

**St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo**  
**Department of English**  
**ENGL 332: Writers on Creative Writing**  
**Remote Delivery, Fall 2020**

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**Chad Wriglesworth**  
**Email: [cwriglesworth@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:cwriglesworth@uwaterloo.ca)**

**Calendar Description:**

This course will focus on a selected genre, approach, creative method, or other aspect of Creative Writing.

**Course Overview and Objectives:**

In this course, we will attend to the words and experiences of contemporary writers who offer us insights on matters of literary craft. We will begin with Alice Mattison's *The Kite and the String*, a work that challenges us to think beyond categories of "rules and instruction" and to write "boldly and freely," while still stepping back to think "steadily and critically" about what we are making. We will then turn to number of fiction writers, essayists, and poets by using a two-fold approach to engaging with their ideas and work. First, we will listen to their thoughts and experiences on life and writing (via personal essays, podcasts and interviews . . .). Then we will turn to representative examples of their creative work. Through this approach, we will get a sense of the commingling of each writer's artistic philosophy, life experiences, and imaginative disposition—and begin to see how these matters are worked out in their creative work. With any luck, we will also become more attentive to sensing this same phenomenon being played out in our own lives and work. We will read extensively in this course, but we will also dabble with writing strategies (both critical and creative) that will help you become more attentive to your own work, as well as the work of other writers.

This course makes no assumptions about where you are at in terms of your experience with creative writing. Everyone is welcome in this course. I've designed the course with hope that it will be useful to you in your own development as a person and a writer.

**Format of Remote Delivery:**

I will post 60 minute lectures on the assigned readings twice per week (ideally on Tuesdays and Thursdays). You will want to complete the assigned readings before viewing the course lecture. In addition, I will hold 30 minute live-open discussion sessions each Friday. These sessions will provide space for you to ask questions about assignments and to discuss the week's readings and lectures (a time for these will be determined the first week of class). I will record and post each Friday session for those who are unable to attend the live session. All announcements, postings, and lectures for this course will be made available through Learn.

**Required Texts:**

Alice Mattison, *The Kite and the String* (2016)  
Materials posted on Learn

**Additional Materials of Interest:**

Throughout the course outline, you will see a number of sources listed as "Additional Materials of Interest." These additional materials are not "required," but are being offered as a way for you to have a more immersive experience with the course during remote delivery. Links to these sources will be posted on Learn as the course unfolds.

**Assignments and Due Dates:**

Writing Exercise #1 (1 p.)	10%	Due: Week 2 (by midnight, Sept. 18)
Writing Exercise #2 (1 p.)	10%	Due: Week 4 (by midnight, Oct. 2)
Writing Exercise #3 (1 p.)	10%	Due: Week 8 (by midnight, Nov. 6)
Notebook (5 pp.)	35%	Due: Variable (by midnight, Nov. 6, Nov. 20, or Dec. 4)
Creative Submission	35%	Due: End of Term (by midnight, Dec. 11)

There will be no final exam in this course.

As the course progresses, more specific instructions may be posted for the Writing Exercises, the Notebook and Creative Submission. The **Writing Exercises** will consist of brief critical or creative assignments that are connected to some aspect of the readings. Based on the readings from Part II of the course, you will also choose a genre to concentrate on (fiction, nonfiction, or poetry) to prepare a **Notebook** of observations and insights (more specific details will follow). Finally, at the end of the term, you will submit a **Creative Submission** from a genre of your choosing. Prose submissions (fiction or nonfiction) will be no longer than 2000 words, while poetry submissions will consist of 3 poems – each at least 14 lines long, and each at least 140 words long.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

### PART I: GROUNDWORK

#### Week One

- T-9/8 Introduction: overview of syllabus, assignments, and reading schedule
- TH-9/10 Mattison, “Introduction” (xi-xx); Joan Didion, “On Keeping a Notebook” (pp. 131-141) in *Slouching Toward Bethlehem* (1966, Learn)

#### Week Two

- T-9/15 Mattison, Chapters 1-2 (pp. 3-32)
- TH-9/17 Mattison, Chapter 3 (pp. 33-51)  
**Due: Writing Exercise #1 (by Friday, 9/18 at midnight)**

#### Week Three

- T-9/22 Mattison, Chapter 4 (pp. 52-71)
- TH-9/24 Mattison, Chapter 5 (pp. 72-88)

