

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS (MA)

CREATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

These Syllabuses apply to candidates admitted to the Master of Arts in the field of Creative Communications in the academic year 2025-26 and thereafter.

The Master of Arts in the field of Creative Communications programme is offered full-time over one year. This unique academic programme opens the often mysterious door of creativity as nothing less now than a necessity for emerging leadership, professional promotion, and creative collaborations across every disciplinary and multilingual background. Top CEOs and industry leaders already recognize the key of creativity to their success stories.

With an emphasis on language and discourse, and rooted in prestigious research and practice at HKU, the MA welcomes all emerging professionals to expand their global footprint and creative impact. The MA opens out creative foundations and futures of professional leadership, whether in an individual project, for example, such as a film or memoir; or in a professional context, such as app development or architecture. Participants in the programme will discover and expand their creative adaptability and competitive muscle in theory and practice, life-changing and transformative for expanding audience, clients, and professional impact.

The programme consists of 60 credits, including two compulsory 9-credit courses, five 6-credit elective courses that cover different areas of creative practice, and a compulsory 12-credit Capstone Experience.

Compulsory Courses

ENGL7507. Creative Foundations: Macro Structure and History (9 credits)

This foundations course offers special focus on the intercultural histories and practices of creative discourse, structure and impact. Students will explore the macro fluid histories and structures of creativity and construction in genre and expectation. This macro course will include emphasis on the legacies of creative discourse and practice in English and monolingual contexts. Included will be the urgent history and contemporary architecture and structure for creativity in evolving and international frames and contexts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

(This course is cross-listed with the Master of Fine Arts in the field of Creative Writing in English programme)

ENGL7512. Constructing and Staging Creative Perspective (9 credits)

Reading and observing widely is essential to framing the array of choices that a creative perspective demands. Creative perspectives may be said, more accurately, to be drawn from design: active “watching” and “directing” the construction of creative content. Therefore, in

this unique design studio, students will begin to articulate and study their own creative perspectives on an ongoing and selected project, brought forward from work or personal development. This course aims to equip students with the skills and critical frameworks necessary to develop scripts, storyboards, and creative treatments for various mediums, including film, games, social media content, music, marketing deliverables, exhibitions, and other art forms. This course will also build toward each student's submission in the Happiness Project of Semester 2. The course will therefore explore advanced elements of creative craft and articulation in monolingual and multilingual contexts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7995. Capstone Experience: The Happiness Project (12 credits)

Creative communications positions as foundational that any project, whether of writing, video, architecture, teaching materials or rhetorical presentation, needs a deep understanding and infusion of creative values, rooted in creative studies, to let it move its audience into an unforgettable and powerful emotional impact. Creative communications, after all, does not take for granted the beauty -- and thus, the urgent study and practice -- of connecting with those we do not know, across cultures and languages, ages and tastes, and even connecting better with those we do know well.

Drawing from ENGL7512, this course takes a special angle of connection, construction, and creative communications as an act of creative "happiness." Happiness offers a 21st century field of inquiry; new interdisciplinary approaches are important for studying closely and at length how our creative projects become communicatively "memorable," that is, of lasting and felt impact for our audiences.

This course will culminate in the production of a powerful and creative perspective in communications and narration for the life story of your own project or design, through small guided tutorial and workshop groups. Students will learn to build a higher register of "happiness" in audiences, across languages and cultures. This capstone course, therefore, will bring your own project new frames of creative communications and development, exploring questions of ideals, rituals, and play with regard to human relationships and societies. In the capstone process, students are invited to explore their personal vulnerability or resistance to certain "master plots" and conventions of their field, to challenge familiar and often unchallenged ideologies, and to become powerful players in their own acts of building and constructing creative communication that lasts through time.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

ENGL7509. Creative Life Stories: Narrating the Life Story of a Project, Person or Dream (6 credits)

In this course, students will study, and frame with increasing accuracy, their own creative signatures of history, practice, and voice within their chosen field. In particular, students will

focus on the history and practice of creatively “telling” the life story of a project, person, or dream that pertains to exploring the life of their own projects. In this course of creative communications and “authorship,” whether authoring a novel, a project, class materials, a film or presentation, students will learn how to cast creative light on what is otherwise left unseen and unfelt without their illumination. Students will study the discipline of creative impact in telling and constructing a life narrative, especially in relation to the creator’s own decisions for “what is at stake” on creative perspective. The course therefore can also pave the way, for exploring, generation to generation, what constitutes an ‘experimental’ work, from both individual and intercultural perspectives.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7510. Workshopping Your Creative Vision (6 credits)

This course will open the frames of creative communications to wider and communal contexts of practice and reception. It will explore the many “built environments” of creative communications: forging new communities and building excitement around staging powerful new creative perspectives on a growing personal or professional project. In innovative and direct practice and study, students will be given opportunities communally to stage and share excerpts from their own new creative perspectives on a developing project, guided in workshop by creative professionals. No matter what the project or genre, students will receive mentorship with creative professionals to help understand the totality of a creative “environment.”

