



## COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Creative writing: poetry and short story / Kūrybinis rašymas: poezija ir apsakymas	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
<b>Coordinator:</b> Dr Davide Castiglione <b>Other(s):</b>	English Philology Faculty of Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
BA programme, semester 6	Elective

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Lectures and seminars	Autumn Semester	English

Requirements for students	
<b>Prerequisites:</b> Previous courses in literature, stylistics and creative writing may be an advantage but are not strict prerequisites.	<b>Additional requirements (if any):</b> English (C1)

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	150	32	118

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed
<p>This course aims to develop students' creative writing skills in poetry and short fiction. To ensure consistency and to overcome the writer's block, students will submit weekly short texts based on techniques or genres introduced in class. These tasks, along with peer feedback, form part of the cumulative assessment. In this way, students progressively expand their expressive range, starting from the simplest techniques and, from there, moving on to tackle more challenging ones. At the end of the course, students will have submitted a portfolio of their best work or a longer piece integrating the techniques and genres practiced, along with a self-reflective report on their creative journey. The course includes guest workshops and a session on preparing work for submission to journals and magazines, as well as reflections on AI and how it can assist the creative process without replacing it or dulling one's writing.</p> <p><u>Generic competences:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Responsibility:</u> completing the assigned writing and reading tasks ahead of the seminars, attending the seminars, asking questions, posing problems, monitoring one's learning process</li> <li>• <u>Cooperation:</u> receiving and providing constructive feedback, appreciating the insights stemming from the process; showing interest in others' works, encouraging them to improve further</li> <li>• <u>Problem solving:</u> finding the best way to translate an idea or experience into language requires evaluating alternatives and choosing between them based on rhetorical effectiveness and authorial designs; creative writing is a problem-solving activity requiring deep personal engagement</li> <li>• <u>Planning:</u> completing a longer piece of writing requires careful planning, time and resource management; students will work their way from short to increasingly complex texts according to a realistic plan</li> <li>• <u>Openness to change:</u> at least some students will be new to creative writing; even those with prior experience may find sharing their work initially intimidating. The rise of AI is another challenge that may cause anxiety in some,</li> </ul>

but we will learn to use it as a tool for editing or clarifying ideas, turning AI into an assistant rather than a rival. Openness to change is then an attitudinal prerequisite but also a personal quality that the course aims to develop.

Subject-specific competences:

- Students will write regularly to overcome the writer’s block and gain self-confidence
- will get inspiration from the styles and themes of some of the best writers and poets writing in English
- will enhance their planning skills and perseverance through the ideation and writing of longer pieces (e.g., short stories, long poems, drama pieces)
- will practice introspection, focus and observation through the writing of short forms (e.g., aphorisms, flash-fiction, epigrams, haiku)
- will learn to provide and receive constructive criticism with a view of improving their own’s and others’ writing
- will practice a wide range of literary techniques (e.g., description, dialogue, characterisation, pace and rhythm, metaphors and imagery)
- will produce original creative work, either in prose or verse or a mixture of the two
- will enrich their vocabulary, especially for descriptive or characterisation purposes
- will critically reflect on their own craft and creative journey
- will learn about opportunities to publish and meet experienced writers
- will be able to apply creative writing skills in non-literary contexts where these skills are in demand (e.g., advertisement, speeches)

Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Short introductory lectures to practices, techniques, genres; reading assignments; hands-on seminars with individual and group tasks (e.g., manipulating viewpoint through role-plays, re-writing story endings, continuing or completing dialogues, writing about everyday objects, conforming to/subverting literary manifestoes, writing parodies and imitations); workshops with invited guests.	Assessment of written work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly tasks (10%)</li> <li>• Provision of feedback to peers (20%)</li> <li>• 2000-word portfolio (1000-word if poetry-only) (60%)</li> <li>• 700-word self-reflective report (10%)</li> </ul>

