

## Writing 1000G-652: The Writer's Studio

### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

#### DESCRIPTION

Students are introduced to the creative process of writing through in-class exercises, peer workshop, analysis of creative texts, and a review of grammar, mechanics, and composition. Students learn strategies for idea generation in a variety of genres, composing a first draft, approaching revision, and effective editing and proofreading techniques.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

1. identify the fundamental elements of creative writing;
2. generate ideas in a variety of genres: poetry, fiction, creative non-fiction, drama/screenwriting
3. analyze and respond critically to published writing and the work of their peers;
4. identify and correct errors in composition, grammar, and mechanics; and
5. incorporate feedback into revisions.

#### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

1. *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology* by Nancy Pagh
2. *The Canadian Writer's Handbook, Third Essentials Edition*, by William E. Messenger, Jan de Bruyn, Judy Brown and Ramona Montagnes
3. *Shut Up You're Pretty*, by Téa Mutoñji

#### ASSIGNMENTS

Free Verse Poem (Week 3):	10%
Flash Fiction (Week 5):	15%
Flash Creative Nonfiction (Week 7):	15%
Capstone Assignment (Week 12):	40%
Exam:	20%

## Assignment Format

All assignments must be submitted to the OWL site as Word files (docx); no PDFs or other file formats accepted. Make sure that prose assignments are double-spaced and that poetry assignments are single-spaced. Include your name, course name, section number, and the instructor's name on the first page. For source documentation (if applicable) and document format, you will be expected to follow the conventions of MLA style. All details relevant to each writing project will be posted in OWL Assignments ahead of the due date.

## Submitting Assignments/Due dates/late submission penalties etc.

In this course you will be required to submit the final version of each of your assignments electronically through OWL to turnitin.com.

Assignments are due on the date specified in the weekly schedule (below). Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day unless you have received an extension. You must contact your instructor about extensions ahead of the due date (but please see the **Medical Accommodation Policy** below); extensions are not automatic and cannot be granted retroactively. Our class week runs from Monday to Sunday, so assignments for a particular week are due by Sunday (mid)night, Eastern Standard Time, unless otherwise stated.

Important: you are responsible for keeping a copy of all assignments you submit.

## Attendance policies

This is an online course with no scheduled classes and no penalties for missing class. However, it is your responsibility to stay engaged with the course by regularly logging in to OWL to read the weekly lectures and stay abreast of assignments and forums.

You are also required to participate regularly in OWL FORUM workshops (see weekly schedule below for workshop dates), where you will give and receive feedback on drafts of your creative pieces. Lecture #1 outlines how the forums will be organized. Lecture #2 includes instructions on how to give and receive constructive feedback on creative works. A penalty of 10% will be assessed to any student who does not post an assignment for workshopping and/or does not provide feedback to the other students in their workshop group. **The OWL Forum workshops will have deadlines to ensure students have enough time to apply feedback to their draft revisions; once a forum is locked, the posts cannot be made up.**

**NOTE: the use of racist language, 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.**

## 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>.

In this course, students are permitted to use AI tools for information gathering and preliminary research purposes **only** (unless otherwise indicated in the assignment instructions). These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. It is essential, however, that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize, develop, and articulate their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploration, but students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism in any form. Note that for all assignments completed outside of class, the instructor can require you to attend an in-person interview to discuss your work before a mark is finalized. Assignments should always reflect students' own thoughts and constitute independent written work. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and ethical learning environment that promotes critical thinking, supports independent inquiry, and encourages original written contributions.

## Academic Accommodation

### **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 judgement 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.

## **Statement on Gender-based Sexual Violence**

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find

information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, here. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

## 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/>

## Course Schedule

### Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Readings:

- Week 1 Lecture
- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology*:
  - “Why I Write?” (pg. 19)
  - “Practicing Perception” (pg. 25)
  - “Drafting” (pg. 36)
  - “Revision” (pg. 48)

### Week 2: The Elements of Poetry

Readings

- Week 2 Lecture
- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology*:
  - “Image, Detail and Figurative Language” (pg. 67)
  - “Sound” (pg. 80)
  - “Writing Poems” (pg. 139)
  - Kelli Russel Agodo, “Geography” (pg. 207)
  - Stephanie Bolster, “Many Have Written Poems about Blackberries” (pg. 242)
  - T.S. Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (pg. 265)
  - Nancy Pagh, “Love Song: After T.S. Eliot” (pg. 370)
  - Sina Queyras, “On the Scent, #14” (pg. 373)
  - Elizabeth Bachinsky, “For the Pageant Girls” (pg. 223)
  - Patricia Smith, “Hip-Hop Ghazal” (pg. 390)
  - James Tyner, “At a Barbecue for R.C. One Week after He Is Out of Iraq” (pg. 403)
- Grammar: Nouns, Pronouns and Verbs
  - Chapters 6-8 of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*

