



School of English, Journalism  
& European Languages

---

## Unit Outline

### HEA255 Confessionalism

Semester 1, 2009  
Launceston

<http://www.utas.edu.au/units/HEA255>

<b>Convenor:</b>	Dr Narelle Shaw  Room: L219 Phone: 6324 3225 Email: N.Shaw@utas.edu.au
<b>Consultation Hours:</b>	Tuesdays 11-12, Fridays 10-11
<b>Unit Description:</b>	Critics argued that Robert Lowell's <i>Life Studies</i> set a precedent for confessional poetry in the mid twentieth-century. The unit analyses the nature of this precedent by investigating links with the lyric, Romanticism and Beat poetry. It examines the confessional impulse inspired by Lowell, chiefly through a study of the work of Sylvia Plath, Ted Hughes and Margaret Scott, and overviews confessional literature from Augustine to Ben Elton.
<b>Unit Aims and Objectives:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Define confessionalism and establish links with the lyric, Romanticism and Beat poetry.</li><li>2. Discuss texts in relation to confessionalism.</li><li>3. Demonstrate knowledge of critical appraisals of confessionalism.</li><li>4. Evaluate the extent to which Lowell's confessionalism constituted a radical new poetics.</li></ol>
<b>Learning Outcomes:</b>	By undertaking this intermediate unit you should build on progress achieved at Level 100 in relation to the following attributes:  <b>Knowledge:</b> You will acquire advanced knowledge of English and practise the application of that knowledge through the appropriate use of terminology and theories related to a range of autobiographical literature. <b>Communication skills:</b> You will communicate effectively and appropriately using various composition types across a range of contexts. Methods of demonstrating such skills will include identification, definition, classification, illustration, comparison, analysis, argumentation. <b>Problem-solving skills:</b> You will develop advanced competencies in information literacy and research; you will identify, explore and resolve critical issues in English.

	<p><b>Global perspective:</b> You will demonstrate awareness of the international influence of literary texts and theory.</p>
<p><b>Required Texts:</b></p>	<p>Robert Lowell, <i>Life Studies</i> (London: Faber, 2001). Sylvia Plath, <i>The Bell Jar</i> (London: Faber, 1999). Ted Hughes, <i>Birthday Letters</i> (London: Faber, 1998). Margaret Scott, <i>Family Album</i> (Sydney: Vintage, 2000) and selected poems, stories, essays [e-reserve] Ben Elton, <i>Blind Faith</i>. (London: Bantam, 2007).</p>
<p><b>When Taught:</b></p>	<p><b>Lecture</b> Venue: LT9 Friday 11-12.50</p> <p><b>Tutorials</b> Venue: L141 Friday 2.10-3.00 (alternate weeks)</p> <p>Regular tutorial attendance is a unit requirement.</p>
<p><b>Assessment:</b></p>	<p>3000 word-essay (60%), 2 hour exam (40%)</p>

## LECTURE/SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Week	Date beginning	Topic	Assignment options due
1	23 February	<i>Life Studies</i> and Confessionalism	
2	2 March	(Cont.)	
3	9 March	(Cont.)	
4	16 March	(Cont.)	
5	23 March	<i>The Bell Jar</i>	
6	30 March	(Cont.)	Option 1 (Lowell): 6 April
7	6 April	<i>Birthday Letters</i>	
<b>Easter Break 9-15 April</b>			
8	20 April	(Cont.)	
9	27 April	(Cont.)	Option 2 (Plath): 27 April
10	4 May	<i>Family Album</i>	
11	11 May	(Cont.)	
12	18 May	<i>Blind Faith</i>	Option 3 (Hughes): 22 May
13	25 May	(Cont.)	
<b>Study Period 1-5 June</b> <b>5 June: deadline for accepting all extended work in the unit</b> <b>Examination Period: 6-23 June</b>			

# ASSESSMENT

Assessment task 1	
<b>Task description</b>	<p>Choose ONE (1) of the following options. Note: you won't be able to write in the exam on the text you choose to write on now.</p> <p><b>Option 1:</b> In confessional poetry the private is a metaphor for the public. To what extent is Lowell a representative sufferer in <i>Life Studies</i>?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p><b>Option 2:</b> Does <i>The Bell Jar</i> represent "a kind of shut box and mirror-looking narcissistic experience" or is it "generally relevant" art?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p><b>Option 3:</b> To what extent does Hughes's verse novel <i>Birthday Letters</i> represent "a total self-examination and self accusation, a total confession"?</p>
<b>Task length</b>	3,000 words
<b>Links to learning outcomes</b>	1, 2, 3, 4
<b>Assessment criteria applying to all essay options</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Effectiveness of introduction</li> <li>2. Relevance and coherence of argument</li> <li>3. Effectiveness of conclusion</li> <li>4. Scope of textual referencing</li> <li>5. Use of critics</li> <li>6. Attention to expression, spelling, proof-reading, MLA Style</li> </ol>
<b>Dates due</b>	<p>Option 1 (Lowell): Monday 6 April</p> <p>Option 2 (Plath): Monday 27 April</p> <p>Option 3 (Hughes): Friday 22 May</p>

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Submission of Assignments

Students are required to submit a signed cover sheet with every assignment. This includes a declaration that all material submitted is their own work except where there is clear acknowledgement or reference to the work of others and that they have read the University statement on Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism) on the University website at [www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism](http://www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism) or in the Student Information Handbook. Assignment cover sheets are available from the School office or the School website. **Assignments submitted without a signed cover sheet will not be marked.** Students who submit assignments without a signed cover sheet will be contacted once via their UTAS email address; in such instances the cover sheet must be completed within two weeks of the due date.

All assignments must be submitted in hard-copy (not by email) and placed in the essay box at the School office on or before 5pm on the due date. Students are required to keep copies of all submitted assignments. Assignments submitted on time will be returned within three weeks of the due date; once on time assignments have been returned no further late assignments will be accepted. All marked assignments will be returned in tutorials unless otherwise advised.

### Late Assignments

Late submissions will be penalized as follows: 5% of the available marks for the first day, and then 2% per working day thereafter. Late work will be accepted without penalty if accompanied by a medical certificate for the relevant period or a letter from a counsellor in the case of a serious non-medical reason.

### Difficulties with your Studies

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you should raise these with your lecturer and/or one of the following Student Services staff as soon as possible:

- Learning Skills Adviser
- Disability Adviser
- Careers Adviser
- Student Counsellor

### University Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

"**Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at <http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see <http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/>."

**The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed.**

### Assignment Presentation

The English discipline uses MLA Style, which is characterized by in-text referencing and a list of works cited. See the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed. Ed. Joseph Gibaldi (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003). For a brief introduction, refer to [http://www.utas.edu.au/english/english1/mla\\_citation\\_syst.doc](http://www.utas.edu.au/english/english1/mla_citation_syst.doc), MLA Citations System: A Brief Guide.

### Marking Scale

The following distribution of marks and grades is applied in assessing your work:

- High Distinction (HD)—80-100%
- Distinction (DN)—70-79%
- Credit (CR)—60-69%
- Pass (PP)—50-59%
- Fail (NN)—0-49%

All marks are subject to moderation.

### IT Support

Learning online—for online learning and Vista support – <http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/>

Information Technology Services—for general IT Support (includes link to UTAS download website) <http://www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk/student/index.html>

Library Services—for information literacy support – <http://www.utas.edu.au/library/>  
Help Desk (email [HelpDesk@utas.edu.au](mailto:HelpDesk@utas.edu.au) or 6226 1818, within University 1818)