

**3402G: Hitting the Right Notes: Lyric Writing**

Winter 2023

**Section 001****Time/Room: M 12:30-3:30pm****Room: UC-1220****Instructor: David Barrick****Email: dbarric@uwo.ca****Office hours: Th 2:00-4:00pm (via Zoom)****Course Objectives**

This course introduces students to the basics of effective lyric writing in several forms/genres using tools such as prosody, sensory images, repetition, fictional persona, and narrative forms. After analyzing the work of accomplished songwriters, students will workshop their own lyrics while building towards a thematically coherent final project.

Students who successfully complete Writing 3402G should be able to do the following:

- Generate ideas and sensory imagery for lyrics through object writing exercises
- Write lyrics in basic metrical form that will allow them to be set to music
- Understand the different conventions of several lyrical genres (including spoken word)
- Analyze the work of accomplished songwriters
- Understand and articulate how different musical settings can help support the content of a lyric
- Understand the roles of persona, narrative, and performance in the writing of lyrics
- Work effectively with classmates, giving and receiving constructive feedback
- Incorporate feedback into revisions of course work

**Required Texts**

Pattison, Pat. *Writing Better Lyrics (WBL)*. Second edition. Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 2012.

Zollo, Paul. *Songwriters on Songwriting (SOS)*. Fourth edition. Cincinnati: Da Capo Press, 2003.

- Students must have access to Apple Music and/or YouTube for songs in weekly playlists; access to Garage Band (or other recording software/programs) is also ideal.
- A bound notebook for writing exercises is strongly recommended.

**Course Requirements**

Term Work	Grade Value
Lyric Analysis Essay (1000 words)	20%
Midterm Songbook (2 lyrics with musical context notes)	20%
Album Project Pitch (oral presentation)	15%
Album Project (6-7 lyrics with musical context notes)	35%
Recording/reading (performance element)	10%

## Assignment Format

All assignments must be typed and stapled; make sure that prose assignments are double-spaced and that verse assignments are single-spaced. All assignments must have your name, course name, section number, and the instructor's name on the first page. Whenever using sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow MLA style.

## Submitting Assignments

Assignments are due in-class on the date specified on the schedule. **Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day unless I have granted you an extension.** You must talk to your instructor about extensions ahead of the due date; they are not automatic.

In this course you will be required to submit the final version of each of your written assignments electronically, through OWL, to Turnitin.com. If necessary, please submit hard copy assignments to the Department of English and Writing Studies Drop Box outside of University College 2401, **making sure you include your instructor's name, the course code, and your name on the first page.** Do not fax or email assignments. Also, be aware that you are responsible for keeping backup copies of all assignments submitted.

## Office Hours & E-mail Policy

This term, my office hours will be held via Zoom on Thursdays from 2:00-4:00pm; I am also happy to book Zoom appointments and answer questions in person during (or directly after) our class each week. I try to 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.

## 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: '**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 Western University **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 Writing class in order to write such a test in another class, 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 [acw@uwo.ca](mailto:acw@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**

"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](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 assignments to turnitin.com through your section's OWL HomePage.***

## **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 a) a final grade of 65 or more in one of Writing 2101F/G, 2125F/G (or the former 2121F/G), 2111F/G, 2130F/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**

***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](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](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](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/>