Content: breakdown of the topics (Prose: 2-9; poetry:	Contact hours							Self-study work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. <b>Overview of the course.</b> Introduction to creative writing. Probing the students’ motivation, discussing earlier attempts at creative writing. Overcoming the writer’s block.	1		1				2	7	Students start to keep a notebook/diary. They jot down reflections, observations, etc.
2. <b>Personal narratives:</b> telling stories via setting, action, resolution, tellability (the point of a story).	1		1				2	7	Students write a prose piece or poem focusing on a specific episode or experience that happened to them. They must include a setting, a complicating action and a resolution
3. <b>Themes and genres in literature.</b> The importance of conflict/tension. Genres as templates to explore themes and fictional worlds. Collective vs. individual narratives.	1		1				2	7	Students propose one or more themes that fascinates them, and discuss ideas on how to bring such themes to

									life. They also rewrite their personal story making its point more or less clear.	
<b>4. Modes: from fantasy to realism, from realism to parody.</b> What characters can and cannot do, and the narrator's stance on them.	1		1					2	7	Students explore their chosen themes in the different modes. They rewrite their personal story as a parody or myth, etc.
<b>5. Description &amp; ekphrasis: making things vivid.</b> Use of metaphors, adjectives, concrete nouns. The art of literary portrayal. Degree of detail and subjectivity of descriptions. Description as method to slow down the narrative tempo.	1		1					2	7	Students write short descriptions, in prose or poetry. They can describe by observing, recalling, or imagining people, landscapes, objects, works of art.
<b>6. Character building.</b> Preparing character sketches and profiles. How would your characters interact in given scenarios?	1		1					2	7	Students describe their favorite characters from books/movies/TV series following the schema provided (social role, gender/ethnicity/culture, personal traits, goals). They imagine how such characters would interact in various settings.
<b>7. Dialogue: the art of interaction.</b> Constructing a realistic and plot-advancing dialogue. Learning about speech presentation categories and when to use them. Examples from literature. Elements of conversation analysis. Dialogue as characterization tool.	1		1					2	7	Students write a short dialogue (6-8 turn-takings) in simple direct speech or free direct speech. The dialogue can be fictional or a faithful memory of a real dialogue. They also role-play characters in a dialogue to continue those dialogues.
<b>8. Thought: introspection and inner worlds.</b> Exploring what's in your or in your characters' head via interior monologue or stream of consciousness. Categories of thought presentation (e.g., free direct thought, free indirect thought).	1		1					2	7	Students write an interior monologue and/or a stream of consciousness piece. They explore their own thoughts or attribute thoughts to their characters.
<b>9. Shaping the sentence:</b> syntactic options to arrange information and vary the rhythm. The use of list in prose fiction.	1		1					2	7	Students rewrite sentences from their story/poems to make their syntax more unpredictable, using the techniques learned in class
<b>10. Prose/poetry: guest speaker</b>	1		1					2	7	Workshop with local writer. Students ask questions, having read some of her/his works

									in advance.	
11. <b>Spacing and segmentivity in poetry.</b> How visual appearance shapes rhythm and meaning. The importance of enjambments. The idea that even free verse is never truly free.	1		1					2	7	Students reflect on how segmentation and spacing change the meaning and rhythm of a text. They will be exposed to a range of typographically experimental texts.
12. <b>Metre: the iambic pentameter and the tetrameter.</b> How to write regular metrical lines. Blank verse vs. rhymed couplets.	1		1					2	9	Students learn to scan metrical poems and write in metre themselves.
13. <b>Functions of poetry:</b> elegy, pastoral, ode, parody, satire	1		1					2	9	Students are introduced to various types of poetry and try to imitate at least one of them
14. <b>Forms of poetry:</b> ballad, sonnet, sestina, villanelle, haiku	1		1					2	9	Students are introduced to various poetic forms and try to imitate at least one of them
15: <b>Experimental writing methods:</b> surrealism, DADA, cut up, New Sentence	1		1					2	7	Students are introduced to some experimental or avantgarde forms of writing and practice them.
16. <b>Getting your work published.</b> Publication outlets, accompanying letter, tracking your submissions.	1		1					2	7	Open session – tips and advice from editor of magazine or published author. Students prepare questions beforehand.
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>16</b>					<b>32</b>	<b>118</b>	

