

# EN2721: THE ART OF LIFE NARRATIVE

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## Effective Term

Semester A 2024/25

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

The Art of Life Narrative

### Subject Code

EN - English

### Course Number

2721

### Academic Unit

English (EN)

### College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

Nil

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

Nil

### Exclusive Courses

GE2407 Reading Lives, Writing Selves: Autobiography and Culture

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

' The Art of Life Narrative' is an English course introduces students to the theory and practice of life narrative in diverse forms. Combining a thematic focus on questions such as identity, gender, history and language with discussion of forms,

students will explore and analyse a variety of texts, such as autobiographical essays, memoir, diary, graphic narrative and documentaries, produced in different cultural and historical contexts. This course adopts a discovery-based approach and emphasizes students' self-reflexivity and engagement with their own life when exploring, as well as composing, life narratives of the others and those of their own.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Recognize formal elements—structures, narrative perspectives, style, rhetorical strategies, etc.—in life narratives and explore how they may represent issues of contemporary interest.		x	
2	Analyze the theoretical, aesthetic, and creative aspects of life writing evidenced by the particular structures, styles, and thematic elements in each text.	x	x	x
3	Apply critical thinking and reading skills in the interpretation of diverse life narratives, highlighting their local and global significance, and identifying connections among different traditions.	x	x	x
4	Reflect on their own learning processes and engage with their own life experience when composing their own creative and critical work.	x	x	x

#### A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

#### A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

#### A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

### Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Interactive Lectures and Discussion	Students will acquire knowledge of key concepts and theories of life writing through lectures and group discussions	1, 2
2	Group Life Writing Project	Students will collaboratively design and develop a group project on a theme germane to life writing	1, 2, 3, 4

3	Critical Essay	Students will apply their knowledge and literary interpretative skills to compose a critical essay on selected literary texts or issues.	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	In-Class Reading and Creative Responses	Students will compose a range of critical reading and creative responses to selected literary and cultural texts throughout the courses, applying the knowledge that they learnt in class.	1, 2, 3, 4	

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

	<b>ATs</b>	<b>CILO No.</b>	<b>Weighting (%)</b>	<b>Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)</b>
1	In-Class Reading and Creative Responses  Students will compose a range of short in-class reading and creative responses to selected texts and topics throughout the course.	2, 4	30	Individual Work
2	Critical Essay (1200-1500 words)  Students will write a critical essay on a topic relating to the genre of life writing. They will demonstrate their understanding and application of their theoretical readings by critically analysing one or two literary text/s.	1, 2, 3, 4	30	Individual Work

3	<p>Group Life Writing Project</p> <p>Students will form small groups to build a webpage/blog that engages with the theme 'memory and place' in relation to the life stories of their own as well as those who dwell and/or work in the city. Students will need to share their project with the whole class upon completion.</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	30	Group Work
4	<p>Participation</p> <p>Students will participate in class discussions and activities, as well as complete short writing exercises and take part in other in-class activities throughout the course</p>	1, 2, 3, 4	10	Individual Work

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

100

**Examination (%)**

0

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

Critical Essay

**Criterion**

Argumentation

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Thesis is clear and appropriate for the writing task. There is a sense of originality in the way the writer has answered the question. Ideas are well supported and conclusions reveal a progression of ideas

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The responses contain sharp ideas that are clearly expressed, original, and thoughtfully supported.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Elements of B and D

**Marginal (D)**

The topic is clear but there is little originality in the way that the writer has answered the question. Ideas are not always supported. There is little sense of progression as the paper develops.

**Failure (F)**

The essay appears to be off topic or only loosely related to the task. The writer may have misunderstood the question.

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**Assessment Task**

Critical Essay

**Criterion**

Language

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Exceptionally well composed. Words are used with precision and accuracy. A wide variety of sentence structures are used.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Strong control of language and a wide lexical range. Grammatical structures are varied and well constructed. Small errors may persist but the meaning is sharp and clear.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Effective and functional control. Basic ideas are communicated effectively. Errors cause minimal distraction.

**Marginal (D)**

There is a high density of errors, causing strain for the reader. The meaning is sometimes lost or unclear

**Failure (F)**

Almost every sentence has some kind of error, which causes serious problems for the reader. The meaning is often lost or distorted.

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**Assessment Task**

Critical Essay

**Criterion**

Engagement

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Sophisticated critical reading and interpretative skills apparent.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The discussion of the primary texts is appropriate and sufficiently detailed. There is a sense of the writer critically engaging with the texts.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Elements of B and D

**Marginal (D)**

Some discussion of the primary texts, but mostly in general and broad terms. The selection of primary texts may not be appropriate for the task. Citation methods are not clear or inconsistently applied.

**Failure (F)**

Very little if any engagement with the primary texts

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**Assessment Task**

Critical Essay

**Criterion**

Presentation

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

The written assignments are extremely well presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The written assignments are well presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

The written assignments are adequately presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

**Marginal (D)**

The written assignments are poorly presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

**Failure (F)**

The written assignments are very poorly presented in terms of font, layout, spacing, headings, and citation

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**Assessment Task**

In-Class Reading and Creative Responses

**Criterion**

Engagement and Support

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Demonstrates a very detailed understanding of the course readings. Demonstrates creative and original thought; show a deep self-reflexivity and engagement with the self. Specific and accurate support

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Demonstrates a good understanding of relevant texts with some specific support. Demonstrates some creative and thoughtful ideas; gives a sense of self-reflexivity and engagement with the self.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Demonstrates fairly good understanding of relevant texts, but lacking in detail. There may be some inaccuracies. The sense of self-reflexivity needs to be strengthened.

