

**St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo**  
**Department of English**  
**ENGL 210H**  
**Arts Writing**  
**Fall 2020**

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**Course Description**

Welcome to ENGL210H for Fall, 2020!

We will cover three main areas in this course:

- 1) Writing about the arts from a critical perspective -- reviewing, profiles, features, etc.
- 2) Writing to promote the arts from within an arts organization -- such as a museum, gallery, theatre company, etc.
- 3) Editing and proofreading

**Note:**

- We will emphasize work that duplicates the writing process in professional environments.
- Several visitors to our class and a virtual visit (TBD) to the U of Waterloo Art Gallery (UWAG) will add perspectives on professional writing.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Write clearly and engagingly about the arts, both as a critic/reviewer and a promoter.
- Know how to tailor your writing to a wide range of audiences.

- Edit accurately for style, spelling and grammar, using editorial best practices.
- And perhaps most importantly .... To write more effectively in future schooling and work!

### **Readings:**

- There are no required texts for the course.
- All readings are available on-line or posted on LEARN as per the class outlines below.
- **Note:** The reading load is not excessive, but all readings are required.

### **Online Delivery:**

- “Synchronous” class lectures will be delivered Monday evenings, 7-8 pm EST.
- Although attendance is encouraged, recorded lectures and the accompanying PowerPoint presentations will be posted for students who cannot attend in person.
- As MS Teams will be in use for the session, we can determine as a group our “best practices” for discussions (i.e. hand raising / chat function to ask questions, discuss, etc.)
- An MS Teams invite will be sent all students’ Outlook calendars via their @uwaterloo.ca addresses.
- **Notes:**
  - If all class members are able to attend synchronously, we can consider longer time-blocks for lectures.

## **Course Requirements and Assessment**

Your final mark in this class will be based on the following:

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| • 10 weekly writing “snapshots” (throughout term)                        | 20 per cent |
| • Assignment 1: Review (due Class 4 - Oct 5)                             | 15 per cent |
| • Copy editing test (Class 8- Nov 9)                                     | 10 per cent |
| • Assignment 2: In-house arts writing (due Class 9 - Nov 16)             | 15 per cent |
| • Final Assignment (due class 12 - Dec 7; outline due class 10 - Nov 23) | 40 per cent |

**NOTE:** There is no mid-term or final in this class.

# ASSIGNMENTS

## General Information

For the three written assignments, answering five questions is key:

- **Audience:** Who are you writing for? And have you reached them?
- **Style:** Is your writing engaging and compelling for your target audience?
- **Content:** Have you covered all the key facts accurately? (The 5 Ws!)
- **Editing:** Is your work “clean” and free from errors, mistakes of grammar, etc.?
- **Understanding of the material we have covered in class:** Have you demonstrated that you have understood how to use what we have talked about? (In other words, I am looking for work you could not have done prior to taking this class!)

As this is a practical writing class, we will devote **a lot of time** to preparing for assignments, and in reviewing completed assignments. You will receive your assignments back the week after they are submitted.

We will be reviewing each assignment extensively in the classes leading up to the due dates, and will review each assignment in class after they have been handed back.

**NOTE:** Please put your name, assignment number/name, word count on the front page of each assignment. Assignments are due, via email, by the **start** of class (7 pm) on the due date.

### **VERY Important Re: Email submissions:**

- Please give your attached file a name that has: Your name, the course name (ENGL 201H) and assignment number.
- Do not, under any circumstance, send me an attachment called “Assignment One” or “ENGL 201H Assignment” or any other ambiguous file name.
- It is very confusing (and annoying) to receive these files as I have to re-name them for my own records.
- If I receive such an attachment, I will send it back and will only accept it with an appropriate file name... and this may lead to a reduction in marks! (See below re: late penalties.) An appropriate file name would be:  
**J Trudeau\_ENGL210H\_Assignment One**
- You will receive a reply email from me within 48 hours of submitting an assignment via email, acknowledging that I have received it. If you do not receive this email, please assume I have not received it... and follow up!

**Policy on late submissions:** In keeping with the best practices in journalism, you are expected to meet deadlines. If you are registered with U of W as requiring an academic accommodation, we can discuss how this will affect your assignments. Otherwise, you

will need note from a doctor or other health care professional to be granted an extension. In all cases of extension, we will work to assign a new due date.

