



**UNSW**  
A U S T R A L I A

**Faculty of Arts and Social  
Sciences**

**School of the Arts and Media**

**ARTS1010**

**The Life of Words**

Session 1, 2016

## UNSW Course Outline

### Staff Contact Details

Position	Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Course Authority	Dr Stephanie Bishop	Stephanie.bishop@unsw.edu.au	Wednesday 2-3:30 or by appointment (please email)	Robert Webster 204	
Tutor	A/Professor Anne Brewster	a.brewster@unsw.edu.au			
Tutor	James Bedford	james.bedford@unsw.edu.au			

### School of the Arts and Media Contact Information

Room 312, level 3 Robert Webster Building

Phone: 9385 4856

Email: [sam@unsw.edu.au](mailto:sam@unsw.edu.au)

Website: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au>

### Attendance Requirements

- A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face (F2F) or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.
- Timetable clash - If a student is unable to attend all classes for a course due to timetable clashes, the student must complete the UNSW Arts & Social Sciences Permissible Timetable Clash Application form: <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/ttclash/index.php>
- Where practical, a student's attendance will be recorded. The procedure for recording attendance will be set out on the course Learning Management System (Moodle).
- A student who attends less than 80% of the classes/activities and has not submitted appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain their absence may be awarded a final grade of UF (Unsatisfactory Fail).
- A student who has submitted the appropriate documentation but attends less than 66% of the classes/activities will be asked by the Course Authority to apply to discontinue the course without failure rather than be awarded a final grade of UF. The final decision as to whether a student can be withdrawn

without failure is made by Student Administration and Records.

- A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.
- If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, their request should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.
- A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance. A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course's learning outcomes and/or volume of learning. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.
- For more information about the SAM attendance protocols, see the SAM policies and guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

### **Essential Information For SAM Students**

For essential student information relating to: attendance requirements; requests for extension; review of marks; occupational health and safety; examination procedures; special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure; student equity and disability; and other essential matters, see the SAM Policies and Guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

### **Course details Credit**

**Points: 6**

### **Summary of the Course:**

This course will examine the form of the short story. Focusing on modernist and contemporary examples, the course will explore the principles that have shaped the development of this form. We may consider, for instance, the influence of Chekhov and his advocacy of the story as a "slice of life", Edgar Allen Poe's aesthetic theories, the development of stream of consciousness in relation to the short story, the use of epiphany and anti-epiphany and the function of compression. In addition we will examine techniques and strategies crucial to the success of the form and useful to your development as writers, including point of view, narrative design, the development of voice and the use of economy and symbolism. In the later part of the course we will examine the influence of new technology on the short story, including the relationship between the short story and the blog and the transmission of the short story through twitter. Writing exercises will be provided and everyone will have the chance to workshop their writing and participate in online discussion.

### **Student learning outcomes:**

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Understand the primary elements of short fiction
2. Understand a variety of genres and forms in contemporary literature
3. Demonstrate familiarity with variations and experiments within the short story form
4. Clearly compose written texts in English
5. Critically appraise their own work and the work of others

### **Teaching Strategies & Rationale**

**Rationale:** The material included is designed to increase student's knowledge and understanding of the nature of writing, and the form of the short story. Weekly readings will serve as models for student's own creative work. The teaching will introduce a wide variety of literary examples in order to encourage the literary, experimental and ambitious development of student's own creative work in the area of short fiction.

**Teaching Strategies:** Lectures will introduce students to a range of writing practices, methods and styles. A primary aim of the lectures is to impart a knowledge of craft - what techniques are invented or employed in any given piece of literature, what makes these techniques effective and why do writers settle on the technical decisions that they do? What is involved in the creative process and how do you arrive at the place where you can shape your own creative narrative? The lectures will focus on the discussion of literary craft, style and experimentation, literary analysis, and the practicalities of the writing process. The lecture-tutorial will encourage discussion and critical analysis of weekly readings with the expectation that these readings will serve as models for student's own writing. The lecture-tutorial will also be used to conduct writing exercises. These will encourage students to work in new and experimental ways using a variety of prompts and methods. The workshops will provide the opportunity for peer group feedback on student's own creative work. The workshop will encourage independent learning and critical reflection on one's own writing. It will also develop student's understanding of the process of revising, editing and polishing a piece of work. The success of the workshop depends upon individual engagement with the weekly material; it relies on group learning and it is essential that everyone actively participate in each workshop. The approach of lecturers and tutors in the course is governed in general by:

- their own intellectual and passionate engagement with writing
- their creative and critical experience in the field
- their understanding of creative writing as a discipline within the Humanities

Lecturers and tutors in the course will pursue the course aims by doing several things among which are:

- participating in and guiding discussion in the tutorial and workshops
- providing written comments on the written work you submit
- being available to discuss with you the course and your studies
- using technical vocabulary to discuss the assigned texts
- trying to respond in a helpful way to your questions about the material and the course
- asking you to work in small groups in the lecture-tutorial

## Assessment

### Assessment Items to Learning Outcomes

#### Major Creative Work

Understand the primary elements of short fiction  
Clearly compose written texts in English  
Critically appraise their own work and the work of others

#### Research Essay

Understand the primary elements of short fiction  
Understand a variety of genres and forms in contemporary literature  
Demonstrate familiarity with variations and experiments within the short story form  
Clearly compose written texts in English

#### Writing Workshop

Understand the primary elements of short fiction  
Understand a variety of genres and forms in contemporary literature  
Demonstrate familiarity with variations and experiments within the short story form  
Critically appraise their own work and the work of others

Assessment & Weighting	Length	Due date	Feedback
Research Essay (25%)	1500 words MAXIMUM	Week 6 Friday April 15	Written feedback
Writing Workshop (20%)	Individual workshopping (1000 words max) 15-20 mins + weekly workshop preparation	Ongoing	Oral and written feedback
Major Creative Work (55%)	3000 words MAXIMUM	Week 13 Friday June 3	Written feedback

**In order to pass this course, you must make a serious attempt at ALL assessment tasks. This is a SAM requirement.**

#### Submission of Assessment Tasks

Students are expected to put their **names** and **student numbers** on **every page** of their assignments. If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on [externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au](mailto:externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au). Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally in SAM there will no longer be any hard-copy submission; assessments must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible it will be stated on your course's moodle site with alternative submission details.

### **Late Submission**

PLEASE NOTE THAT THESE RULES APPLY FOR ALL COURSES IN SAM.

If your assignment is submitted after the due date, a penalty of 3% per day (including Saturday, Sunday and public holidays) will be imposed for up to 2 weeks. For example, if you are given a mark of 72 out of 100 for an essay, and your essay were handed in two days late, it would attract a penalty of 6% and the mark would be reduced to 66%. If the same essay were handed in seven days late (i.e. a penalty of 21%) it would receive a mark of 51%. If your assignment is not submitted within 2 weeks of its due date, it will receive a mark of 0. For more information on submission of late work, consult the SAM assessment protocols at <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

### **Extension Procedure**

- A student seeking an extension should submit a SAM extension application form (found in Forms on SAM website) to the Course Authority before the due date.
- The Course Authority should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
- The Course Authority can only approve an extension of up to five days. A student requesting an extension of more than five days should complete an application for Special Consideration.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time.
- This procedure does not apply to assessment tasks that take place during regular class hours or any task specifically identified by the Course Authority as not subject to extension requests.
- A student who misses an assessed activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.
- For more information, see the SAM extension protocols on the SAM policies and guidelines webpage: <https://sam.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policies-guidelines/>

### **Special Consideration**

In the case of more serious or ongoing illness or misadventure, you will need to apply for Special Consideration. For information on Special Consideration please go to this URL: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Students who are prevented from attending a substantial amount of the course may be advised to apply to withdraw without penalty. This will only be approved in the most extreme and properly documented cases.

### **Academic honesty and plagiarism**

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from

deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- **Copying:** using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.
- **Inappropriate paraphrasing:** changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.
- **Collusion:** working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.
- **Inappropriate citation:** Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.
- **Duplication ("self-plagiarism"):** submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Details of what plagiarism is can be found on the Learning Centre's Website Plagiarism & Academic Integrity website (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/academic-integrity-plagiarism>), in the myUNSW student A-Z: Guide <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism> and in Appendix A of the Student Misconduct Procedure (pdf- <https://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf>).

It is not permissible to buy essay/writing services from third parties as the use of such services constitutes plagiarism because it involves using the words or ideas of others and passing them off as your own. Further, it is not permissible to sell copies of lecture or tutorial notes as you do not own the rights to this intellectual property.

