



LTC15D150

Title: *HUM New Course Proposal*
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Issue

To approve new Guardian Masterclass course approval for:

How to write children's fiction
Continuation class bibliography

from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee.

Recommendation

To approve the proposals

Resource Implications

None

Risk Implications

None.

Equality and Diversity

None

Timing of decisions

HUM EXEC approved March 2016

HUM LTQC approved March 2016

Further Information

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Attachments

Course proposals

UEA/Guardian Masterclasses.

Course Proposal

1/ Introduction

The Directors of the UEA/Guardian Masterclass programme, with the approval of the UEA/Guardian Masterclass Board, would like to offer a new three-month course in How to Write Children's Fiction.

The basic format of the three month courses in this programme was approved by the University three years ago. Since then we have offered a number of genre specific courses in this format, including How to Write Historical Fiction and How to Write a Psychological Thriller. We have had a positive response from the students taking these courses and would like now to include another offering in Children's Fiction. There are indications from the Guardian two day course programmes that there is an appetite on the part of aspiring writers for such a course.

The three month courses do not lead to a formal qualification, but a Certificate of Attendance is awarded to students who attend on a regular basis and submit a short piece of work for assessment.

The details of the proposed course and its tutor are given below. The course description has been produced in collaboration with the tutor. In the view of the programme directors it conforms to the basic requirements of the three month UEA/Guardian Masterclass offerings.

2/ How to Write Children's Fiction

Led by award-winning author of the Darcy Burdock series and Lorali, Laura Dockrill, this playful and inventive course will encourage your seed of an idea for a children's book to grow, flourish and thrive.

Over twelve weeks of workshops, one-on-one tutorials and lots of writing, you can explore your narrative voice for young people and develop your story. At the end of the course students can expect to achieve complete chapters, clear plot arcs and rounded wholesome characters.

The aim of the course is to create a comfortable, supportive and fun environment to play and stretch out new ideas and get feedback too. The once-a-week meetings will intend to keep pace and momentum, inviting writers of all stages of the process to be brave and tell the story that they've always wanted to... Or, of course, find a new story altogether!

This course is aimed at developing larger pieces of work for middle-grade readers and upwards (a novel that a child could read independently, for example writers and books such as; Jacqueline Wilson, Roald Dahl, Harry Potter, Diary of a Wimpy Kid to Hunger Games and Twilight).

Course programme

Week 1: Well done, you are here! - Monday 7 March

Participants are invited to talk about their previous writing experience (although this is not necessary), their personal aims for the course and what they hope to achieve. Attendees can also bring writing along with them to share or reference material (books they like for inspiration) and talk through any grassroots ideas (of any stage) they have.

Week 2: Finding your writing voice - Monday 14 March

Finding your writing voice for younger readers is the biggest challenge of all. The way young people speak changes all the time, their language constantly evolving. The best way is through memory. For the next few weeks writers will be encouraged to find their writing voice to find the little child within themselves and conjure up their own natural tone through a series of short practical writing exercises eg. a walk to school.

Week 3: Bedrooms, part 1 - Monday 21 March

Using maps that we've created to ignite memory, writers will 're-visit' their own bedrooms when they were young, aiming to resurrect their personality.

Easter break

Week 4: Bedrooms, part 2 - Monday 4 April

Writers will now be encouraged to create a new bedroom for their own fictional character. Having fun with humour, magical qualities, location and time.

Week 5: Who are you and why are you in my head? - Monday 11 April

Get to know your character. Through an interview/Q&A session between you and your character, writers will individually have to understand the interests, likes, dislikes, dreams and worries of their characters. People, young people in particular, know what they like and what they don't. Ensuring our characters are 3D and wholesome, we will spend some time through writing getting to know our characters (yes, even if they are an alien or a zebra or a mermaid - they still need a personality.)

Week 6: All the scary w's: when, what, who, why, where? - Monday 18 April

Thrashing out ideas, we will plant our characters in their scenes, settings and scenarios. Building a landscape, writers can create new worlds and explore territories of their new fictional discovery. Why this story? Why this world?

Week 7: Pockets - Monday 25 April

Writers will place something interesting in the pocket of their character that will lead to an exciting adventure, plot change, a new place.

