

Liverpool John Moores University

Title: Life Stories: Telling Tales and Keeping Secrets in Auto/Biographical Writing
Status: Definitive
Code: **5125ENGL** (125770)
Version Start Date: 01-08-2021

Owning School/Faculty: Humanities and Social Science
Teaching School/Faculty: Humanities and Social Science

Team	Leader
Emily Cuming	Y
Joe Moran	

Academic Level: FHEQ5 **Credit Value:** 20 **Total Delivered Hours:** 33
Total Learning Hours: 200 **Private Study:** 167

Delivery Options

Course typically offered: Semester 2

Component	Contact Hours
Lecture	11
Seminar	20
Workshop	2

Grading Basis: 40 %

Assessment Details

Category	Short Description	Description	Weighting (%)	Exam Duration
Reflection	AS1	1500 Word Critical Reflection	30	
Essay	AS2	2500 Word Essay	70	

Aims

- To introduce students to the diversity of auto/biographical writing*
- To equip students with the critical vocabulary and analytical tools to explore and analyse modern life-writing*

3. To understand key critical topics relating to life-writing, including the relations of subjectivity and form; the intersections of gender, race, class and embodiment; the role of memory and nostalgia; narrative strategies of confession and secrecy.

4. To explore these questions in an interdisciplinary context with reference to a wide range of literary, cultural and visual texts.

Learning Outcomes

After completing the module the student should be able to:

- 1 Analyse and evaluate a diverse range of auto/biographical narratives using an appropriate critical vocabulary
- 2 Apply skills of close reading and theoretical/contextual analysis in order to interpret a broad and diverse range of life-writing
- 3 Demonstrate an awareness of narrative structures and the complexities of representing biographical material

Learning Outcomes of Assessments

The assessment item list is assessed via the learning outcomes listed:

1500 Word Critical Reflection	2	
2500 Word Essay	1	3

Outline Syllabus

An example of a syllabus of core texts would be:

Virginia Woolf, selections from Moments of Being
Jackie Kay, Red Dust Road
Alison Bechdel, Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic
Eva Hoffman, Lost in Translation
Jenny Diski, Skating to Antarctica
Asif Kapadia, dir., Amy (documentary film)

Learning Activities

Lectures, seminars, workshops and tutorials; film screening and discussion; private study, written work and Canvas activity.

Notes

This second year course introduces students to a diverse range of auto/biographical narratives, including memoirs, oral history, a psychoanalytical case-study, a graphic novel, a biographical film, personal essays, and a novel-in-verse. Focusing on the

formal and generic qualities of a variety of innovative modes of life writing, the course engages thematically with the strategies of disclosure and secrecy that are the hallmark of these auto/biographical texts. The course complements existing modules on the curriculum that address writing and identity (Cultures of Childhood, Adolescence and Writing, Writing the Real) and acts as a pathway for the Level 6 option on working-class autobiography, Writing Lives.