**Note:** Please notify me re: any difficulties you are having in completing assignments as soon as possible; it is much easier to make alternate arrangements for submission if there is not a time crunch.

**Deductions:** One mark (not one percent!) per day for assignments marked out of 15; two marks per day (not two percent!) on the assignment marked out of 40.

## **Assignments: Evaluation**

### **10 weekly writing “snapshots”**

**Due in classes 2-11** – (20 per cent of final mark)

- **Length:** 100 - 250 words
- **Notes:**
  - These are short, “personal-reflection” writing assignments that will be due each week at 7 pm EST. Please send them via email. They will be returned to you before the next class date.
  - Although each individual assignment is “only” worth 2 percent of the total class mark, they will all be VERY useful in helping practice what we cover in class! Topics are related to ongoing assignments, readings etc.
  - Note that some snapshots are due on the same day as larger assignments... in those cases the snapshots relate to the assignments... so please plan accordingly.

### **Assignment One: Review**

**Due in class number 4 - Monday, Oct 5** – (15 per cent of final mark)

- **Length:** 650-750 words
- **Note:** KYA - your assignment MUST also include a 25-50 word summary of the audience you are writing for!

**The assignment:** Review an arts event such as a film, play, concert, comedy show, “open mike” night, dance performance, etc.

- Watch your event on-line, via cable, radio, etc. DVD, VHS, etc. video is also acceptable.
- **Note:** The event you are reviewing needs to be approved one week prior to the assignment – Monday, September 28.
- I will accept just about any event as a “arts event” but students who have not checked with me first to make sure an unconventional event is acceptable have sometimes found their marks have suffered because the event they chose was in fact not appropriate.

**The task:** Write a review of the event you attend, using the conventions/styles we have covered in class.

- Grammar and spelling are crucial, as well as an engaging style, and the basic elements of a good review.

- Make sure your review is the correct length.
- Be sure to take into account the scope of your event (i.e. is it a big-budget film or concert, or a small local theatre production?) when providing your judgment.
- Note: We will do writing exercises (in class and posted on LEARN) to help you with the assignment in preceding classes.
- And, it is crucial you tell me who your audience is – I cannot judge how well you have written for your audience if I don't know who they are!

### **Editing test:**

#### **Monday November 9 in class number 8** (15 per cent of final mark)

- This is a 1-hour editing test based on editing principles and practices we have reviewed to that point.
- You will be marked on errors you catch in a short chunk of text.
- We will be practicing for this test in preceding classes – with practice tests posted on LEARN.

### **Assignment Two:**

#### **Promotional Arts Writing**

#### **Due in class 9: Monday, November 16**

(15 percent of final mark)

**Length: 1,000-1,200 words.**

**\*\*Note: KYA - your assignment must also include a 25-50 word summary of the audience you are writing for!**

#### **The task: Promotional writing for an exhibit or performance.**

- Complete the following pieces of writing for ONE of the following three imaginary arts events.
- This is material that would appear in a program, or on the walls of an art gallery, museum, etc.
- Your overall aim is to promote and “sell” your event to your target audience using writing that will resonate with them.
- Please check with your instructor if you have any concerns or questions about your topic.

#### **Event Options:**

- 1) A jazz or popular music concert at a large urban concert hall or stadium
- 2) A regional theatre production of a play by a local playwright
- 3) A small art gallery exhibition by an artists' collective

#### **Materials**

- 1) Bio of the artist(s)
- 2) Overview/description of the concert/play/exhibition
- 3) At least five individual notes on separate elements of the exhibit or performance (i.e. five short summaries of paintings, sculptures, songs, etc.)

**Notes:**

- We will review format and expectations for this assignment in preceding classes, and do writing exercises (posted on LEARN) to help you with the assignment. Remember your KYA statement!
- Consistency is key -- there should be a clear thematic link between all these elements.
- You may allot the 1,000-1,200 words however you see fit between each of the three elements, and part of your mark will be based on how well you apportion the word count!

**Final assignment: Joining Critical and Promotional Writing****Due in class 12: Monday, December 7 (last class).**

(40 percent of final mark)

**NOTE – an outline for this assignment is due in Class #10 on November 23.****\*\* 4,000-5,000 words.****Note:** KYA - your assignment must also include a 25-50 word summary of the audience you are writing for!