**Week Four**

T-9/29 Mattison, Chapter 8 (pp. 149-176)

TH-10/1 Mattison, Chapter 9 (pp. 177-220)  
**Due: Writing Exercise #2 (by Friday, 10/2 at midnight)**

**PART II:  
 CASE STUDIES**

**Fiction**

**Week Five: Raymond Carver**

T-10/6 Raymond Carver, “On Writing” and “Fires” (pp. 728-733, 734-745; 1983, Learn)

TH-10/8 Raymond Carver, “A Serious Talk” (pp. 291-296; 1981, Learn) and “Cathedral” (pp. 514-529; 1983, Learn)

Additional Materials of Interest: Daisy Goodwin, *Raymond Carver: Dreams are What You Wake Up From* (1989, Learn)

**Thanksgiving and Reading Break (10/12 - 10/16)****Week Six: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and Zadie Smith**

T-10/20 Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “The Danger of the Single Story,” (2009, Learn), “The Thing Around Your Neck” (pp. 115-127) in *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2010, Learn)

TH-10/22 Zadie Smith, “Joy,” *The New York Times Review of Books* (2013, Learn); section from *On Beauty* (pp. 249-253, 2005; Learn)

Additional Materials of Interest: “Between the Lines: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie with Zadie Smith,” *New York Public Library* (2014, Learn)

**Week Seven: Tim O’Brien**

T-10/27 Tim O’Brien, “The Magic Show” (pp. 175-183) in *Writers on Writing: A Bread Loaf Anthology* (Learn); “A Letter to My Son,” (pp. 1-4), “Home School” (pp. 112-118) in *Dad’s Maybe Book* (2019, Learn)

TH-10/29 Tim O’Brien, “The Man I Killed,” “Ambush,” and “Good Form” (pp. 118-124, 125-130, 171-172) in *The Things They Carried*; “Lecture on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Publication of *The Things They Carried*, Harvard University (2000, Learn)

**Week Eight: Alice Munro**

- T-11/3 Alice Munro, “What Is Real?” (pp. 223-226) in *Making it New: Contemporary Canadian Stories* (1982, Learn); “Alice Munro, In Her Own Words: 2013 Nobel Prize in Literature” (2013, Learn)
- TH-11/5 Alice Munro, “The Turkey Season” (pp. 218-230) in *Selected Stories* (1996, Learn)  
**Due: Writing Exercise #3 (by Friday, 11/6 at midnight)**

**On Nonfiction****Week Nine: Annie Dillard and Andre Dubus**

- T-11/10 Annie Dillard, selection from *The Writing Life* (pp. 3-21, 1989; Learn); “Total Eclipse” (pp. 9-28) in *Teaching a Stone to Talk* (1988, Learn)
- TH-11/12 Andre Dubus, “Profile: Andre Dubus (2011, Learn); “Bodily Mysteries” (pp. 100-102) and “Grace” (pp. 59-60) in *Meditations from a Moveable Chair* (1998, Learn); “Making Sandwiches for My Daughters” (pp. 18-23) in *God is Love: Essays from Portland Magazine* (2003, Learn)

**Week Ten: James Baldwin and Ta-Nehisi Coates**

- T-11/17 James Baldwin, Interview with Terry Gross (*Fresh Air* Podcast, 1986; Learn); Baldwin, “Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation” (pp. 17-24) in *The Fire Next Time* (1963, Learn)
- TH-11/19 Ta-Nehisi Coates and Krista Tippett, “Imagining a New America” (*On Being* Podcast, 2017; Learn); Ta-Nehisi Coates, selection from *Between the World and Me* (pp. 5-21, Learn)

**On Poetry****Week Eleven: Tracy K. Smith and Jane Kenyon**

- T-11/24 Tracy K. Smith, “Wipe That Smirk Off Your Poem” (2015, Learn); “I Will Tell You the Truth about This, I Will Tell You All about It” (pp. 77-80, 24-37) in *Wade in the Water* (2018, Learn)

Additional Materials of Interest: Tracy K. Smith and Krista Tippett, “love is a language / Few practice, but all, or near all speak” (*On Being* Podcast 2018, Learn)

- TH-11/26 Jane Kenyon, “Notes from a Lecture: Everything I Know About Writing Poetry” pp. 139-141) in *A Hundred White Daffodils* (1999, Learn); “Twilight: After

