

## Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

### COURSE OUTLINE – Fall 2022

#### EN2950 (A2): Introduction to Creative Writing, Prose – 3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Anna Lapointe                      **PHONE:** 780-539-2992  
**OFFICE:** C420    **E-MAIL:** alapointe@nwpolytech.ca  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesdays, 1:20-2:20 (in-person and Zoom) or by appointment

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:** At an introductory level, this course emphasizes the principles and practices of writing publishable prose. Students are encouraged to write in various genres aimed at traditional publication or other markets.

**PREREQUISITE:** 6 credits of junior English. Students without the prerequisite may not receive credit for this course.

#### **REQUIRED TEXT:**

- Vandermeer, Jeff, and John Coulthart. *Wonderbook: The Illustrated Guide to Creating Imaginative Fiction*. (Revised and Expanded Edition.) Abrams.

Fiction readings are posted on MyClass. Students are responsible for ensuring that they can access these files.

**DELIVERY MODE:** Lecture/discussion/workshop

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Students will use personal experiences and reflections on memory to produce writing that can be used as a foundation for both fiction and creative nonfiction, prepare samples of their work for group critique, offer constructive criticism on the work of others, and revise their own work in response to both instructor and group feedback.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** By the end of this course, students will be able to

- Articulate the distinctions between genres of prose writing
- Produce written work in at least two prose genres
- Prepare and present work for group feedback
- Offer feedback in a detailed and constructive manner
- Engage in detailed revision of creative prose
- Integrate a range of feedback in revising their work for submission

**TRANSFERABILITY:**

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferalberta.ca>.

**\*\* Grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

**EVALUATIONS:**

Weekly assignments	35% (averaged)
Final portfolio (stands in place of exam)	30%
Presentation of work/response to critiques	15%
Participation (including in-class constructive critiques)	15%
Self-Evaluation	5%

**GRADING CRITERIA:**

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines		Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	90-100		C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-89		C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72		F	0.0	00-49

**COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:**

Workshops will constitute a significant portion of the class time. The schedule for these will be posted on MyClass as soon as students have selected their workshop dates. Workshops will take place on Wednesdays. Course readings are taken up on Mondays. Because the workshop dates are not yet set, this schedule lists only Monday classes (with a few exceptions).

Students should have readings completed before coming to class. Ideally, take notes and be prepared to ask questions/offer comments and thoughts. The short stories listed below are posted on MyClass.

This schedule may be subject to change. Changes to the schedule will be posted to MyClass.

Sept 5 – Labour Day (no class)

Sept 7 – introduction

Sept 12 – *Wonderbook* chapter 1

Sept 14 – Ernest Hemingway – “Hills Like White Elephants”

Sept 19 – *Wonderbook* chapter 2

Sept 26 – Karen Russell – “St. Lucy’s Home for Girls Raised by Wolves”

Oct 3 – *Wonderbook* chapter 3

Week of Oct 10 – Thanksgiving Break (no classes)

Oct 17 – Sherman Alexie – “What You Pawn I Will Redeem”

Oct 24 – *Wonderbook* chapter 4

Oct 31 – Kathleen Hale – “The Tub is Just the Safest Place”

Nov 7 – *Wonderbook* chapter 5

Nov 14 – Thomas McGuane – “Casserole”

Nov 21 – *Wonderbook* chapter 6

Nov 28 – TBA

Dec 5 – *Wonderbook* chapter 7

Dec 12 – wrap-up discussion

Exam date TBA. Your final portfolio will be due on the exam date. You do not need to submit your portfolio in person.

### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Attendance:** Even more than a regular English class, this course requires your presence. Although we are remote, this course needs your engagement in real time. Showing up is fundamental. **Each unexcused absence will result in a major deduction from your attendance & participation grade.**
  - If your absence is for a legitimate reason (internet disruption, illness, family crisis), **let the instructor know by e-mail.** In your e-mail, please indicate your course number and section. Please send a new e-mail for each class missed for a legitimate reason, or clearly state which days will be missed. E-mailed notices of absence do not automatically “roll over” for future missed dates.

- **Participation:** Simply showing up is not sufficient. You are expected to comment, respond to questions, interact with classmates, and otherwise contribute to the class dialogue. Questions are welcomed and encouraged. If you're wondering about something, most likely several classmates are as well, only they're afraid to speak up. So ask!
  - In order to participate effectively, you should have the day's reading completed before class begins. Ideally, you will also have made notes on the material and brought them along, so that you're never left saying, "I got nothin'," when asked to comment.
  - The goal of this class is to create a safe environment in which we examine both published texts and our own work. Discomfort can be part of the learning process. However, if the discomfort starts to turn to distress, please feel you can withdraw from the activity.
  