If you breach the *Student Code* with respect to academic integrity the University may take disciplinary action under the *Student Misconduct Procedure* (see above).

The Learning Centre also provides substantial educational written materials, workshops, and tutorials to aid students, for example:

- Correct referencing practices;
- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time

management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

## Description of Assessment Tasks:

### Research Essay

For this assignment you are expected to research and write a critical essay on one of the topics considered in the lectures between weeks 2 and 7. **Essay questions related to these topics will be provided in week 3.** The essay is not to exceed 1500 words. In this essay you are expected to focus on the practice of reading as a writer and the poetics of the short story form. This assessment will develop your understanding of how the short story works, how certain effects are achieved, and encourage you to reflect on the significance of particular techniques and craft decisions in relation to your own creative work. It is expected that this critical knowledge will enhance your creative practice.

### Writing Workshop

*Formal workshopping of material will begin in Week 4.*

Two or three students will have their writing workshopped in each tutorial (approximately 15 minutes each). A class timetable will be drawn up in the first tutorial and each student must put their name down for one workshop session. If this process results in an uneven distribution of students, tutors may assign workshop weeks randomly. Although the point of the workshop is to discuss works in progress, it is important to present a developed piece of work.

- Please limit your workshop piece to a maximum of 1000 words (or 3 pages, double spaced 12 point font). There is no minimum. **Anything beyond the word limit will not be read by your tutor.**
- Please ensure that your pages are numbered and your name is on each page of your piece. This is a large course and everybody is dealing with a lot of paper.
- You are expected to submit your piece for workshopping at least **2 full weekdays prior to the workshop**. Depending on the arrangements of the tutor you will submit your work through Moodle or via an e-mail list. *LATE SUBMISSION of workshop material will result in no feedback from the tutor.* Please note: it will be at the discretion of each individual tutor to confirm submission expectations (in terms of due date) for the workshopping
- When it is your turn to be workshopped, it is your responsibility to email your draft manuscript to the class. **All manuscripts submitted for workshopping should be double-spaced, page numbered, with a minimum of two centimetre margins.** It is the responsibility of all students to print off and read these manuscripts before class and come to class prepared to edit and critically assess the material. **All manuscripts should be returned in hardcopy to the author with written feedback. To ensure that this requirement is met, the tutor will collect all manuscripts and check the feedback before this is returned to the respective writer.**



- You will be expected to participate in discussion.

### **Major Creative Work**

For this major assignment you are expected to write a short story. It is expected that this will be a polished version of the draft you submitted for workshopping. This is not essential, but it is to your advantage to polish the piece you workshop. The final work is not to exceed 3,000 words. There is no minimum, but please discuss this with the convenor if you're thinking of working in a micro-story (or similar) format.

### **Assessment Criteria**

#### **Workshop**

- Thoughtful, constructive and courteous feedback to peers, demonstrating critical rigour
- Quality of creative work presented i.e. evidence of craft skills, originality, use of images, emotional integrity. For further details see the guidelines for assessment criteria in relation to the Major Work.
- Demonstrate your capacity to take into consideration issues raised in the readings and the lectures – both as critics and writers

#### **Research Essay**

- Critical awareness: the capacity to place/discuss the text in a critical context
- Demonstration of critical reflection (this may be in regards to a text or creative practice, depending on the question being addressed)
- Demonstration of critical knowledge surrounding the selected text (secondary sources)
- Understanding of how the relevant poetic element(s) operates in the selected text, evidenced by close analysis/close readings of passages from the text
- Originality and initiative in using reflective, analytical and critical thinking
- Appropriate academic referencing, presentation and style.

### **Major Creative Work**

- Flow/reading coherence: transitions between sentences and paragraphs, movement within the piece
- Narrative development: does the piece build/evolve? Ability to create change within the piece
- Special qualities: such as risk-taking, humour, unusual images, compelling digression
- Originality and initiative
- Use of language: precision, experimentation, lyricism, vivacity
- Use of time: how are we orientated in time? How is time used to structure the piece?
- Engagement with topic/ reader/ engaging nature of idea
- Emotional integrity, capacity to elicit response
- Sense of authenticity of dialogue and characterization (when relevant)
- Reflection on elements of craft and poetics as discussed in lectures and workshops : evidence of engagement with course material

