



Ukamaka Olisakwe
Assistant Professor of English

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. University of South Dakota, English, with a specialization in Literary Studies: Creative, 2024.
- MFA. Vermont College of Fine Arts, Writing and Publishing, 2020.
- HND. Abia State Polytechnic, Nigeria, Computer Science, 2006.

Special Training:

- Certificate in Digital Accessibility, University of South Dakota, 2021.

TEACHING AND RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Creative Writing, Screenwriting, Film Analysis, Women's Literature, Indigenous Feminisms, Postpartum Interiorities, Postcolonial Literatures, Trauma and the Traumatic, AfricanFuturism, Fantasy, YA.

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Shortlisted, 2024 Nommo Award for Best Novel.
- USD English Department Memorial Scholarship, 2023-2024.
- Runner-Up, Gerald Kraak Prize, 2022.
- Winner, SprinNG Women Authors Prize, 2021.



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- Finalist, The Brittle Paper Non-fiction Prize, 2019.
- Nominated, The Pushcart Prize in Poetry, 2019.
- Book Distribution Fellowship, Vermont College of Fine Arts, 2019.
Winner, Emerging Writers Scholarship, Vermont College of Fine Arts, 2018.
- Finalist, Miles Morland Writing Scholarship, 2017.
- Fellow, University of Iowa's International Writers Program, 2016.
- Fellow, City of Asylum Residency Fellowship, Pittsburg, 2016.
- Honorary Fellowship in Writing, International Writing Program, University of Iowa, 2016.
- City of Asylum Residency Fellowship, Pittsburg, 2016.
- Prince Claus Fund Grant, for the Writivism Festival, Kampala, Uganda. 2015.
- Honoree, Most Promising Writers in Africa Under the Age of 40 for UNESCO/Africa39, 2014.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

- *Don't Answer When They Call Your Name*. Masobe Books, 2023; Griots Lounge, 2024.
- *Ogadinma: Or, Everything Will Be Alright*. The Indigo Press UK, 2020.
- *Eyes of a Goddess*. Piraeus Books LLC, 2012.



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Stories, Essays, and Poems

- “Mbido: An Excerpt.” *The Johannesburg Review of Books*, 2023.
- “Maybe Now, Maybe Never: A Story.” *Guernica*, 2023.
- “I’m Done Listening: An Essay.” *Catapult*, 2022.
- “The Grasscutter’s Curse: A Story.” *The Other Foundation*, 2022.
- “Postpartum Interiorities: Preface.” *Isele Magazine*, 2021.
- “Seesaw by Timothy Ogene: Book Review.” *Isele Magazine*, 2021.
- “Alien Stories by E.C. Osondu: Book Review.” *Isele Magazine*, 2021.
- “Those We Throw Away Are Diamonds by Mondiant Dogon: Book Review.” *Isele Magazine*, 2021.
- “Disruption Anthology: Book Review.” *Isele Magazine*, 2021.
- “Best Book of 2019: Better Never than Late: An Essay.” *Granta*, 2021.
- “Lova Lova: A Story.” *Google Arts & Culture*, 2021.
- “Ogadinma: An Excerpt.” *Granta*, 2020.
- “Is it Still Beautiful? Motherhood and Mental Health in a Pandemic: An Essay.” *Brittle Paper*, 2020.
- “Trends in Modern and Contemporary English Literature: Anthology.” Edited by Tetiana M. Starostenko. H.S. *Skovoroda Khartiv National Pedagogical University*, 2020.
- “The Myth of the Lazy Mothers: An Essay.” *The Rumpus*, 2019.



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- “After Three Children, Reclaiming My Body and My Mind: An Essay.” *Longreads*, 2019.
- “Finding Freedom Within Marriage and Motherhood: An Essay.” *Catapult*, 2019.
- “The Mothers: A Story.” *Waxwing Mag*, 2019.
- “Being A Woman in Nigeria: An Essay.” *University of Iowa, IWP Collections*, 2017.
- “Giving a Sexist Character Texture: An Essay.” *Hunger Mountain*, 2018.
- Olisakwe, Ukamaka. “Something had Changed and Stirred Interest in Church Again: An Essay.” *Popula*, 2018.
- “My Writing Day & Other Tips: An Essay.” *Praxis Mag*, 2017.
- “This is How I Remember It: A Story.” *Sampsonia Way*, 2016.
- “Nkem’s Nightmare: A Story.” *Jalada*, 2016.
- “In Nigeria, an Election to Believe in: An Essay.” *The New York Times*, 2015.
- “Growing Up Fearful in Nigeria: An Essay.” *The New York Times*, 2014.
- “Where Do I Stuff These Memories: An Essay.” *Brittle Paper*, 2014.
- “Running: A Story.” *Short Story Day Africa*, 2013.
- “Spiritual Attack: A Story.” *Saraba*, 2013.
- “Of Rising, and the Home-Based Nigerian Writer: An Essay.” *Saraba*, 2013.
- “Girl to Woman: A Story.” *Sentinel Nigeria*, 2011.



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TV:

- *The Calabash*. Africa Magic, 2014.
- *Agoodjie*. Canal+ & Studio Canal (in pre-production).

