



## DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURES IN ENGLISH

**Dr. Aisha Spencer** - Head Of Department (Acting)

BA, DipEd, MA, PhD, UWI

### OVERVIEW

The academic year 2021-2022 was a very challenging yet meaningful year for the Department of Literatures in English, Mona Campus. Moving out of the Covid-19 pandemic experience created the opportunity for us individually and collectively to reflect on our 18 months of operation in the virtual space and enabled us to create shifts in the way we envisioned the department, managed our interpersonal relationships, participated in the teaching and learning process, and planned for the way forward.

### ACCESS

#### STUDENTS

During the AY2021-2022, the situation of the teaching and learning process remained a central part of discussions held by faculty as we navigated ways to ensure the best possible teaching and learning experiences and outcomes for our students. Lecturers in the DLIE made efforts to create a comfortable and engaging learning environment virtually which allowed students to feel open and motivated to learn. In addition to the Staff Liaison meetings, lecturers provided one-on-one consultation sessions with specific students and 'conversation moments' during lectures or tutorials to allow students to voice their concerns. Two meetings were held between the Departmental Representative for the Guild and the Acting HoD to share matters related to the teaching and learning experiences of students.

**UNDERGRADUATE**

*LIE Majors (16)*  
*Liberal Studies Majors (13)*  
*Film Studies (10)*  
*Writing, Publishing & Literature (13)*  
*First Class Honours (2)*

**POSTGRADUATE:**

*PhD (2)*  
*MPhil (5)*  
*MA (5)*

**Undergraduate Awards**

Thirteen students from the DLIE received awards at the 2020/2021 Annual FHE Awards Ceremony. The awardees were: Nikema Bell, Xan-Xi Bethel, Cezanne Chin, Amani Cooke, Jullisa Farquharson, Jeremy Gardner, Yashika Graham, Anthony Lemmie, Crystal Lewis, Andrew McDaniel, Kae-Shanae Virgo, Lattecha Willocks and Tajha Winkle.

**Postgraduate Awards**

Mr Paul Codner, PhD candidate - two-year UWI Postgraduate Scholarship.  
Mr Kevhaun Bailey and Ms Yashika Graham, MPhil candidates - 2021/2022 Departmental Awards.

**Congratulations**

Ms Whitney Eaton was successful in her upgrade from the MPhil to PhD Literatures in English, w.e.f. March 11, Semester II, 2021/2022. Dr Alexis Samuels was awarded the PhD Literatures in English degree on August 26, 2021.

**Conference Presentations**

- Kevhaun Bailey, MPhil Candidate, presented on the topic, 'What can a body do?': Lover's Rock and the Reframing of Methodologies of Visual Culture." 46th Annual Conference, Caribbean Studies Association (CSA); Virtual Conference (Kingston, Jamaica) on June 2, 2022.
- Sasha-Gaye Taylor, MA Candidate: "What a Day When the Tables will Turn" Parody and Irony as Tools of Subversion of Hegemonic Masculinities in Ishawna's Counteraction Music" The Heterotopic Junction Conference (HJC) on Language, Literature, and `Culture, Hong

`Kong, April 30, 2022.

## **Publications**

- Keilah Mills, PhD Candidate, "Between a Rock and a Sea Place: Environmental Decay and Apocalypse in Edwidge Danticat's *Claire of the Sea Light*." *Caribbean Quarterly* vol. 68, no. 1, Mar. 2022, pp. 9-23. Taylor and Francis.

## **TEACHING & LEARNING**

### **Staff Matters**

Dr Rachel Moseley-Wood proceeded on Sabbatical Leave for the 2021-2022 academic year. Dr Aisha Spencer acted as Head of Department in her stead. Dr Michael Bucknor proceeded on No-Pay Leave for the academic year 2021-2022. Dr Anthea Morrison, retiree, substituted for him as Temporary Full-time Lecturer. Dr Jennifer Brittan proceeded on Study Leave for Semester 1, Academic Year 2021-2022 and returned in Semester 2, Academic Year 2021-2022. Dr Connor Ryan, Lecturer, resigned from his position with effect from January 1, 2022.

Ms Tanya Shirley, Lecturer, resigned from her position with effect from July 31, 2022.

### **Award**

The FHE Guild Committee listed Dr Isis Semaj-Hall as one of the Top Educators to be recognized for The FHE Owl Awards.

### **Curriculum Development**

BA Writing, Literature and Publishing: The new Level 2 course Publishing in the Caribbean, PUBL2001 and three Level 3 core courses (Applied Marketing & Finance in Publishing, PUBL3001, Current Trends and Issues in Publishing, PUBL3002 and Editing & Proof Reading, PUBL3003) were approved and offered in Semester 1, 2021/2022. The department has also collaborated with Mr Scott Fraser, President of Dundurn Press, who has pledged his support in assisting the programme through teaching and the provision of internship positions for finalizing WLP students. The revised BA Liberal Studies was approved during the AY 2020-2021. The MFA Creative Writing was drafted in October 2021 but has been stalled due to the resignation of one of the department's lecturers. The prerequisite for the Creative Writing Senior Project, LITS3605 was revised to enable greater student access.

