

## The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

### Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

<b>Subject Code</b>	ELC1CN03
<b>Subject Title</b>	<b>Creative Writing in English</b>
<b>Credit Value</b>	3
<b>Level</b>	1
<b>Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion</b>	None
<b>Objectives</b>	The course aims to provide the theoretical knowledge necessary for students to be able to critically appreciate classical and modern creative writing; enhance students' creative writing and critical thinking skills through learning and practising relevant language and literacy resources and creating original creative work. Other objectives include cultivating among students a deep interest in the power of the English language for creativity through analysing works of local and international writers and filmmakers with a view to expanding students' intellectual capacity beyond their disciplinary domain and fulfil the PolyU's Reading and Writing Requirements
<b>Intended Learning Outcomes</b> <i>(Note 1)</i>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <p>a) read, view and analyse and present creative works from the major fiction and creative non-fiction genres in print and media;</p> <p>b) produce original examples of creative writing that demonstrate an understanding of fiction and creative nonfiction genres in print and media such as short stories, film scripts, memoirs and diaries;</p> <p>c) critically review and revise drafts, and effectively apply skills of revision, editing, peer-editing and proof-reading.</p>
<b>Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus</b> <i>(Note 2)</i>	<p>Synopsis</p> <hr/> <p>Lecture (1 hr) Workshop (2 hrs)</p>



**Week 1 Introduction to course and narrative principles**

- I. Subject details
- II. Creativity: Where does it come from
- III. Narrative Principles

**Week 2 Characters and character development**

- IV. Developing characters/character arcs
- V. Psychological motivation and making choices

**Week 3 Story Structure**

- VI. Three Act story structure
- VII. EWR Orientation

**Week 4 Creating Scenes**

- VIII. Screenwriting Basics: Short films vs feature films
- IX. Writing treatments
- X. Creating scenes

**Week 5 Scenes and sequences**

- XI. Scene purpose
- XII. Scenes and sequences
- XIII. Sequences in treatments

**Week 6 Short film analysis and narrative principles**

- XIV. Screen Treatments

**Week 7 Assessment 1**

- XV. Optional Consultations for First Draft of Assessment 2 (Screen Treatment)

**Week 8 Writing Screenplays**

- XVI. Creating good opening scenes

**Week 9 Act 1 and the Inciting Incident**

- XVII. Typical Scene Writing Mistakes

**Week 10 Film adaptation**

- XVIII. Intro to film adaptation principles
- XIX. Inciting Incidents
- XX. Writing dialogue

**Week 11 Act 2 and Rising Tension**

- XXI. Act 2 and conflict
- XXII. Supporting characters
- XXIII. Film adaptation: Recontextualization

**Week 12 Act 3 and the Climax**

- XXIV. Act 3 and the Climax
- XXV. Adaptation principles continued

**Week 13 Theme in short films**

- XXVI. Theme Going forward



	<b>Throughout the semester</b> Students will be assigned required reading that includes a guide on writing screenplays and a major novel that has been adapted for screen to prepare for Assessment 3 and fulfil reading requirement.	
<b>Teaching/Learning Methodology</b> <i>(Note 3)</i>	The course will consist of <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Seminars (13 hours): These will be used for discussion of the themes and movements that influence creative works, introduction of major genres of creative writing, techniques for creating poetry, fiction and non-fiction prose and screen writing.</li><li>✓ Workshops (26 hours): These will explore the techniques of, and current trends in, the major creative writing genres. They aim to provide an inspiring and productive ambience within which students can share and peer critique their work. Students will be encouraged to articulate responses to classmates' drafts, integrating an understanding of the elements and mechanics of each genre. Such activities will essentially be an exploration of language and, through this, students will become more fully aware of the system of language while developing their intellectual and aesthetic acumen, thus acquiring critical and creative literacy. .</li><li>✓ Reading one or more exemplar works of creative writing (read out of class but discussed in workshops to gauge students' progress): Students will be required to read one or more works of creative fiction (thus fulfilling the University's Reading Requirement). The reading will be assessed in form of a comparative presentation assignment of in which students will compare a work of fiction with its film adaptation based on their comprehension of the themes and narrative elements of the text and its rendering into media adaptation representing or enhancing an understanding of the narrative or rhetoric and comment on the linguistic, literary or artistic value of the text.</li><li>✓ Writing a screenplay for a short film to fulfil the Writing Requirement*.</li></ul>	



