



ENGL*4720 Creative Writing: Prose/Poetry

Fall 2020

Section(s): 02

School of English and Theatre Studies

Credit Weight: 1.00

Version 3.00 - August 17, 2020

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

A development and extension of the creative writing/reading skills and techniques introduced in the creative writing workshops. This course will involve the generation and revision of challenging new work, sophisticated critique of the work of other students, and focused discussion of the cultural, social, and political issues in which the practice of creative writing is enmeshed.

Pre-Requisites:

1 of ENGL*2920, ENGL*2940, ENGL*3050, ENGL*3060, ENGL*3070, ENGL*3090

Restrictions:

This is a Priority Access Course. Enrolment may be restricted to particular programs or specializations or semester levels during certain periods. Please see departmental website for more information.

1.2 Course Description

This advanced workshop will focus on writing fiction, specifically the short story or the opening chapters plus the outline of a novel. Students will share their own writing and comment constructively on the writing of other students. Assigned texts will look at key elements of craft in a detailed and complex way. We will study the craft of creative writing but also look at how that craft is practiced by two writers in the novel and short story form. During workshoping student work, we will look at how these elements of craft are employed by students being workshoped and how they could be employed even more effectively in the rewrite to produce more polished drafts. Students will be expected to produce a portfolio of 7,000- 10,000 words, submitting 4 assignments. Work is due as per the *Online Forum Schedule and Guidelines* handout that will be posted on Courselink. s. The delivery of the course will be both Asynchronous and Synchronous.

ASYNCHRONOUS: There will be a weekly online forum that will run from Sunday 10 a.m. to Monday 4 p.m. During this time, students will be expected to respond 1-2 times per discussion thread posted on Courselink Discussion. These discussion threads will be of two kinds:

Discussion of Student Work: Students being workshopped will post their submissions for workshopping on separate discussion threads the Tuesday before their work is discussed. Submissions must be posted by 11:30 a.m. The *Online Forum Schedule and Guidelines* handout will tell students when their work is due for posting. A student editor will be assigned per submission. The student editor will post an editorial letter between 600-1,000 words by Sunday 10 a.m. of that week. Guidelines for editorial letters will be in the *Online Forum Schedule and Guidelines* handout. All the other students (except the student being workshopped) will respond to the editorial letter and also add their own views on the submitted piece that they did not find contained in the editorial letter. These responses must be a minimum of 250 words for the first posting. For subsequent postings, there is no minimum. The instructor will also pose questions and guide discussion where needed.

Discussion of Assigned Reading: Student will respond to questions the instructor poses on each assigned reading. Each first response must be a minimum of 250 words. For subsequent responses there is no minimum. The instructor will also pose questions and guide discussion where needed.

SYNCHRONOUS: Students will meet via Zoom from 1:00- 2:20 p.m every Tuesday to review discussions on the previous online forum and engage in further discussion. Each student who was workshopped during the previous online forum will explain their process with the work (what inspired it, how it changed over writing, things they struggled with). They will direct questions to students whose feedback they didn't understand or needed more information on; they will also offer suggestions on how they will rewrite the piece based on the feedback. The instructor will summarize discussion of Assigned Readings and point out things the students missed. He will also, where needed, give mini lectures.

1.3 Timetable

Timetable is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

1.4 Final Exam

Exam time and location is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

2 Instructional Support

Shyam Selvadurai
Email: selvadus@uoguelph.ca
Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30- 3:30 p.m

BY APPOINTMENT via Zoom. I will send you a link for the appointment.

3 Learning Resources

Paradise by Toni Morrison

Unaccustomed Earth by Jhumpa Lahiri

How Fiction Works by James Wood.

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Through the workshop method of self- and peer-analysis, gain a comprehensive knowledge of the creative process. You should be able to critically assess your creative work and the work of others utilizing a firm grasp of the fundamentals of literary forms and techniques. You will also be able to critically engage and assess these various fundamentals in order to adapt or revise your work.
2. Understand deeper your craft. You will be able to approach your aesthetic practice in an analytical and informed manner.
3. Demonstrate an advanced competency in the elements and techniques of creative writing. With acuity and depth, you will be able to articulate a response on the craft of writing in regard to form and genre, literary and cultural contexts, and situate your own work within these contexts

4. Demonstrate the ability to produce sustained literary work of skilled quality that shows technical confidence, a distinct individual voice and an aesthetically sophisticated engagement with a literary form. You will attain the writing skills necessary to produce 7,000-10,000 words of creative writing, which may serve as a portfolio for admission into an MFA program.
 5. Demonstrate an ability to read as writers. You should be able to demonstrate the ability to examine a literary text through a writers eye; to look at how the writer used their craft and understanding of the literary form they are working in to shape a creative work. You should be able to examine how a writer engaged with social, political and cultural issues important to them and how they used their craft to highlight these issues in an inspired creative way.
 6. Organize your work and manage your time in order to complete your creative writing projects.
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5 Teaching and Learning Activities

5.1 Seminar

Tue, Sep 15, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Discussion of beginnings. Please read first two pages of *Paradise*, First 2 pages of *Once in a Lifetime* from *Unaccustomed Earth*. All the first pages of novels in *First Pages* handout posted on Courselink. Writing exercise on Beginnings. Discussion of *Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am - American Masters* Available on Netflix and Itunes.

Sun, Sep 20, 10:00 AM - Mon, Sep 21, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Narrating, Flaubert and Modern Narrative* and *Flaubert and the Rise of the Flaneur* from *How Fiction Works*. Also the Ruby and Mavis sections of *Paradise*.

