Kweku John

Education

University of Michigan
Helen Zell Writers' Program MFA Poetry Writing | 4.0

University of Virginia
Double Major: B.A. English | B.A. Distinguished Major African-American Studies | 3.9

Awards

- Academy of American Poets, First Book Prize for Poetry [2022]
- University of Michigan, Rackham Thesis Travel Grant [2021]
- University of Michigan, Hopwood Creative Writing Award [2021]
- University of Michigan, Rackham Merit Fellowship [2019]

Experience

Visiting Assistant Professor, *University of Tampa*
[August 2023- Present]

- Instruct a total of three sections in creative writing, academic writing, and critical inquiry each semester.
- Design multi-modal lessons, assignments, and in-class activities for each lecture session.
- Meet, collaborate with, and mentor students during office hours.
- Critically evaluate student work, provide feedback, and chart each student's academic progress.

Lecturer I, *University of Michigan*
[August 2022 – June 2023]

- Instructed a total of three sections in creative writing, academic writing, and critical inquiry each semester.
- Designed multi-modal lessons, assignments, and in-class activities for each lecture session.
- Met, collaborated with, and mentored students during office hours.
- Critically evaluated student work, provided feedback, and charted each student's academic progress.
- Trained new Graduate Student Instructors in innovative pedagogical design and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ).

Literary Arts Fellow, *InsideOut Literary Arts*
[September 2019- July 2022]

- Taught ten weekly creative writing lessons to middle school students in the Detroit Public School System (DPSS).
- Created engaging lesson plans with multi-modal and visual thinking strategies that encouraged students to produce original creative work, with an emphasis on poetry writing.
- Provided students with writing techniques and constructive criticism to improve their creative writing and overall writing skillset.
- Compiled and edited student creative work at the end of each term, for publication through a local Detroit press, Unsold Studio.

Graduate Student Instructor (GSI), *University of Michigan*
[April 2020-May 2021]

- Instructed students in creative writing, academic rhetoric, and composition while implementing anti-racist pedagogy.
- Designed creative lessons, assignments, and in-class activities for each lecture session.
- Met, collaborated with, and mentored students during office hours.
- Critically evaluated student, work provided feedback, and charted each student's academic progress.

Editorial Intern, *Michigan Quarterly Review*
[September 2019-May 2021]

- Read nonfiction, fiction, and poetry submissions to the journal for possible publication.
- Collaborated with the editorial team to choose, proofread, and edit manuscripts for publication in online and print journals.
- Wrote book reviews for award-winning works and conducted literary interviews for *MQR Online.*

Creative Writing Instructional Intern, *Richmond Young Writers*
[May 2019- August 2019]

- Led and facilitated creative writing workshops for children ages 8-10.
- Collaborated with fellow interns and teachers to develop engaging lesson plans and field trips that challenged students to produce unique and daring work, while fostering an environment of safety, inclusion, and mutual respect.
- Provided students with line edits, clarification, and constructive criticism for their creative work with the eventual goal of having said work featured in a final collaborative anthology published by Richmond Young Writers.

Program Facilitator, *Citizens Initiative, International NGO*
[May 2017- July 2017]

- Facilitated daily project development workshops for a team of 11 student fellows in Accra, Ghana.
- Aided the fellows in creating individual community impact projects to help address socio-economic problems in the Greater Accra region of Ghana.
- Served as a consultant for the community-based projects and initiatives of each fellow, throughout the 6-week developmental program.
- Secured $10,000 in seed funding to jumpstart each fellow's project.

Conferences, Leadership & Professional Development

Napa Valley Writer's Conference
[August 1-6, 2021, Napa Valley, California]

- Attended craft lectures and seminars in the areas of prose and poetry.
- Engaged in daily critical workshops with other professional writers, providing and receiving constructive criticism of submitted creative work.
- Selected to give public readings of my creative work

National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in High Education
[May 29 – June 2, 2018, New Orleans, Louisiana]

- Attended pre-conference institutes, networking events, and sessions centered on increasing Black and African-American representation in academia and careers in tertiary education.
- Implemented a semester-long restorative-justice community engagement project, based on strategies discussed at the conference

Published Creative Work (Pen Name: Kweku Abimbola)

- *Saltwater Demands a Psalm,* full-length poetry collection, Graywolf Press (2023)
- "Kwasiada," "Wukuada" *American Poets* (2022)
- "Adinkra," *20.35 Africa* (2021)
- "Stank Face," *Shade Literary Arts* (2021)
- "Rite," *The Common* (2021)
- "Child Solider," *Sunu Journal* (2020)
- "Light-off," "Hem," "Four-in-hand," *Obsidian* (2020)
- "Barbershop Philosophy," *4 Anthology* (2020)