

Department of English and Writing Studies

Writing 2203 — 650 Writing for Publication: From Deadline to Headline
Fall 2022

Instructor: Mark Kearney



Email: mkearney@uwo.ca

Office hours: Via Zoom Tuesdays 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm or by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

From Deadline to Headline is designed to teach students how to write for various forms of publication including news stories, profiles, and magazine feature articles. Students will learn the ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences. Students will develop skills in the research, writing, editing, formatting and marketing of materials for publication. Students will acquire the ability to develop story ideas, research, interview, write query letters, produce features, revise and edit, prepare and meet the requirements of specific genres and publications. Strong emphasis will be given to the practicalities of writing as a career, including getting started, working towards success (and coping with rejection) and learning how to manage the organizational side. Students will be encouraged to submit their work to outside publications when applicable.

Course Texts/Materials

Text: In lieu of a text, there will be a range of handouts and/or links to websites posted on the syllabus and the course OWL site for you to read.

Recommended Texts:

Ivor Shapiro. Editor. *The Bigger Picture: Elements of Feature Writing*. 2009. Emond Montgomery Publications Limited. (in Weldon)

William Zinsser. *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. 30th anniversary edition. Quill Harper Resource. (in Weldon).

Course Requirements - Assignments

1. Local news story	20%	Due Oct. 2
2. Profile of classmate	35%	Due Oct. 23
3. Feature Article	40%	Due Nov. 27
5. Online Discussion/Exercises/Workshopping	5%	Ongoing

Assignment Format

All assignments should be submitted in Word and double-spaced as they are easier to grade and as close to the assigned word count as possible. **Assignments must be submitted via the OWL site for the course.** Emailed assignments may be acceptable in certain circumstances.

Submitting Assignments/Due dates/late submission penalties

I don't like to penalize late assignments; however, since one of the purposes of this course is to familiarize you with the writing profession, you need to know that **deadlines are crucial**. For this reason, all assignments will be due on the dates specified unless you negotiate an extension at least 48 hours in advance. Following any other policy would be an injustice to you as a future writer. Assignments are submitted electronically via OWL. In certain circumstances with my permission, you may also place them in the drop box outside Room 2401 University College. **Late assignments will be penalized at 3 marks per day, including weekends.**

Attendance Policies

Obviously we do not meet formally as a "class" in a Distance Studies course. Therefore "attendance" and participation on the Discussion Forum on OWL are intertwined. Distance Studies classes are generally self-paced, so you must attend class (defined as logging into our OWL section) and participate by introducing yourself and posting questions and thoughts each week based on the given week's set discussion topic) **at least two times weekly**. This means at least two separate posts per week (a week is defined as running from Monday to Sunday), at least one of which must be a "new" post rather than just a reply to someone else's. Extended absences, defined as a failure to post into the OWL classroom for more than a week, must be coordinated with the instructor. **The use of racist or any language that works against the values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will not be tolerated.**

Postings on the Discussion Forum must have the following characteristics:

- Must contribute something meaningful to the Forum;
- Must support your opinion with sufficient reasons or evidence;
- Must display good grammar and organization.

Postings should also not:

- Contain disrespectful or insulting language;
- Be excessively long or excessively short;
- Be unrelated to the week's topic;
- Say things that do not contribute anything, e.g. "I agree with you" or "nice comment".

- I will track your postings to the discussion Board, and it will be part of your 5% Online Discussion/Exercises/Workshopping mark indicated above. **Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements may result in your final grade in the course being reduced by up to 10% (e.g., an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 72).**

Although this is an online course, you are expected to check into the OWL site on a regular basis, to read the

material and your fellow students' comments, participate in online discussions and to interact online with your fellow classmates by workshopping your drafts as much as online allows you. This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have good reasons for your absence discuss these reasons with your instructor within one week of that absence. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, who may require documentation. That advisor may then contact all of your instructors. See also: '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

Note: a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of 'make-up class' in another course **will** count as non-attendance, and **will** attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario **shall not require** a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student's other scheduled class times. If you are asked or 'required' to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is **your** choice; your absence will not be excused.

See also: '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

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

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text 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 (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above).

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>)."

Prerequisites

"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."