Principal's Tablet Initiative: One undergraduate LIE student, Shari Porter, benefitted from the Main Library laptop loan initiative for Semester 1, 2021. Summer School 2022: No courses were offered for Summer School 2022.

### **Staff/Postgraduate Seminar**

- Mr Elton Johnson, MPhil candidate, presented on the topic, "Mapping "Independent" As Feminist Empowerment Via Musical Cross-Pollination Between the US and Jamaica," on June 24, via Zoom. Mr Carlton Lowrie presented on the topics: "Politics & Nation in Post-Independence Jamaican Poetry" on June 16, 2022 and "The Gender and Healing of Nation: In Early Post-Independence Jamaican Poetry" on Friday November 26, 2021.
- Mr Kevhaun Bailey, MPhil Candidate, presented a paper titled, "Assemblages of Black(ened) Being: A Deciphering of Jamaica in the Black Atlantic Cinematic Imagination" on February 4, 2022.
- Mr Paul Codner, PhD Candidate in Literatures in English, presented a paper titled "Hybridizing Textual 'Repetitions': Tracking Diaspora, Creolization and gender in Selected Anglophone Caribbean Fiction" on Tuesday October 19, 2021.

## **MARKETING INITIATIVES**

### **Outreach to Students:**

Brian Turner, Writer, and Director of the MFA Programme at Sierra Nevada College, Lake Tahoe, was a guest lecturer for LITS2603: Creative Writing, Poetry, on October 15, 2022. The Departmental Consultative Committee (DCC) Meeting for Semesters 1 and 2 of the AY 2021-2022 were held virtually, via the Zoom platform, on Thursday October 7, 2021 and March 10 2022. A First Year Virtual Welcome Social was held on Thursday September 30 via Zoom. First-year students were assigned to lecturers for advising and mentoring.

### **Student Support in Collaboration with GLMF**

The Gloria Lyn Memorial Fund (GLMF), held two scholarship competitions in collaboration with the DLIE – The 'What Jamaica Means to Me' short story competition for secondary school students and the 'Joan McLaughlin

Short Story Competition', for students across all UWI campuses. Outreach to High Schools. The Department of Literatures in English held its Annual CAPE Lecture/Discussion Series from March 28-April 6 via YouTube and Zoom, coordinated by Ms. Lisa Brown. To date the series has attracted 4,000 viewers.

### **Community Outreach**

During the academic year the Department organised many events as outreach efforts to the wider community as well as support to teaching and learning.

1)The 15th Edward Baugh Distinguished Lecture was offered by keynote speaker, Professor Alison Donnell, Head of School of Literature, Drama & Creative Writing, University of East Anglia, who presented on: The Missing Mid-Century West Indian Woman Writer.

2)On June 12, 2022: Dr Semaj-Hall co-founder and editor for PREE: Caribbean Writing, PREE hosted a public reading, which featured writers Marlon James, Kei Miller, Diana McCauley, and Roland Watson-Grant.

3)The Department held a Live Reading with Alecia McKenzie at 12:00 p.m. on Thursday April 28 via YouTube.

4)The 7th FHE Annual Lecture Series on Thursday March 31 on the Faculty's YouTube Live Channel featured keynote speaker Professor Roopika Risam, Associate Professor of Secondary and Higher Education and English, Salem State University, who was selected by the Department of Literatures in English.

5)"A Conversation on Literature, Publishing and What it takes to make your dreams a reality," with Scott Fraser, President & Publisher, Dundurn Press, Canada, led by Dr. Aisha Spencer.

6) The DLIE, in collaboration with the Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English (ACCUTE), presented "Make the World New: A Celebration and Discussion of the Work, Poetry and Influence of Lillian Allen" on March 18, 2022.

7) "Reggae Talks 2022 with Devin Di Dakta" via YouTube, February 14, 2022, hosted by Dr Isis Semaj-Hall.

8) A Virtual Conversation with Mateo Askaripour, author of "Black Buck" on Thursday December 9, and was co-hosted by Dr Isis Semaj-Hall and Ms Tanya Shirley.

9) A Live Reading with Yvonne Bailey-Smith, author of "The Day I Fell Off My Island" was also held on November 15, 2022 and chaired by Dr Aisha Spencer, with a special introduction of the guest author by Professor Emerita, Carolyn Cooper, and a Q & A segment moderated by Ms Lisa Brown.

### **Workshops**

June 11-12, 2022: PREE: Caribbean Writing hosted writing workshops in partnership with the DLIE and featured writers Marlon James, Kei Miller, Diana McCaulay, and Roland Watson-Grant.

