

Department of English & Writing Studies

The Alice Munro Chair in Creativity Seminar: Creative Writing Workshop
English 4899F (001)
Fall 2020**Instructor:** Ivan Coyote**Course Day/Time:** Tuesday 2:30-5:30 pm**Course Location:** online/Zoom**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

Participants will be introduced to methods and means for creating their own personal writing discipline and creative practice. This course is crafted for students who are serious about creating an early draft or developing a work of narrative prose, a short story collection, or a poetry manuscript. There will be short readings from contemporary authors introduced for the purposes of inspiration and discussion. Weekly word-count based writing assignments will be produced, and workshopped in a creative and encouraging environment. This course is built on the premise that a writer learns to write through a scheduled, sustained, and supported writing practice.

For Fall 2020, this course will be delivered synchronously online via Zoom.

Objectives:

By the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Develop a personal writing discipline and creative practice.
- Compile an approximately 12,000-word rough draft of a work in progress.

Course Materials

Course reading materials will be (for the most part) provided via online resources/links, and will be drawn from the works of predominantly Canadian creators, with a focus on texts that use the power of word and story to centre the voices of writers that speak to issues of gender, sexuality, family, class, race, and ability. Full reading list TBA.

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Portfolio 50%

Attendance/punctuality 12%

Participation in classroom discussions 24%

Completion of readings and commentary 14%

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>.

General Information

Attendance in synchronous Zoom class is mandatory. Attendance and being on time will be a part of your grade. Students will be asked to complete weekly writing assignments (approximately 1,000 words, or page equivalent for poetry) with the goal of developing a manuscript in mind.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work

Students who are temporarily unable to meet academic requirements (e.g. attending lectures or labs, writing tests or midterm exams, completing and submitting assignments, participating in presentations) may submit a self-reported absence form online (available on your Student Center) provided that the absence is 48 hours or less and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy are met. Students can self-report only two absences per academic year. See policy here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf.

Students whose absences are expected to last longer than 48 hours, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds) to Academic Counselling. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. The Student Medical Certificate is available online at https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation.

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.

Timetable

Tuesdays from 2:30-5:30

September 15 class introduction, in-class writing prompt, short lecture/discussion “Why Write This Anyway?”, reading #1 assigned with 3-4 discussion questions included. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio (or equivalent pages for poets).

September 22 Reading #1 questions are due, writing assignment must be uploaded to student’s personal dropbox. Short lecture/discussion about manuscript formatting, submission guidelines. Workshopping of student work. Reading #2 assigned. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio.

September 29 Reading #2 questions are due, weekly writing assignment must be uploaded to student’s personal dropbox. Short lecture/discussion about editing practice and methods. Workshopping of student work. Reading #3 assigned. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio.

October 6 Reading #3 questions are due, weekly writing assignment must be uploaded to student dropbox. Class discussion about writing about real people, writer’s block, confronting common writerly fears. Student self-evaluation of portfolio progress. Reading #4 assigned. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio.

October 13 Reading #4 questions are due, weekly writing assignment must be uploaded to student dropbox. Class discussion about publisher’s submission guidelines, plot synopsis, query letters. Reading #5 assigned. Writing assignment 1000 words for portfolio.

October 20 Reading #5 questions are due. Weekly writing assignment must be uploaded to student’s dropbox. Workshopping of student work. Class discussion about narrative arc, outlines, order of pieces, methods and strategies for structuring a longer work or short story/poetry collection. Reading #6 assigned. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio.

October 27 Reading #6 questions/observations are due. At some point during this week students will be provided with a mid-term evaluation based on stated grading criteria, and individual portfolio development. Students will be asked to double their usual writing assignment to 2000 words, but no reading will be assigned.

November 10 Class discussion will focus on beginnings and endings. Workshopping of student work. Reading #7 assigned. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio.

November 17 Reading #7 questions/observations are due. Weekly writing assignment must be uploaded to dropbox. Class discussion will centre around working with multiple drafts, backing up work, writing software options. Workshopping student work. Reading #8 assigned. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio.

November 24 Reading #8 questions and observations due. Weekly writing assignment must be uploaded to student's drop box. Class discussion will be focused on where we find our inspiration, sharing of favourite books, authors, and the reasons why these books moved you. Reading #9 is assigned, which is to go out and select your own favourite excerpt (max 7-10 pages) from a book or magazine and provide your own synopsis of the work, and come up with three questions to foster discussion and discourse around your selected piece. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio.

December 1 Discussion of student's selected readings. Workshopping student work. Reading #10 assigned. Writing assignment: 1000 words for portfolio.

December 8 Reading #10 questions and observations due. Weekly writing assignment must be uploaded to student's dropbox. Final class discussion is about setting long term goals, finding a writing partner or group, structuring a sustainable and lasting writing discipline and creative practice. Deadline for final portfolio will be assigned.