



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo

Department of English

Winter 2022

ENGL 335 – Introduction to Creative Writing

Mondays, 6:30 – 7:50 pm and asynchronous

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Claire Tacon
Office Hours: By appointment
Email: ctacon@uwaterloo.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What makes a piece of writing grab your attention? What makes it stay with you long after you've read it? Why are others almost instantly forgettable? Through a series of creative investigations, students will explore how poems and stories affect us, looking for tools to make their own writing burrow into the reader's skin.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, we are working towards:

- A. Improving writing skills in poetry and fiction
 - Understanding common techniques and finding interesting ways to apply them
 - Reading published examples to understand how the author has achieved various effects
- B. Developing a stronger critical eye
 - Providing workshop feedback to peers
 - Analysing our own revision process
- C. Greater understanding of the contemporary Canadian literary landscape
 - Introduction to literary journals, small presses and reading series

REQUIRED TEXTS

All required readings are available online and through course reserves and will be posted on LEARN. Please refer to the course schedule to see which ones are due before each class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT

Writing Portfolio (25% of final grade)

Throughout the course, you will be building a portfolio with all of the writing you create during the term. This portfolio will include drafts started in class, as well as your "extender exercise" drafts. You are also welcome to add point-form explanatory notes on why you made the artistic choices you did. Please document all of the steps as you work through the exercises. If you find that you have written something that is more private, you have the option to redact portions. You will be graded on the completeness of your portfolio and on the risks you take with pushing the work further.

Due dates:

Friday, February 18 (for all writing assignments up to that point)

April 8 (for all remaining writing assignments)

Revision (25% of final grade)

There are two author-led workshops in this course. For **each** workshop, you will pick one piece that you developed as part of the writing extenders and will keep working on it, turning it into a poem or short story. You will then submit it to the Dropbox for peer feedback. You must pick a new piece for each workshop.

Of those two pieces submitted for peer workshop you, will pick one that you are going to thoroughly revise. You will then hand it in to me for instructor feedback. There are two points in the term when you can hand in your work to me for instructor feedback: February 14 or March 28. Pick the hand-in date that is most convenient for you.

In your revision, I expect to see significant experimentation and a clear jump from the initial draft to the revised version. Changing one or two lines will not result in a high grade. Please make effective use of your author-led workshop time to get the feedback most useful to your revision (either synchronously or asynchronously).

You **must** complete a revision analysis sheet (available on LEARN) to accompany your final revision. The revision will be marked on draft quality and on the depth of your revision analysis.

Submission dates for peer feedback:

Tuesday, February 1 by midnight

Tuesday, March 15 by midnight (this must be a different piece than the one submitted for the first workshop)

Submission dates for instructor feedback:

Monday, Feb 14 or Monday, March 28 (pick one)

Final revision due date:

Friday, April 8 (you may also submit earlier in the semester, provided your work has received peer and instructor feedback)

Reading Journal (25% of final grade)

Reading responses are the main asynchronous class component. You are expected to complete the reading journal provided on LEARN, in advance of each class. Reading responses should be handed in on a weekly basis. You will be graded on the completeness of the journal and on your level of engagement with the text. You will receive a grade on the readings halfway through the term as well as at the end.

Reading responses should be submitted before class each week, according to schedule below (also available on LEARN and on the library course reserves)

Marks returned:

February 24 (for work up to that point), April 12 (for remaining readings)

Workshops Sheets and Peer Discussion (25% of final grade)

There are two workshops this semester. You will be placed in groups of 6-8 students and are expected to read each submission and to complete a workshop sheet for each writer. If you are able to join synchronously you will also be expected to participate in an author-led discussion of the work. If you can only join asynchronously, you will be expected to answer any follow-up questions from the author in one of the LEARN discussion forums. You will be graded on the generosity and depth of the peer feedback you provide. If you are late with submitting either your draft or your feedback, the penalty will be deducted from this grade.

Workshop Sheets due dates:

Sunday, February 6 by midnight

Sunday, March 20 by midnight

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	In class work, readings (links on LEARN and in reading journal) and deadlines
1	Jan 10	Introduction	<p>In class: List poetry</p> <p>Asynchronous work (due by Jan 17): <i>Craft reading:</i> Poetry Foundation article “How to Make a Poem”</p> <p><i>Literature Readings:</i> “Boreal Swing” by Liz Howard “Influence is Infinitely Circuital” by Madhur Anand “Famous” by Naomi Shihab Nye</p> <p><i>Writing extenders:</i> available on LEARN</p>
2	Jan 17	Scavenging for Words	<p>In class: Found poetry and sound play</p> <p>Asynchronous work (due by Jan 24): <i>Craft Readings:</i> Poetry Foundation article “Learning the Poetic Line” “The 6 S’s” by Catherine Wagner</p> <p><i>Literature Readings:</i> “Everything Must Go” by Raoul Fernandes “Budapest” by Billy Collins “let poems be mist” by Craig Santos Perez</p> <p><i>Writing extenders:</i> available on LEARN</p>
3	Jan 24	Where We Live Now	<p>In class: Setting and line breaks</p> <p>Asynchronous work (due by Jan 31): <i>Craft Reading:</i> Poetry Foundation article “Learning About Figurative Language”</p> <p><i>Literature Readings:</i> “Russian Figure” Significant Objects “27-year-old Crust...” Museum of Brokenships “Blue” by Maggie Pahos</p> <p><i>Writing extenders:</i> available on LEARN</p>
4	Jan 31	A Knack for Knick-knacks	<p>In class: Metaphor, connotation and object-based writing</p> <p>Asynchronous work (due by Feb 7): <i>Craft Reading:</i> “On Seeing and Being Seen: the difference between writing with empathy and writing with love” by Alicia Elliot</p> <p><i>Writing extenders:</i> available on LEARN</p> <p>DUE DATE: Tuesday, Feb 1 by midnight First submission for peer workshop</p> <p>DUE DATE: Sunday, Feb 6 by midnight Workshop sheets for all the pieces in your group</p>