### **Book Launches**

The DLIE, in partnership with The UWI Bookshop, hosted a virtual book launch of Olive Senior's 'Hurricane Watch' on Tuesday May 24, 2022 at the UWI Bookshop, which was aired live on the Department's Youtube channel. The DLIE and the Institute for Gender and Development Studies (Mona), in collaboration with The Centre for Caribbean & Diaspora Studies (CCDS), Goldsmiths, University of London, virtually hosted the launch of African-Caribbean Women Interrogating Diaspora/Post-Diaspora on the Department's YouTube channel.

Publications:

- Dr Jennifer Brittan: *The Mambi-Land: Adventures of a Herald Correspondent in Cuba* by James J. O'Kelly: A Critical Edition, University of Virginia Press. Publication Date: Feb. 22, 2022.
- Dr Isis Semaj-Hall: "Dubbing Dub Poetry? Approaching Lee 'Scratch' Perry, Poetically." *Journal of West Indian Literature*. Issue 30 Vol 1, November 2021.
- Ms Tanya Shirley: "The Mother Locks Them Inside and Goes to Work" and "Sunday Morning" in *Stand*, Volume 19, No. 4, Guest Edited by Shara McCallum and Malika Booker. Publication Date: March 2022.

- Dr Jennifer Brittan's role as editor included: critical introduction: (13,000 words); co-translation from Spanish to English (with Dr. Peter Hulme, Professor Emeritus, University of Essex (21,000 words); annotations; the chronology; historical and critical notes; curation of primary source material; obtaining permissions and editing the full manuscript.

# ALIGNMENT

## Public Engagement & Links with Other Universities

### Conference Presentations

1. Dr Michael Bucknor and Dr Sonjah Niah, Co-convenors of The UWI/University of Leicester International Summer School at the Regional Headquarters of the UWI (Mona Campus). Theme: "Politics and Cultures of Protest"  
Title of Presentation: "The Black Dandy: Styling Protests,"

2. Title, place and date of Conference: Dionne Brand Celebration Conference. York University, Ontario Canada, November 3-6, 2021.  
Title of Conference presentation: "The Black Body"

### Dr Isis Semaj-Hall

1. Title, place, date of Festival Podcast: The 2022 Carnegie Hall Afrofuturism Festival Podcast, May 30, 2022. Title of presentation: "Hot Caribbean Girls: Reading Climate Change in Dennis-Benn and McCaulay's Fiction"

2. Title, place, date of Symposium: A virtual One-day Symposium, The University of Central Florida, Department of English, Friday April 29, 2022. Title of presentation: "Translation and Loss: Time, Migration, Meaning". She was an invited panellist for the Web event "Conversation in Caribbean Studies Presents: Word. Sound. Power. A Listening Session in Honor of Lee 'Scratch' Perry", hosted by The Carter G. Woodson Institute for African American and African Studies at the University of Virginia, on October 21.

3. Title, date, place of conference: The National Council for Black Studies conference on February 26, 2022. Title of presentation: "Class Interruptions: Status, Black Women, and Literature"

### Ms Tanya Shirley

1. Reading event: The Brooklyn Caribbean Lit Fest, September 10, 2021.
2. Guest Lecture: The Fine Arts Work Centre in Provincetown on February



## **PUBLIC SERVICE**

### **Dr Michael A. Bucknor**

- Senior Editor, Journal of West Indian Literature (Regional Refereed Publication) (2004-present)
- Editorial Board Member, Caribbean Quarterly (Regional Refereed Publication) (2010-present)
- Member, Board of Readers, Issues in Critical Investigation, Vanderbilt University, USA. (2010-present)
- Senior Editorial Advisor, Lucayos, College of the Bahamas. (Regional Refereed Publication) (2011-present)
- Member of the Poet Laureate Committee, National Library of Jamaica
- Member of the Musgrave Medals Selection Sub-Committee--Literature
- Board Member of the Canada-Caribbean Institute (UWI/Brock U) and reviewer of manuscripts for The Journal of Postcolonial Literature and the Human Rights Review.

### **Dr Jennifer Brittan**

- Member, Modern Language Association
- Member, American Comparative Literature Association
- Member, Canadian Association of American Studies

### **Dr Isis Semaj-Hall**

- Editor and Co-Founder, PREE: Caribbean. Writing
- 2021-2022 Caribbean Studies Association, served as Literary Salon Committee and Chair

### **Dr Norval Edwards**

- Member of the Editorial Team of the online Literary Journal, PREE Caribbean. Writing.
- Member, Advisory Board, Issues in Critical Investigation, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.



# AGILITY

Following the Quality Assurance Review (QAR) which was conducted during the week of March 15-19, 2021, the DLIE offered its response, as part of the review process, through the presentation of an action plan. The presentation was given at Faculty Board during the month of March and at Academic Board during the month April. The response was supported by both Boards.