

**Carleton University
Fall 2017
Department of English**

ENGL 1500 Introduction to Creative Writing: Conventions and Genre Outlaws

Location: Tory Building 340
Fridays 11:35-2:25

Instructor: Sarah Waisvisz
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Office: Dunton Tower 1914
Office Hours: Fridays 3-5

Introduction to Creative Writing -- Course Description:

This course is designed for students of any academic discipline or level who have an interest in creative writing—as an artistic practice, an industry, or an academic discipline. Students who have never written creatively are welcome in this course: they just need a desire to try it out. Students who have written creatively are also welcome. Together we will read literary examples from various genres, practice writing those genres, and develop a portfolio of edited writing.

TAs/ Teaching Assistants: Sanita Fejzic (Office Hours Tues 10-11) and Faizal Deen (by aptmt)

Please note: this course is not a prerequisite for taking the Creative Writing workshops offered in the Department of English. In other words, taking this course does not guarantee admission into the department's Creative Writing workshops. These workshops (listed on the English Department website) are all based on the submission of a quality portfolio (which this course will give you the opportunity to prepare) and the permission of the instructor. As such, if you already have a portfolio of creative work, you might consider submitting it to one or more of the workshops we offer without taking this course.

However:

- If you feel you need time and guidance preparing a portfolio, this course is the ideal place to do so.
- If you never plan on taking a Creative Writing workshop but still have an interest in writing (as a practice or perhaps as a business, or just because you love reading and wonder what goes on behind the scenes) this course is also for you.
- If you are already in a Creative Writing workshop but are interested in learning more about the ins and outs of creative writing (here at Carleton and in North America more broadly), this course is also for you.

The weekly schedule is divided into:

- lectures by the instructor on a weekly topic
- guest lectures (by local writers, publishers, organizers of literary festivals, as well as other specialists)
- in-class writing in response to targeted writing prompts and in response to literary examples
- in-class peer editing (sharing and critiquing) in a small groups in class.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students will emerge from this course with the beginnings of a portfolio of creative work in multiple genres (poetry, short story, creative non-fiction, playwriting). With this portfolio students can opt to apply for acceptance into the Creative Writing workshops at the 2000 and 3000 level offered in the Department of English.
2. Students will also gain a critical understanding of how the publishing industry functions in Canada and North America and be able to situate literary trends (self-publishing, fan fiction, literary fiction) within that landscape (a landscape which includes literary prizes and festivals).
3. Students will learn to read literary and dramatic texts as writers and to speak about these same texts as writers (rather than as readers or scholars)
4. Students will learn how to critique a piece of writing, employing key terms such as “voice” and “character” for fiction, “image” and “rhythm” for poetry
5. Students will learn how to edit their own creative work and that of others
6. Students will have the opportunity to practice reading their own creative work in front of others

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Each week we will read creative writing, dramatic writing, and/or an essay on the weekly topic(s). These readings will be on ARES (a digital repository of class readings made available through MacOdrum library); in the library on COURSE RESERVE; or available at OCTUPUS BOOKS. Students are expected to have carefully read that week’s reading BEFORE class.

EVALUATION:

1. Midterm test on assigned readings, lecture material, and guest speakers: **25%**
2. Ottawa Writers Festival/ literary reading review assignment: **10%**
3. 2 Writing Prompts -- you will revise 2 of the prompts you have written in class and that have undergone a peer-evaluation process in class. You will submit the revisions, along with the originals and the editorial feedback, as “Portfolio Text 1” and “Portfolio Text 2”: **35%**
4. Editorial feedback that you engage in on the work of your peers: **15%**
5. End-of-Term Test: on the literary texts and concepts we have studied: **15%**

ATTENDANCE will be taken at the beginning of each class. A student who misses more than four classes without a medical note or note of accommodation will automatically lose 10% of their final grade.

NO CELL PHONE USE, please. If you need to be on your phone on Fridays from 11:35-2:35, simply do not come to class.

ASSIGNMENT descriptions:

1. Evaluations:

A Midterm Test will be held during the first half of the semester.