Tue, Sep 22, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: **ASSIGNMENT 1 on Beginnings is due.** Discussion of *Narrating, Flaubert and Modern Narrative* and

Flaubert and the Rise of the Flaneur from *How Fiction Works*.
Discussion of Ruby and Mavis sections of *Paradise*.

Sun, Sep 27, 10:00 AM - Mon, Sep 28, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Detail, Character* and *A Brief History of Consciousness* from *How Fiction Works*. Also the Grace and Seneca sections of *Paradise*.

Tue, Sep 29, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: **Student 1-4 Assignment 2** is due. Discussion of *Detail, Character* and *A Brief History of Consciousness* from *How Fiction Works*. Discussion of Grace and Seneca sections of *Paradise*.

Sun, Oct 4, 10:00 AM - Mon, Oct 5, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on Divine and Patricia sections of *Paradise*. Respond to work by Students 1-4.

Tue, Oct 6, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Workshop Students 1-4. **Students 5-8 Assignment 2** is due. Discussion of Divine and Patricia sections of *Paradise*.

Sun, Oct 18, 10:00 AM - Mon, Oct 19, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Dialogue* from *How Fiction Works* and the Consolata, Lone and Save-Marie sections of *Paradise*. Respond to work by Students 5-8.

Tue, Oct 20, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Workshop Students 5-8. **Students 9-12 Assignment 2** is due. Discussion of *Dialogue* from *How Fiction Works*. Discussion of Consolata, Lone and Save-Marie sections of *Paradise*.

Sun, Oct 25, 10:00 AM - Mon, Oct 26, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Once in a Lifetime* from *Unaccustomed Earth*. Respond to work by Students 9-12.

Tue, Oct 27, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Workshop Students 9-12. **Students 13-15 Assignment 2** is due. Discussion of *Once in a Lifetime* from *Unaccustomed Earth*.

Sun, Nov 1, 10:00 AM - Mon, Nov 2, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Year's End* from *Unaccustomed Earth*. Respond to work by Students 13-15.

Tue, Nov 3, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Workshop Students 13-15. **Students 1-4 Assignment 3** is due. Discuss *Year's End* from *Unaccustomed Earth*.

Sun, Nov 8, 10:00 AM - Mon, Nov 9, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Going Ashore* from *Unaccustomed Earth*. Respond to work by Students 1-4.

Tue, Nov 10, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Workshop Students 1-4. **Students 5-8 Assignment 3** is due. Discuss *Going Ashore* from *Unaccustomed Earth*.

Sun, Nov 15, 10:00 AM - Mon, Nov 16, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Nobody's Business* from *Unaccustomed Earth*. Respond to work by Students 5-8.

Tue, Nov 17, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Workshop Students 5-8. **Students 9-12 Assignment 3** is due. Discuss *Nobody's Business* from *Unaccustomed Earth*.

Sun, Nov 22, 10:00 AM - Mon, Nov 23, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Only Goodness* from *Unaccustomed Earth*. Respond to work by Students 9-12.

Tue, Nov 24, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Workshop Students 9-12. **Students 13-15 Assignment 3** is due. Discuss *Only Goodness* from *Unaccustomed Earth*.

Sun, Nov 29, 10:00 AM - Mon, Nov 30, 4:00 PM

Topics: ASYNCHRONOUS: Respond to instructor questions on *Hell-Heaven* from *Unaccustomed Earth*. Respond to work by Students 13-15.

Tue, Dec 1, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: Workshop Students 13-15. Discussion of *Hell-Heaven* from *Unaccustomed Earth*.

Thu, Dec 3, 1:00 PM - 2:20 PM

Topics: SYNCHRONOUS: **Assignment 4 is due from all students:** MFA programs, literary magazines, getting an agent, the editorial process. Possible visit by a guest lecturer.

6 Assessments

The format for all assignments is double spaced, 12pt font. Please note: The penalty for late work is half a letter grade *per late day*.

6.1 Assessment Details

EXERCISE 1 BEGINNINGS (10%)

Date: Tue, Sep 22

500-1000 words. The beginning of your short story or novel. DUE VIA DROPBOX

ASSIGNMENT 2 (20%)

Date: DUE THE TUESDAY BEFORE YOUR WORK IS WORKSHOPPED AS PER SCHEDULE

Short Story or opening chapter +outline of novel 2,000 – 3,000 words

ASSIGNMENT 3 (20%)

Date: DUE THE TUESDAY BEFORE YOUR WORK IS WORKSHOPPED AS PER SCHEDULE

Short Story or subsequent chapters of novel 2,500 – 3,000 words

ASSIGNMENT 4 (20%)

Date: Thu, Dec 3

Revise Assignment # 1 OR # 2 (or a combination with approval of the instructor). 2,000-3,000 words. DUE VIA DROPBOX

ASSIGNMENT #5 (15%)

Date: DUE AS PER THE ONLINE FORUM SCHEDULE

Offer lead comments on other student's work twice, in the form of an editorial letter. Failure to do this on time will result in a failed grade in this grading category, for each missed deadline.

CLASS PARTICIPATION (15%)

Date: AT EACH CLASS (SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS)

The mark for participation will be based on attendance and contribution to synchronous and asynchronous discussions.

7 University Statements

7.1 Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

7.2 When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml>

7.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

7.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

7.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website
<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

7.6 Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community-faculty, staff, and students-to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>

7.9 Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

7.10 Illness

The University will not require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for the fall 2020 or winter 2021 semesters.
