

**Course: LS 820, Fall 2025**  
**Instructor: Sasha Colby**  
**Contact: scolby@sfu.ca**

**Schedule: Zoom seminars and Oxford week as  
scheduled in itinerary below**

### **LS 820: Travel Study - Oxford Lives**

In association with the University of Oxford's Centre for Life Writing (OCLW), this travel study will explore the many and varied ways lives have been represented across time, genre, and media. Our partnership with the OCLW will allow students to participate in Oxford faculty-led seminars and talks with leading figures in biography, autobiography and beyond.

The course will begin with 4 pre-departure Zoom seminars in April of 2025 and 2 Zoom classes in September of 2025 that will allow us to create a reading base, foster community, and prepare the ground for our written projects. Our intensive on-the-ground week in Oxford October 11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>, 2025 will combine walking tours, site visits, lectures and dedicated seminars with Oxford writers and academics.

This course is an exploration of both historical and contemporary writing. Our historical through-line is the aesthetic and social thought generated by nineteenth and twentieth century literary and artistic Oxford lives (with a focus on Ruskin, Pater, Wilde, Brittain, Naipaul, and Winterson) while also being attentive to the many lives of the city itself. In addition, OCLW seminars and lectures will increase our awareness of trends and techniques in contemporary life writing, broadening our understanding and fostering our own works of writing and research. As part of the course, students will be inducted into the University's Bodleian library and can research their final academic papers or research-based creative projects in one of Europe's oldest libraries.

This iteration of the travel study at Oxford will be structured around the GLS-OCLW Yosef Wosk Inaugural Travel Study Lecture and Seminar Series. This series has been made possible through the generosity of Dr. Yosef Wosk and the Yosef Wosk Family Foundation.

#### **Reading:**

Custom courseware package of readings written by – or selected by – our Oxford-based faculty.

#### **Required Texts:**

Stoppard, Tom. *The Invention of Love*. Grove Press, 1998.

Hare, David. *The Judas Kiss*. Grove Press, 1998.

Brittain, Vera. *Testament of Youth*. Penguin, 2005.

Naipaul, V.S. *The Enigma of Arrival*. Vintage, 2018.

Winterson, Jeanette. *Art Objects*. Vintage, 1996.

Wilde, Oscar. *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Dover, 1990.

Ruskin, John. *The Nature of Gothic*. Pallas Athene, 2015.

Pater, Walter. *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Documentary: *Oscar Wilde: Spendthrift of Genius*.