TEACHING:

University of South Dakota - TA/Instructor (2020 – 2024)

- ENGL 210: Introduction to Literature [poetry, fiction, drama (stage/screen) analyses]
- ENGL 283: Introduction to Creative Writing (poetry, fiction, and nonfiction)
- ENGL 101: English Composition
- ENGL 201: Composition II
- ENGL 205: Business Writing

Creative Writing & Screenwriting Workshops Taught (*Online and In-person*)

- Guest Facilitator, EIO Fiction Workshop, Tallahassee, Florida. 2023
- Guest Facilitator, Idembeka Creative Writing Workshop, Louisville, Kentucky. 2023.
- Guest Teacher, Sokoto Books and Arts Foundation Workshop, Nigeria 2022.
- Guest Facilitator, UNOOTHWA Writers Program, Dubai, UAE. 2021.
- Guest Teacher, Community Class, Vermont College of Fine Arts. 2019.
- Co- Facilitator, Writivism Workshop, Lagos. 2014.
- Co- Facilitator, Writivism Workshop, Abuja. 2013



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Class Visits --

Harvard University (2023 & 2024)

- AFRAMER 160X: Engaging Africa and its Cultures

Emory University (2023)

- AFS 270 / ENG 290: African Women's Writing
- AFS 389 / ENG 389: New African Diaspora Literary Activism

LITERARY AND ACADEMIC SERVICE:

- Keynote Speaker, Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Ceremony, SD Writing Region, Spring 2023.
- Judge, Scholastic Art & Writing Awards 2022 (Personal Essays & Memoir Category), Spring 2023.
Guest Facilitator, EIO Fiction Workshop, Summer 2023
- Guest Facilitator, Idembeka Creative Writing Workshop, Spring 2023.
- Organizer, The Isele Prizes, Spring 2023.
- Judge, Scholastic Art & Writing Awards 2022 (Personal Essays & Memoir Category), Spring 2022.
- Organizer, The Isele Prizes, Spring 2022.
- Associate CNF Editor, Red Coyote. Fall 2021 – 2022.
- Guest Reader, Milton Conference/Vermillion Literary Project Reading, Fall 2021.



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- Presenter, Writing Center Workshop: Media Analysis Presentation. University of South Dakota, Vermillion, Fall 2021.
- Presenter, Research-Based Academic Essay, Practicum Orientation. University of South Dakota, Vermillion, Fall 2021.
- Judge, The Poetavango Award for Short Fiction, Botswana, 2020.
- Participant, VLP LiTrash Reading & Open Mike, Fall 2020.
- Founder/Editor in Chief, Isele Magazine, 2020.
- Founder/Editor in Chief, The Body Conversation.
- Associate Fiction Editor, Hunger Mountain. 2018-2019.
- Judge, Kofi Addo and Abena Korantemaa Prizes, 2016.
- Co-Facilitator, Orange Crush/Niger Delta Creative Writers Workshop, Rivers, Nigeria, 2013.
- Mentor, Writivism, 2014.
- Pioneer and Mentor, Writivism, 2013
- Founder, Isele! Spoken Word Poetry Prize, 2013.

PRESENTATIONS

- “Beyond Achebe & Adichie: 21st Century Stakeholders in the Publishing of African Writers.” Southeastern Regional Seminar in African Studies (SERSAS), University of Virginia. Spring 2023.



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- “Stealing Time: On Purpose, Permission, and Putting Writing First.” AWP Conference and Book Fair, Seattle. Spring 2023.
- “Impossible Balance: Re-examining the Narrative About Writing and Parenting.” AWP Conference and Book Fair, Seattle. Spring 2023.
- “Literary Representations of Motherhood in African Women’s Writing.” Guest Writer Series, Institute of African Studies, Emory University. Spring 2023.
- Writing Center Workshop: Media Analysis Presentation. University of South Dakota, Vermillion. Fall 2022.
- “Counter History: Reproducing Archival Omissions Through the Use of Fabula.” The 19th Annual Begemann – Gordon Lecture Series. Women’s and Gender Studies program, Georgia College. Fall 2021.
- Writing Center Workshop: Media Analysis Presentation. University of South Dakota, Vermillion. Fall 2021.
- Research Based Academic Essay, Practicum Orientation. University of South Dakota, Vermillion. Fall 2021.
- “Trauma and the Traumatic,” UNOOTH A Writers Program, Dubai, United Arab Emirates (Online). Fall 2021.
- “Dancing With Queen Theresa Onuorah,” The Igbo Conference. Spring 2020
- “To What Do I Belong,” Writers Summit, Tangier, Morocco, 2017
- “Lines & Spaces.” American Delegation Tour - Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra, 2017.



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- “Lines & Spaces.” American Delegation Tour - American Language Center, Fez, 2017.
- “Lines & Spaces.” American Delegation Tour - Hassan II University, Casablanca, 2017.
- “Strategies for Reflective Writing,” and “Craft Your Story” and “Strategies for Reflective Writing.” American Delegation Tour - Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, Fez, Morocco. May 2017.
- “Craft Talk: How to Bring Your Characters to Life.” MOOC Program, International Writing Program, the University of Iowa. 2016.
- “Right to Remove, Right to Refuge,” International Writers Residency in Iowa, City Public Library, on the topic, 2016.
- “Writing and Politics.” the International Writers Residency in Iowa, Iowa City Public Library Series, 2016.
- “The State of African Literature.” African Studies, the University of Iowa. 2016.
- “Sense of Place.” Iowa City Book Festival, Iowa, on the topic, Iowa, 2016.
- “You Could Be the Next Maternal Death Statistic.” TEDxGarki Talk, Abuja, Nigeria, 2015.
- Guest Author, Orange Crush/Niger Delta Creative Writers Workshop, Rivers, Nigeria, 2013.



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— DEPARTMENT OF —
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE
& LITERATURE**

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FUN FACT

I make the best jollof rice in the entire world. ☐