Your assignment will see you taking both "sides" of the critical/promotional forms we have studied in class, to write about ONE of the following imaginary event options  
Note – these are the same as assignment 2 and you CANNOT choose the one you chose for assignment 2):

**Event Options:**

- 1) A jazz or popular music concert at a large urban concert hall or stadium
- 2) A regional theatre production of a play by a local playwright
- 3) A small art gallery exhibition by an artists' collective

For the assignment, please write the following six pieces:

**As PR person promoting your event:**

- A news release (max 500 words).
- A Q& A /FAQ document
- Bios of major artists or creative personnel involved

**As a reviewer / critic for a newspaper, magazine or online publication:**

- A review of the event
- A feature /profile on a person connected to the event-- i.e. on an individual performer/artist, or behind-the-scenes piece

**NOTES:**

- You can allot the 4-5000 word total as you see fit. Part of this exercise is an evaluation of how you use your judgment to allot the word count on each of the different pieces above.
- As always, your assignment will be evaluated for writing (quality, style, grammar and spelling).
- We will do extensive review and preparation for this assignment in preceding classes, with materials posted on LEARN. Remember KYA!
- As these assignments are due on the final day of class I will return them, marked, to any students who provide me with a mailing address.

*(Continued on next page with Class Schedule)*

## Class Schedule

### CLASS ONE: Monday, September 14

#### What we'll cover:

- Introduction to arts writing ENGL 201H - what it's all about!
- Instructor and class intro; review course outline
- Discussion: What do we talk about when we talk about “the arts?”

### CLASS TWO: Monday, September 21

#### Writing Snapshot due today:

- What's your personal definition of “the arts”? What does it include/exclude?
- How do reviewers/critics impact your experience of the arts?
- What does it take to be a good reviewer/critic?

#### What we'll cover:

- Reviewing -- a general overview; film, books, theatre.
- Review and group work re: paper due in two weeks (Monday Oct. 5)

#### Reading for this class:

**Summary:** Chapter 1, The Critic's Canon, by Richard H Palmer. (posted on LEARN)

#### Sample Reviews:

- **Film:** Roger Ebert Review of “The Madwoman of Chaillot” (from 1969!) : <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/the-madwoman-of-chaillot-1969>
- **Theatre:** “Theatre Review: Our Town,” by Bob Clark. (Calgary Herald, January 19, 2008) (<https://calgaryherald.com/entertainment/theatre-review-our-town/>)
- **Dance:** “Dancing swans, demented toymakers and men in tutus: how to escape to the ballet online,” by Michael Crabb. (*Toronto Star*, April 27, 2020) (<https://www.guelphmercury.com/whatson-story/9962772-dancing-swans-demented-toymakers-and-men-in-tutus-how-to-escape-to-the-ballet-online/>)
- **Music:** “The Seoul Philharmonic: Concert Review” by Geoffrey Newman (2012). (<https://www.vanclassicalmusic.com/the-seoul-philharmonic-orchestra-concert-review>)
- **Grammar/Style Lesson 1:** University of Waterloo Style Guide – sections Acronyms to Numbers sections. Part 1: Acronyms and Abbreviations; Capitalization; Conventions for academic calendars; Conventions for convocation. (<https://uwaterloo.ca/brand/writing-storytelling/university-waterloo-writing-style-guide>)



## CLASS THREE – Monday September 28

### Writing Snapshot due today:

- What are you going to review for assignment #1?
- Why did you make this choice?
- What aspects of this event do you plan to focus on?

### What we'll cover:

- Group writing activity
- Review / group work re: paper due next week

### Reading for this class:

#### Canadian Theatre Critics Code of Ethics:

[http://canadiantheatrecritics.ca/?page\\_id=9](http://canadiantheatrecritics.ca/?page_id=9)

### Profiles:

- *Obituary: Gord Downie*, by Michael Barclay. *Maclean's*, October 18, 2017. <https://www.macleans.ca/gord-downie-obituary/>
- “For the Love of Lupita Nyong'o,” by Kimberly Drew, *Vanity Fair*. <https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2019/09/lupita-nyongo-cover-story>
- “Jean-Paul Jerome in review: Hard-edge heaven,” by Isa Tousignant. *Canadian Art*, October 30, 2008. <https://canadianart.ca/reviews/jean-paul-jerome/>
- **Grammar/Style Lesson:** University of Waterloo Style Guide – sections Acronyms to Numbers sections. Part 2: Formatting; Numbers; People and titles. (<https://uwaterloo.ca/brand/writing-storytelling/university-waterloo-writing-style-guide>)

## CLASS FOUR: Monday October 5

### Writing Snapshot due today:

- How did it go with assignment one?
- What did you find compelling about the assignment?
- What was difficult/challenging or “different” from a standard English course assignment?

