

Department of English & Writing Studies

**Advanced Fiction Workshop: The Novel
English 4570F (001)**

Fall 2019

Instructor: Nino Ricci
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Office Hours: Wed 1:00-2:00 pm
or by appointment

Course Location: [see Fall/Winter 2019-20
Western Timetable](#)

Course Date/Time: [see Fall/Winter 2019-
20 Western Timetable](#)

Prerequisites: 1.0 from English 3000-3999 or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

This advanced fiction workshop offers a chance for students who are serious about their writing to get a start on the novel they've always wanted to write, under the guidance of a seasoned professional novelist. The course will focus on the crucial early stages of the writing process. By the end of the course students should have completed anywhere from 20 to 40 pages of an early draft of their novel. It is advised that students who enroll in the class have at least a rough idea beforehand of the project they would like to pursue.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful students will have:

- enhanced their understanding of the creative process and of the theory and practice of writing novels;
- improved their ability to analyse and edit both their own work and that of others;
- learned about the practical aspects of getting their work published and of pursuing writing as a profession.

Course Materials

A course pack will be distributed at the beginning of the term containing selections from such texts on writing as the following:

- Burroway, Janet et. al. *Writing Fiction: A Guide to Narrative Craft*. Pearson, 2014.
Dillard, Annie. *The Writing Life*. Harper Perennial, 2013 (1989).
Gardner, John. *The Art of Fiction: Notes on Craft for Young Writers*. Vintage, 2010 (1983).
King, Stephen. *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. Scribner, 2010 (2000).
Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird*. Anchor, 2007 (1994).
Wood, James. *How Fiction Works*. Picador, 2009.

In addition, selections from published novels may be distributed from to time as a basis for discussing aspects of novel writing.

Methods of Evaluation

This is a workshop course. Students will be expected to submit work on a regular basis to be discussed by the class and to produce 20 to 40 pages of an early draft of a novel. Students will also be expected to discuss other students' submissions in class as well as to submit written commentaries on them.

A workshop schedule will be established early in the semester. In addition, the instructor will meet individually with students to establish a plan of work tailored to each student's project.

Final grades will be based on the following:

- Workshop submissions: 55%
 - Students will submit a portfolio at the end of the semester of 20 to 40 pages (5000 to 10,000 words) containing all work submitted during the semester and any additional work completed but not yet submitted.
 - At the instructor's discretion, revisions of work that has been workshopped in class may be included in your total page count.
- Oral presentation: 5%
 - Each student will be responsible for a five- to ten-minute in-class presentation on a topic drawn from one of the required course readings.
- Class participation: 20%
- Written commentaries (minimum of 150 words for each submission): 20%

There is NO final exam in this course.

For a creative writing workshop to function effectively, students **MUST ATTEND REGULARLY** and **MUST SUBMIT WORK ON DEADLINE**. Absences not supported with a doctor's note or other acceptable documentation will affect a student's participation mark and may result in a failure in the course if they amount to more than 15% of class time. Late submissions will be penalized or not accepted.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.