

DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURES IN ENGLISH

Norval Edwards, BA UWI, MA, PhD *York*
– Head of Department

WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT

Teaching and Learning

In the 2011 -2012 academic year, the Department of Literatures in English strategically focused on curricular reform and public outreach to the secondary schools. This strategic focus emerged from the Department's own internal curriculum planning reviews, and the specific mandate by the Principal that the Department should implement effective strategies to increase enrollment by promoting the UWI, Mona Campus as a centre of excellence for literary studies. The Department sought to achieve both goals by leveraging its strengths in Anglophone Caribbean literary and cultural studies and Creative Writing, particularly its record of alumni who are distinguished writers and critics (such as Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott, the scholar-poets Edward Baugh, Mervyn Morris, Velma Pollard, and new writers such as Marlon James, Kei Miller, and Tanya Shirley). Additionally, the Department developed three new film courses thus expanding its film studies programme and facilitating the offering of a film studies minor (for the 2012-2013 academic year).



Curriculum Development

Creative Writing

In the year under review, the Department implemented a practitioner-centred approach to revising and expanding the Creative Writing curriculum. Weekend workshops conducted by internationally acclaimed writers such as Earl Lovelace (November 12, 2011) and Olive Senior (January 21, 2012) were pivotal to this initiative. These workshops allowed aspiring writers to benefit from the experiences and insights of master practitioners. The feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive and they expressed their appreciation for the practical pedagogical approaches of the writers - the nuts and bolts approach to mastering craft. Subsequently, the Department enlisted three published writers to help draft new Creative Writing courses to increase its options in this area and facilitate the introduction of an undergraduate Minor and a graduate program (MFA) in Creative Writing. The Department also appointed Ms Tanya Shirley, an adjunct lecturer and a talented published poet, to coordinate these initiatives.

Film Studies

At the April 2012 meeting of the Faculty Board, the Department proposed the introduction of a Minor in Film Studies to be offered in collaboration with the Institute of Caribbean Studies, CARIMAC, and the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. The Minor will promote valuable interdepartmental collaboration and considerably expand course offerings in the Department. Three new courses have been introduced to facilitate the Minor: LITS2806: Reggae Films: Screening the Caribbean, LITS2906: Adaptation: Novel to Film, and LITS3806: Popular Film and Ideology. It is projected that LITS2806: Reggae Films could be offered during the summer semester as an income earning course targeting visiting international students and groups, and hopefully facilitating greater interaction between the Department, students, and practitioners through the hosting of guest lectures and seminars.

New Courses

The Department submitted a proposal to for a course on Reggae Narratives to FAQAC which duly reviewed and returned it to the Department for revision.

Interdisciplinary and Interdepartmental Initiatives

- The Department completed and submitted its contribution to the proposal for a new BA in Literature and Language Education. The proposal has not yet been submitted to FAQAC, but it will hopefully be reviewed and approved in time for the new degree programme to be offered in the 2013-2014 academic year.
- The Department met with Dr. Lorna Down from the School of Education to discuss potential collaboration in developing and teaching courses in children's literature and environmental literature, and creating a joint MA in Literature and the Teaching of English.
- The Department and the Philip Sherlock Centre for the Creative Arts produced a draft proposal for a minor in Theatre Studies but the initiative stalled due to certain curricular and administrative glitches. Both departments are committed to resolving the problem so that a Minor in Theatre Studies will be available in 2013-14.
- Dr. Rachel Moseley-Wood, the Department's Film Studies specialist, initiated preliminary discussion with CARIMAC regarding the feasibility of a minor in Film and Media Studies. No concrete proposals emerged from the discussion with CARIMAC but, as reported above, the department's three new film courses (LITS2906: Adaptation: Novel to Film; LITS2806) plus the film courses from the Institute of Caribbean Studies and the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures will constitute the core requirements and electives of the Minor in Film Studies to be offered in the 2012-2013 academic year.

BUS Quality Reviews

The Department met with Dr. Anna Perkins from the Quality Assurance Unit on Friday, March 9, 2012 to discuss the forthcoming Quality Assurance Review exercise slated for December 2012. Dr. Perkins' orientation presentation was timely and quite useful in facilitating the Department's preparation for the Review.

Graduate Studies and Research

The Department resumed the MA programme this year with a small cohort of students. The low class size and the lack of staff resulted in only four courses being offered instead of the normal quota of six, hence students had to do electives in other departments.

The Department noted with great concern the increasing challenges to graduate students and the negative impact of the harsh economic climate on student productivity and throughput. Another major concern was the noticeable decline in the quality of graduate students entering the programme, and the Department, while cognizant of the need for increased enrollment, has established more rigorous vetting of applicants.

