

## 2520A: Write Now! Writers on Writing

Fall 2019

**Section: 001**

**Time: Monday 3:30-4:30 and Wednesday 3:30-5:30**

**Room: UC-3110**

**Instructor: Dr. Aaron Schneider**

**Email: [aschne4@uwo.ca](mailto:aschne4@uwo.ca) or OWL email**

**Office: UC 2431**

**Office Hours: Monday 9:30-11:30 or by appointment**

**TA: Andrew Woods**

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**Office:**

**Office Hours:**

### Course Description and Objectives

Though a series of lectures by contemporary writers, *Write Now!*, explores the art, craft, and process of creative writing in a variety of genres. Course topics include inspiration, overcoming creative blocks, revision, social media, publishing, literary citizenship, and the writing life.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will have demonstrated the ability to

1. identify the fundamental elements of the craft of creative writing
2. generate ideas in a variety of genres
3. understand concepts relating to contemporary creative writing practices
4. execute a dedicated writing practice through daily journal writing and class assignments

#### Required Texts

*Creative Writing: Four Genres in Brief*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition by David Starkey, Bedford St. Marin's Press, 2017.

In addition to the textbook, links to an interview with or a blog post by each writer will be posted on OWL. These are required readings and should be completed before the class in which the writer in question speaks.

#### Assignments

Polished Draft	10%
Midterm (October 16)	20%
Creative Writing Portfolio	30%

If you cannot submit your assignment in class, you can drop it off in the Writing Studies drop box. This is on the wall in hall across from UC 2431. Make sure that your name, your instructor's name, and the course number are clearly visible on the first page of the assignment.

Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day.

**Email Policy:**

I reply to email in two working days. I do not reply to email over the weekend.

**Classroom Technology Use Policy:**

It is not appropriate to use technology (such as, but not limited to, PDAs, laptops, cellphones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and distracting to other students and to the instructor and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

Note: because this course is organized around a series of visiting speakers, this is particularly important. Speakers are our guests. As such, they deserve your full attention, and they deserve to be able to speak without being interrupted by cellphones, etc. If your inappropriate use of technology impacts one of the guest speakers, you may be asked to leave the class.

**Attendance policies**

**\*Note**

Please refer to the

Chapter 1:

- Writing Poetry (page 14)
- Getting started with poetry (page 72)
- Kick-Starts: Beginning your poems (page 73)

Read this interview with Rebecca Rosenblum: <http://notesandqueries.ca/interviews/rebecca-rosenblum-interviewed-brad-de-roo/>

**Weekly Draft:** Write an occasional poem

Suggestions:

Write a poem for the anniversary of an official institution—a school, a company, a town or city, a club, etc.

Write a poem for the beginning of the school year

Write a poem for a pop-culture event, such as the release of an album, a celebrity's birthday, the premier or finale of a show. Try to have fun with the poem.

## Week 2 (September 16 and 18):

**Speaker: Emma Healey**

**Readings:**

Chapter 1:

- The elements of poetry (page 18)
- The short poem: Three models (page 19)
- Lines and stanzas (page 22)
- Meter and rhythm (page 29)
- The music of poetry (page 36)
- Poetic forms:
  - Sonnet (page 53)
  - Sestina (page 61)
  - Haiku (page 65)
  - Ghazal (page 68)

Read this interview with Emma Healey: <http://open-book.ca/News/I-Like-to-Be-Surrounded-by-Objects-with-a-Past-Meet-Our-Poetry-Month-Writer-in-Residence-Emma-Healey>

**Weekly Draft:** Write a formal poem—that is, a poem that follows a clear, predetermined structure. It can be as simple as a poem in rhyming couplets or as complex as a Sestina. If you pick a short form, such as a Haiku, try to write a handful of them.

Suggestions:

Write a classic love poem (try to avoid cliché)

Write a poem about a surprising, unpoetic subject (cheeseburgers, a night out in London, the freshman 15, etc.)

- Diction, syntax, and the language of poetry (page 48)
- Poetic forms:
  - Prose poem (page 69)

Listen to this interview with Andrew Wilmot: <https://www.unnervingmagazine.com/single-post/2018/12/14/EP025---Talking-The-Death-Scene-Artists-With-Andrew-Wilmot>

**Weekly Draft:** Write a poem that uses images, symbols and figurative language, rather than direct statements, to convey a powerful emotion. For example, instead of writing



Read this interview with Nicole Brossard: <https://www.jonathanball.com/nicole-brossard-the-idea-of-a-landscape-interview/>

**Weekly Draft:** Write a handful of 1 sentence stories. Have some fun with this, try to be clever, witty, shocking, surprising. On the one hand, try to see how much you can pack into one sentence. On the other hand, try to see how little you need to make a story.

Suggestions:

- No suggestions this week because they would be longer than most of the stories you are going to write.

## **Week 8 (October 28 and 30):**

**No speaker this week**

**Readings:**

Chapter 3

- Telling the truth (page 201)
- Creative nonfiction as narrative (page 206)
- The poetry of creative nonfiction (page 211)
- Writing yourself into creative nonfiction (page 215)
- Ethics and edicts (page 218)

**Weekly Draft:** Write a short creative nonfiction pieces about a time when you were not completely in the right. Try to explore and grapple with your own culpability, and, also, try to explore the situation and how you looked to the other people involved in the situation. Don't be afraid of writing about a situation that is ethically complex, that has a lot of grey in it. It is this kind of complexity and wrestling with it that makes a lot of creative nonfiction interesting.

Suggestions:

Write a short creative nonfiction piece about a disagreement you had where you were in the wrong.

Write a short creative nonfiction piece about a time when you hurt someone else.

Write a short creative nonfiction piece about a misunderstanding.

## **\*\*Fall Reading Break\*\***

## **Week 9 (November 11 and 13):**

**Speaker: Tea Mutonji**

**Readings:**

Chapter 4

- Writing the Ten-Minute Play (page 247)
- The elements of play writing (page 252)
- The ten-minute play: Three models (page 253) (read all three plays)
- Structuring the ten-minute play (page 274)
- Getting started writing the ten-minute play (page 308)
- Kick-starts: Beginning your play (page 309)

Playscript Format: A Model (page 311)

Read this interview with Tea Mutonji: <http://prismmagazine.ca/2019/07/11/shut-up-youre-pretty-an-interview-with-tea-mutonji/>





**\*\*\*Creative Writing Portfolio due in class on Wednesday, December 4 \*\*\***

**Speaker: Jane Urquhart**

**Readings:**

A Few Words of Farewell (page364)

Read this interview Jane Urquhart: <https://www.januarymagazine.com/profiles/urquhart.html>