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7514. Internship: The History of Practice (6 credits)

This course responds to a 21st century growing demand for every individual to explore creativity and reinvent a first-rate profile for top competitive positions and collaborative leadership, locally and internationally.

This course also offers students an opportunity to engage in experiential learning through self-initiated internships in various fields related to Creative Writing or Creative Communications. Students will have the flexibility to choose their internship host from a curated list of partner organisations or pursue their own options, fostering a personalised learning experience in Hong Kong. Students also have the option to participate in internal internship opportunities offered by the university. The course requires a minimum of 40 contact hours of service, allowing students to immerse themselves fully in a professional environment.

Finally, this course brings together a 21st century interdisciplinary vision and design from around the world, offering students a contemporary and fertile environment of knowledge acquisition, skill-based experiential learning, and networking with potential colleagues and employers in their chosen field of creative communications and writing.

Assessment: 100% coursework (graded on a distinction/pass/fail basis)

(This course is cross-listed with the Master of Fine Arts in the field of Creative Writing in English programme)

ENGL7518. Corporate Storytelling (6 credits)

Storytelling is not just a tradition confined to novels — it extends to nearly every facet of human life, including the life of a business. Corporate storytelling is the art of using narrative techniques to bring meaning and vitality to business practices. This course explores effective storytelling as a core element of corporate communications, teaching students how to craft captivating narratives that define and amplify a company's values, essence, and vision. By enriching and extending the life of a company or brand, storytelling becomes a powerful tool for connection and growth. Corporate stories can take many forms — advertisements, business proposals, presentations, and digital content such as blogs or vlogs. Students will engage with these platforms to learn how to frame narratives that breathe life into a company's story and create deeper meaning for its stakeholders.

Assessment: 100% coursework

(This course is cross-listed with the Master of Fine Arts in the field of Creative Writing in English programme)

ENGL7519. Building Characters Across Media (6 credits)

This course delves into the art and craft of creating multidimensional characters that resonate across diverse storytelling platforms, such as novels, short stories, film, social media, video games, and more. Students will explore how to apply characterisation techniques across different mediums by addressing key fundamentals of character such as dialogue, thought, action, memory and body/interactivity.

Through a combination of analysis, comparative studies, collaborative exercises, and project-based work, students will develop the skills needed to craft characters with depth, consistency, and versatility. The course emphasises tailoring characters to suit the unique demands of each medium — whether writing for the screen, the page, or other immersive and interactive environments. By the end of the course, students will have the tools and knowledge to create compelling, fully realised characters that successfully connect with audiences across platforms.

Assessment: 100% coursework

(This course is cross-listed with the Master of Fine Arts in the field of Creative Writing in English programme)

ENGL7601. Imagining Heritage in New Media Art (6 credits)

This course critically explores the intersection of cultural heritage, identity, and the digital visual arts through contemporary artistic practices. Students will engage in reimagining and redefining heritage by incorporating transmedia and multimedia techniques. Through a combination of personal experiences and broader cultural frameworks, students will employ innovative artistic strategies to reinterpret heritage in the digital age. The course encourages advanced critical thinking and self-reflection, providing an environment for students to challenge traditional views on identity and heritage through the creative arts. Students who

complete this course will develop a more critical understanding of the dynamic relationship between heritage studies, curatorial practices, and digital media ecosystems.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7602. Exhibition Design (6 credits)

This course provides an in-depth exploration of modern curatorial practices within the sphere of exhibition art. The course centres on the dynamic relationship between audience and artwork, with particular emphasis on the interactive media arts. Students will explore and critique innovative exhibition design methods and digital archiving techniques, and develop an understanding of contemporary curatorial methodologies. Through detailed case studies of digital exhibitions, students will gain practical insights into real-world applications. Students will experiment with strategies that merge physical and virtual spaces, and expand the conventional understanding of exhibition environments. Students will also survey theories of curatorship as well as the digital resources relevant to the industry. A key objective of the course is to encourage students to conceive innovative exhibitions that challenge and push the boundaries of traditional viewership. This course aims to inspire a new generation of curators who are equipped to navigate and shape the future of exhibition art.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7603. Ludic Stories: Writing for Digital Narratives (6 credits)