Student-Oriented Activities

The Department hosted its annual social for incoming students on November 3, 2011. Students interacted with lecturers and administrative staff in a relaxed setting that allowed cordial and useful conversation regarding academic and administrative procedures, study skills, critical thinking, choosing courses, and the optimal mix of core requirements and electives over the three years of the undergraduate programme.

Unfortunately, due to conflicting schedules, the Department was unable to stage its annual Career Seminar for undergraduate students, but selected students were given scholarships (courtesy of Ms Winsome Minott of Artistic Expressions) to attend the Writers' Forum and Seminar on Writing as a Business at the Knutsford Court Hotel on May 14-15, 2012.

The Department was unable to implement a pilot peer-mentoring project in 2011-2012 to assist students in academic writing, study skills, and other

required competencies, because Ms. Shala Alert, the graduate student tasked with coordinating the project, was on leave of absence for the year.

Scholarly Activities and Outreach

The Department's outreach activities in 2011-2012 included the following:

Public Lectures

- The Department hosted a public lecture by Damian “Junior Gong” Marley at the Assembly Hall on February 10, 2012.
- Professor Susan Gingell, visiting scholar from the University of Saskatchewan, gave a public lecture, “‘Can you spare a little social change, please?’ Theorizing and Exemplifying the Dub City - Walker in the Cosmopolis” on Thursday, February 16, 2012 in the New Education Lecture Theatre.
- E26D: Creative Writing – Prose Fiction students gave a public reading of their work on Thursday, April 19, 2012 in the Neville Hall Lecture Theatre.
- **The Edward Baugh Distinguished Lecture Series:** On November 13, 2011, The acclaimed Trinidadian writer, Earl Lovelace delivered the Fifth Edward Baugh Distinguished Lecture at the Sir Philip Sherlock Centre for the Creative Arts on the topic Reclaiming Rebellion.
- **March is Literatures in English Month:** As part of its ongoing outreach initiative for 2011-2012, the Department declared March as Literatures in English month. The outreach activities consisted of “March is Movie Month at Mona,” a series of public screenings, presentations and lectures on Jamaican film, co-sponsored by the Institute of Caribbean Studies, and a series of literary readings held on March 20 and 27, 2012 titled “Love Affair with Literature which offered lovers of literature an opportunity to hear both established and aspiring writers. Dr. Rachel Moseley-Wood and Ms Tanya Shirley efficiently and

energetically coordinated the film lecture series and the literary readings respectively.

March is Movie Month at Mona Lecture Schedule

- March 02, 2012 - Neville Hall Lecture Theatre (N1) - Barbara Blake Hannah
- March 09, 2012 - Neville Hall Lecture Theatre (N1) - Chris Browne
- March 16, 2012 - Neville Hall Lecture Theatre (N1) - Storm Saulter
- March 23, 2012 - Neville Hall Lecture Theatre (N1) - Esther Figueroa
- March 30, 2012 - Neville Hall Lecture Theatre (N1) - Franklyn St. Juste
- **Love Affair with Literature Schedule**
- March 13, 2012 - New Education Lecture Theatre (NELT)
Gabrielle Owens, Jamel Hall, Andrew Stone, Curdella Forbes, Diana McCauley and Ann-Margaret Lim
- March 20, 2012 - N2
Renee Moulton, Monica Minott, Karen Hutchinson, Mervyn Morris, Sharon Leach and Garfield Ellis

Book Launches

- December 11, 2011: Olive Senior, *Dancing Lessons*

Staff / Postgraduate Seminar Series

The Department's Staff / Postgraduate Seminar Series featured the following presenters for the 2011/2012 academic year.

Visiting Scholars

- Dr. Curdella Forbes, Professor of Caribbean Literature at Howard University, presented a paper on “Ethics, Representation and the Arts of Solitude in Edwidge Danticat’s Haiti” on Friday, October 28, 2011.
- Carrie Walker, Fulbright Scholar from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, presented a paper on “Letter Writing, Gender Equity and Human Rights. On Friday, November 18, 2011.
- Dr. Erin MacLeod, Postdoctoral Fellow, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, presented a paper titled “Narrating Identity: Ethiopians and Rastafari” on Friday, December 2, 2011.
- Kei Miller, acclaimed Jamaican Writer and Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Glasgow presented on the topic ‘From the Letters of Bustamante to the Tweets of Busta Rhymes: Some Thoughts on Jamaican Epistolography’ on Friday, April 13, 2012.
- Dr. Lucy Evans, lecturer at the University of Leicester, presented on the topic: “Writing Kingston: Urban Communities in Kwame Dawes’ *A Place to Hide and Other Stories*”, Friday, April 27, 2012.

Literatures in English Graduate Students

- Dwight Pennycooke, MPhil candidate, presented on the topic in “Hybrid Subjectivity in South Asian Fiction in English (with specific reference to Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*)” on Friday, April 20, 2012.

