

CREATIVITY FOR WRITERS

WRCR6215

Course Outline (online)

Description:

For many writers the most terrifying thing is the blank page. We are stumped about how to begin, have difficulty finding good ideas or stories to write about, and have a hard time finding a fresh take on what we want to write about. This course is for any writer who needs help igniting the creative spark to start writing. This course is for the fiction writer, non-fiction writer, memoirist, or freelance journalist. In this course we will examine numerous techniques and methods that unleash the imagination and will get you writing fresh and exciting work.

Course Goals:

The goal of this course is to enable students to generate ideas for their writing whether they are fiction or non-fiction writers.

Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Develop story ideas when and where they need them.
- Identify sources and inspirations for future projects.
- Utilize a variety of techniques to motivate their writing process and help them push past blocks.

Texts:

TBA

Evaluation:

1. *Creative blog*

One of the best ways to learn about writing is to write. Each student is required to maintain a creative blog. You will write and post a minimum 200-word blog post once per week for the duration of the course. Your blog will be concerned with ideas and observations about writing.

25%

2. *Childhood memory*

You will write a 250-word description of your most vivid and earliest memory. Please answer how it could be used in a story.

15%

3. *Dream*

You will write a 250-word description of your most vivid and interesting dream. Please answer how it could be used in a story.

15%

4. *Historical figure*

You will write a 250-word description of your most intriguing figure from history. Please answer how it could be used in a story.

15%

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5. *Artwork*

You will write a 250-word description of one of the artworks listed below. You can follow the links to view the art. You will have to do a little research about the piece and artist. Please answer how it could be used in a story.

15%

a) Diego Velázquez, *Las Meninas*

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Meninas

b) Kent Monkman, *The Academy*, 2008

<http://touquetouque.tumblr.com/post/11996539538/kent-monkman-the-academy-2008-artist-of-the>

c) Joseph Beuys, *Das Rudel (The Pack)*

<https://www.artsy.net/artwork/joseph-beuys-the-pack-das-rudel>

d) Roy Lichtenstein, *Drowning Girl*,

https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/lichtenstein-drowning-girl-1963/

e) Georges Seurat, *Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*,

<http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/georges-seurat/sunday-afternoon-on-the-island-of-la-grande-jatte-1886>

f) Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*,

<http://www.pablopicasso.org/guernica.jsp>

g) Francisco Goya, *The Third of May 1808*,

http://employees.oneonta.edu/farberas/arth/Images/110images/sl19_images/Goya_ThirdofMay.jpg

h) Frida Kahlo, *Self Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird*,

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Frida_Kahlo_\(self_portrait\).jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Frida_Kahlo_(self_portrait).jpg)

6. *Participation*

Participation will consist of posting questions and supplying feedback to your fellow students. As well, reading your classmates' blogs and posting your comments there.

15%

Grading:

A+	90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A	80-89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B	70-79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C	60-69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D	50-59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F	below 50	Fail

Online Participation Grading Chart:

The following chart will act as a guide for assessing student participation in an online course.

Grade	Criteria
9-10	The student participates frequently, providing relevant responses more than 35 times spread evenly over the length of the course. Replies to discussion questions, instructor comments as well as the responses of other students in a positive and critical manner.

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The student responds in a timely manner (allowing enough time for fellow students to respond, and not posting on the last day of the unit).

Responses are of a high quality, an obvious effort has been made to research the answer. Responses offer new perspectives on course material and spark discussion amongst the class.

7-8 The student participates consistently, providing relevant responses 30-35 times over the length of the course.

The student responds in a timely manner (allowing enough time for fellow students to respond, and not posting on the last day of the unit).

6 The student offers new ideas and responds to the contributions of others.
The student provides some relevant contributions, 15-20 times over the length of the course.

The student responds before the end of the unit.

5 The student occasionally offers new ideas and responds to others.
The student's contributions are inconsistent in both quality and timing, 10-15 times over the length of the course.

The student's responses are not always on time.

4 The student does not offer any new ideas, and responses to fellow students are few.
The student rarely provides contributions to the course, 5-10 times.

The student does not always respond on time.

0-3 The student has difficulty understanding the course content, and does not respond to the contributions of the other students.
The student provides little or no discussion, less than 5 times.

Information is contributed only when asked to by the instructor, and responses are negative or disagreeable to the instructor/fellow students.

Responses show little in the way of comprehension of course material. The responses are usually limited to "I agree", "Me too" or the like.

Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct:

Academic honesty is a cornerstone of conduct at Western University. We cannot have freedom of expression without integrity. Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences; please refer to the section on "Scholastic Offences" in the current University Academic Calendar, or on the web at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca>. Such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in this University or elsewhere (without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom the work is submitted). Students enrolled in non-degree courses are expected to abide by the University's code of conduct.

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Code of Student Conduct

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For the complete Code of Student Conduct:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf>

Plagiarism

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Policy on Late Assignments:

Marks will be deducted from late assignments. Two percent per day will be deducted from the assignment, including weekends, up to a maximum of 10 days, after which assignments will not be accepted and a grade of zero will be assigned unless documentation for accommodation has been provided in advance.

When will I receive my grades?

Assignments will be marked, and the grades available, as soon as possible after they are due. Final grades will be available 2 weeks after the last scheduled day of the course. A grade report can be printed from myWCS.

How often will the instructor communicate with me?

The instructor will be in communication at least once per week with students.

How do I hand in assignments?

All assignments will be submitted electronically through OWL by posting your work in the designated discussion area or class blog as directed by the instructor. Failure to meet deadlines without the instructor's written permission will be subject to the late assignment policy. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all assignments forwarded to the instructor arrive before the due date. If you experience difficulty in submitting assignments through OWL, you are responsible for contacting the instructor and arranging an alternate method of delivery (e.g. e-mail attachment) for the assignment.

Course Schedule:

Session 1. Introductions and blogs

Introductions and review the course structure and assignments.

Session 2. Sources of fiction

Determining your style of writing and level of research.

Session 3. Other sources of fiction

Common sources of fiction.

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Session 4. Sources for non-fiction – journalism
Common sources for non-fiction.

Session 5. Showing up to work
Setting up a writing routine.

Session 6. The craft
Mastery of the craft.

Session 7. Unusual sources
Other sources of stories.

Session 8. The writing process
Five steps of writing.