

On-Campus MFA Courses

2022 Winter

Please note that the [UBC Course Schedule](#) is the definitive list of courses available. Be sure to select the correct term when viewing, as it defaults to the current term (in summer it will show summer courses rather than fall/winter courses).

On-Campus courses and Optional-Residency courses share the same course numbers, but all sections of the on-campus courses are distinguished by a section number beginning with “0”. For example, CRWR 509A-001 is an on-campus section while CRWR 509A-D01 is an Optional-Residency section. Please be aware of this when you are creating your course lists in the [Student Service Centre](#) so you don’t inadvertently select the wrong course.

Note: Courses highlighted in YELLOW either have no instructor attached yet, or are waiting for a potential description update from the instructor. We will update this document regularly.

Current as of June 7, 2022

Basic Course Listing – 2022/23 Academic Year

CRWR 501K-001 – Advanced Writing of Poetry (3 credits, term 1)

Billy-Ray Belcourt

In this course, we will examine and experiment with various practices of “poetic inquiry.” By poetic inquiry, I don’t mean simply the production of poems (though that’s naturally included), but more expansively the ways we read, think, research, write, and be in the world that are resonant with some kind of lyrical value or possibility. Of particular interest will be the study of the ways writers account for their poetic labor or express their poetic sensibilities across different modes. A central aim of the course is for students to fine-tune their senses of subject matter, process, and methodology.

CRWR 501L -002 (term 2) Advanced Writing of Poetry (3 credits)

Sheryda Warrener

In this course, we will explore the complex and nuanced relationships between poems in a sequence, series, or cycle. To accompany this exploration, we’ll perform close readings of contemporary poets working in sequential modes. Together, we will re-imagine the workshop as an atelier, where writing emerges from rigorous experimentation and through the process of artistic inquiry. The pre-writing and generative writing activities, as well as your individual

creative research, will lead naturally to a final collection of ten poems unified by subject, mode, and theme, collected in chapbook form.

CRWR 502L-002 – Advanced Writing for New Media: Podcasting (3 credits, term 2)

Instructor TBC

Writers in this mixed graduate/undergraduate workshop who participate in this introduction to writing for podcasting course will learn about formatting, dialogue, character development, world building, plot and the importance of sound effects and music for this genre. They will be expected to complete several short assignments and for the final project to develop and complete two ten to fifteen-minute scripts. They will also have the option to produce a short ten-minute feature or dramatic piece.

Writers will also be expected to research and provide feedback to the class about recent fictional (aka dramatic) series: *Homecoming*, *The Unexplainable Disappearance of Mars Patel*, *The Truth (Radiotopia)*, *Wolf 359*, *Blackout*, *We're Alive: Goldrush*, *The Rest is Electric*, *Limetown*, *Carrier*, *Six Minutes*, *The Magnus Archives* and recent feature series: *Serial*, *You're Wrong About*, *In the Dark* and *Beyond Reasonable Doubt?* As well as stellar producers such as *The Kitchen Sisters*.

Regular attendance and participation in the workshop are essential for it to succeed.

CRWR 503K 001 – Advanced Writing for Children I (3 credits, term 1)

Tanya Kyi

This course is an interactive journey through the world of children's literature, with a particular focus on picture books and early readers. (No illustration talents required!) Students will explore narrative devices, character development, and wordplay through weekly activities and in-depth assignments. In the second half of the course, we'll broaden our scope to include everything from chapter books to verse novels, and students will collaborate to workshop, edit, and revise. Participants will leave the class with a broad understanding of traditional and contemporary writing for children.

CRWR 503L 002 – Advanced Writing for Middle-Grade and Young Adults (3 credits, term 2)

Emily Pohl-Weary

Books for young adults (YA) and middle-grade (MG) readers feature compelling main characters, unique narrative voices, tight plotting, and near-constant dramatic tension. Successful writers for these ages make the "mechanics" of their writing invisible, know how to keep their readers riveted, and don't shy away from tackling current social issues. In fact, books for young readers may respond to social change faster than books for adults.

CRWR 503 is an advanced graduate workshop class supported by brief lectures, interactive discussions, assigned readings, and focused writing exercises. You do a lot of writing for specific

ages, refine your ability to give and get feedback, develop your “writerly toolkit,” try an experimental form of writing for kids and teens, and explore the changing kids/MG/YA publishing industry. You also write an MG or YA book review and present on a specific craft choice made by its author. By the end of term, you will have detailed revision plans for three pieces of writing and a better sense of the children’s and YA publishing industry.

