

Writing 1000 004: The Writers' Studio

Fall 2026

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

DESCRIPTION

Students are introduced to the creative process of writing through in-class exercises, peer workshop, and analysis of creative text. 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; and
4. incorporate feedback into revisions.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND COURSE MATERIALS

Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology by Nancy Pagh (\$64.25 hard copy/\$44.00 eBook)

ASSIGNMENTS:

Free Verse Poem (Week 4):	10%
Flash Fiction (Week 6):	10%
Flash Creative Nonfiction (Week 8):	10%
Capstone Assignment (Week 12):	40%
Exam:	30%

****Note: In Fall/Winter 2026, the Exam will be written in-person.****

No aids are permitted for the final exam. Electronic devices of any kind (including calculators, cell phones, and smart watches) are not permitted.

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the

Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Assignment Format

Assignments must be submitted electronically via OWL (Word doc). **All assignments must have your name, course name, section number, and instructor's name on the first page.** When/if using sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow MLA standards for documentation. Each assignment will have unique formatting specifications.

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 our Brightspace course site to [turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) the day the assignment is due.

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.

Attendance policies

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

If you miss nine unexcused hours of class (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 10 marks (e.g., an earned final grade of 80% will be reduced to a final grade of 70%; a grade of 70% will be reduced to 60%).

If you miss a total of more than nine unexcused hours of class (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class meetings) your final grade will be reduced by 15 marks (e.g., an earned final grade of 80% will be reduced to a final grade of 65; a final grade of 70 will be reduced to 55).

This policy will be waived only if you have either undocumented or documented academic consideration. You may only use the undocumented consideration option once each term. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you must discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, and submit documentation to support your request for academic consideration. (See Academic Consideration 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.

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: https://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 <https://www.turnitin.com>.

In this course, the use of AI (such as automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, ChatGPT, etc.) is strictly prohibited, unless there has been discussion with and agreement by the instructor before beginning an assignment. If AI use is suspected, the instructor will ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and/or other materials used in preparing assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

Academic Consideration Policy

University policy on academic considerations is described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation.

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests through the Student Absence Portal, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation, which may include a Student Medical Certificate. Recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation.

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.

Statement on Gender-based Sexual Violence

Western University is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentssupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact 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/>

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.

Course Schedule

WEEK 1 : INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

- **The importance of concrete detail**
- **The process of writing**
- **How to get started writing**

Readings:

- *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: POETRY I

- **Forms of poetry with a specific emphasis on free verse**
- **Image and detail**
- **Figurative language**

Readings

- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*

- “Image, Detail and Figurative Language” (pg. 67)
- “Writing Poems” (pg. 139)

- Kelli Russel Agodo, “Geography” (pg. 207)
- Stephanie Bolster, “Many Have Written Poems about Blackberries” (pg. 242)
- Sandra Cisneros, “My Wicked Wicked Ways” (pg. 255)
- T.S. Eliot, “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (pg. 265)
- Mallory Opel, “Among the Blossoms” (pg. 368)
- Nancy Pagh, “Love Song: After T.S. Eliot” (pg. 370)

WEEK 3: POETRY II

- **Forms of poetry with a closer look at formal poetry and prose poetry**
- **Sound and rhythm**

Readings

- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*
 - “Sound” (pg. 80)
 - “Writing Poems” (pg. 139)

 - Elizabeth Bachinsky, “For the Pageant Girls” (pg. 223)
 - Natalie Diaz, “My Brother at 3 A.M.” (pg. 262)
 - Emily Dickinson. “I started Early—Took my Dog—” (pg. 263)
 - Sina Queyras, “On the Scent, #14” (pg. 373)
 - 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)

Activity:

- Free verse poem workshop

WEEK 4: FICTION I

- **Character**
- **Setting**
- **Scene, exposition and reflection**

Readings:

- *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)
- Kristiana Kahakauwila, “Thirty-Nine Rules for Making a Hawaiian Funeral into a Drinking Game” (pg. 194)

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

WEEK 5: FICTION II

- **Narrative structure**

Readings:

- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*
 - “Writing Stories” (pg. 156)
 - Aimee Nezhukumatathil, “The Witching Hour” (pg. 343)
 - Madeleine Thien, “Simple Recipes” (pg. 397)
 - David Foster Wallace, “Incarnations of Burned Children” (pg. 269)
 - Jeanette Winterson, “The Three Friends” (pg. 411)

Activity:

- Flash Fiction Workshop

*****READING WEEK - No Classes***
(October 10-18)**

WEEK 6: CREATIVE NONFICTION I

- **The personal essay**
- **Form and creative nonfiction**

Readings:

- *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)

****Assignment 2: Flash Fiction Due****

WEEK 7: CREATIVE NONFICTION II

- **Personal experience in writing**
- **The ethics of fiction/creative nonfiction**

Readings:

- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*
 - “Voice and Perspective” (pg. 119)
 - Alfred Taiaiake, “What I Think of When I Think of Skin” (pg. 208)
 - Patricia Lockwood, “Rape Joke” (pg. 314)
 - Sonja Livingston, “The Ghetto Girls’ Guide to Dating and Romance” (pg. 311)
 - 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)

Activity:

- Flash Creative Nonfiction workshop

WEEK 8: SCRIPTS I

- **Screenwriting Module Week 1 material**
- *The Stutterer*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2m_VTZR5MU0
- *Pixar’s Piper*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIPV1iwzrzg>
- *Cargo*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyfmwgOV6uo&t=141s>
- *Porcelain Unicorn*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRMcPJrWm-g&t=6s>
- *Lights Out*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUQhNGEu2KA&t=2s>
- *Presentation*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Vq4Nf-zJoc>

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

WEEK 9: SCRIPTS II

- **Screenwriting Module Week 2 material**

WEEK 10: INSTRUCTOR’S CHOICE

WEEK 11: PUBLISHING/EDITING/EXAM PREP

Activity:

- Capstone Workshop
- Write a third person bio

WEEK 12: REVIEW/EDITING/EXAM PREP

Activity:

- Exam prep

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

Assignment Due**