Workshops

Creative Writing Workshops

- November 12, 2011: Earl Lovelace conducted a Writing Workshop at the Mona Visitors Lodge

- January 21, 2012: Olive Senior conducted a Writing Workshop at the Faculty of Law Seminar room One.

CAPE Literatures in English Workshops

The Department of Literatures in English participated in a major way in the Faculty of Humanities and Education CAPE Workshops Series for the 2011-2012 academic year. On April 20 and 27, 2012, lecturers from the department presented lectures on seven prescribed CAPE Literatures in English texts. The well-received lectures certainly helped to boost institutional outreach efforts and presented a positive image of literary scholarship at UWI to high school students.

Interactive Discussion

CXC and CAPE Literature Texts

- Tuesday, November 15, 2011: Earl Lovelace discussed his novel, *The Wine of Astonishment* with over a thousand high school students in the Graduation Tent.
- Friday, January 20, 2012: Olive Senior discussed her poetry collection, *Gardening in the Tropics*, with over two hundred high school students in the Neville Hall Lecture Theatre.
- Monday, March 12, 2012: Curdella Forbes discussed her collection of short fiction, *Songs of Silence* with over three hundred high school students at the Assembly Hall.

Interactive Discussion –Bethlehem and Church Teacher Colleges

- Thursday, April 19, 2012 : Paulette Ramsay discussed her novella, *Aunt Jen*, with students from Bethlehem, Mico, and Church at the Multifunction Room in the Main Library.

Links with Other Universities (Local)

On May 14, 2012, Dr. Norval Edwards served as the External Examiner for Northern Caribbean University's Language and Content examination for their final-year students.

Initiatives in Collaboration (Regional and International)

Exchange with Malmö University:

Dr. Asko Kauppinen and Dr. Petra Ragnestam from Malmö University visited the Department, April 14-22, 2012, to discuss new modes of collaboration to replace the the current Exchange programme which will expire at the end of the 2012-2013 academic year.

International Organizations / Professional Achievement

Dr. Michael Bucknor served his second year as Chair of the Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS) Ms. Tanya Shirley, a PhD candidate and temporary lecturer in Literatures in English, is Treasurer of ACLALS.

Staff Matters

The Department continued to face serious personnel and curricular problems due to the retirement of Dr. Victor Chang and the departure of Ms. Lisa Brown, who were the two drama and Shakespeare specialists. In the year under review, Dr. Chang graciously agreed to teach LITS3204: Shakespeare I, and a part-time lecturer, Ms. Carolyn Allen, taught the Level I drama course (LITS1003: Introduction to Drama) and LITS2505: West Indian Drama. Without a drama specialist, the Department's programme will suffer from a paucity of courses in the genre, thus depriving students of a balanced and well-rounded literary studies curriculum. The matter is an urgent one which has been raised with the Principal and the Dean, and the Department is still hopeful that it will be resolved despite the budgetary constraints and other factors which have so far stymied a permanent appointment.

PAPERS PRESENTED

Michael Bucknor.

- “Canadian Windrush: Austin Clarke and the Literary Caribbean Diaspora” Round Table presentation, “Who Belongs to Postwar West Indian Literature 2,” 37th Annual Conference of the Caribbean Studies Conference, “Unpacking Caribbean Citizenship(s): Rights, Participation and Belonging,” May 28 – June 1, 2012, Creole Beach Hotel, Guadeloupe, French W.I. (8 pages)
- “Conceptualizing the Discursive Performance of Afro-Caribbean Masculinities in Austin Clarke’s *The Origin of Waves*,” Women’s Suffrage Movement Symposium “Gender Transformation: Moving Beyond Boundaries,” March 6-9, 2012, College of the Bahamas, The Bahamas. (13 pages)
- “Ten ‘Tory In a One’: Olive Senior’s *Dancing Lessons*” Launch Talk at Department of Literatures in English and WIACLALS Book Launch, December 11, 2011, University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica. (8 Pages)
- “Beyond Windrush and the Black Atlantic: Austin Clarke, Race and the Transformation of the Anglophone Caribbean Literary Landscape,” 30th Anniversary of West Indian Literature Conference, “Literature and Social Transformation,” October 13 to 15, 2011, St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad. (12 pages)
- “The Voice from the Bottom of the Well’: Olive Senior’s ‘Grung’/Ground(ed) Poetics” Conference in Honour of Bridget Brereton, Barbara Lalla and Ian Robertson, “Reassembling the Fragments,” August 25-27, 2011, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad. (12 pages)

Carolyn Cooper

- “Deporting Portia: Creole Language Politics in the Jamaica Labour Party’s Advertising Campaign for the 2011 General

Election in Jamaica”, 37th annual Caribbean Studies Association Conference, May/June 2012, Le Gosier, Guadeloupe