Assessment strategy	Weight, %	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Weekly assignments	10	Throughout semester	10 weekly assignments in total. 1pt. per assignment, regardless of quality (completion and punctuality is what matters).
Provision of feedback to peers	20	20 Nov	Quantity and quality of comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 0.5pt per short comment (e.g., on typos, or quick appreciation)</li> <li>- 1 pt per medium-sized comment (e.g., stylistic or local advice)</li> <li>- 2 pts per extensive comment (e.g., on characters, overall structure, changes of perspective... ‘bold’ comments)</li> </ul>
2000-word portfolio (consisting of poems, short stories or flash fictions, or a combination of them)	60	End of term (8 Jan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Artistic statement (contents conveyed, idea) and overlap between intention (as emerging from the report) and outcome – 25% (15 pts)</li> <li>- Style and quality of writing (e.g., command of literary techniques, patterning, rhythm, pace, variation) – 25% (15 pts)</li> <li>- Originality (e.g., deviation from stock motifs, mixing styles and genres, refreshing perspective) – 25% (15 pts)</li> <li>- Ability to engage the reader (intellectually, emotionally, aesthetically) – 25% (15 pts)</li> </ul> <b>PASS set at 30/60 pts.</b>

700-word self-reflective report	10	End of term (8 Jan)	<p>- Generation of insights – 40% (4pts)</p> <p>- Demonstration of self-critical skills – 40% (4pts)</p> <p>- Personal tone reflecting the creative experience – 20% (2 pts)</p> <p>OVERALL PASS is set at 48/<b>100 pts</b>. insofar as the portfolio reaches the minimum score for a pass (the remaining points would come from the other assessment parts)</p> <p>Table of conversion: 93-100 = 10; 85-92 = 9; 75-84 = 8; 65-74 = 7; 64-55 = 6; 54-48 = 5</p> <p>The retake only involves the portfolio. Retakes are organised in accordance with current Vilnius University regulations. If any of the other task is not completed, it simply gets no points. The self-reflective report, in any case, must be submitted alongside the portfolio, as it is supporting material helping me to fairly assess the portfolio. It is theoretically possible, although strongly discouraged, to pass the course with only an excellent portfolio (e.g., 55-60 pts = 6).</p>
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Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing place and house or web link
<b>Compulsory reading</b>				
Cosgrove, Shady	2018	Controlling the Clock – how showing and telling impact time in short-short fiction	<i>New Writing</i>	<a href="https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14790726.2019.1566369">https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14790726.2019.1566369</a>
Dufresne, John	2018	<i>Flash! Writing the Very Short Story</i>		W. W. Norton & Company
Hanauer, David	2010	<i>Poetry as Research: Exploring Second Language Poetry Writing</i>		John Benjamins
Kroll, J. and G. Harper (eds)	2013	<i>Research Methods in Creative Writing</i>		Palgrave Macmillan.
Scott, Jeremy	2013	<i>Creative Writing and Stylistics: Creative and Critical Approaches.</i>		Palgrave Macmillan
<b>Optional reading</b>				
Boland, Eavan & Strand, Mark (eds.)	2001	<i>The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms</i>		W. W. Norton & Company
Carter, Ronald	2011	<i>Language and Creativity. The Art of Common Talk.</i>		Routledge
Culpeper, Jonathan	2001	<i>Language and characterisation in Plays and Texts</i>		Routledge
Goldberg, Natalie	1986	<i>Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within</i>		Shambhala Publications
Jordan-Baker, Craig	2018	Language, landscape and setting	<i>New Writing</i>	<a href="https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14790726.2019.1574837">https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14790726.2019.1574837</a>
Mayers, Tim	2016	Creative Writing Studies: the Past Decade (and the Next)	<i>Journal of Creative Writing Studies</i> 1:1	<a href="https://scholarworks.rit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&amp;context=jcws">https://scholarworks.rit.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&amp;context=jcws</a>
Nicholes, Justin	2017	Measuring Writing	<i>Journal of</i>	<a href="https://scholarworks.rit.edu/jc">https://scholarworks.rit.edu/jc</a>

		Engagement and Emotional Tone in L2 Creative Writing: Implications for Interdisciplinarity	<i>Creative Writing Studies</i> 2:1	<a href="#">ws/vol2/iss1/2</a>
Toolan, Michael	2009	<i>Narrative Progression in the Short Story</i>		John Benjamins

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