### What we'll cover

- Assignment 1 due today
- Reviewing music, graphic arts, arts travel.
- Group writing activity
- Guest Speaker – Nicole Westlund Stewart, U of Waterloo Writing Centre

### Reading for this class

#### Sample reviews:

- **Music:** “Our track by track review of *Lover*, Taylor Swift’s new album”, *Toronto Star*, Friday, Aug 3, 2019.  
<https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/music/review/2019/08/23/our-track-by-track-review-of-lover-taylor-swifts-new-album.html>
- **Graphic Arts:** “National Trust denies ‘dumbing down’ in drive for new audiences,” by Harriet Sherwood. *The Guardian*, Aug. 22, 2020  
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/aug/22/national-trust-denies-dumbing-down-in-drive-for-new-audiences>
- **Travel:** “Chicago's Shedd Aquarium, Frank Lloyd Wright homes impress,” by Marie Bruce. *Vancouver Sun*, February 24, 2017.  
<http://vancouversun.com/uncategorized/travel-community/chicago-warns-the-heart-of-our-writer-despite-the-cold>
- **Grammar/Style Lesson :** University of Waterloo Style Guide – sections Acronyms to Numbers sections. Part 3: Punctuation; Spelling; University of Waterloo. (<https://uwaterloo.ca/brand/writing-storytelling/university-waterloo-writing-style-guide>)

**MONDAY OCTOBER 12- no class... Give thanks today!**

**CLASS FIVE: Monday October 19**

### Writing Snapshot due today:

- What is your personal experience of art “institutions” such as galleries, museums, etc?
- Do you visit often, sometimes, never?
- Do you need to be “prepared” with special knowledge, expertise to enjoy a visit to one of these places?

### What we'll cover

- Virtual visit to U of Waterloo Art Gallery – TBD
- Guest speaker: Ivan Jurakic, director/curator of the U of Waterloo Art Gallery: exhibition tour, aspects of writing a gallery review, connection between critical and promotional writing; Q+A

## CLASS SIX: Monday October 26

### Writing Snapshot due today:

- How does critic or reviewer approach writing differently from a person who is writing promotionally about the arts?
- Which of these approaches appeals to you more?

### What we'll cover:

- Introduction to promotional writing/transition from critical writing
- The elements/products of writing promotionally
- Group writing activity
- Introduction to editing + practice test #1 (posted on LEARN)

### Reading for this class:

**News releases/ Media materials: Intro:** “The Ingredients of a Press Kit”  
<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/57260#>

### Samples:

- Art Gallery of Ontario (<http://www.ago.net/press>) – read 3 or 4 samples
- Hamilton Philharmonic Press Kit: <https://hpo.org/category/press-room/> - review elements of kit
- UWAG <http://uwag.uwaterloo.ca/> - see individual exhibition descriptions and artist bios.

**Intro to editing 1: Practice test** - Editing marks sheet hand out in class + available on LEARN

## CLASS SEVEN: Monday November 2

### Writing Snapshot due today:

- Have you used outlines in your academic (or personal/professional) work to help organize your work?
- What techniques, tricks, etc. have you used to write successful outlines?
- Is there anything you avoid when outlining?

### What we'll cover:

- Introduction to interviewing; interview techniques; outlining.
- Editing test practice #2 (posted on LEARN)

## Reading for this class:

### Interviewing:

- Four Principles of Interviewing– Columbia School of Journalism (<http://www.columbia.edu/itc/journalism/isaacs/edit/MencherIntv1.html>)
- How to Conduct an Interview Like a Journalist (<http://thewritepractice.com/how-to-conduct-an-interview-like-a-journalist/>)

### Samples:

- Interview with composer Ludovico Einaudi (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IR5gbDo2HCY>)
- **Intro to editing 2: Practice test** - Editing marks sheet hand out in class + available on LEARN

## CLASS EIGHT: Monday November 9

### Writing Snapshot due today:

- Is being a good editor important to good writing – or can spell/grammar checking functions take care of that?
- Have you asked others to help you edit your work? Or do you mainly self-edit?
- Do you think there any ethical / academic integrity issues involved in pre-diting student papers?