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**Assessment Methods  
in Alignment with  
Intended Learning  
Outcomes**

(Note 4)

Specific assessment tasks	% weighting			
		a	b	c
Assessment 1: Creative Reflection on a short film based on a book (500 words) Week 7 In-class	20	✓		✓
1. Assessment 2: Writing a screenplay script for a short film (EWR)  1500 - 2500 words out of class (or 8 pages as is industry standard for short film screenplays)  Final screenplay script to CAR teacher in Week 14  <i>Note: Students are expected to start writing in Week 4 the latest in order to submit drafts to ELC EWR Writing teachers before revision for final submission</i>	40 (30 + 10 for EW feedback by ELC before final submission)	✓	✓	✓
Assessment 3  A digital presentation with a comparative review of the required reading text and its film adaptation. Week 13	40	✓		
<b>Total</b>	<b>100 %</b>			

Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:

Assessment 1, Analysing a creative work (short film), will enable students to achieve learning outcome a) and c), making them analytical and knowledgeable in the genres of creative writing and media.

Assessment 2, a writing a longer piece of original work (screenplay), will enable students to engage in applying their understanding of various narrative principles and techniques, thus fulfilling learning outcomes b) together with a) and c).

Assessment 3, A critical or evaluative written critique/summary/review of the required reading text and its adaptation in film aims to help students achieve learning outcome a).

Class contact:

- Seminars/lectures

1x14= 14 Hrs.



<b>Student Study Effort Expected</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Workshops (discussing creative works)</li> </ul>	2x14=28 Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading and preparing to discuss creative works</li> </ul>	3x14=42 Hrs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assignments and assessments</li> </ul>	3x14=42 Hrs.
	<b>Total student study effort</b>	<b>126 Hrs.</b>
<b>Reading List and References</b>	<p>Useful reference books</p> <p>Coe, N., Rycroft. R. and Ernest P. (1983). <i>Writing Skills: A Problem-solving Approach</i>. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Cowgill, L. J. (2005). <i>Writing short films: Structure and content for screenwriters</i>. Los Angeles, CA: Lone Eagle.</p> <p>Doubtfire, D. (1983). <i>Teach Yourself Creative Writing</i>. London: Hodder &amp; Stoughton.</p> <p>Lima, C. (2008). <i>A Brief Introduction to Critical Literacy in English Language Education</i>. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.britishcouncil.org.br/elt">http://www.britishcouncil.org.br/elt</a>.</p> <p>Phillips, W. H., &amp; Walter, R. (1999). <i>Writing short scripts</i>. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.</p> <p>Selbo, J. (2016). <i>Screenplay: Building story through character</i>. New York: Routledge.</p> <p>Snyder, B. (2005). <i>Save the cat!: the last book on screenwriting you'll ever need</i>. Studio City : Michael Wiese Productions.</p> <p><b>Textbooks and references for teachers</b></p> <p><a href="#">Eldridge, R. T.</a> (2009). <i>The Oxford handbook of philosophy and literature</i>. New York: Oxford University Press.</p> <p><a href="#">Eldridge, R. T.</a> (2008). <i>Literature, life, and modernity</i>. New York: Columbia University Press.</p> <p>Levine, B. (2010). <i>The Writing and Critique Group Survival Guide: How to give and receive feedback, self-edit and re-draft</i>. Cincinnati, Ohio: Writer's Digest Books.</p> <p>Zinsser, W. (2006). <i>On Writing Well</i>. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.</p> <p><b>Reading list for the PolyU Reading Requirement</b></p> <p>To complete the Reading Requirement, students need to select one or more titles from the list of titles below together comprising of 200 pages or around 100,000 words.</p> <p>Bronte, E. (1847). <i>Wuthering Heights</i>, New York: Chelsea House. E-book available in PolyU Net Library and The Gutenberg Project website at <a href="http://www.gutenberg.org">http://www.gutenberg.org</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">Cisneros, S.</a> (2009). <i>The House on Mango Street</i>, New York: Vintage</p>	



Contemporaries.

