

2211F: The Naked Writer - Fundamentals of Creative Writing

Section: # 001

Day/time: WED 1:30pm – 4:30pm

Classroom: PAB-36 (online until Jan 30th)

Professor: Dr. Tom Cull

Email: tcull3@uwo.ca

Office hours: by email/Zoom appointment

*** Classes will be online/virtual until at least Jan 31st. This period may be extended.**

Course Description and Objectives

In this course, you will explore the fundamentals and challenges of creative writing via short fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction. The goal of this practice-based class is two-fold: to acquaint you with a variety of creative writing being published today and to provide you with the tools to produce creative work of your own. You will share work and provide critical feedback on the work of your peers. Classes will be a mixture of in-class writing, discussion, and workshop.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will have demonstrated the ability to

- identify the fundamental elements of creative writing (plot, character, dialogue, etc.);
- analyse and discuss published fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction;
- write in three genres;
- provide classmates with critical feedback;
- incorporate feedback into revisions.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Writing 2211F Custom Course Pack available at [The Book Store At Western](#)

If you do not have one already, please purchase a blank writing journal for in-class exercises.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Method of Evaluation	Grade Value	Due Date
Image Poem	15%	Week 3 – Final Draft
Polished Creative Nonfiction Essay or Fiction Story	20%	Week 7 – Final Draft
Narrative Preview Presentation	10%	Weeks 8-10
Narrative Assignment with Revision Notes	40%	Week 11 – Rough Draft Due Last class – Final Draft Due
Reading Responses/Discussion Leader Assignment	15%	Ongoing
	100%	

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

All assignments must be word-processed in 12-point font and given a title. Your name, your student number, the course code, and my name must appear in the top righthand corner. Please include page numbers for multipage assignments; you must submit work in class as a hard copy **AND** on the OWL course site as a PDF, rtf, or Doc file.

Submitting Assignments

Late assignments will receive a penalty of 5% per day. To qualify for an extension, you must have a valid reason and contact your instructor prior to the deadline. Please see the medical accommodation policy below.

If necessary, please submit assignments to the English and Writing Studies Drop Box across from University College room 2431, **making sure you include your name, your instructor's name, the course name, and your section number on the first page.** Do not fax or e-mail assignments, and do not slide them under office doors. Keep copies (electronic, paper, or both) of all assignments submitted.

Office Hours/Email Policy/OWL website

This term, I will not be holding in-person office hours. Instead, I will be answering course questions and offering additional clarification/help through email and Zoom appointments. I respond to e-mails within 24 hours. If you have not heard from me in 48 hours, please resend your message. I do not check e-mail on the weekend.

All students must have an active Western e-mail account and regular access to the OWL course website. This website is the primary way that I communicate with you outside of class. You will also be required to post brief weekly response papers to the online OWL Forum before class (see below).

Reading Responses

Between Weeks 2-7, for each set of course pack readings, you will write a 350-450-word response paper and upload it to the Forum section of OWL before the class meeting (e.g. the response paper for Week 2 is due by 12:30pm before class on Jan 19th). For one of these weeks, you will sign up to help initiate/lead the class discussion. These course elements are due on the assigned date *before* class and cannot be made up.

STATEMENT ON EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit.

Important note: Given the sensitive and challenging nature of the material discussed in class, it is imperative that there be an atmosphere of trust and safety in the classroom. I will attempt to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions; please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense. While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention.

I am always open to listening to students' experiences, and I want to work with students to find acceptable ways to process and address issues that may arise. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable discussing an issue directly with me, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address the issue such as your academic advisor, or a faculty member. I have included below the contact information for the Chair of English and Writing Studies and the Writing Studies Program Director.

Manina Jones. Chair, English and Writing Studies mjones@uwo.ca
Brock Eayrs. Undergraduate Program Director, Writing Studies beayrs@uwo.ca

NOTE: the use of racist or any language that works against the values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will not be tolerated. Before posting, please review all your OWL comments to ensure that they are respectful and appropriate.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Attendance at class is required to improve as a writer. Here is the Writing Studies attendance policy in this class:

- You may miss up to three hours (the equivalent of one week of class) of class meetings during the term without explanation. That means that the first three class hours you miss will be recorded as absences but excused provided you don't miss any more.
- However, if you miss a total of four to nine class hours (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 10% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 72).
- If you miss a total of more than nine hours of class meetings (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class meetings) your final grade will be reduced by 15% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 68).

This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have good reasons for waiving an absence of one class meeting (e.g. if you've missed three hours, and need or want to miss another class meeting) 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: '**Academic Accommodation and Consideration 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.

In-class Mask Policy

Students will be expected to wear **triple layer non-medical masks at all times** in the classroom as per Western policy and public health directives. Students who are unable to wear a mask for medical or religious reasons must seek formal accommodation through Accessible Education at aeu@uwo.ca.

Students are expected not to eat or drink while in class to ensure masks stay in place. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks.

Students unwilling to wear a mask as stipulated by Western policy and public health directives will be referred to the Department, and such actions will be considered a violation of the student Code of Conduct.