Haying,” “We Let the Boat Drift,” “At the Public Market Museum: Charleston, South Carolina,” “Gettysburg: July 1, 1863” and “Happiness” in *Collected Poems* (2005, Learn)

Additional Materials of Interest: *Donald Hall and Jane Kenyon: A Life Together* (1993, Learn)

## **Week Twelve: Mary Oliver and William Stafford**

T-12/1 Mary Oliver, selection from *A Poetry Handbook* (pp. 1-9, 1994; Learn); “The Summer Day,” “Morning Poem,” “Wild Geese,” “One or Two Things,” “In Backwater Woods” in *New and Selected Poems* (1992, Learn)

Additional Materials of Interest: Mary Oliver and Krista Tippett, *Listening to the World (On Being Podcast, 2015; Learn)*

TH-12/3 William Stafford, “Writing the Australian Crawl” (pp. 21-28) in *Writing the Australian Crawl* (1978, Learn); “The Way It Is,” “You Reading This, Be Ready,” “Ceremony,” “A Ritual to Read to Each Other” and “Traveling through the Dark” in *The Way It Is* (1998, Learn)

Additional Materials of Interest: “William Stafford Interviewed by Henry Lyman,” *Poems to a Listener* (1989, Learn)

**Due: Creative Submission/Commentary (by Friday, 12/11 at midnight)**

## **ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND PROCEDURES**

### **ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

- All assignments will be submitted to a dropbox on LEARN. On the week an assignment is due (for example, Week 5), I will open a dropbox for the assignment on Monday. Assignments must be submitted by no later than midnight the Friday of that week. Assignments submitted after the Friday deadline (at midnight) will be marked 2% per day late, including weekends.

### **EMAIL COMMUNICATION AND OFFICE HOURS**

Students using email to contact me should include their first and last names, as well as the course in which they are enrolled in the email subject line. Feel free to contact me about the course through email, but please keep the following in mind:

- I am unable to provide in-depth responses about assignments, readings, and proofreading. If you wish to discuss these matters, please set up a time for a virtual office meeting. I may also save your questions to be addressed on the Friday live meeting.

## **UW POLICY REGARDING ILLNESS AND MISSED TESTS**

The University of Waterloo Examination Regulations

([www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf](http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf)) states that:

- A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “University of Waterloo Verification of Illness” form or it will not be accepted. This form can be obtained from Health Services or at [www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health\\_Services/verification.html](http://www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html).
- If a student has a test/examination deferred due to acceptable medical evidence, he/she normally will write the test/examination at a mutually convenient time, to be determined by the course instructor.
- The University acknowledges that, due to the pluralistic nature of the University community, some students may on religious grounds require alternative times to write tests and examinations.
- Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an alternative examination time.

## **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY**

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of their instructor, TA, and/or St. Jerome’s University. Intellectual property includes items such as:

- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Questions or solution sets from various types of assessments (e.g., assignments, quizzes, tests, final exams); and
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).

Course materials and the intellectual property contained therein, are used to enhance a student’s educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without the intellectual property owner’s permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. For this reason, it is necessary to ask the instructor, TA, and/or St. Jerome’s University for permission before uploading and sharing the intellectual property of others online (e.g., to an online repository).

Permission from an instructor, TA, or the University is also necessary before sharing the intellectual property of others from completed courses with students taking the same/similar courses in subsequent terms/years. In many cases, instructors might be happy to allow distribution of certain materials. However, doing so without expressed permission is considered a violation of intellectual property rights.

Please alert the instructor if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, either through the student body or online. The intellectual property rights owner deserves to know (and may have already given their consent).

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. [Read the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances.](#) [www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload\\_file/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Petitions-and-Grievances\\_20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/upload_file/PLCY_AOM_Student-Petitions-and-Grievances_20151211-SJUSCapproved.pdf). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the St. Jerome's Advising Specialist, Student Affairs Office, who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for their actions. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/) for more information.] 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 instructor, 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.](#) [www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Discipline\\_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Discipline_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to University of Waterloo Policy 71, Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties, check the Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals.](#) [www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY\\_AOM\\_Student-Appeals\\_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf](http://www.sju.ca/sites/default/files/PLCY_AOM_Student-Appeals_20131122-SJUSCapproved.pdf).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall (Room 1401) at the University of Waterloo, 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 AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term, [www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability-services/).