**Marginal (D)**

Demonstrates a superficial understanding of relevant texts. Support is not always detailed or accurate. Little attempt to engage with the self; a lack of self-reflexivity.

**Failure (F)**

Demonstrates a minimal understanding of relevant texts and/or lacking in content. Failed to demonstrate any attempt to engage with one's self.

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**Assessment Task**

In-Class Reading and Creative Responses

**Criterion**

Ideas

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

The main ideas of the response are sharp, creative, and compelling.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The response is coherent and contains some elements of creativity and originality.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Main ideas are mostly clear but the response may be lacking in terms of specific or original ideas.

**Marginal (D)**

The main ideas are not always clear and the response appears to be lacking in terms of originality or relevance.

**Failure (F)**

The response appears to be off topic or ideas are generally incoherent.

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**Assessment Task**

Group Life Writing Project

**Criterion**

Ideas

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

The main ideas are original, thoughtful and demonstrates a strong engagement with the genre of life writing.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The main ideas are thoughtful and contains elements of originality. It demonstrates an engagement with the genre of life writing.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

There are some interesting ideas, though the project appears to be lacking in terms of original/thoughtful ideas. It demonstrates an attempt to engage with the genre of life writing.

**Marginal (D)**

The project appears to be lacking in terms of originality or relevance. It has a minimal engagement with the genre of life writing.

**Failure (F)**

The project ideas are generally incoherent, or irrelevant to the chosen topic. Failed to engage with the genre of life writing.

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**Assessment Task**

Group Life Writing Project

**Criterion**

Engagement and Support

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

The key ideas of the life writing project are very well expressed and supported. Demonstrates a deep sense of self-reflexivity and engagement with the self and the others.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The key ideas of the life writing project are well-articulated and supported. Demonstrates a good sense of self-reflexivity and engagement with the self and the others.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

The key ideas of the life writing project are to a large extent conveyed. Demonstrates a sense of self-reflexivity and an attempt to engage with the self and the others.

**Marginal (D)**

The main ideas are unclear. A weak sense of self-reflexivity and little attempt to engage with the self and the others.

**Failure (F)**

Failed to convey the main ideas of the project. Failed to give any sense of self-reflexivity or engagement with the self and the others.

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**Assessment Task**

Group Life Writing Project

**Criterion**

Presentation

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

The life writing project is extremely well-presented. The chosen approach succeeds in bringing out the major features and ideas of the project.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

The life writing project is well-presented. The chosen approach to a large extent brings out the major features and ideas of the project.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

The life writing project is to a large extent clearly presented. The chosen approach may not bring out all the key features and ideas of the project.

**Marginal (D)**

The life writing project is not effectively presented. The chosen approach is not effective in bringing out the key ideas of the project.

**Failure (F)**

The presentation appears to be incoherent and is in lack of consideration.

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**Assessment Task**

Participation

**Criterion**

Participation in-class discussion and activities

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Makes significant contribution to in-class discussion and completes tasks satisfactorily.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Makes occasional contribution to in-class discussion and completes the tasks satisfactorily.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Seldom makes contribution to in-class discussion; completes some of the in-class writing tasks.

**Marginal (D)**

Little evidence of participation in class; completes very few in-class writing tasks.



**Failure (F)**

Fails to sufficiently participate in in-class activities (including discussion and writing)

**Part III Other Information****Keyword Syllabus**

Autobiography, life writing, narrative, identity, culture, history, language, memory, experience, place

**Reading List****Compulsory Readings**

	<b>Title</b>
1	Eva Hoffman, <i>Lost in Translation</i>
2	Orhan Pamuk, <i>Istanbul: Memories of a City</i> (selections)
3	Spiegelman, Art, <i>MAUS Complete</i> (graphic novel)
4	Woolf, Virginia, <i>Moments of Being: Autobiographical Writings</i> (selections)
5	Other primary texts will be distributed by the instructor before the start of the course
6	Smith, Sidonie and Julia Watson. <i>Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives</i> (Second Edition). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. (selections)
7	Bill Roorbach. <i>Writing Life Stories</i> . Ohio: F&W Publications, 2008. (selections)

**Additional Readings**

	<b>Title</b>
1	Anderson, Linda. <i>Autobiography</i> . London: Routledge, 2001.
2	Eakin, Paul John. <i>How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves</i> . Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.
3	Engel, Susan. <i>Context is Everything: The Nature of Memory</i> . New York: W.H. Freeman and Co., 1999.
4	Olney, James, ed. <i>Autobiography: Essays Theoretical and Critical</i> . Princeton: Princeton University, 1980.
5	Gornick, Vivian. <i>The Situation and the Story: The Art of Personal Narrative</i> . New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.
6	Zinsser, William. <i>On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction</i> . New York: HarperCollins, 2006. (selections)