The prerequisite for registration in this course is: At least 65% in one of Writing 2101F/G, Writing 2125F/G (or the former Writing 2121F/G), Writing 2111F/G, Writing 2130F/G or Writing 2131F/G; or at least 65% in one of Writing 1000F/G, Writing 1030F/G, or Writing 1031F/G; or at least 65% in each of MIT 1020E (or both of MIT 1021F/G and MIT 1022F/G) and MIT 1025F/G; or permission of the Department (consult the Undergraduate Program Director, Writing).

Antirequisites

Please note that MIT 3829F/G and MIT 3870G if taken in 2009-10, 2010-11, or 2011-12, are antirequisites for Writing 2203. You will not receive credit for both courses if you take both.

Academic Accommodation and Related Matters

Effective September 2022, Western is reverting to its pre-Fall 2019 policy covering requests for academic accommodation on medical or other grounds. **Self-Report Absences (SRAs) are now gone**; consequently, all language referring to them in previous accommodation policy statements needs to be removed from your course outlines. **Unless and until updated accommodation policy language is provided (and there is apparently a Working Group in place that is developing that language), please use the statements below (up to the “Other Accommodation Requests” section) on your outlines, in their entirety and with no modifications:**

Academic Accommodation

Senate language requires all requests for accommodation for a grade component of 10% or more to go to academic counselling.

Accommodation by Instructor for work worth less than 10% of the overall grade in a course:

A student seeking academic accommodation for any work worth less than 10% must contact the instructor or follow the appropriate Department or course specific instructions provided on the course outline.

Where medical documentation is required, such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Academic Counselling/Dean’s office, who will make the determination whether accommodation is warranted. Given the University’s Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy (https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/privacy.pdf), **instructors may not collect medical documentation.”**

Medical Accommodation Policy

“The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Dean’s office (the Office of the Dean of the student’s Faculty of registration/home Faculty) together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. These documents will be retained in the student’s file and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University’s Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy. Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic accommodation shall be determined by the Dean’s Office in consultation with the student’s instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty. Academic accommodation shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration, and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”)

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.”

Documentation from Family Physicians/Nurse Practitioners and Walk-In Clinics

A Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Documentation from Student Health Services

At the time of illness, students should make an appointment with a physician/nurse practitioner at Student Health Services. During this appointment, request a Student Medical Certificate from the Physician/Nurse Practitioner.

Documentation from Hospital Urgent Care Centres or Emergency Departments

Students should request that an SMC be filled out. Students may bring this form with them or request alternative Emergency Department documentation. Documentation should be secured at the time of the initial visit to the Emergency Department. Where it is not possible for a student to have an SMC completed by the attending physician, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that their ability to meet their academic responsibilities was seriously affected.”

Please note that individual instructors will not under any circumstances accept or read medical documentation directly offered by a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds or for related reasons (e.g., to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an ‘Attendance’ policy in the course). **All medical documentation must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling or Undergraduate office of a student’s home Faculty.

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:

(<https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519-661-3030 (during class hours) or 519-433-2023 after class hours and on weekends.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays and should give reasonable notice in writing (email), prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar.

Other Student 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/>

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Intellectual Property and Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g., PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students’ personal use within the course and remain the instructor’s intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without

permission. Posting the instructor’s content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Special Requests (Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing), Requests for Academic Relief and Complaints.”

In particular, concerning the first of these topics, please note that students must initiate all requests for Special Exams, Incompletes, or Aegrotat standing through the Dean’s office of their home faculty.. Instructors do not have the discretion to consent to such requests directly.

At least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a 1000- or 2000-level course without academic penalty, students will receive assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade. Generally, students can expect some form of feedback on their performance in a course before the drop date.” November 12 is the last day to drop a first-term half-course without academic penalty.

NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER DECEMBER 8, 2022. OUTSTANDING WORK AS OF THIS DATE WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF ZERO.

