



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo

Department of English
ENGL 332 Winter/2020
Creative Writing for Change
Mon/Weds 10:00 – 11:20 - SJI 2011

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Judith Robinson
Office: SH 2113
Phone: TBA
Office Hours: Monday 11:30 – 1:00
Email: jrobinson@sju.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Can creative writing initiate and inspire positive change? Do poems, songs, stories, dramas and articles have the ability to foster understanding, awareness, citizen engagement and social reform? In this course students will be encouraged to develop literary works that open minds and awaken hearts to issues such as workers' rights, environmental degradation, racial discrimination, gender bias and the peace movement.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Identify key areas of concern.
- Formulate a methodology to communicate in various genres.
- Discover successful artists to emulate.
- Take risks and experiment with various techniques.
- Revise, edit and improve their writing.
- Research potential markets to publish their manuscripts.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All required texts will either be posted on the course website or linked to resources available online.

SUGGESTED READING

Catron, Louis E. *The Elements of Playwriting*. Macmillan: New York, NY, 1993.
Catron, Louis E. *Playwriting: Writing, Producing and Selling Your Play*. Waveland Press: Long Grove, IL, 1990.
Steele, Alexander. *Gotham Writers Workshop, Writing Fiction*. Bloomsbury Publishing: New York, 2003.
Minot, Stephen and Thiel, Diane. *Three Genres: The Writing of Literary Prose, Poems, and Plays*. Pearson: Glenview, IL. 9th ed. 2012.
Oliver, Mary. *A Poetic Handbook*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: Boston, MA, 1994.

Course Requirements and Assessments

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Profile of a Writer from the Course Outline – 5 min Presentation	Jan 13	10%
Poem about Social Justice	Jan 29	10%
Opening Scene from a Short Story on a Social Justice Theme (2–3 pgs)	Feb. 24	10%
Pivotal Scene from a 10 min Play about Social Justice (2–3 pgs)	March 11	10%
Column about Social Justice (400–500 words)	March 23	10%
Writer’s Creed & Reflection on your Work – 5 min Presentation	March 30	10%
Writers’ Portfolio – Poem about Social Justice	April 8	10%
Writers’ Portfolio - Short Story about Social Justice (5–10 pgs)	April 8	10%
Writers’ Portfolio – 10 min Play about Social Justice (7–10 pgs)	April 8	10%
Participation	Ongoing	10%

The 10% **PARTICIPATION GRADE** will be calculated based on attendance, completion of assigned readings and assignments, and engaged participation in class discussions, writing exercises and workshops.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Assignments & Activities:
1	Jan 6	Intro to the course.	Drafting a writer’s creed.
1	Jan 8	Discovering the Elements of Poetry such as images, symbols, theme and the role of the speaker.	Exploring poetic elements.
2	Jan 13	Student Presentations.	Due: Profile of a Writer - Presentation - 10%
2	Jan 15	Environmental poetry by William Wordsworth, Bruce Cockburn, Joni Mitchell, Craig Santos Perez, DG Nanouk Okpik and Joe Walsh.	Examining poetic images & symbols.
3	Jan 20	Poetry celebrating workers’ rights by Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie and Marge Piercy; Poetry protesting racism by Jim Wong-Chu, Muriel Rukeyser; Langston Hughes & Maya Angelou.	Reflecting on narrative voice and the role of the speaker.
3	Jan 22	Anti-war poems by Buffy Sainte-Marie, Wilfred Owen, Goh Poh Seng, Pete Seeger, Denise Levertov and William Butler Yeats.	Discovering the importance of theme.
4	Jan 27	Workshopping student poetry.	Small group workshops & critiques.
4	Jan 29	The Techniques of Fiction Writing – voice, mood, theme, tone, plotting & exposition.	Exploring fictional elements. Due: Social Justice Poem – 10%
5	Feb 3	<i>Just Lather, That’s All</i> by Hernando Tellez - depicting the horrors of oppressive regimes.	Exploring mood, characterization and atmosphere’s contributions to a story’s effectiveness.
5	Feb 5	<i>The Sniper</i> by Liam O’Flaherty - exposing the effects of civil wars on families.	Examining the stages of the plot.

