

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 265-01

Fall 2016

COURSE TITLE: Introductory Creative Writing  
T/R 8:00-9:15 Tuesdays – MFH 164

Instructor: Suzette Mayr

Office: SS 1048

Phone: 403-220-4659

E-mail: [smayr@ucalgary.ca](mailto:smayr@ucalgary.ca)

Office hours: Tuesdays 9:30 – 11:30 am, or by appointment

Homepage/course website: <https://english.ucalgary.ca/profiles/suzette-mayr>

**Tutorial Instructors (Thursdays)**

Michaela Stephen – SEM 01 – SA 107([michaela.stephen2@ucalgary.ca](mailto:michaela.stephen2@ucalgary.ca))

Richard Kemick – SEM 02 – SS 012([richard.kemick@ucalgary.ca](mailto:richard.kemick@ucalgary.ca))

Deborah Morgan- SEM 03 – SA 235 ([deborah.morgan@ucalgary.ca](mailto:deborah.morgan@ucalgary.ca))

Erin Vance- SEM 04 – ST 064 ([eevance@ucalgary.ca](mailto:eevance@ucalgary.ca))

Paul Meunier – SEM 05 – SS006 ([pnmeunie@ucalgary.ca](mailto:pnmeunie@ucalgary.ca))

**Email and Electronic Submissions Policy:**

I am happy to reply to short, specific questions via email and will answer as promptly as possible (usually it takes me approximately one week to respond to a given email). However, I cannot guarantee that you will have a reply within a specific amount of time. If you have detailed questions on the course material it is more appropriate to see me during office hours, or make an appointment to see me personally in my office.

Electronic submission of assignments via D2L is required with all assignments EXCEPT the final portfolio due Tuesday, Dec. 06, which must be submitted in hard copy form at the BEGINNING of class.

**Use and Abuse of Electronic Devices in Class:**

Laptops are permitted for class use, but please refrain from engaging with social media or other non-class related activities during class time.

**Course description:**

This course will provide instruction in the rudiments of craft for fiction, poetry, and drama, emphasizing the centrality of reading and revision to literary composition. The overall course objective is to provide the opportunity for students to discover the extent of their interest in writing in these literary genres.

Instruction in the larger Tuesday lecture will cover the rudiments of craft for each of the genres, include discussion centered on published texts and the techniques that make these texts effective. The Thursday tutorial component will be conducted according to the seminar/workshop model for individual analysis and discussion of student writing.

Although this course does not count toward a Creative Writing “Concentration” designation on a student’s transcript, the class should result in a much stronger portfolio for use in a student’s application to intermediate and advanced creative writing classes.

By the end of this course students will have:

- practiced writing craft in at least two of the three Creative Writing genres;
- begun to develop their own Creative Writing practice;
- developed a concrete understanding of how image, metaphor, and narrative may work in these three genres;
- begun to develop critical tools with which to analyze Creative Writing;
- been introduced to a number of significant Creative Writers through the course texts.

Students do not need to have written anything prior to taking this course. The course aims to encourage and support everyone from the casual journal writer who may never have discussed writing in a public way, to the budding poet or emerging novelist.

### **Texts and readings:**

Available at the U of C Bookstore:

Tysdal, Daniel Scott. *The Writing Moment: A Practical Guide to Creating Poems*

Available via D2L:

Lammott, Anne. “Shitty First Drafts”

Hemingway, Ernest. “Hills Like White Elephants”

Oates, Joyce Carol. “Thanksgiving”

O’Brien, Tim. “The Things They Carried”

Johnston, Bret Anthony. “Don’t Write What You Know”

Martini, Clem. “A Case Study”

Davis, Lydia. “Passing Wind”

Davis, Lydia. “Oral History (with Hiccups)”

A comprehensive dictionary and thesaurus are recommended

### **Participation in the Writing Workshop (Tutorial Groups):**

The workshop is a chance to enhance not only your writing skills, but also your reading and editing abilities. The workshops will require students to submit and discuss written exercises and assignments, and to receive oral peer feedback on two works of creative writing during tutorial. Participation is essential to ensure a successful workshop – this means that all students must come to the tutorial having read assigned texts if required, having read their peers’ texts, and prepared to provide thoughtful responses to their peers’ work.

