

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

COURSE OUTLINE

1. COURSE TITLE

Big Stories: Writing Long-form Fictional Narratives

2. COURSE CODE

WRIT3025

3. NO. OF UNITS

3 Units

4. OFFERING DEPARTMENT

Department of Humanities and Creative Writing

5. PREREQUISITES

Nil

6. MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

English

7. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The course will explore the art of long-form narrative fiction, focusing on novels, novellas and films, but also newer digital forms such as video games and podcast plays. The course aims to grant students the ability to work on a single, sustained writing project of their own choosing and equip them with advanced skills in narratological, stylistic, aesthetic and structural analysis. In addition, students will work closely with their peers in dedicated writing workshops with the aim of advancing both their creative practice and editorial skills.

8. COURSE CONTENT

The course will examine major forms of long-form fictional narratives. It will discuss how history, technology and cultural attitudes have shaped long-form storytelling. The course will ask what long-form stories do that shorter forms do not and what special compositional techniques and strategies are demanded.

Throughout the course students will be given the opportunity to work on a single, sustained project of their own choosing: for example, the opening chapters of a novel, an

episode of a podcast play, part of a video game or scenes from a screenplay. Students will write in dialogue with their classmates in a writing workshop that includes review and editing. As part of the workshops, students will be guided through some of the major editorial passes a long-form work may go through, namely a voice edit, structural edit and continuity edit. The course will conclude by guiding students on paths to publication.

A typical semester may cover the following topics:

Origins of Long Form Narrative – New and old modes and technologies
 Gardeners and Architects – When, why and what not to plan
 First Marks on the Page – Beginnings and inspiration
 Creating Atmosphere
 Observe, Listen, Reflect – The writer as phenomenologist
 Turning life experience into story.
 Authentic Voice, POV & Character Voices (including voice editing)
 Character – Types and arcs
 Genre – Ghosts, dragons, detectives & damsels in distress: utilising and subverting conventions.
 Writing Comedy
 Leveraging Place & Place as a Structuring Principle (including structural editing)
 A Story of Hong Kong – Representing Hong Kong on the global literary stage
 Plotting – Selecting, ordering & pacing scenes and chapters
 Podcast narratives
 Video game narratives
 Silence, Incompleteness, Imperfection – The importance of the thing left out
 Experimentation in Long-form Narrative Fiction (including continuity editing)
 Style and Substance: Advanced prosody
 The Road to Publication: Cover letters, author bios & synopses.

9. COURSE INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES (CILOs)

CILO	By the end of the course, students should be able to:
CILO 1	Appreciate the history, philosophy and techniques of long-form fictional narratives from around the world and across time.
CILO 2	Critically analyse long-form works of narrative fiction for appropriable techniques via methods such as narratology and stylistic analysis.
CILO 3	Plan and produce a sustained, coherent work of long-form narrative fiction.
CILO 4	Provide sophisticated editorial input for a variety of long-form writing texts while becoming familiar with the dynamics of sustained, collaborative editor-author relationships.
CILO 5	Prepare and format writing suitable for submission to publishers and agents and develop a strategy for successful submission.

10. TEACHING & LEARNING ACTIVITIES (TLAs)

CILO alignment	Type of TLA
1, 2	Students will study the history and function of long-form storytelling (with a focus on writing) via lecture materials
1, 2	Students will read closely, analyse and discuss a variety of long-form creative texts and complimentary theoretical texts.
3, 4	Students will write and revise a long-form fictional narrative of their choosing throughout the semester.
3, 4	Students will work collaboratively in a writing workshop.
3	Individual consultations on the progress of the work will be conducted with the lecturer.
5	Students will be instructed in how to present works in an appropriate manner to be read by editors and publishers and develop strategies for getting published, including writing cover letters, author bios, synopses etc.

11. ASSESSMENT METHODS (AMs)

Type of Assessment Methods	Weighting	CILOs to be addressed	Description of Assessment Tasks
Class Participation	10 %	1, 2, 3	In-class participation (such as attentiveness, evidence of engagement with set texts, participating in discussions, workshop engagement).
Formative Plan	20 %	4	Students will submit a Formative Plan of their Final Project (an extract from their creative work). The plan will include the title of the work, a back-cover blurb (or equivalent), a plot synopsis and proposed list of characters as well as two pages (approximately 500 words) of the draft creative work.
Artist's Statement Essay	20 %	1, 2	Students will write an Artist's Statement Essay (comprising a statement of purpose and an aesthetic rationale for their creative work) of 3 pages (approximately 750-1000 words). The essay will give evidence of critical engagement with at least three of the set readings. The assignment will also include 4 pages (approximately 1000 words) of the draft creative work.
Final Project	50 %	4, 5	Students will submit the final 10-15-page draft of their creative work (approximately 2500-4000 words or equivalent). The submission will include

		a 1-2-page submission letter (including revised artist statement and plot synopsis) designed for a prospective publisher. In addition, students will choose and attach to their submission one example of an edit performed on a peer's work throughout the semester.
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