6	Feb 10	Alice Munro's <i>Boys and Girls</i> - exploring gender bias.	Studying narrative voice, dialogue and exposition.
6	Feb 12	Workshopping short stories' opening scenes.	Small group workshops & critiques.
Reading Week		NO CLASSES	
7	Feb 24	The Basics of Playwriting – creating authentic characters & dialogue; Dramatic structuring & formatting.	Exploring dramatic elements. Due: Short Story's Opening Scene – 10%
7	Feb 26	Ibsen's <i>Enemy of the People</i> Act I	Building strong dramatic characters.
8	Mar 2	Ibsen's <i>Enemy of the People</i> Act II & III	Creating authentic dialogue.
8	Mar 4	Ibsen's <i>Enemy of the People</i> Act IV & V	Examining plot & theme.
9	Mar 9	Workshopping pivotal scenes.	Small group workshops & critiques.
9	Mar 11	Overview of Non Fiction – column writing.	Exploring the elements of creative nonfiction. Due: Play's Pivotal Scene – 10%
10	Mar 16	Columns and Opinion Pieces by Seymour Hersh, Julian Brave NoiseCat, Margaret Atwood, Viviane Fairbank, Jimmy Carter and Nicholas Kristof.	Theme, message and voice in creative nonfiction.
10	Mar 18	Workshopping columns.	Small group workshops & critiques.
11	Mar 23	Whole Class Writing Workshops.	Whole class workshops & critiques. Due: Social Justice Column – 10%
11	Mar 25	Whole Class Writing Workshops.	Whole class workshops & Critiques.
12	Mar 30	Student Presentations	Due: Writer's Creed & Reflection on Your Work - Presentations 10%
12	April 1	Writers' Organizations; Opportunities & Graduate Programs; Marketing manuscripts.	Examining potential markets for manuscripts & graduate programs in writing.
NO FINAL EXAM		The Writers' Portfolio - due April 8 th is equivalent to a final exam.	DUE: Writer's Portfolio - 30% - Upload a poem, a short story and a 10 minute play into the appropriate drop boxes. (10% each).

Course Bibliography

Poetry

- Maya Angelou – “Still I Rise”
 Langston Hughes – “Mother to Son”
 Denise Levertov – “Making Peace”
 DG Nanouk Okpik – “If Oil is Drilled in Bristol Bay”
 Wilfred Owen – “Dulce et Decorum Est”
 Craig Santos Perez – “Halloween in the Anthropocene”
 Muriel Rukeyser – “George Robinson Blues”
 Marge Piercy – “To Be of Use”
 Goh Poh Seng – “Vietnam”
 Jim Wong-Chu – “equal opportunity”
 William Wordsworth – “The World is Too Much with Us”
 William Butler Yeats – “An Irish Airman Foresees His Death”

Song Lyrics

Bruce Cockburn –	“If a Tree Falls”
Bob Dylan –	“Workingman Blues #2”
Woody Guthrie –	“Union Maid”
Joni Mitchell -	“Big Yellow Taxi”
Buffy Sainte-Marie –	“Universal Soldier”
Pete Seeger –	“Where Have all the Flowers Gone?”
Joe Walsh -	“Song for a Dying Planet”

Short Stories

Alice Munro –	“Boy and Girls”
Liam O’Flaherty –	“The Sniper”
Hernando Tellez –	“Just Lather, That’s All”

Plays

Henrik Ibsen –	“An Enemy of the People”
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Columns

Margaret Atwood –	“Am I a Bad Feminist?”
Jimmy Carter –	“Losing my Religion for Equality”
Viviane Fairbank –	“The False Promise of Green Housing”
Seymour Hersh –	“The Scene of the Crime”
Nicholas Kristof –	“Trump Finds a Brawler for his War on Workers”
Julian Brave NoiseCat –	“We Need Indigenous Wisdom to Survive the Apocalypse”

FEEDBACK FORUM

A series of discussion tools will be set up on the course website so students can receive feedback on their writing from their peers. These rough drafts will not be evaluated or monitored by the instructor.

POLICY ON LATE WORK, MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, AND MAKE-UP TESTS

Late assignments will receive a penalty of 5% per business date. If an extension is required please email me before the deadline.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance will constitute part of the participation grade. Please email me before class if you will be unable to make it. Don’t feel you have to come in if you are sick.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

It is recommended that students bring their laptop to every class in order to participate in writing and editing exercises and to access course materials posted online.

CORRESPONDENCE

I will check my email daily. Remember to check your Waterloo email frequently to see if I have sent out any course announcements (such as extensions on deadlines) etc.

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances, www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload_file/PLCY_AOM_Student-Petitions-and-Grievances_20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the St. Jerome's Advising Specialist, Student Affairs Office, who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline, www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Discipline_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to University of Waterloo Policy 71, Student Discipline, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. For typical penalties, check the Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals, www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Appeals_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf.

Note for students with disabilities: AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall (Room 1401) at the University of Waterloo, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term, www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/.