- Overall focus of the piece
- Representation of consciousness, presence or suggestion of interiority, correlation of character with environment
- Sense of idea/event: what matters most? Capacity to prioritise
- Attempt to explore complex ideas and/or experiences through formal innovation / originality and initiative

## Course schedule

### Lectures

- Lectures run in Weeks 1-4 and 5-12
- Two one-hour lectures per week, Wednesday 10:00-12:00. The second hour of the lecture will function as a large-scale tutorial
- Weekly readings will be available via Moodle
- *Please ensure you have completed the readings BEFORE the lecture*

### Tutorials

- Tutorials run weeks 2-4 and 5-13
- The 1 hour tutorial will function as a writing workshop

### Week 1 – March 1

Introduction

*No readings this week*

### Week 2 – March 9

Creative Thinking/Creative Writing

*Readings:*

Raymond Carver "On Writing"

Julie Schumacher "Turning Real Life into Fiction"

Robyn Hemley, Extract from *Turning Life into Fiction*

### Week 3 - March 16

Minimalism, Twiterature and the "Slice of Life"

*Readings:*

Lydia Davis "The Piano", "Writing", "A Strange Impulse", "A Double Negative"

Jennifer Egan, "Black Box"

Claire Louise-Bennett extract from *Pond*

Chekhov "Misery"

### Week 4 - March 23

Aesthetics of the Mundane and the Sublime: the role of the epiphany in the short story

*Readings:*

Sue Woolfe, excerpt from *Making Stories*

Helen Garner "Postcards from Surfers" Helen Garner "I"

**MID-SEMESTER BREAK: March 25- April 3**

**Week 5- April 6**

Character Consciousness: How to convey inner life?

*Readings:*

Anne Enright "Yesterday's Weather"

Other readings *TBC*

**Week 6 - April 13**

Patterns of Memory and Narrative Design: Story Structure and Patterning

*Readings:*

Colm Toibin "One Minus One"

Hilary Mantel "Winter Break"

**Week 7 - April 20**

The Symbolic Mode: metonymy, dream, association

*Readings:*

Deborah Levy, "Shining a Light", "Placing a Call"

A.L Kennedy "Tea and Biscuits"

**Week 8 – April 27**

Documenting the Process of Composition: the fictional and the imaginary, truth v. facts

*Readings:*

Stephanie Bishop "Weatherman"

Stephanie Bishop "In the Wild the Male is Always the Most Beautiful"

**Week 9 – May 4**

Adapting the story form: Creative non-fiction & the shape of the contemporary essay

*Readings*

Jhumpa Lahri "In Translation"

Other readings *TBC*

**Week 10 - May 11**

Practice Based lecture and editing

**Week 11 – May 18**

Sydney Writer's Festival – details of lecture format to be confirmed

**Week 12 – May 25**

Student readings

## 12. Expected Resources for students

This is a Web Supplemented course. Course readings should be downloaded from Moodle *and read carefully*. Other readings may be added as a supplement to the course which students may find helpful. The on-line material will include:

- course outline
- weekly readings
- internet sites relevant to the course
- audio and video material

## Prescribed Resources

All weekly set readings and related material are available on Moodle

## Recommended Resources

These are all held in the library in the high use collection and will be of particular use in the research essay assessment.

May, Charles E., *The New Short Story Theories* (Athens, Ohio University Press, 1994)

Head, Dominic, *The Modernist Short Story: A Study in Theory and Practice* (Cambridge; New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009)

Hunter, Adrian, *The Cambridge Introduction to the Short Story in English* (Cambridge; New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007)

Shaw, Valerie, *The Short Story: A Critical Introduction*, ( London; New York, Longman, 1983)

Loehlin, James N., *The Cambridge Introduction to Chekhov* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010) - especially chapter 3 and chapter 5

Drewery, Claire Burlington. , *Modernist Short Fiction by Women: The Liminal in Katherine Mansfield, Dorothy Richardson, May Sinclair and Virginia Woolf* (Vt: Ashgate, 2011)

O'Connor, Frank, *The Lonely Voice: A Study of the Short Story* (London: Macmillan, 1963)

## Course evaluation and development

This course is being continually improved and revised based on student feedback and developments in Creative Writing pedagogy. If you have any comments about the course which can reasonably be addressed during the semester, please offer these thoughts informally to your tutor or the coordinator. At the end of semester you will be expected to complete a CATEI evaluation form that will assist the coordinator in the future improvement and development of the course.

