

**Writing 1000G:
The Writer's Studio
Winter 2026**

Section: 651 FW25
Instructor: Melanie Chambers
Email: mchambe4@uwo.ca
Office Hours: online by appointment

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 (\$63.20 hard copy/\$43.00 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 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.

Writing 1000: Content Warning

Creative writing often deals with difficult subject matter. In the readings for this course, you may encounter a piece of writing that you find troubling or struggle to read because of its content. If this is the case, you don't need to finish reading it.

The exam asks you to edit a story and produce some creative writing of your own. It does not test you on the readings assigned in the course, and there is no penalty for not finishing a reading whose content is particularly troubling for you.

However, one of the keys to improving as a creative writer is reading, and you are required to read consistently throughout the course across all four of the major genres. So, if you choose not to finish one of the assigned readings because of its subject matter, you need to find another, comparable piece in the textbook that has not been assigned and read it instead. For example, if you find that the subject matter of a story is too troubling for you, stop reading that story, and find another story in the textbook to read in its place.

Assignment Format

No title page required. Times Roman font, doubled spaced, pages numbered. Course name, section and student NAME on the top left of the page. No PDF's please. Word documents only.

Submitting Assignments/Due dates/late submission penalties etc.

Peer editing: You will notice that every assignment requires a first draft, which will be used for online editing purposes *except the food report. The first due date is when the peer edit draft is due. Every peer edit workshop requires **THREE** copies of your work. The purpose of this is to mimic the editor and writer relationship that exists in a 'real world' scenario. Editing and rewriting are critical to improving and sculpting a story for publication. As an editor, you will learn to critique and help shape fellow students' work and as a writer, you must get used to

adopting and/or rejecting editing comments and concerns. This work will be done in-class; therefore, if you're absent, this will reflect on your participation mark.

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.

Attendance Policies

Attendance at class is required to improve as a writer. I don't like to penalize late assignments; however, since one of the purposes of this course is to familiarize you with the writing profession, you need to know that deadlines are crucial. For this reason, all assignments will be due on the date specified unless you negotiate an extension at least 48 hours in advance. Following any other policy would be an injustice to you as a future writer.

Assignments are submitted electronically. Late assignments will be penalized at 3 marks per day, including weekends.

Obviously we do not meet formally as a "class" in a Distance Studies course. Therefore "attendance" and participation on the Discussion Board are intertwined. Distance Studies classes are generally self-paced, so you must attend class (defined as logging into our OWL section) and participate by introducing yourself, and posting questions and thoughts each week based on the given week's set discussion topic) **at least two times weekly**. This means at least two separate posts per week (a week is defined as running from Monday to Sunday), at least one of which must be a "new" post rather than just a reply to someone else's.

Extended absences, defined as a failure to post into the OWL classroom for more than five consecutive days, must be coordinated with the instructor.

Postings on the Discussion Board must have the following characteristics:

Must contribute something meaningful to the Board; Must support your opinion with sufficient reasons or evidence; Must display good grammar and organization.

Postings should not:

Contain disrespectful or insulting language; Be excessively long or excessively short; Be unrelated to the week's topic; Say things that do not contribute anything, e.g. "I agree with you" or "nice comment". I will track your postings to the discussion Board, and it will be part of your 5% Online Discussion/ Exercises/Workshopping mark indicated above. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements **may result in your final grade in the course being reduced by 10%** (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 72).

Although this is an online course, you are expected to check into the OWL site on a regular basis, to read the material and your fellow students' comments, participate in online discussions and to interact online with your fellow classmates by workshopping your drafts as much as online allows you. This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. 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.

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: 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, the use of AI (such as automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, ChatGPT...) is 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/studentsupport/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/>

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

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

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

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

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

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

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

Week 6: Creative Nonfiction I

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

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

Readings:

- *Pixar’s Piper*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIPV1iwzrzg>
- *Cargo*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyfmwgOV6uo&t=141s>
- *I Really Like You*: <https://vimeo.com/groups/732802/videos/91054893>
- *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

Readings:

- Review the films from last week

Week 10: Editing

Readings:

- *Write Moves: A Creative Writing Guide and Anthology:*
 - “Revision” redux (pg. 48)

Week 11: Review/Editing/Exam Prep

Readings:

- Re-read the Week 10 lecture on editing

Activity:

- Capstone Workshop

Week 12: Publishing/Exam Prep

Activity:

- Exam prep
- Write a third person bio
- Write 2-4 writing prompts

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