

# Writing Lives: Texts, Techniques, and Creativity in Life-Writing

LMH Summer Programmes are provided by Lady Margaret Hall, a college in the University of Oxford

Course:	Writing Lives: Texts, Techniques, and Creativity in Life-Writing
Available:	Programme Session 2: 17 <sup>th</sup> July to 4 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
Lectures:	18 Hours
Seminars:	12 Hours
Tutorials:	3 Hours
Independent Study:	Approximately 120 Hours
Recommended Credit:	15 CATS / 7.5 ECTS / 4 US Credits

About this Course:	<p>Unlock your creative potential on an exciting course which combines academic literary analysis with the opportunity to explore and develop your own writing voice.</p> <p>You will examine the literary genre of life-writing in its various forms, including biography, autobiography, and memoir, through close reading and analysis of key texts from diverse periods and authors such as Olaudah Equiano, Virginia Woolf, and Hermione Lee. You will explore and discuss life-writing modes, themes, and techniques, thinking about literary devices, experimentation, the roles of narrative and truth, and the subjectivity of personal and cultural memory. You will put these skills and discussions into practice with the opportunity to produce your own life-writing and receive personalised feedback in workshops and tutorials. This course will develop your literary analysis, hone your writing skills, and unlock your creative potential.</p>
Course Overview:	<p>Life-writing: form, function, and themes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History and forms of life-writing as a genre</li> <li>• Autobiography and memoir</li> <li>• Confessionalism and autobiography</li> <li>• Subjectivity, truth, and fiction</li> <li>• Biography and the body</li> <li>• Post-colonial narratives and life-writing as resistance</li> <li>• Romanticism and the Self</li> <li>• Memory, memories, and forgetting</li> </ul>

	<p>Developing life-writing skills and techniques through creative writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form, narrative, and structure</li> <li>• Characterisation, identity, and authenticity</li> <li>• Perception, perspectives, and points of view</li> <li>• Imagery, senses, and constructing setting</li> <li>• Developing dialogue</li> </ul>
Key Texts:	<p>Lee, H. (ed), <i>Body Parts: Essays on Life-Writing</i>, 2008, London.  Olaudah Equiano, <i>The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano</i>, 1789.  Virginia Woolf, <i>The Art of Biography</i>, 1939.</p>
Learning Outcomes:	<p>After studying this course you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of life-writing as a literary genre.</li> <li>• Analyse literary works of life-writing and evaluate critically key modes, themes, and techniques of the genre.</li> <li>• Produce your own life-writing with an analytical understanding of your aims as a writer and how to achieve them.</li> </ul>
Admissions Requirements:	<p>LMH Summer Programmes are designed for students who want to gain and develop knowledge in their chosen subject area. LMH Summer Programmes are intensive courses of study aimed at undergraduates who have completed one, two, or three years of their degree, or entry level postgraduate students.</p> <p>We will consider each applicant's academic ability and expect successful applicants to have a minimum grade point average equivalent to 2:1 level on the British grading scale. For example, this would mean at least a 3.2 GPA on the 4.0 grading scale in the United States, and 80% in China.</p> <p><b>This course would suit students of the Humanities, including those with a background in English Literature, Theatre, Dramatic Arts, or History, and especially those who wish to develop their own skill and confidence as writers.</b></p> <p>To participate fully in the programme all students will need to have proficiency in English.</p> <p>English language requirements for students who are not native English speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall TOEFL score of 85;</li> <li>• or IELTS score of 6.5 (no less than 6.0 in each component);</li> <li>• or CET-4 at 550 or CET-6 at 520.</li> </ul> <p>If the language of instruction in your home institution is English you do not need to provide evidence of your English proficiency.</p>
Teaching Methods:	<p>Core syllabus material will be covered in lectures. Students attend four lectures each week and each lecture lasts 90 minutes. Seminars in smaller groups offer students space to discuss and debate, to dig deeper into difficult concepts, and to explore their own ideas. Student contribution to seminars is vital, and tutors will ensure everyone takes part in discussions. Seminars last 2 hours and students will take part in two seminars each week. Seminars will combine close reading and analysis of literature with workshop sessions to develop students' own compositions.</p> <p>Independent study is a crucial part of an LMH Summer Programme and of the Oxford teaching model. Tutors will recommend important reading to do between lectures and seminars that will enable students to come to class equipped to understand the information presented and prepared to take part in discussion and</p>

	<p>debate. Each week students will have an assignment of independent work to complete and submit in advance of the tutorial. There is an appropriate amount of space in the timetable to complete the necessary reading, preparation, and assignments. Students should expect to do around 40 hours of independent study each week.</p> <p>The final class each week is a tutorial, a very small class typically including only 2-4 students and central to the teaching methods used by the University of Oxford and on LMH Summer Programmes. Guided by their tutor, students will receive feedback on their assignments and be challenged to defend, justify, or even rethink their work and ideas. These rigorous academic discussions help develop and facilitate learning in a way that cannot be done with lectures and seminars alone.</p>
Assessment:	<p>On a three-week LMH Summer Programme students produce one piece of assessed work every week, which is submitted to the tutor and then discussed in a tutorial. At the end of each week students will receive a percentage grade for their submitted work. Each week's work counts for a third of the final percentage grade, so the final grade is an average of the mark received for each piece of work. Students who stay for six or nine weeks will receive a separate grade for each 3-week course.</p>
Academic Credit:	<p>Lady Margaret Hall will provide a transcript of students' assessed work, and can send this directly to your home institution if required. LMH Summer Programmes are designed to be eligible for academic credit, and we will communicate with home institution to facilitate this as needed. As a guide, we recommend the award of 15 CATS / 7.5 ECTS / 4 US Credits for each 3-week course.</p>