- “‘One of a Handful Still Alive’: Strains of Resistance in the Fiction of Jamaica Kincaid,” 13th International Conference of the Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars, Paramaribo, Suriname, May 2012. An earlier version presented at the 2nd Conference on Ethnicity, Race, & Indigenous Peoples in Latin America & the Caribbean, University of California, San Diego, November 2011. Also presented at the 30th annual West Indian Literature Conference, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, October 13-15, 2011
- “‘We’re More Than a Beach, We’re a Country’: Exploring the Linkages between Tourism, Culture and the Creative Industries in a Caribbean context,” Keynote lecture, 2nd International Tourism Conference, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, January 2012
- “Skin-bleaching: Contested Identities in Contemporary Jamaica,” 1st International Scientific Conference, “Dying to be Beautiful”: Body Image, Eating Disorders and Health in the Caribbean,” University of the West Indies, Mona, Western Jamaica Campus, January 2012

Mawuena Logan

- “Listen to the Modern Griot: Assessing and Evaluating the Continent in the Postcolonial Novel.” International Conference, “Two Decades of Democracy and Governance in Africa: Lessons Learned, Challenges and Prospects,” Dakar, Senegal (June 20-22, 2011) (12 pages).

Anthea Morrison

- “The Creative Writer as Scribe”. 30th Annual West Indian Literature Conference, UWI, St. Augustine, October 13-15, 2011.

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Journal Articles

- * Bucknor, Michael. Review of The Fullness of Everything, by Patricia Powell. *Journal of West Indian Literature* 20.1.(2011): 106-109. (4 pages)
- * Edwards, Norval. “Contexts, Criticism, and Quarrels: A Reflection on Edward Baugh’s “The West Indian Writer and His Quarrel with History””. *Small Axe* 38 (July 2012): 99-107. (9 pages)
- * Logan, Mawuena. “Peter Abrahams: The “Essential” Message in His Literary Works and Artistic Vision.” *Cultural Arts: A Journal for South-North Cultural and Media Studies* (Special Issue) 25.4 (Dec. 2011): 514-528. (15 pages)
- * Morrison, Anthea. “Of Home Soil and Rainbows: Rooted Travelers in Curdella Forbes’ *A Permanent Freedom*. *Journal of Caribbean Literatures*, Vol.6.3, pp.23-36. (14 pages)

Creative Writing

Tanya Shirley

- * Poetry published in *Jubilation!: Poems Celebrating 50 Years of Jamaican Independence* (edited by Kwame Dawes). Leeds: Peepal Tree Press, 2012.
- * Poetry published in *Cave Canem XII Anthology* (Willow Books, 2012)

PUBLIC SERVICE

Dr Michael Bucknor

- Editor, *Journal of West Indian Literature* (Regional Journal)
- Advisor, CAPE Literatures in English, Project—Preparation of Study Guide for CAPE Literatures in English, Caribbean Examinations Council

- Chair, Association for Commonwealth Literatures and Language Studies ACLALS
- Reviewer of Manuscripts for MaCormere (*Journal of the Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars*)

Professor Carolyn Cooper

- Member, Board of Directors, Development Partners and Management International Limited, Kingston
- Regional Editor (Caribbean), *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, Routledge.
- Weekly columnist, *Sunday Gleaner*

Dr Norval Edwards

- Review editor, Northern Caribbean University's peer-reviewed journal, *International Review of Humanities*
- Member, Advisory Board, *Issues in Critical Investigation*, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee),
- Associate Editor, *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism*
- Editorial Board Member, *Postcolonial Text*

Dr. Mawuena Logan

- Coordinator, Departmental Postgraduate Studies
- AQAC Representative, Department of Literatures in English
- Secretary, Executive Board of the Alliance Française de la Jamaïque, Kingston, Jamaica
- Vice President, Ghanaian Association in Jamaica, Kingston Jamaica
- Member, Alliance Française de la Jamaïque, Kingston, Jamaica

Dr. Anthea Morrison

- Departmental Seminar Series Coordinator

Dr. Rachel Moseley-Wood

- Departmental Events Coordinator

- Coordinator, March is Movie Month Series of Screenings and Lectures on Jamaican Film

Ms Tanya Shirley

- Coordinator, March is Literatures in English Month Literary Readings (“Love Affair With Literature”)

Mr David Williams

- Member, Executive Committee of the Jamaica Association for Mentally Retarded Persons

Cross Campus collaboration

The Department publishes the *Journal of West Indian Literature* in collaboration with our sister departments at Cave Hill and St. Augustine, and its members are actively involved in WIACLALS, the regional branch of ACLALS.

CATEGORIES OF STUDENTS

Undergraduate

Majors	–	173
First Class Honours	–	Abigail Henry

Postgraduate

Registration

PhD	–	2
MPhil	–	14
MA	–	18

Award of Degrees

MA	–	Shirlene Woodburn Renee Mair
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