A Second Test/ End of Term Test will be held on the second last class. The tests will involve short and long answer responses about the literary texts we have studied; the tests will not include writing anything creative (i.e. I will not ask you to write a poem etc.) The Second Test is NOT cumulative and only covers material studied after the Midterm Test.

2. Ottawa Writers Festival/ literary reading review assignment:

Each of you will attend a literary reading this fall here in Ottawa and write a review of it (two double-spaced pages, approximately five hundred words). The Ottawa Writers Festival in mid-October (dates TBA) is free for Carleton students, offering many tempting readings for you to attend and review. I will also post some alternate readings (of fiction and poetry) throughout the term for you to attend.

You may begin your review by introducing the time, date, location, name of the reader(s). You can then comment on such things as your general impressions about the content of the reading, the reading style, the venue, and/ or the experience of listening to authors speak about their writing. As with all assignments in this course, this review will be typed in Times New Roman 12-point font, and double spaced. Your name and the name of your TA will appear on each page.

3. Writing Prompts:

Students will engage in in-class writing exercises throughout the semester (covering a variety of literary genres) and students will gain practice in editing their own work as well as the work of their peers. From these prompts and exercises, students will choose their best 2 texts to revise and hand in for grading. One will be due on Friday Oct. 6 and one will be due on Friday Dec. 8.

The editorial comments the prompts receive from your workshop group are the starting point for your revisions. Once you have read and thought about the feedback, revise your piece TWICE with the aim to clarify, solidify, and polish your writing. You must hand in all drafts. Please take the time to get feedback from the instructor or your TAs when you are “revising.”

INCLUDE YOUR NAME, STUDENT NUMBER, AND THE NAME OF YOUR TA ON ALL PAGES of work you submit. ALL submissions will be typed, printed, and handed in in person during class.

Date and Topic	Readings	Guest	Work Due
Week 1: Sept. 8 Course outline; CU Learn and ARES Assign workshop groups Workshop mechanics/ Reading as a Writer	“Show Or Tell: Should Creative Writing be Taught?” by Louis Menand Francine Prose, “Close Reading”		ALL readings must be read and completed FOR the class they are labelled as.
Week 2: Sept. 15 Artistic Practice and Technique	Faizal + Sanita share their experiences and insights into their writerly journeys; then they lead a workshop on technique	TAs discuss their practices and then lead tutorials	
Week 3: Sept. 22 The Short Story: Elements of Fiction : plot / story	“A Wall of Fire Rising” by Edwidge Danticat, from <i>Krik? Krak!</i>		
Week 4: Sept. 29 The Graphic Novel	* <i>Persepolis</i> by Marjane Satrapi		
Week 5: Oct. 6 Topics in Hybrid Texts	* <i>Nox</i> by Anne Carson	Sanita Fejzic	First revised Portfolio text is due
Week 6: Oct. 13 Revising and editing The Role of the Writers Festival Topics in Creative Nonfiction #1 Midterm Test 25%	Midterm Test (1.5 hours) On the literary examples and terms we have studied so far	*possible special guest	Class: 11:35-12:45 1:00-2:30 Midterm TEST 25%
Week 7: Oct. 20 Poetry #1: Word Images Poetry #2: Simile; metaphor; comparison	* Faizal’s choices of poetry	Faizal Deen On poetry	(No class on Oct. 27)
Week 8: Nov. 3 The Play: Writing for the Stage (in Canada)	* <i>The Monument</i> by Colleen Wagner		
Week 9: Nov. 10 Elements of Fiction: Voice /Point of View Setting / Character	* <i>Wide Sargasso Sea</i> by Jean Rhys		
Week 10: Nov. 17 Genre Fiction Topics in Publishing and Literary Awards Miscellaneous	* “Seasons of Glass and Iron” by Amal el-Mohtar	Amal el-Mohtar	
Week 11: Nov. 24 Second Test 15% Post-test meetings with Professor if needed	Second Test	Test	Second Test 15%
Week 12: Dec. 1 LAST CLASS Literary Salon: in-class reading of our own work	A chance for you to present your work to your peers	Potentially your guests	2nd revised Portfolio Text is due

Statement on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is cheating.

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence and it cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Final Grades:

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

REQUEST FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). **Requests made**

within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).