Collingham, L. (2006). *Curry: A tale of cooks and conquerors*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Dickens, C. (1860). *Great Expectations*, London: Oxford University Press. E-book

available in PolyU Net Library and The Gutenberg Project website at <http://www.gutenberg.org>.

Fairclough, P. (ed) (1988). *Three Gothic novels*, Harmondsworth: Penguin. (includes

*The castle of Otranto* / by H. Walpole, *Vathek* by W. Beckford and *Frankenstein*

by M. W. Shelley. ISBN 0140430369

Overton, S.C.C. and Edmond Price. (eds) (2009). *Hotel China: One hotel twenty-six stories*, Hong Kong Writer's Circle.

[Keyes, Daniel.](#) (1966) *Flowers for Algernon*, San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Swift, J. (1726). *Gulliver's Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World, The*

Gutenberg Project at <http://www.gutenberg.org>.

### **Noteworthy Works**

#### **Fiction**

Adiga, A. (2009). *The white tiger*, Atlantic Books.

Atwood, M. (1985). *The Handmaid's Tale*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Austen, J. (1975). *Pride and Prejudice*, Oxford University Press. E-book available in PolyU Net Library and the Gutenberg Project website at <http://www.gutenberg.org>.

Cleave, C. (2008). *The Other Hand*, London: Sceptre.

Coetzee, J.M. (1940). *Disgrace*, London: Secker & Warburg.

Coetzee, J.M. (2002). *Youth*, London: Secker & Warburg.

Eliot, G. (1860). *The Mill on the Floss* Oxford University Press. E-book available in PolyU Net Library and The Gutenberg Project website at <http://www.gutenberg.org> . (484 pages)

Hardy, T. (1874). *Far From The Madding Crowd*, The Penguin edition, 1978. E-book

available in PolyU Net Library and The Gutenberg Project website at <http://www.gutenberg.org> . (243 pages)

Martel, Y. (2001). *Life of Pi*, Canada: Knopf.

Morrison, T. (1987) *Beloved*, New York: Knopf.

Orwell, G. (1995). *Down and Out in Paris and London*, London: Penguin.



- Orwell, G. (1949). *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Saramago, J. & Jull Costa, M. (2008). *Death at Intervals*, Houghton: Mifflin Harcourt.
- Timothy, M. (1995). *Brownout on Breadfruit Boulevard*, Hong Kong: Paddleless Press.
- Rushdie, S. (1991). *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, Penguin Group.
- Salinger, S.D. (1951). *The Catcher in the Rye*, New York: Bloom's Literary Criticism. Hardcover available in the PolyU library. E-book available online at <http://openpdf.com/ebook/the-catcher-in-the-rye-pdf.html>. (72,186 words, 116 pages in small print)
- Vittachi, N. (2004). *The Feng Shui Detective*, St. Martin's Minotaur.
- Desai, K. (1998). *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*, New York, NY: Atlantic Monthly Press.
- Wyndham, J. (1955). *The Chrysalids*, Penguin Classics; New Ed (2000).
- Sebold, A. (2002). *The Lovely Bones*, Little, Brown and Company.
- Short Stories**
- du Maurier, D. (2004). *The Birds and other stories*, London: Virago Press.
- Barnes, J. (1989). *The history of the World in 10 1/2 chapters*, Jonathan Cape.
- Non-fiction**
- Bryson Bill, 2000 *In a Sunburned Country*, New York: Broadway Books.
- Bryson Bill, 1995 *Notes from a Small Island* HarperCollins.
- Jonah Lehrer 2009 *How we decide*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Boston.
- Jung Chang c1991 *Wild Swans*, New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Peter Hessler *River town : two years on the Yangtz'* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, c2001. 1st ed.
- Peter Mayle 1995 *A Dog's Life* New York: Knopf: Random House.
- Hahn, E. (1944). *China to me*, ereads.com (September 20, 2004)
- Mortenson, G. & Relin, D. O. (2007). *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace*, Perfection Learning.

Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes

Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus



The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

*Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology*

This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

*Note 4: Assessment Method*

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.