Each student will provide two formal writing submissions for workshopping in the tutorial during the semester (the due date for this assignment will be determined on the first day of the tutorial). Students will receive oral peer feedback in class, and written feedback from the instructor following the workshop.

These basic guidelines apply to all workshops:

- be respectful of all work submitted to the workshop; this means reading each text with care and attention;

- all work submitted to the workshop is CONFIDENTIAL – only class members are allowed to read the work of other class members. Delete other students’ work from your own files once it has been workshopped in class;
- critiques must be constructive and directed at the text, not the author of the text;
- discuss what works and does not work in the text using examples from the text;
- avoid saying ‘I like’ or ‘I don’t like’ – these phrases are based on personal preference rather than the merit of the text;
- work to avoid “writing” a text for the person whose work is being workshopped – try to honour what the writer might have intended in the text rather than what you would do in her or his place.

When it is your turn to have a text workshopped:

- listen to feedback with an open mind – remember that your peer-reviewers are only trying to make the writing better and have your best interests in mind;
- avoid explaining your work – remember the readers of your writing outside the class will not have you there to tell them what you meant.

The workshop format does not imply group work, but all-class participation under the tutorial instructor’s direction. Students are expected to read and engage with published works as well as their classmates’ writing, and to come to class prepared to discuss this writing with constructive, informed, and intelligent criticism.

### **Some Strictures**

To keep students focused on mastering the basic skills of fiction, poetry, and drama, some strictures apply. For the duration of the course (Sept.-Dec.), students are not permitted to submit writing assignments outside of the journal that contain any of the following words:

beauty, dawn, death, future, God, god, heart, hope, humanity, life, love, mind, muse, mystery, peace, soul, time, truth, war, world, “thought” as a noun, “dream” as a noun

Except in your journal, in this course you are also forbidden to:

- kill off a character;
- write fan fiction (the goal of the course is to help you become such a great writer other people will want to write fan fiction about *your* fiction);
- use the murder and/or rape of a character as the instigation for a story or play or poem;
- write procedural police or detective dramas or narratives;
- have a character be “insane” or develop “insanity” in a clichéd or generic manner with clichéd characteristics (eg: schizophrenia presented solely as an individual having several personalities);
- have a character encounter or be transformed into, or be possessed by, aliens, demons, vampires, or other imaginary beings;
- introduce dwarves, elves, angels, robots, robots with consciousness, monsters or other imaginary beings;
- write graphic violence or graphic sex scenes (if you are unsure about this, have your tutorial instructor preview your assignment prior to handing it in).

The idea behind these strictures is to allow you to focus on where story is found in everyday life – your everyday life and the lives of people around you. Most of the above list reflects plots based on recycled, well-worn television and movie plots and not on the true basis of original writing, even the kind of writing found within so-called “genre” writing.

**Special Note:**

In this class there is no such thing as writer’s block and this excuse will not be accepted. If you are to make good progress, it is essential that you set aside time for writing every day because waiting for inspiration will only lead to trouble and lack of discipline.

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

Readings will be assigned for most classes and these must have been read BEFORE we discuss them in class. KEEP ALL DRAFTS OF ALL EXERCISES AND ASSIGNMENTS IN THIS COURSE. Revision and rewriting are an important part of the Creative Writing process, and are part of your evaluation in this course. Additionally, it is good practice for tracking your own progress as a writer.

In order to qualify for a passing grade for this course, students must submit all workshopping / tutorial assignments as well as the following: one fiction assignment of 1650 words (comprised of polished work, draft work, and a process statement); one assignment of EITHER poetry (comprised of 5 pages of polished poetry, draft work, and a process statement) OR drama (comprised of 4-5 pages of a polished scene that has a beginning, middle, and end; draft work; and a process statement); one journal submission; and a final polished portfolio (this assignment also requires the inclusion of draft work and a process statement).

All submissions must be typed, double-spaced (poetry can be single-spaced), with 1-inch margins and in legible 12-point font. Ensure that your name is on your submission and that the pages are numbered in sequence.