CRWR 505K-001 – Advanced Writing of Creative Nonfiction I (3 credits, term 1)

Timothy Taylor

This once-weekly in person course is designed to develop your skills as a creative nonfiction (CNF) writer. Through readings, presentations, writing assignments, and peer review workshops, we’ll be looking at practical techniques and approaches to bringing your true stories to life: voice and point of view, narrative structure, and the tactical use of scene, character, dialogue and other elements of story telling. We’ll also cover some of the most useful tools that a CNF writer can have at their disposal including approaches to observation, note taking, and interviewing.

CNF is a very broad and inclusive area, covering everything from fact-driven investigative journalism to lyrical forms that owe more to poetry than prose. Diversity of voice is central to CNF as I teach it, and as I have practiced it over 30 years. This value will be reflected in the readings we do together and the way workshops are run. My CNF workshops are editorial board simulations. Students pick a “real world” publication where they imagine their piece running. The workshop participants then play the role of that publication’s editorial board who, having commissioned the piece in question, are now refining and readying it for readers. I stress the word *simulation*. Publication is not a course requirement, though I’m pleased to say that many students do. The Ed Board Sim approach is designed instead to focus discussion, as well as to give all workshop participants a common objective.

Over the course of the term, students will write a piece of personal journalism and a profile of a person unrelated to the writer. Each of these should be around 3,000 words. Students are also expected to rewrite one of the first two assignments and submit the rewrite to me in the last week of classes as a third assignment.

CRWR 505L-002 – Advanced Writing of Creative Nonfiction (3 credits, term 2)

Instructor TBC

This seminar aims to ignite your passion for writing powerful true stories. Through craft lectures, readings, writing technique exercises, peer review workshop, and longer written submissions, we’ll explore creative nonfiction forms including memoir, essay, profile, and literary journalism, and review the techniques that bring nonfiction to life: voice, point of view, perspective, scene, style, structure, character, language dialogue, leads and endings. We’ll also discuss essential elements of artful nonfiction such as curiosity, research and reporting, interview techniques, and the ethics of shaping facts into compelling narratives. This workshop is generative, inclusive, and responsive, encouraging writers to take risks and experiment. You

will submit one nonfiction work drawn from experience or observations of the world around you and a second work incorporating research/reporting.

CRWR 506M-001 – Advanced Writing of Drama for Screen I (6 credits, term 1-2)

Martin Kinch

In this workshop you will begin to write feature-length film scripts.

Term 1. We loosely follow the movie industry model. All projects begin with a pitch proceed through an outline before progressing to a detailed treatment (a scene-by-scene prose version describing your screen story in the active voice) and the creation of sample scenes.

You will also make a short presentation (maximum 10 minute) on a particular aspect of craft.

Term 2. Students will advance to drafts of Acts 1 and 2 of their chosen projects.

We workshop two pieces a week. The goal is to workshop each project two times per term after the initial pitches. There is a minimum page count of 30 pages a semester that must be submitted (re-writes are counted as 2 pages for 1 page). There is a maximum submission of 20 pages per student per workshop session. If a student wishes to submit more pages, they must have the approval of the class and written instructor permission two weeks in advance.

In the workshop we encourage a rich exchange of ideas. In the collaborative world of screenwriting, learning how to prepare, give and receive feedback is an essential skill. In our sessions we will work on story, plot, dialogue, character, theme and many more elements of the screenplay form.

There will also be assigned screenings of selected films that will be discussed in class.

Students from this workshop have gone on to make films. Many fiction writers take this workshop to help them with story structure and dramatic writing. Experienced industry screenwriters have also taken this course to receive critiques and support with their more personal projects.

CRWR 507M-001 – Advanced Writing of Drama for the Stage (6 credits, term 1-2)

Instructor TBC

Writers in this mixed graduate/undergraduate workshop are welcome to write one-act plays or develop the first draft of an original full-length stage play.

We will work on story, plot, dialogue, character development, theme and many other elements involved in the stage play form. In the workshop productive feedback and the exchange of ideas are encouraged. Stage plays (or excerpts) are read out loud, allowing enough time for discussion.

