Love. One Woman's Remarkable Life Story and Her Fight for the Right to Die with Dignity*. Dublin: Hachette Books, 2014.
- Lodge, David. *The Art of Fiction*. London: Vintage, 2011.
- MacNeice, Louis. 'Letter to Graham and Anne Shephard'. W.H. Auden and Louis MacNeice, *Letters from Iceland*. London: Faber & Faber, 1937.
- Magan, Manchán. *Angels and Rabies: A Journey through the Americas*. Dingle: Brandon, 2006.
- ——. *Manchán's Travels: A Journey through India*. Dingle: Brandon, 2007.
- Maher, Mary, ed. *How Far We Have Travelled: The Voice of Mary Holland*. Dublin: Townhouse, 2004.
- Mahoney, Rosemary. *Whoredom in Kimmage: Irish Women Coming of Age*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.
- McGahern, John. *Memoir*. London: Faber & Faber, 2006.
- O'Brien, Edna. *The Country Girl: A Memoir*. London: Faber & Faber, 2012.
- O'Faolain, Nuala. *A Radiant Life: The Selected Journalism of Nuala O'Faolain*. New York City: Harry N. Abrams, 2011.
- O'Faolain, Nuala. *Are You Somebody: The Accidental Memoir of a Dublin Woman*. New York City: Holt Paperbacks, 2009.
- O'Faolain, Sean. *An Irish Journey*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947.
- O'Toole, Emer. *Girls will be Girls*. London: Orion, 2015.
- Pine, Emilie. *Notes to Self*. Dublin: Tramp Press, 2018.
- Sampson, Denis. *A Migrant Heart*. Montreal: Linda Leith Publishing, 2014.
- Synge, J.M. *Travelling Ireland: Essays 1898-1908*, ed. Nicholas Grene. Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2009.
- Tóibín, Colm. 'Memory of War' from *The Sign of the Cross: Travels in Catholic Europe*. London: Picador, 2001.
- Youngs, Tim. *The Cambridge Introduction to Travel Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Urry, John. *The Tourist Gaze* (2nd edition). London: Sage, 2002.

RECOMMENDED ONLINE, ARCHIVE, AND EXHIBITION RESOURCES:

- [National Archives of Ireland](#)
- [National Print Museum](#)
- [National Library of Ireland](#)
- [Irish Film Institute & Irish Film Archive](#)
- [The Irish Times](#)
- [The Irish Independent](#)
- [The Irish Examiner](#)
- [Radio Telefís Éireann: Ireland's national public-service media organisation](#)