The specific apportioning of grades for the class is as follows:

Participation (includes on-time submission of material for tutorial workshop, and workshop attendance)	10%
Fiction assignment due to tutorial instructor via D2L (1650 words – comprised of 1050-word polished fiction + minimum 700-word rough draft + 350-word process statement) <b>due Thursday, Oct. 20</b>	20%
Journal due to Prof. Mayr via D2L <b>Tuesday, Nov. 08</b>	5%
Poetry OR drama assignment due to tutorial instructor via D2L (5 pages of polished poetry + minimum 4 pages rough draft + 350-word process statement OR a 4-5-page polished scene with beginning, middle, and end + minimum 5 pages rough draft + 350-word process statement) <b>due Thursday, Nov. 17</b>	20%
Final portfolio of new work <b>in hard copy form (printed)</b> , due to Prof. Mayr (1950 words fiction + minimum 1400 words rough draft of fiction + 500 word process statement OR 6 pages poetry + minimum 5 pages rough draft + 500 word process statement OR 6-page drama + 5 pages rough draft of drama + 500 word process statement) <b>due Tuesday, Dec. 06 at the beginning of class</b>	45%

**There is no final exam in this course.**

**Late Assignments or Absences:**

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (an A- to B+) for each business day (not class) that the assignment is overdue. No assignments will be accepted after two weeks past the assignment deadline without the prior consent of the instructor.

As stated earlier, all assignments are due via D2L EXCEPT the final portfolio, which must be submitted in hard copy (printed) form. Please make every effort to take this assignment directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the dropbox. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox. It is your responsibility to keep copies and backups of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.

**Grading System:**

Grades are arrived at through a combination of the percentages and letter grades. The following grading system is used in this course:

90 + %	A+	4.0
85 – 89 %	A	4.0
80 – 84 %	A–	3.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3
74 – 76 %	B	3.0
70 – 73 %	B–	2.7
67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
64 – 66 %	C	2.0
60 – 63 %	C–	1.7
55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
50 – 54 %	D	1.0
0 – 49 %	F	0

The University of Calgary’s four-point Undergraduate Grading System is described in the Calendar (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>). Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

**A+: Outstanding Work**

This work has all of the components of work that fits in the “A range” category (see below), but is at a publishable or near-publishable level in that the ideas and language are wholly original, and presentation (including formatting and language) is impeccable.

**A range: Consistently exceptional work**

Outstanding or superior performance that shows a comprehensive understanding of subject matter. The work is moving toward a publishable level. The use of language is precise, original, imaginative and compelling; if applicable, the content of the work is treated in a fresh, new way, and the form chosen is the best possible. Writing in this range employs every element of the genre with sophistication and elegance.

**B range: Consistently good work**

Good, clearly above average performance. The work demonstrates originality, control, and generally exact and thoughtful use of language, but could use more refinement or development, and more revision. It shows at least in part a heightened awareness of language and image, and an original perspective or point of view.

**C range: Consistently average work**

The work is satisfactory, but relies on ordinary, even somewhat predictable use of language. Work in this range is formally not innovative, although the writing will be competent, even promising. The material will definitely need more work, more layering, more texture. Image and sound but may verge on clichéd and predictable.

**D range: Minimal pass**

The work shows some effort but is carelessly constructed. Use of language will be undistinguished and clichéd, ideas ordinary, even predictable.

**F: No credit**

Work shows no effort or flippant treatment of the assignment; no work has been done at all.

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

**Plagiarism:**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

**Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:**

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events

<http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club>.

Our email address is [smecuofc@gmail.com](mailto:smecuofc@gmail.com).

**English Department Website:**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should

verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

**Writing support:**

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

**Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:**

<http://www.enough.utoronto.ca/computeruse/eetiquette.htm>

**Library and Research Support:**

Christie Hurrell, Interim Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: [christie.hurrell@ucalgary.ca](mailto:christie.hurrell@ucalgary.ca).

Find The English Pages research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

**Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:**



**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

**Grade appeals:**

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.”

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

**Deferral of term work and final examinations:**

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>,

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

**Student Accommodations:**

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf).

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:**

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:**

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

**“Safewalk” Program:**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:**

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Arts Students’ Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at

[ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at

<http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

**Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:**

[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Contact for Students Ombudsman’s Office:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

**Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):**

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses ([www.ucalgary.ca/usri](http://www.ucalgary.ca/usri)). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT**

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>) "The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community". The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a "positive and productive learning and working environment." This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that "seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff". Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.