As part of the course, writers are required to submit a short play (ten to fifteen minutes long) for the Brave New Play Rites festival. Now in its 36th year, Brave New Play Rites showcases new student plays in a series of staged readings and full productions. The festival is held annually in March in a theatre venue off-campus. Please note that only ten plays are given live productions; there is an adjudication process in November of the fall term.

Overall, a minimum of eighty (80) pages should be completed. Grades will be based on your written work and your attendance, active participation and the quality of the critical feedback you give to your writing classmates.

CRWR 508L-002 – Advanced Writing for Graphic Forms (3 credits, term 2)

Sarah Leavitt

This offering of CRWR 508 will be focused on book-length projects. The class will be delivered online, and is open to both Opt Res and on-campus students. Students coming into this class will either have taken 508 previously, or otherwise have experience crafting short comics.

Over the course of the term, students will develop a solid foundation for a book-length project, including a proposal, outline, script, thumbnail sketches and finished chapters. In addition to creating these items, students will develop collaborative and supportive working relationships within the class, meet and interview professional cartoonists, and closely study and analyze book length comics. Students will also build skills for sustaining, developing and refining their creative practice in the long term.

CRWR 509K-001 – Advanced Writing of Fiction (3 credits, term 1)

Instructor TBC

In this class, we'll come together as a community to read, write, explore, dream, and play with short stories. The class will include substantial conversations about craft and assigned readings—both fiction and essays about writing. Among the many things we're likely to discuss are: structure, point of view, beginnings and endings; techniques to develop and deepen characterization; the management of mood, tone, and voice; the crucial machinery of plot and the moments in which we might, just as crucially, dispense with it; the establishment and maintenance of narrative and stylistic urgency; the pleasures of genre; and the joys of working at the sentence level to make beautiful and moving prose. There will be some workshopping, but the class will also focus on discussion of process and practice, experimentation, establishing a vocabulary for writerly goals, and taking risks as artists.

CRWR 509K-003 – Advanced Writing of Fiction (3 credits, term 1)

John Vigna

Generative Mentorship Lab in Fiction. This 3-credit on campus/in-class grad fiction course will focus on generative writing, experimenting broadly with form and technique. We will meet as a group once a week and engage in discussions focused on advanced topics on process, craft, technique and aesthetic. We will also meet one-on-one several times during the semester. An

emphasis will be placed on asking questions of one's own work to get at the story you are working towards, to deepen and layer it. The goal is for each of you to push yourselves out of your comfort zones by looking at your own work and taking risks in style, theme, subject, etc, while working next level toward your own artistic intention. There will be weekly writing experiments and close reading reflections. There will be minimal workshopping in this course (sharing of your work with peers for discussion). Instead the focus will be on generating material that will culminate in one- or two-story submissions.

CRWR 509L-002 – Advanced Writing of Fiction (3 credits, term 2)

Timothy Taylor

This once weekly in person workshop is about shaping effective short works of fiction. Our work together will be involved in depth discussions of craft as well as assigned readings of both works of fiction and essays about writing. These craft-oriented discussions will largely arise out of our weekly peer review workshops, where specific stories submitted by students will serve as the starting point for broader conversations about structure, point of view, beginnings and endings, character, scene, tone, and a wide range of other storytelling elements. All of these discussions will be oriented to helping students towards a deeper appreciation of the short story form and ultimately towards the creation of beautiful and moving prose. Over the course of the term, students will write and workshop two short stories for the first two assignments. For the third assignment students can either submit a third short story or a rewrite of one of the first two. My fiction workshops are founded crucially on the embrace and celebration of diverse voices, and the encouragement of a team mentality among all workshop participants. Bring your creativity, your imagination. Bring yourself. And prepare to be encouraged and supported in your fiction projects.

CRWR 509L-004 – Advanced Writing of Fiction (3 credits, term 2)

Anosh Irani

This is a workshop in the writing of fiction designed to help students develop as both writers and critical thinkers. Each week we will discuss students' written work as well as the craft and techniques of literary fiction. Additional reading/viewing will be assigned for class discussion. During the term, students will be expected to turn in a short story for workshop, plus a rewrite of the story. Over the duration of the course, we will examine a wide range of story elements, including—but not limited to— character, dialogue, structure, plotting and so on. The course will also guide students through the process of rewriting their work. Overall, this workshop aims to give students the opportunity to express themselves creatively, hone their voice, and gain a deeper understanding of their own work.

