

**Carleton University
Winter 2019
Department of English**

**ENGL 3915 Special Topics in Writing:
*Writing for the Theatre***

Location:

Mondays: 6:00pm-9pm

Please confirm location and time on Carleton Central

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Waisvisz

Email: sarah.waisvisz@carleton.ca

Office Hours: by appointment only

Prerequisite(s): third-year Honours standing, a 2000-level creative writing workshop, or permission of the instructor.

ENGL 3915 is ideal for students in the Creative Writing and Drama concentrations; please consult the Department if you want to have the course recognized as a partial fulfillment of Requirement #9.

What is the difference between prose and dramatic writing, and what makes it *playable*? How do you fuse poetry with dance? What is immersive performance? What makes a spoken-word piece theatrical? What if we want to *keep* the Fourth Wall? Join professional theatre maker Sarah Waisvisz in a hands-on, experiential writing workshop where we will learn about contemporary genres of performance and the texts that propel them. If you want to hone your writing voice and explore the intersection between different artistic disciplines, then this workshop is for you. This course will involve

- designated in-class writing time with the aim of honing our writing voice and experimenting with different techniques
- presentations, activities, and/or workshops offered by special invited guests
- opportunities to share, workshop, and respectfully critique each other's writing
- mandatory "field trips" to experience local professional performances together

Learning outcomes:

1. Students will emerge from this course with a portfolio of creative work for the stage.
2. Students will also gain a critical understanding of how the playwriting and theatre industry functions in Canada within an increasingly interdisciplinary artistic ecology.
3. Students will learn to read and experience artistic work as writers and theatre creators.
4. Students will learn how to critique/discuss a piece of dramatic writing, employing key terms such as "plot," "voice," and "style" as well as vocabulary related to dance, music, circus, and performance art.
5. Students will learn how to be "dramaturges" and edit their own work and that of others.
6. Students will have the opportunity to practice reading their own creative work in front of others.

7. Students will learn from professional artists working in the field of theatre.

Required texts:

Required reading material will be available on ARES (a digital repository of class readings made available through MacOdrum library), on Reserve at the Library, or on CULearn, depending.

Evaluation:

1. **Attendance** in class and to all field trips and special activities: 10%
2. **Research presentation** about an interdisciplinary Canadian artist or project: 10%
3. **Artist Pages** (in class writing exercises, texts, drafts that support your project): 30%
4. **Editorial feedback** regular, respectful editorial contributions to your peers : 15%
5. **Final Project:** 35%

Please note:

- **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. Please write to me in advance of a known, legitimate, impending absence.

- **Final Project:** 35%

Our opportunities for regular writing and editing during each class will give you fodder and material for your final project, due the last day of class. The final project will consist of a text meant for the stage, and an accompanying “Vision Statement” to explain how the text functions within a larger theatrical whole. Before turning in your final project, you **MUST** have 2 consultation sessions with me about your project. The consultation sessions together count for 5% but if we do not meet and I do not give my OK I cannot accept the completion of your assignment. These consultations will ensure you are on the right track and will also be the occasion to discuss your writing process, as well as any struggles and successes you may be facing. These consultations can be short discussions.

Please note: Because I am a Sessional Instructor, I do not work out of campus. Consequently, I am available by email and by phone, in addition to after class is adjourned. Please email me in advance to schedule time for a conversation or appointment.

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.

Weekly Schedule

Date and Topic	Topic	Venue	Special Note
Week 1 Monday, January 7 Course outline; CU Learn and ARES	Introduction	Carleton	This is our first class!
Week 2 Monday, January 14 The difference between writing for the page and writing for the stage:	VOICE and MOVEMENT workshop considering actors, physicality, voice, design, sound, audience, setting, etc.	Carleton	
Week 3 Monday, January 21 Write what you know? Topics in appropriation, imagination, audience	READING: <i>Monstrous</i> by Sarah Waisvisz discussing process and writing from truth	Carleton	Please read the script before class.
Week 4 Monday January 28	<i>Monstrous</i> continued // different registers of storytelling	Carleton	
Week 5 Mon. February 4—Tuesday 5th Class moved to Tuesday evening for show	Immersive Theatre: <i>The Wedding Party</i>	NAC	6:30-7:15 Pre-Show Chat; SW and guest 7:30- SHOW
Week 6 Mon. February 11	Storytelling and Theatricality	Carleton	Special Guest Teacher: TBA
READING WEEK	READING WEEK	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Week 7 Monday February 25	Unpacking <i>Monstrous</i> , <i>The Wedding Party</i> , and storytelling	Carleton	
Week 8 Monday March 4	*research presentations in class about interdisciplinary work in Canada	Carleton	Student-led Research talks
Week 9 Monday March 11	*research presentations in class about interdisciplinary work in Canada	Carleton	Student-led Research talks
Week 10 Monday March 18	Working with history in our writing	Carleton	
Week 11 Mon. March 25	Honing our voice / staying curious	Carleton	
Week 12 Monday April 1	editing workshop for the whole class	Carleton	Editing Workshop
Week 13 Monday, April 8	Literary Salon: in-class readings	Carleton	FINAL PROJECT DUE

VII. Statement on Plagiarism

PLAGIARISM

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 that cannot be resolved directly by 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. More information can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

VII. Requests 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

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. carleton.ca/pmc

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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.

<https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>