Activities:

- Free Verse Poem Workshop

**Week 3: The Elements of Narrative**

Readings:

- Week 3 Lecture
- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology*:
  - “Character and Setting” (pg. 93)
  - “Scene, Exposition and Reflection” (pg. 106)
  - Raymond Carver, “Chef’s House” (pg. 248)
  - Michael Crummey, “Bread” (pg. 261)
  - Kate Chopin, “The Story of an Hour” (pg. 253)
- *Shut Up You’re Pretty*:
  - “Tits for Cigs” (pg. 9)
  - “This is Only Temporary” (pg. 45)
  - “Tilapia Fish” (pg. 131)
- Grammar: Adjectives and Adverbs
  - Chapters 10 and 11 of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*

**\*\*Assignment 1: Free Verse Poem Due\*\***

**Week 4: Writing Stories**

Readings:

- Week 4 Lecture
- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology*:
  - “Writing Stories” (pg. 156)
  - David Foster Wallace, “Incarnations of Burned Children” (pg. 269)
  - Aimee Nezhukumatathil, “The Witching Hour” (pg. 343)
  - Madeleine Thien, “Simple Recipes” (pg. 397)
  - Jeanette Winterson, “The Three Friends” (pg. 411)
- *Shut Up You’re Pretty*:
  - “Parchment Paper” (pg. 15)
  - “The Event” (pg. 21)
  - “Down the Lakeshore” (pg. 27)
  - “If Not Happiness” (pg. 31)
- Grammar: Sentences
  - Chapters 3 and 4 of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*

Activity:

- Flash Fiction Workshop

## Week 5: Voice and the Ethics of Storytelling

### Readings:

- Week 5 Lecture
- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*
  - “Voice and Perspective” (pg. 119)
  - Patricia Lockwood, “Rape Joke” (pg. 314)
  - Shani Mootoo, “Out on Main Street” (pg. 333)
  - Michael Ondaatje, “The Cinnamon Peeler” (pg. 367)
  - Richard Shelton, “The Stones” (pg. 387)
  - Priscila Uppal, “Sorry I Forgot to Clean Up After Myself” (pg. 404)
- Shut Up You’re Pretty:
  - “Men, Tricks, and Money” (pg. 85)
  - “The Waitress” (pg. 91)
  - “Shut Up You’re Pretty” (pg. 95)
  - “Women Talking” (pg. 115)
- Grammar: The comma, the semicolon and the colon
  - Chapters 15-17 of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*

### **\*\*Assignment 2: Flash Fiction Due\*\***

## Week 6: Writing Creative Nonfiction

### Readings:

- Week 6 Lecture
- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*
  - “Writing Personal Essays” (pg. 173)
  - Ivan E. Coyote, “This, That and the Other Thing” (pg. 256)
  - Brian Doyle, “Leap” (pg. 264)
  - Evelyn Lau, “An Insatiable Emptiness” (pg. 301)
  - Donald Murray, “War Stories Untold” (pg. 339)
- Grammar: The dash and parentheses
  - Chapters 18 and 19 of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*

### Activity:

- Flash Creative Nonfiction Workshop

### **\*\*Winter Reading Break\*\***

## Week 7: Writing Scripts

### Readings:

- Week 7 Lecture
- Grammar: Common sentence “problems” I
  - Chapters 5a, 5b and 5c of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*



## **\*\*Assignment 3: Flash Creative Nonfiction Due\*\***

### **Week 8: Drafting/Capstone Presentation**

#### Readings:

- Week 8 Lecture
- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*
  - “Drafting” redux (pg. 36)
- Grammar: Common sentence “problems” II
  - Chapters 5a, 5b and 5c of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*

#### Activity:

- Capstone Presentation

### **Week 9: Revision/Capstone Presentation**

#### Readings:

- Week 9 Lecture
- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*
  - “Revision” redux (pg. 48)
- Grammar: Paragraphs
  - Chapter 2 of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*

#### Activity:

- Capstone Presentation

### **Week 10: Experimental Writing**

#### Readings:

- Week 10 Lecture

#### Activity:

- Capstone Presentation

### **Week 11: Publishing/Editing/Exam Prep**

#### Readings:

- Week 11 Lecture

#### Activity:

- Capstone Workshop

### **Week 12: Review/Editing/Exam Prep**

#### Readings:

- Week 12 Lecture

#### Activity:

- Exam prep

**\*\*Assignment 4: Capstone Assignment Due\*\***