

City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of English
with effect from Semester A 2016/17

Part I Course Overview

Course Title: Travel Writing: Discovery and Experience

Course Code: GE2408

Course Duration: One semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: B2

- Arts and Humanities
 Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations
 Science and Technology
 GE English

Proposed Area:
(for GE courses only)

Medium of Instruction: English

Medium of Assessment: English

Prerequisites:
(Course Code and Title) Grade D in HKAL Use of English or Grade 4 in HKDSE or;
successful completion of English Academic Proficiency Courses
(EL0220, EL0222, EL0223 and EL0225 – 6 credits) or;
English for Academic Purposes (EL0200 – 6 credits) or;
English for Academic Purposes 2 (EL0200B – 3 credits) or;
Grade B or above in English for Academic Purposes 1 (EL0200A – 3 credits)

Precursors:
(Course Code and Title) None

Equivalent Courses:
(Course Code and Title) None

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title) None

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

“Travel Writing: Discovery and Experience” is an English course that will introduce students to the interdisciplinary theory and practice of contemporary travel writing. Beginning with a theoretical introduction to the genre, the students will explore the ways in which the history of the world has been discursively formed through travel literature. Combining a thematic focus (questions of identity, class, history, language) with discussions of forms, the course will engage multiple texts, leading students to think and write critically about the texts and learn how to produce their own versions of travel writing, based on their own lives and experiences.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs [#]	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	State and Identify formal elements—structures, narrative perspectives, style, rhetorical strategies, etc.—in travel writing and explore how they may represent issues of contemporary interest.	25%			
2.	Compose travel articles for publication in a variety of medium, by being able to articulate and express ideas, reflections and perceptions through descriptive and analytical writing.	30%			
3.	Analyze the theoretical, aesthetic, and creative aspects of travel writing evidenced by the particular structures, styles, and thematic elements in each text.	20%			
4.	Critically Reflect on the diversity of personal, cultural, and social human experiences and make intelligent connections between texts and cultures.	25%			
		100%			

* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

[#] Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

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 self-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.

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4			
1.	Lectures will acquaint students with relevant issues, concepts and theories. There will be a special emphasis in the course on practical application and interactive tasks, in particular the course will encourage students to engage in reading, writing and reviewing exercises.	√	√	√				Will vary depending on weekly class content
2.	Reviewing exercises whereby students will be asked to research, read and review different aspects of travel writing.	√		√	√			Will vary depending on weekly class content
3.	Written exercises where students will have an opportunity to critically reflect on and compose their responses to different types of travel writing representing different aspects of travel culture.	√	√	√	√			Will vary depending on weekly class content
4.	Audio-visual exercises whereby students will watch and listen to various audio-visual pieces, responding to them in groups and through written work.	√	√		√			Will vary depending on weekly class content
5.	An excursion will be organized to local destinations (such as arts festivals, museums, local eateries etc.) to give students practical lessons in reviewing aspects of culture.	√	√	√	√			Will vary depending on weekly class content

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.					Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4			
Continuous Assessment: 100%							
Travel Website Students will form small groups and prepare an informative travel website over the course of the semester. On the website students will describe a local destination from different perspectives.	√	√	√	√		20%	Group-assessed
Presentation Students will be required to present materials in class at the discretion of the course instructor. Students must work together but will be assessed individually.	√	√	√	√		10%	Individually-assessed
Review Students will write a review of restaurant, hotel or cultural attraction. The review should demonstrate an awareness of audience and effectively manage evaluative and descriptive modes of writing. The review should be 500-600 words.	√	√	√	√		20%	Individually-assessed
Travel Narrative Students are required to describe a personal travel experience and structure the narrative in terms of an unfolding conflict and resolution. The travel narrative should be 650-700 words.	√	√	√	√		20%	Individually-assessed
Critical Essay Students will be asked to write an 850 word critical essay in which they will demonstrate their understanding and application of their theoretical readings by writing a reasoned discussion of particular texts or issues, which will require some research. Before the final assignment deadline students will hand in drafts of their critical essays, and during an in class consultation session have the opportunity to receive feedback from the tutor, and work on improving their individual pieces.	√	√	√	√		30%	Individually-assessed
Examination: 0%							
						100%	

* The weightings should add up to 100%.

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Adequate (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Review	Description	There is a high level of creativity and originality in the descriptive details. There is a strong and vivid sense of the objects being described. The evaluation is very compelling and persuasive.	Description is sharp, specific, and supported by concrete details. Good use of figurative language (metaphors, similes, etc) when appropriate. Evaluation is compelling.	Description is detailed and effective. Some attempts at using language in a creative and original way in order to enhance the description. May be overdone, inconsistent, or inappropriate in places. Level of research seems adequate. Fair and convincing evaluation	Some attempts at description but lacking in details. Hard to visualize. May be predictable and contain cliché images and expressions. More research needed. Evaluation of item being reviewed is not entirely convincing	Little attempt at description. May have misunderstood the assignment / under length
	Language	Exceptionally well composed. Words are used with precision and accuracy. A wide variety of sentence structures are used.	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.	Effective and functional control. Basic ideas are communicated effectively. Errors cause minimal distraction.	There is a high density of errors, causing strain for the reader. The meaning is sometimes lost or unclear	Almost every sentence has some kind of error, which causes serious problems for the reader. The meaning is often lost or distorted.
	Organization	There is sense of progression and development of ideas from beginning to end. Transitions are natural and subtle. The dominant impression is communicated with careful nuance	Details are presented in a logical order. Transitions between ideas are smooth and natural. There is some sense of progression as ideas develop. Topic is focused and the dominant impression is clear	The focus is basically effective. The use of transitions and paragraphing are effectively applied. There may be some lapses (off topic, unnecessary, or random information). There is a clear sense of a dominant impression	The review needs to be better focused. Paragraph structure is absent or not always logical. Too factual and lacking any sense of a dominant impression.	Lacking in focus. It's not clear what the review is really about. Ideas do not progress in any logical way.