### What we'll cover:

- Editing test (for real; not practice!)
- **Guest speaker:** Tor Lukasik-Foss, long-time columnist, *Hamilton Magazine*, musician, graphic artist: Writing about the arts as an artist; how to write profiles; what's it really like to work for an arts organization; Q+A session
- Group writing activity
- Writing display copy - an introduction to heds, deks, cutlines, pull-outs etc

### Reading for this class:

- Artist websites at: <http://www.thandb.ca/> and <https://www.cafka.org/cafka13-may-3-august-11/06-tor-lukasik-foss-hamilton-closet-intimacies-shadow-box-semi-private>
- Writing sample at: <http://canadianart.ca/reviews/graeme-patterson-art-gallery-of-hamilton/>
- <https://www.thespec.com/whatson-story/8645091-hamilton-planting-an-artistic-seed-in-the-baltic/>

## **CLASS NINE: Monday, November 16**

### **Writing Snapshot due today:**

- How was your experience of Assignment #2 different than #1?
- Did you find it harder/easier / about the same?
- Given that your final assignment is a combination of the two assignment styles, what are your early thoughts about this final paper?

### **What we'll cover:**

- Assignment 2 due today!
- Group writing activity
- Discussion re: final assignment + outline due next class

### **Reading for this class:**

- Journalistic Instinct Blog: "Journalistic jargon: hed, dek, lede, nut graf/nutgraf"  
<https://underthecurve.github.io/jekyll/update/2016/12/29/hed-dek-led-graf.html>
- Columbia Journalism Review  
[http://archives.cjr.org/language\\_corner/leading\\_questions.php](http://archives.cjr.org/language_corner/leading_questions.php)
- Poynter Institute: Ten Questions to Help You Write Better Headlines  
<https://www.poynter.org/news/10-questions-help-you-write-better-headlines>
- AAM Curators Committee: Best Practices in Museum Exhibition Writing (2004).  
(<http://www.museum-ed.org/best-practices-in-museum-exhibition-writing-2004/>)
- How to write Photo Cutlines <https://www.thebalance.com/how-to-write-photo-cutlines-2295921>

## **CLASS TEN: Monday, November 23**

### **Writing Snapshot due today – aka Final Assignment Outline:**

- What is your outline for the final paper?
- As discussed in class – how are you going to structure it, what will be your areas of focus, etc.?

**What we'll cover:**

- Visiting speaker: Nancy Schnarr, Communications Manager, Renison University College, University of Waterloo: Working and writing for an arts organization - a personal viewpoint
- Preparation for final paper

**Reading:**

- 40 Great Headlines: <http://www.copypress.com/blog/40-headlines-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/>
- 13 Great Headlines: <http://web.ku.edu/~edit/headgood.html>

**CLASS ELEVEN: Monday November 30****Writing Snapshot due today:**

- How is it going on the final paper?
- What areas are going well? Any struggles or issues?
- How are you finding the exercise of combining the two different types of writing in this assignment?

**What we'll cover:**

- Preparation for final paper - workshop exercises and review

**Reading for this class:**

- None

**CLASS TWELVE: Monday December 7****What we'll cover:**

- Final papers due today
- Guest speaker TBD - Career options for English/Arts students in writing and editing careers

**Reading for this class:**

- None

*Important Information for Students continues on the next page.*

## Important Information for Students

- **Academic Integrity:** To maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Federated University and Affiliated Colleges are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.
- **Academic Integrity Office (UW):** A resource for students and instructors. (<https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>)
- **Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 71 \(Student Discipline\)](#).
- **Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Students who decide to file a grievance should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 70 \(Student Petitions and Grievances\)](#). For more information, students should contact the Associate Dean of St. Jerome’s University.
- **Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under the St. Jerome’s University Policy on Student Discipline or University of Waterloo Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) if a ground for an appeal can be established. In such a case, read [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals](#).
- **Note for Students with Disabilities:** The Accessibility Services Office located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, (<http://uwaterloo.ca/disability-services/>) collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term. They can also be reached by phone at 519-888-4567 ext. 45231 or 47922 or via email at: [access@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:access@uwaterloo.ca)

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