This course presents students with a detailed primer on writing for digital narratives. The course begins with an overview of the principles of storytelling, exploring traditional narrative structures and how they adapt to digital formats. Students will then gain hands-on experience with various digital tools, learning how to combine text, graphics, audio, and video to create engaging multimedia narratives. Over the semester, students will learn and develop practical and professional techniques for writing digital narratives through media such as digital games, blogs, podcasts, wikis, interactive web stories, and social media posts. Simultaneously, students will engage with a selection of provocative ludic stories that will challenge their understanding of both traditional and digital writing. Weekly workshoping of coursework will be supplemented with in-class case studies, group discussions, and playful activities. At the conclusion of the course, using software such as Twine or Articy, students will produce their own interactive digital narratives. No programming will be required for the course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7604. [Playing with] Digital Media: Navigating the Metaverse (6 credits)

This survey course playfully explores the swiftly developing world of digital media. Given that students will be familiar with many forms of digital media, this course endeavours to challenge the underlying assumptions of our digital media usage and consumption, with the goal of a richer understanding of how to most effectively utilize it in both professional and personal

settings. The course will touch upon a number of current digital media topics, including the battle of social media platforms X and BlueSky, the steady decline of platforms such as Facebook, the boom and collapse of the NFT/crypto market, the rise of games and the spread of gaming culture, blogging & memes as new forms of communication, streaming (both to audiences and in isolation), and the onset of AI. Weekly assignments will get students to reevaluate and critique their expectations of digital media and offer new avenues to engage with the digital world, ultimately leading to the final construction of a unique digital portfolio.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7605. Playful Creation: Meaningful Game Design (6 credits)

This introductory course investigates how we can embody the spirit of meaningful, creative play into the design of games. In the world today, games have become a pervasive part of our lives, not only for leisure but also in the form of “gamified” labour. In this context, what does it mean to design a game that goes beyond entertainment to offer a meaningful, transformative experience for the player? To answer this question, students will embark on a journey encompassing the meticulous crafting of game worlds, the delicate balancing of gameplay systems, and the lively performance of roleplaying sessions, among others. Weekly readings will inform the students’ participation in class workshops, leading up to the final production of a game demo. No programming will be needed for the course. No prior experience with games is necessary.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7606. Interdisciplinary Multimedia Narratives (6 credits)

This course will guide students through the comprehensive process of conceptualizing, developing, and executing multimedia projects. By employing an interdisciplinary approach and engaging with a diverse range of media, the course places a strong emphasis on both artistic and narrative techniques essential for crafting cohesive and compelling multimedia experiences. Through case studies and a survey through a body of influential multimedia artworks and campaigns, students will develop and execute their own creative project and will acquire both theoretical knowledge and practical insights into the multifaceted domain of multimedia design. This detailed exploration encompasses a variety of disciplines, including filmmaking, music design, performance art, and technology, among others. By the end of this course, students will have cultivated critical frameworks for analysing the interplay between various media forms and their collective impact on narrative storytelling.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7607. Roleplaying Games: Performance and Practice (6 credits)

This course provides an in-depth examination of non-digital roleplaying games, a genre that has seen a significant surge in popularity over the past decade. Non-digital roleplaying games,

which can be conducted around a table with the optional use of miniature figurines or performed as a form of improvisational theatre, have captivated a global audience. From the iconic *Dungeons and Dragons* to the immersive *Werewolf*, individuals worldwide are increasingly participating in collective performative roleplay.

However, what precisely constitutes roleplaying? How is this practice manifested across diverse cultural and communal contexts? Moreover, how can we discern the distinctions and commonalities among various roleplaying communities? This course will address these critical inquiries through a multifaceted approach that will involve students in historical research, comparative case studies, game design, and hands-on experiential learning. By engaging with these methodologies, students will cultivate a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the transformative potential inherent in contemporary roleplaying. Upon completion of the course, participants will possess a nuanced comprehension of roleplaying as an innovative and creative practice. Additionally, they will gain insights into the development and operationalization of roleplaying games within a spectrum of environments and settings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7608. The Ethics of Communication and (Mis)Representation (6 credits)

This course explores into the complex ethical considerations surrounding communication and representation in various contexts, including media, literature, art, and everyday interactions. Students will critically examine the ways in which individuals and groups are portrayed, the impact of these representations on society, and the responsibilities that come with the power of communication. Through discussions, case studies, and practical exercises, students will explore topics such as cultural appropriation, stereotypes, misrepresentation, and the power dynamics inherent in communication. The course will also address issues related to truth-telling, privacy, consent, and the ethical use of language and imagery in different forms of communication. Students who complete this course will have developed a more critical relationship to forms of media consumption and production, as well as be able to engage critically with current debates on the obligations of the creative media to their publics.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7609. Creative Adaptation (6 credits)