CRWR 511K 001 – Advanced Writing for Lyric Forms (3 credits, term 1)

Tariq Hussain

In this class students will explore the craft of songwriting through a variety of methods from participating in creative exercises to personal practice. Students will be challenged to look

deeply at the work of professionals through readings, close listenings, podcasts, and to go deep within their own work as well. Students will create, share and discuss their songs with the goal of helping each other create more effective writing through the workshopping process and will be encouraged to take risks while still holding true to their artistic vision. Audio recordings are expected for submissions along with lyric sheets however technical knowledge of recording software or proficiency on an instrument—though an asset—are not required. This course will take place in real time, face-to-face in a weekly two-hour session which students are required to attend. Participation and discussion as well as maintaining an environment of support and mutual respect is key to the success of this course as students will be participating in a genre that is more performative in nature than some others, and perhaps extra challenging if students haven't tried it before. This should not be seen as a deterrent for anyone who's new to songwriting, however, but rather as an invitation to try something fun, exciting, and challenging.

CRWR 511L 002 – Advanced Writing for Lyric Forms (3 credits, term 2)

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In this class students will explore the craft of songwriting through a variety of methods from participating in creative exercises to personal practice. Students will be challenged to look deeply at the work of professionals through readings, close listenings, podcasts, and to go deep within their own work as well. Students will create, share and discuss their songs with the goal of helping each other create more effective writing through the workshopping process and will be encouraged to take risks while still holding true to their artistic vision. Audio recordings are expected for submissions along with lyric sheets however technical knowledge of recording software or proficiency on an instrument—though an asset—are not required. This course will take place in real time, face-to-face in a weekly two-hour session which students are required to attend. Participation and discussion as well as maintaining an environment of support and mutual respect is key to the success of this course as students will be participating in a genre that is more performative in nature than some others, and perhaps extra challenging if students haven't tried it before. This should not be seen as a deterrent for anyone who's new to songwriting, however, but rather as an invitation to try something fun, exciting, and challenging.

CRWR 514M-001 – Advanced Writing for Television (6 credits, term 1-2)

Linda Svendsen

Class format: Zoom

Prerequisite: N/A.

The purpose of this two-term workshop is to create your own original one-hour (term 1) TV series concept and pilot script, via three peer and instructor reviewed assignments: Concept, pilot beat sheet (brief outline), and draft pilot script; later in Term 2, you'll create a ½ hour TV series concept, pilot beat sheet, and scenes toward a draft script (if time allows). Concurrently, your peer review reflections and contributions in the writers' room group/s will build your TV writing and story editing skills. Essentially, while you create and write a brand-new TV series,

you also act and serve as story editor on eleven other series. While the class is not prescriptive, per se, the mission of a writer's room is to creatively and speculatively engage, to bring your years of TV-series chops to the table, to brainstorm, to ask "what if?" while always supporting the creator/writer's vision.

The course is built upon these two original series and is supported with dramaturgical grids, rubrics for each assignment, readings on structure and the industry, as well as sample pilot scripts.

Participation: written feedback prior to the workshop discussion, collaboration with an in-class TV partner, and an instructor conference, as well as attendance contribute considerably to the grading component.

CRWR 519L-002 (term 2) – Writing Speculative Fiction (3 credits)

Nalo Hopkinson

Exploration and practice writing in the various modes of speculative fiction, including science fiction, fantasy, and horror. Emphasis on reading various genre examples, practising writing in those genres, and on peer responses.

CRWR 530-001 (term 1) – Preparation for a Career in Writing (3 credits)

Instructor TBC

How do you build a sustainable career as a writer? This course covers the basics of book publishing, print and online publication, screen, as well as branding and marketing, promotion, grants, residencies, entrepreneurship, and self-care. As you complete each assignment, you will hone the skills necessary to handle the business side of your writing career. The main text is *The Business of Being a Writer* by Jane Friedman, with additional materials to be posted on Canvas. The class will be asynchronous (modules to be posted on Mondays), with an optional component to meet on Zoom for live discussion weekly on Wednesdays at 10am Pacific Time.

CRWR 570L-002 – Advanced Special Projects in Creative Writing (3 credits, term 2)

Timothy Taylor

Collaboration with Physics.
Course Description TBC

Enrolment Note

We use the UBC enrolment system through the [Student Service Centre](#) for all workshop enrolment. Thesis enrolment must be carried out directly through the program support, Alexandra Tsardidis, with the prior permission of your thesis advisor.