Week 8: BFF'S and BAES - Monday 2 May

In every good children's book there is a friend, a glimmer of hope at the end of the rainbow. And sometimes it has to get worse before it can get improve. No matter what, a protagonist needs a pal to get them through. Sometimes this friendship is

not always a human, but an animal, an imaginary friend, a shadow or even an inanimate object. We will spend some time creating these and their relationship to your character.

Week 9: Trolls and monsters - Monday 9 May

With light, must come dark. What opposing threats are there for your character? Whether it's a scary Miss Trunchbull or just school altogether, together we will build our obstacle.

Week 10: Writing time and one-to-one tutorials - Monday 16 May

Week 11: Q&A with a secret special visitor - Monday 23 May

Week 12: AGHHHHH- HELP ME - No, don't worry you'll be fine
-
Monday 30 May

Reading, sharing, feedback and what on EARTH to do next...

Profile of the course tutor

Laura Dockrill is a writer, illustrator and performance poet whose work includes the much-loved Darcy Burdock books for children. Named one of the top ten literary talents by The Times, Laura's energy and enthusiasm shines through in both her writing and teaching style.

Assessment

Writers who successfully complete the course will receive a completion certificate from UEA, which will be made on the basis of ongoing assessment and a final submission of at least 3,000 words.

Timings and specifics

The course will have places for 12 participants who will meet for one three-hour session per week (6.30pm - 9.30pm) for a period of three months at the Guardian Building, 90 York Way, Kings Cross, London N1 9GU.

Refunds

Refunds will not be given to students who miss sessions or drop out of the course once the full fee has been paid.

UEA/Guardian Masterclass

Masterclass Proposal

1/ Introduction

In the five years of its operation students taking UEA/Guardian Masterclasses have frequently asked for there to be provision for some form of continuation class after the six or nine month masterclasses have ended. In some cases this has led to informal arrangements for further meetings, as agreed between a tutor and his or her students. In other cases, students have continued to meet with each other, forming what is, in effect, a writers' support group.

A recent instance of this request has occurred in the Biography class, taught by Jon Cook. After discussion with his fellow course director, Kelsey Padjen, and the students concerned, a proposal to pilot a UEA/Guardian Continuity Course was put to the UEA/Guardian Management Board. The Board approved the outline proposal, as a pilot to test the viability of the idea for courses other than the Biography class. The programme directors are now seeking approval from UEA LTQC to pilot this course, starting in May 2016.

2/ Masterclass Outline.

The course is intended for students who have successfully completed the open entry course, How to Write the New Biography, and wish to continue with the biographical project developed in that course. In line with the teaching and learning process initiated in How to Write the New Biography, the continuation class will be organized as a series of tutorial and workshop sessions. While students will continue to develop a greater awareness of the potentials and limitations of biography as a genre, the main focus of this course will be on a substantial development of their own biographical work. Evidence of this development will be assessed through the form of a 15,000 word submission to be submitted within one week of the completion of the masterclass, unless an extension has been agreed.

The course will meet over a twelve month period. Each month there will be one day given over to one-to-one tutorials and one evening devoted to the workshopping of draft material submitted by the students. Students will be encouraged to complete as much of their project as is possible to them in the time available, and certainly have a 15,000 word submission prepared by the end of the course.

Students who successfully complete the course will qualify for a certificate of completion, the UEA/Guardian Masterclass Diploma in Creative Writing.

The masterclass will recruit between 6-10 students each year.

3/ Award and Fee.

The proposed award is in line with the current assessment requirements for the Level 3 UEA/Guardian Masterclass, How to Complete a Work of Fiction. This nine month course requires a submission of 15,000 words at its end. Although it is taught on a more intensive basis, the current nine month course would match in its requirements the contact hours and writing demands of the proposed continuation

class. The students would receive the equivalent of the three months of weekly tuition that completes the current Level 3 class, but, in this case, and at the request of the students, the process would be spread out over a twelve month period of meetings twice a month.

The fee for the continuation class would be £3,000. This means that the combined total fee for the initial six month class, How to Write the New Biography, and the continuation class is the same as the fee for the current nine month class, How to Complete a Novel.

4/ Business Case

The basis of the business case for this course has been sketched above. It arises in response to evidence of demand from the current cohort of UEA/Guardian Masterclass students. The course directors believe that a pilot of the kind outlined here will enable us to test the idea of a class which enhances both the students' writing experience and their qualification level at a fee that they find acceptable.

Jon Cook
January 2016