

**Paper Number:**  
139.226

**Paper Title:**  
Life Writing

**Credit Value:**  
15 credits

**Calendar Prescription:**  
A theoretical and practical study of the nature of life writing, including oral history, biography, and autobiography, personal memoirs and family history.

**Pre and co requisites:**  
None.

**Semester:**  
Semester 1

**Campus:**  
Auckland (Albany)

**Mode:**  
Internal

**E-Learning Category:**  
None (no web component)

**Paper Coordinator:**  
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**Timetable (internal only):**  
The timetable for lectures, laboratories, and tutorials can be found at  
<http://publictimetable.massey.ac.nz/>

**Learning Outcomes:**

- To introduce the theoretical basis of life writing;
- To improve understanding of how personal and non-fictional narratives contribute to New Zealand's cultural history;
- To develop students' awareness of processes for researching human subjects for the writing of biography in related disciplines;
- To develop skills and techniques for reviewing and recording oral history;

- To develop skills and techniques for writing biography and autobiography;
- To develop creative writing skills.

### **Major Topics :**

To produce biographical or autobiographical writing you do not need to study the whole of the history of these genres or to define them definitively. In this course you will read extracts and books in order to identify how writers produce exciting and engaging writing that resonates for you as readers and, to find models for the kind of life writing you want to produce; attend lecture/seminars discussing examples of, and ideas about life writing; and carry out regular writing exercises and practice giving and receiving constructive criticism.

For this first seminar/lecture hour you will usually be required to have read an article or extract. For the second part, the workshop sessions, you will be asked to bring along your writing 'homework' and be prepared to discuss it with other students. Their responses to your writing, as well as comments on features such as structure, word choice, condensation, and imagery will help you to revise and edit your work and to decide on the direction of your major project.

### **Assessment Proportions:**

Internal Assessment : 100%

### **Description of assessment activities :**

Assessment of creative work is difficult and also sometimes quite sensitive as students may be writing about personal material. Assessment, then, will not be based on your 'topic,' but on how effective your composition is in the mode or style that you choose.

<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>	<b>Date due</b>	<b>Min Length</b>
20% Journal Entries	TBA April	1500 words
30% Short writing exercises	TBA April	3 x 1 page
Proposal for major project	TBA May	1 page
40% Major project Completed	TBA June	10 + 1 pages
10% Participation (= attendance / exercises / contribution to discussion)		

### **Due Dates / Deadlines:**

The due dates for assignments (and any other internal assessment components) will be advised at the start of the semester.

Final examination dates can be found at

<http://study.massey.ac.nz/massey/study/programme-course-and-paper-search/paper.cfm>

**Penalties for late assignment submission:**

To Be Advised.

**Assignment turnaround:**

To Be Advised.

**Any specific requirements for passing the paper:**

Weekly attendance at lecture and workshop.

Assignments as above

**Principal Textbook:**

Course Anthology, available from Students Notes in the basement of Quad B. Many examples of and texts on the theory and practice of life writing are on the library shelves at Albany, or available to be ordered from Palmerston North (Turitea campus.) A select bibliography is provided.

**Disclaimer:**

The information contained in this paper outline is correct as of 15/09/2009. Any changes will be notified to students at the beginning of the year.