

2211G: Fundamentals of Creative Writing

Winter 2023

Section: # 001

Day/time: Wednesday 1:30pm – 4:30pm

Classroom: SH-3305

Professor: Dr. Andrew C. Wenaus

Email: awenaus@uwo.ca

Office hours: TBA

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 Word (docx) 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, my office hours will be held via Zoom on Mondays from 2:00-4:00pm; I am also happy to book Zoom appointments and answer questions in person during (or directly after) our class meeting. 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 300-400-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 September 21st). 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.

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

Attendance also extends to tardiness. If you are more than 20 minutes late, you will be penalized an hour of attendance. Please make every effort to be on time as late entry can disrupt the flow of discussion in our class. Early departures from class, which have not been previously arranged with the instructor, will also be counted as an absence. If you leave during the break, you will be docked an hour of attendance.

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. Students who are unable to wear a mask for medical or religious reasons must seek formal accommodation through Accessible Education at aw@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, which can be found here: 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.

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 Western and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.”

Note: *In this course you will be required to submit an electronic copy of the final version of each of your essays to [turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) through your section’s OWL HomePage.*

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.

Senate language requires all requests for accommodation for a grade component of 10% or more to go to academic counselling. That same section, however, allows for (and encourages) instructors to deal directly with accommodation requests for grade components less than 10%. Here’s the relevant Senate language:

“Accommodation by Instructor for work worth less than 10% of the overall grade in a course: Instructors are encouraged, in the first instance, to arrange participation requirements and multiple small assignments in such a way as to allow students some flexibility. 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.

In arranging accommodation, instructors will use good judgment and ensure fair treatment for all students. Instructors must indicate on the course outline how they will be dealing with work worth less than 10% of the total course grade. In particular, instructors must indicate whether medical documentation will be required for absences, late assignments or essays, missed tests, laboratory experiments or tutorials, etc. 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

“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/>

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.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to minor changes)

UNITS	UNIT FOCUS	READINGS
<p>Week 1 January 11, 2023</p>	<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 (Shannon Bramer, Aidan Chafe, Eve Joseph).
<p>Week 2 January 18, 2023</p>	<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; selected poems from contemporary Canadian poets (Julie Bruck, Gary Soto, Steven Heighton, Tolu Oloruntoba, Terese Mason Pierre, Liz Howard, Tony Hoagland).
<p>Week 3 January 25, 2023</p>	<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>Course Pack</u>: “Writing Short Creative Nonfiction” by David Starkey from <i>Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief</i>; “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
<p>Week 4 February 1, 2023</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 February 8, 2023</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 February 15, 2023</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
<p>READING WEEK</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO CLASS February 18 – February 26 	
<p>Week 7 March 1, 2023</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” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>OWL PDF 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” by Jack Hodgins

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Exercise #6: Conflict 	
<p>Week 8 March 8, 2023</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 <i>Joyland: A Hub for Short Fiction</i>
<p>Week 9 March 15, 2023</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 <i>Drunken Boat</i>
<p>Week 10 March 22, 2023</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 <i>Electric Literature</i>
<p>Week 11 March 29, 2023</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 December 5, 2023</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