Week	Date	Topic	In class work, readings (links on LEARN and in reading journal) and deadlines
5	Feb 7	Peer workshops	<p>In class: Author-led workshops</p> <p>Asynchronous work (due by Feb 14): <i>Craft Reading:</i> “What Writers Really Do When They Write” by George Saunders</p> <p><i>Literature Readings:</i> “Surrounded by Sleep” by Akhil Sharma “You Are So Embarrassing” by Souvankham Thammavongsa</p> <p><i>Writing tour task:</i> available on LEARN</p>
6	Feb 14	Lying Through Our Teeth	<p>In class: Character development and research</p> <p>Asynchronous work (due by Feb 28): <i>Craft Reading:</i> Poetry Foundation article “The Choice of Constraint”</p> <p><i>Literature Readings:</i> “We Are Electric” by Kellee Ngan “Spring Training” by Mark Paterson “Untitled” by Rob McLennan</p> <p><i>Writing extenders:</i> available on LEARN</p> <p>DUE DATE: Monday, Feb 14 by midnight First opportunity to submit work for instructor feedback. The second will be March 28. *You only need to select one of these deadlines</p> <p>DUE DATE: Friday, Feb 18 by midnight Portfolio (first half)</p>
	Feb 21	<i>Reading week</i>	
7	Feb 28	Wish You Were Here	<p>In class: Postcard fiction and working with constraints</p> <p>Asynchronous work (due by Mar 7): <i>Craft Reading:</i> “How I Learned to Write Dialogue by Reviewing Police Complaints” by K Chess</p> <p><i>Literature Readings:</i> “Gulliver’s Wife” by Philip Huynh</p> <p><i>Writing extenders:</i> available on LEARN</p>
8	Mar 7	Tell It Like It Is	<p>In class: Dialogue and subtext</p> <p>Asynchronous work (due by Mar 14): <i>Craft Reading:</i> Danez Smith and Kaveh Ahkbar in Conversation</p> <p><i>Literature Readings:</i> “One-room apartment above the grocery store” by Chelene Knight “The Country” by Billy Collins “Girl” by Jamaica Kincaid “Grass” by Carrienne Leung</p> <p><i>Writing extenders:</i> available on LEARN</p>

Week	Date	Topic	In class work, readings (links on LEARN and in reading journal) and deadlines
9	Mar 14	Walk Me Through It	In class: Community-based and participatory art
			Asynchronous work (due by Mar 21): <i>Craft Reading:</i> "25 Essential Notes on Craft" by Matthew Salesses" <i>Writing extenders:</i> available on LEARN
			DUE DATE: Tuesday, Mar 15 by midnight Second submission for peer workshop
			DUE DATE: Sunday, March 20 by midnight Workshop sheets for all the pieces in your group
10	Mar 21	Peer workshops	In class: Author-led workshops
			Asynchronous work (due by Mar 28): <i>Craft Reading:</i> Poetry Foundation article "The Warmth of the Messy Page" <i>Literature Readings:</i> "What, of this Goldfish, Would You Wish?" by Etgar Keret "The Deciding Problem" Sonal Champsee (just needs to be read, no responses required)
11	Mar 28	"Fail Better":	In class: Strategies for revision
			Asynchronous work (due by Apr 4): <i>Craft Reading:</i> "Ten of My Recommendations for Good Writing Habits" by Lydia Davis <i>Literature Readings:</i> Guest author's book(s) (tbd)
			DUE DATE: Monday, March 28 by midnight Second opportunity to submit work for instructor feedback. *You only need to select one of these deadlines
12	Apr 4	Guest artist visit and course wrap up	In class: guest artist visit and course wrap up
			Asynchronous work: Complete final assignments
			DUE DATE: April 8 by midnight Second half of writing portfolio
			DUE DATE: April 8 by midnight Revision
			DUE DATE: April 8 by midnight Any remaining writing assignments

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Tuesday, February 1 (by midnight)	Submit your draft for peer feedback
Sunday, February 6 (by midnight)	Workshop 1 peer feedback sheets due for your group
Friday, February 18 (by midnight)	First writing portfolio hand-in (all writing assignments up to that point)
Monday, February 14 (by midnight)	Submit your draft for instructor feedback *
Tuesday, Mar 15 (by midnight)	Submit your draft for peer feedback (This must be a different piece than the one you submitted for the first workshop.)
Sunday, March 20 (by midnight)	Workshop 2 peer feedback sheets due for your group
Monday, March 28 (by midnight)	Submit your draft for instructor feedback *
April 8	Second writing portfolio hand-in (all remaining writing assignments)
	Final revision due, (revised draft and revision analysis sheet)

Reading-response journal entries are due before class each week (see schedule above).

*Pick one date only.

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

With workshop draft submissions and workshop feedback sheets, late submissions will lose 10% per day to a maximum of 3 days. No assignments will be accepted later than this and a grade of zero will be awarded. Any arrangements for exceeding circumstances are at the discretion of the instructor.

With all other assignments, I am amenable to a one-week grace period. Further extensions only available with advance instructor approval.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are encouraged to attend the synchronous class times over Zoom. A recording of each class will be made available for two weeks. Students unable to attend the synchronous times will be required to watch the video and complete the work on their own. All students are required to complete the asynchronous learning tasks.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please email me with your questions or concerns. I try to return emails within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours on weekends. Office hours this semester are by appointment only, usually on Mondays and Tuesdays. Please email me to book a time.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

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. [Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.]

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. [Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.] 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/.