- **Missed Material:** Students are responsible for all missed material, including material missed due to legitimate/excused absences. Slideshows are posted to MyClass, and you are encouraged to ask your classmates for notes. If, **after** you have gone through these materials, you have questions, please contact me and I'll be pleased to clarify.
  
- **Presentation of Work for Critique: Twice** in the course, students will bring a sample of their work for class critique. It is essential that you provide your sample to the instructor well in advance of the class meeting for which you are scheduled. Workshops take place on Wednesdays; submit your work to the instructor in PDF format **no later than 4pm the preceding Friday**. (Files submitted in formats other than PDF will not be accepted.)
  - If you do not submit your work for critique on time, you may be subject to a 5% penalty.
  - If you do not submit your work for critique at all, or if you are absent without excuse from the class in which you are scheduled for critique, you may receive a grade of 0% for that element of the course. Mercy on this point is entirely at the instructor's discretion.
  
- **Critiques of Classmates' Work:** Work submitted for critique will be posted to Brightspace on Friday for critique the following Wednesday. It is each student's responsibility to access the files, to read the writing samples for that class at least twice, to take notes on them, and to offer constructive suggestions for the editing process.
  - Feedback will be delivered verbally. The workshop process is essential to professional writing, and to the development of writing communities. It is the responsibility of all members of the group to be constructive, helpful, and pleasant during this process. Rudeness, power plays, hate speech, and personal attacks will not be tolerated. It is important to remember that our focus is on the work and not on the author.
  
- **Receptivity:** All writers have moments of resentment in the workshop process. I call this process "You don't understand my genius!" This is a normal feeling, but keep it to yourself. Be prepared to listen to critiques thoughtfully and politely, and be prepared to incorporate feedback into your

editing process. When you are unsure how to respond to a comment or suggestion, “Thank you,” is always appropriate.

- **Submission of Weekly Assignments:** Students will be given writing prompts each Wednesday, for submission the following Wednesday, no later than 4:00pm. These are intended to keep students writing new work and thinking about the writing process. Students must submit **at least seven** weekly assignments to receive full credit.
  - Assignments must be submitted to the MyClass dropbox for that assignment. Assignments must be in pdf format. Improperly submitted work will not be accepted. If the dropbox for some reason will not give you access, e-mail your completed assignment to the instructor to prove that you have completed it, then submit on Brightspace when the issue has been resolved.
  - **Late submissions of weekly assignments will not be accepted.**

#### **STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:**

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and there will be penalties. For a more precise definition of plagiarism and its consequences, refer to the Student Conduct section of the College Calendar at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/programs/calendar/> or the College Policy on Student Misconduct: Plagiarism and Cheating at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html>

\*\*Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

#### **Additional Information:**

- **Office Hours:** My office hours are listed on the first page of this course outline.
  - You don't need an appointment to meet with me during office hours. I meet with students in the order that they show up.
  - This is your time, as much as class is. Please don't feel you're imposing.
  - Office hours cancelled if the instructor is sick. But I'll post an announcement to that effect, and re-schedule when I'm better.
  - If you make an appointment to meet with me outside of regular office hours, please actually attend that meeting, or notify me that you won't be able to make it, so I'm not left humming to myself.
- **Preferred Names & Pronouns:** At the course's outset, my list of students' names is based on the register. If you would prefer to be called something else, please let me know, and I will adjust my list accordingly, and used your preferred name from that point on. You should feel free to use your preferred given name on all essays and submitted assignments, as well as on your Zoom. (If your preferred surname varies from the name under which you are registered, I may need occasional reminders.)

- If you want to tell me your pronouns, you should feel free to do so. I will respect your pronouns.
- All students are expected to respect their classmates' preferred names and pronouns.
  
- **Children, Animals, & Zoom Etiquette:** Some of you may be parenting as you take this class. Please let me know, so that I can make a note of it. (Children create their own complications, and I will create flexibility for parents as needed.)
  - While in class, if you're not speaking, please mute your microphone so that ambient noise (human, animal, etc.) doesn't disrupt the class.
  - If your children are in the room with you during class, that's fine, though you should be aware that the course will deal with adult language and topics.
  - If your pets appear on Zoom, your instructor would like to see and admire them.
  - Please wear clothes while on Zoom.
  
- **Crisis Management:** I'm not a monster, but I'm not psychic, either. If something goes wrong in your life, I won't automatically know. If you let me know, I will work with you to help you keep up/catch up in the course. You are human, and entropy affects us all: crises happen. I will happily work with you to ensure they don't derail your academic career.
  
- **Important Note:** How you do in the class has no effect on how much I like and respect you. If you submit an assignment late, I will not be ashamed of you or look on you with disgust. If your work is imperfect, it's a sign that there are things you need to learn/I need to help you with; it is not a sign that you are a bad, lazy, or unworthy person.