This course explores the art and practice of adaptation in literature, film, theatre, and other forms of media. Students will examine the process of transforming existing texts into new works, considering questions of fidelity, creativity, and interpretation. Through the study of adaptation theory and analysis of specific case studies, students will gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities inherent in adaptation. Topics covered include adaptation as a form of cultural translation, the role of adaptation in shaping narratives across different mediums, and the ethics of adaptation. Students will engage in hands-on projects to apply adaptation principles to their own creative work, culminating in a final project that demonstrates their understanding of adaptation concepts and techniques.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7610. Theatre and Performance (6 credits)

This course will introduce students to the conceptual possibilities of the Performing Arts, where they will learn how creative performance intersects with innovative thinking, community enrichment, and technology. Adopting a dramaturgical approach that will combine textual analysis, technological insight, and theories of spectatorship, students will work towards the realisation of a performance or a theatre piece. Through practical project work as well as the development of analytical skills that will focus on the triangulated relationship between dramatic text, image, and action, students will develop a working critical vocabulary that will encompass frameworks derived from the latest developments in scholarship on global theatrical practices, post-colonial theory, and ideas of socially engaged performances. At the end of this course, students will have a well-developed understanding of key dramaturgical concepts and will be able to deploy dramaturgical analysis to evaluate, critique, and participate in spheres of creative performance.

Assessment: 100% coursework

(This course is cross-listed with the Master of Fine Arts in the field of Creative Writing in English programme)

ENGL7611. Artistic Creativity and Narrative in Music Design (6 credits)

This course is dedicated to fostering a creative vision in music design, with a concentrated emphasis on enhancing artistic creativity and exploring the narrative potential of music. By examining various musical genres and their historical contexts, students will develop their own forms of musical expression that will complement forms of narrative art in contemporary creative practice. The course will focus on the dynamic interactions between music and other multimedia art forms, such as film, and students will develop a critical understanding of the strategic role music design plays within these domains. At the core of this course is the exploration of music as a narrative medium. Students will develop their own music design involving expressing their life stories through musical compositions and or integrating music into their existing multimedia projects.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7612. Short Film Production (6 credits)

This course explores short film production as a creative and analytical process, integrating theoretical knowledge, film analysis, and practical filmmaking skills. Students will engage with film theory, the history of film production, and critical discussions on aesthetics to analyse the art of short filmmaking while applying this knowledge to their own creative projects. The course emphasizes the importance of narrative structure and character development in short film storytelling, teaching students how to build engaging stories within limited time frames. Group projects will sharpen students' skills in directing, cinematography, sound design, and

editing specifically tailored to short film production. Students will also discuss and critique a variety of short films from different genres and styles, fostering their critical analysis skills. The course emphasizes the development of critical thinking, cultural awareness, technical proficiency in filmmaking, and collaborative communication skills.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7613. Integrated Marketing Communications (6 credits)

This course examines the theory and practice of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC), focusing on how brands create consistent and impactful messaging across multiple platforms to engage diverse audiences. Designed for aspiring marketing professionals, the curriculum blends theoretical foundations with practical applications, preparing students to create and execute effective integrated marketing campaigns in today's digital-first environment. This course includes interactive sharing sessions with experienced marketing professionals from various specialisations, such as digital marketing, branding, and public relations. Through these sessions, students will have the opportunity to learn directly from industry experts, engage in meaningful discussions, and participate in Q&A segments to gain insights into real-world practices and emerging industry trends.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7614. Documentary Filmmaking (6 credits)

This course explores the art and craft of documentary filmmaking, focusing on how filmmakers use real-world subjects to tell compelling stories. Students will examine definitions of the documentary film, and engage in critical discussions about the genre's history and evolution in the documentation of realities. The course will survey various documentary styles and techniques, including expository, participatory, observational, and reflexive formats. Through practical workshops and assignments, students will engage with technical skills necessary for documentary production, including research, scripting, camera operation, sound recording, and editing. Students will also examine the ethical considerations of documentary filmmaking and think critically about the obligations owed by creators to their subjects and communities. Through hands-on projects and critical analysis, students will learn to create their own documentaries that balance creative storytelling with factual accuracy and cultural sensitivity.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENGL7615. Content Marketing: Strategy, Creation, and Social Media Management (6 credits)

This course focuses on the principles and practices of content marketing, with an emphasis on creating and managing social media accounts to achieve specific objectives for a defined target audience. Students will learn how to develop persuasive content strategies, craft engaging short-form content, and analyse performance metrics to optimize their campaigns. Through

hands-on experience, students will create and manage their own social media pages, experiment with various content formats, and refine their storytelling skills to build audience engagement.

Assessment: 100% coursework