2. Travel Narrative	Narrative Development	Impresses the reader from beginning to end through original and interesting use of plot, character development, dialogue, etc. Opening is sharp and the resolution is thoughtful.	There is a clear and compelling sense of progression as the story unfolds. Opening and resolution are clearly and effectively stated.	The basic narrative elements are in place, but transitions, opening, and resolution may need revision.	The story can be followed but is predictable or unfocused. Lacking any sense of conflict or progression.	Lacks structure. Reader may see the piece as spinning its wheels and not developing anything as it goes
	Language	Exceptionally well composed. Words are used with precision and accuracy. A wide variety of sentence structures are used.	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.	Effective and functional control. Basic ideas are communicated effectively. Errors cause minimal distraction.	There is a high density of errors, causing strain for the reader. The meaning is sometimes lost or unclear	Almost every sentence has some kind of error, which causes serious problems for the reader. The meaning is often lost or distorted.
	Creative Elements	Varied and sophisticated use of creative and stylistic elements (including metaphor, imagery, symbols, rhythm and style).	Strong use of creative and stylistic elements. There are vivid images and sensory details (when appropriate). Word choices rich and varied.	Some good use of creative elements and basically original in terms of content.	There is a tendency to generalize. Lacking details. Minimal attempts to offer a unique perspective. May contain cliché phrases and ideas.	The writing is completely lacking in terms of stylistic or creative elements. The writer may be uninterested in the work.
3. Critical Essay	Argumentation	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	The responses contains sharp ideas that are clearly expressed, original, and thoughtfully supported.	Elements of B and 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.	The essay appears to be off topic or only loosely related to the task. The writer may have misunderstood the question.
	Language	Exceptionally well composed. Words are used with	Strong control of language and a wide lexical range.	Effective and functional control. Basic ideas are	There is a high density of errors, causing strain for the reader. The	Almost every sentence has some kind of error, which causes serious

		precision and accuracy. A wide variety of sentence structures are used.	Grammatical structures are varied and well constructed. Small errors may persist but the meaning is sharp and clear.	communicated effectively. Errors cause minimal distraction.	meaning is sometimes lost or unclear	problems for the reader. The meaning is often lost or distorted.
	Engagement	Sophisticated critical reading and interpretative skills apparent.	The discussion of the primary texts is appropriate and sufficiently detailed. There is a sense of the writer critically engaging with the texts.	Elements of B and 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.	Very little if any engagement with the primary texts
4. Website	Language	Exceptionally well composed. Words are used with precision and accuracy. A wide variety of sentence structures are used.	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.	Effective and functional control. Basic ideas are communicated effectively. Errors cause minimal distraction.	There is a high density of errors, causing strain for the reader. The meaning is sometimes lost or unclear	Almost every sentence has some kind of error, which causes serious problems for the reader. The meaning is often lost or distorted.
	Content	Content is highly original, detailed, and compelling	Content is thoughtful and original. There may be some lack of details.	Elements of B and C	Content is lacking in originality and detail.	The content is insufficient and/or substantially lacking in detail
	Design	Visually appealing and effectively organized	Visually appealing and effectively organized with some inconsistencies	Elements of B and C	Lacking in clear organization. Design is inappropriate and ineffective	The design is confusing, unclear, or non-existent

Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. Keyword Syllabus

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

Travel writing; descriptive writing; narrative writing; metaphors and symbols; visual analysis; review writing; cultural stereotypes; travel writing and features journalism.

2. Reading List

2.1 Compulsory Readings

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Bill Bryson, 'Hammerfest' from <i>Neither Here Nor There</i> (1991)
2.	Tracy Johnston, 'Boh Knows Hormones' in <i>Traveler's Tales</i> (2003)
3.	Rajendra S. Khadka, 'Chungking and Other Horrors' in <i>Traveler's Tales: Hong Kong</i> (1996)
4.	Suzy Gershman, 'Shop! In the Name of Love' in <i>Traveler's Tales: Hong Kong</i> (1996)
5.	Guy Delisle, <i>Burma Chronicles</i> (2010)
6.	Stacy Allison, 'Triumph on Mount Everest' in <i>Traveler's Tales</i> (2003)
7.	Rebecca McClanahan, from <i>Word Painting: A Guide to Writing More Descriptively</i> (2000)

2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Scott McCloud, <i>Understanding Comics</i> (1993)
2.	Dan Jurafsky, from <i>The Language and Food: A Linguist Reads the Menu</i> (2014)

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

GE PILO	Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)
PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning	1, 2, 3, 4
PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology	3, 4
PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills	3, 4
PILO 4: Interpret information and numerical data	3, 4
PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text	2, 3
PILO 6: Demonstrate effective oral communication skills	
PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team	1, 2
PILO 8: Recognise important characteristics of their own culture(s) and at least one other culture, and their impact on global issues	1, 2, 3, 4
PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions	3, 4
PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation	1, 2, 3, 4

GE course leaders should cover the mandatory PILOs for the GE area (Area 1: Arts and Humanities; Area 2: Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations; Area 3: Science and Technology) for which they have classified their course; for quality assurance purposes, they are advised to carefully consider if it is beneficial to claim any coverage of additional PILOs. General advice would be to restrict PILOs to only the essential ones. (Please refer to the curricular mapping of GE programme: http://www.cityu.edu.hk/edge/ge/faculty/curricular_mapping.htm.)

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task
Critical Essay