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

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

“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 a) a final grade of 65 or more in one of Writing 2101F/G, 2125F/G (or the former 2121F/G), 2111F/G, or 2131F/G, or b) a final grade of 70 or more in one of Writing 1000F/G, 1030F/G, 1031F/G, or c) Special Permission of the department.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION AND CONSIDERATION

Note: the official Western Accommodation Policy appears below. This is in effect but may be modified temporarily by the university during the academic year as conditions change.

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: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student’s final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors by email within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence (SRA) are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation. All requests for consideration for assessments worth more than 30% of a final grade must be directed to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.

In this course, all requests for academic consideration must be directed to the Academic Counselling office of the student's Home Faculty if an SRA will not be used.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see

[Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

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

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> 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 Important Links for Student Services:

Registrar 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/>

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing

Please refer to the "Information for All Students in a Writing Course" for more detailed information.

Briefly, remember that your instructor does not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean's office of your home faculty.

Statements Concerning Online Etiquette

Some components of this course will involve online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- Please “arrive” to class on time.
- Please use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet).
- Ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material.
- To minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise.
- In order to give us optimum bandwidth and web quality, your instructor may ask you to turn off your video camera for the entire class unless you are invited to speak.
- Please be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor’s request if the internet connection becomes unstable.
- Unless invited by your instructor, do **not** share your screen in the meeting.

The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- If you wish to speak, use the “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question.
- Remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking.
- Self-identify when speaking.
- Remember to mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise).

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment. “Flaming” is never appropriate.
- Be professional and scholarly in all online postings. Cite the ideas of others appropriately.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of Zoom-bombing a class or of other serious online offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Student Code of Conduct.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to minor changes)

UNITS	UNIT FOCUS	READINGS
Week 1 Jan 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Introductions and Why Write? • Assignment: Image Poem • Writing Exercise #1: Images 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Course Pack</u>: “The Impact of Images” and “Using the Sound of Language” by Stephen Minot • Selected poems from contemporary Canadian poets (in-class handout).
Week 2 Jan 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Image Poem (10% penalty for no draft) • Discussion: Craft of Poetry • Writing Exercise #2: Metaphor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Online Readings</u>: Workshop Etiquette, Reading Image Poems • <u>Course Pack</u>: “Verse That Is Free” and “Diction, Tone, and Voice” by Mary Oliver; “Monkey Ranch” by Julie Bruck; excerpts from <i>The Knife Thrower’s Partner</i> by Douglas Burnet Smith; “Oranges” by Gary Soto
Week 3 Jan 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Image Poem Due (15%) • Assignment: Creative Nonfiction • Discussion: Creative Nonfiction (Compare & Contrast) • Writing Exercise #3: Bad Behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Online readings</u>: “A Mind Spread Out on the Ground” by Alicia Elliott; • <u>OWL PDF Handout</u>: “Liferower” by Rebecca McClanahan and “Joyas Voladoras” by Brian Doyle

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Course Pack</u>: "Writing Short Creative Nonfiction" by David Starkey from <i>Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief</i>
<p>Week 4 Feb 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Creative Nonfiction (10% penalty for no draft) • Discussion: "Simple Recipes" • Writing Exercise #4: Character Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Course Pack</u>: "Simple Recipes" by Madeleine Thien; • <u>Online Readings</u>: Brevity: A Journal of Concise Literary Non-fiction (two essays of your choice)
<p>Week 5 Feb 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion: Narrative Explorations & "Hills Like White Elephants" • Writing Exercise #5: Brainstorming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Course Pack</u>: "Hills Like White Elephants" by Ernest Hemingway, "Introduction," <i>Fiction: A Longman Pocket Anthology</i>, Edited by R.S. Gwynn, "Mermaid in the Jar" by Sheila Heti
<p>Week 6 Feb 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Short Story (10% penalty for no draft) • Discussion: "That Crafty Feeling," "The Lottery" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Course Pack</u>: "That Crafty Feeling" by Zadie Smith; "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson
Feb 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • READING WEEK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No assigned readings
<p>Week 7 (Zalika) March 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polished Short Story OR Creative Nonfiction (20%) • Discussion: Building Tension in fiction, "What I Saw from Where I Stood" • Writing Exercise #6: Conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>OWL PDF</u> <u>handout</u>: "What I saw from where I stood" by Marisa Silver • <u>Course Pack</u>: "Tension" by Heather Sellers (<i>The Practice of Creative Writing</i>); "Types of Prose in Fiction" and "Choosing a Point of View" by Jack Hodgins
<p>Week 8 March 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Presentations: Narrative Preview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Online Readings</u>: Explore the online journal Joyland: A Hub for Short Fiction
<p>Week 9 March 16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Presentations: Narrative Preview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Online Readings</u>: Explore the online journal Drunken Boat
<p>Week 10 March 23</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Presentations: Narrative Preview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Online Readings</u>: Explore the online journal Electric Literature
<p>Week 11 March 30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop: Final Narrative (10% penalty for no draft) • Revision Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Course Pack</u>: "Revision" by Heather Sellers (<i>The Practice of Creative Writing</i>)
<p>Week 12 April 6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Narrative Assignment and Revision notes Due (40%) • Discussion: Self-assessment • Writing Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Online Readings</u>: Writing Resources, What Editors Want • <u>Course Pack</u>: "Publication" by Heather Sellers from <i>The Practice of Creative Writing</i>