Class Meeting Schedule

Date	Meeting focus	Readings
Week 1 (Course starts Sept. 8 and Week 1 runs through to Sept. 18).	Learn to write leads to a variety of story styles; using quotes Dissect a newspaper or magazine lead. Why does it pull you into the story and does it match what the story is about? Find a fresh quote. Tell your fellow students why it's compelling or not	Award winning leads— https://www.poynter.org/reporting-editing/2020/and-the-winner-for-2020s-best-pulitzer-prize-lead-is/ Article on Leads – (see OWL) Article on quoting – http://journalism.about.com/od/reporting/a/goodquotes.htm
Week 2 (Sept. 19 to 26) This pattern continues until the final week	Developing news sense; write a local story Using the details provided in the lecture notes, write a practice news lead and story. Comment on each other’s stories: does the lead include enough details? Is it too long?	See sample localizing story posted on course site 10 Writing Tips – (see OWL)
Week 3 (Sept 26 to Oct. 2)	Discover magazine styles and understand the magazine you will write for. Learn about the five major differences between journalistic and academic writing.	Choose a magazine or newspaper from online links provided and write a few sentences about it. What makes its tone and style different from academic writing? What magazines do you read and why?

<p>Week 4 (Oct 3 to Oct 9)</p>	<p>Interviewing techniques for writing a classmate profile. If you could interview anyone, dead or alive, who would it be and why? What two questions would you ask? Why is interviewing important to the stories we write?</p>	<p>Read http://www.thestar.com/life/fashion_style/2012/01/02/mic_key_man_covers_body_in_whimsical_world_of_disney.html <u>ml</u> AND Sample profiles with analysis provided on OWL</p>
<p>Week 5 <i>Oct 10 is Thanksgiving holiday.</i> (Oct 11 to Oct. 16)</p>	<p>Ideas for stories; learn how to find a winning idea that sells and how to spin it into several ideas. Start thinking about what you would like to write for a feature. It takes some time to develop a good idea—so let’s start now. In three sentences, write your idea. Include an angle and what steps you’ll take to get it written.</p>	<p>Story ideas article posted on OWL.</p>
<p>Week 6 (Oct 17 to Oct. 23)</p>	<p>Query letters/Other types of stories How to pitch stories to editors. We’ll do an exercise where you pretend you are an editor who just received a sample query letter provided? Would you accept it? Why or why not? Front of the book stories and service articles</p>	<p>21 Rules for Writing Stellar Query Letters posted on OWL Sample Query Letter with Analysis</p>
<p>Week 7 (Oct 24 to Oct. 30)</p>	<p>Feature writing How do features differ from news story? What elements make for a good feature and how do you go about developing a story that can be done in a relatively short time.</p>	<p>See sample feature articles posted for this week. Feature article tips Sample feature with analysis</p>
<p>Oct 31 – Nov. 6 Reading Week</p>	<p>No Classes</p>	
<p>Week 8 (Nov. 7 to Nov. 13)</p>	<p>Research techniques. Where to find data, research and content online and elsewhere. An exercise on finding sources for</p>	<p>Exercise on finding information</p>

<p>Week 9 (Nov. 14 to Nov. 20)</p>	<p>a story and how they would help put the story together. Read a provided feature to consider the range of sources used for it: facts, description, use of interviews etc. What sources might you include for your potential story idea?</p> <hr/> <p>Editing, headlines and fact checking/feature update Write headlines for stories provided. Update the class on the progress you've made on your feature. Are you running into challenges getting it done? What solutions can you offer? Other types of stories that magazines use.</p>	<hr/> <p>http://journalism.about.com/od/writing/a/headlines.htm</p>
<p>Week 10 (Nov. 21 to Nov. 27)</p>	<p>Markets online and learning to write for the internet Find two web sites that accept freelance writing. What type of stories do they accept? Do not include writer's guideline details; rather, provide your opinion of the tone and style, length and details.</p>	<p>How much they pay (posted on OWL) Feature due on Nov. 27</p>
<p>Week 11 (Nov. 28 to Dec. 4)</p>	<p>Online ethics and copyright. Considering what you've learned about copyright this week, do you feel any differently about downloading various materials without paying for them?</p>	<p>Watch Harlan Ellison video -- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mj5IV23g-fE An article on recycling your work (on OWL)</p>
<p>Week 12 (Dec. 5- 8)</p>	<p>Journalism ethics/Freelancer's toolbox Discuss the provided ethical situation you might find yourself in as a writer and decide what you would do in this scenario. Do you think your feature could be sold to a publication outside of this class? What publications do you have in mind and how do you plan to go about getting an editor's attention for it. Final thoughts on magazine writing and its future.</p>	