ENGL 335: Creative Writing 1, section 002, Fall 2018  
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:30-12:50, SJ2 2001 (St. Jerome’s)

Course Outline

Instructor: Carrie Snyder  
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Office hours: HH 369, Tues & Thurs, 1-2pm  
Updates and reminders are posted regularly on LEARN.

Course description: The course consists of in-class exercises and workshops, group discussions of assigned readings to illustrate core concepts, and lots of opportunities to write and develop a personal writing practice, with units on poetry and short fiction. Students will also submit work to a Canadian literary magazine.

Required materials: Courseware and A Poetry Handbook, by Mary Oliver. Composition notebook and black pen for in-class exercises. In-class exercises will be written by hand.

Attendance and participation: This is a workshop, and your attendance & participation are crucial to the class’s success. That said, life happens. You get sick, your cat gets sick. I understand. If you have to miss class, please email me, preferably in advance. Generally speaking, if you miss 1-3 classes, this is ok; red flags start going up if you miss 3 or more classes. Three x late = 1 absence. Cellphone and laptop use is discouraged during class. Late assignments receive penalties of a full letter grade for each day late; but extensions can be arranged in advance. If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to me, via email or in person.

Mark breakdown: Participation, 25%. Includes in-class participation & notebook work + textual analysis of “Mother” + cover letter for literary magazine submission + personal reflections. Participation rubric will be posted on LEARN.  
Portfolio work, 75%. Includes peer reviews. Poetry portfolio: Three poems + reflection (15%) + poetry peer reviews (10%) = 25%. Story # 1: One story + reflection (15%) + book report (5%) + story peer reviews (10%) = 30%. Story # 2: One story developed from your notebook work + reflection (17.5%) + in-class peer response (2.5%) = 20%.

Grading: Your final grade will be affected by attendance & punctuality, classroom participation & notebook work, and timely completion of assignments. Unless otherwise noted, formally graded assignments are assessed on the following criteria: Grammar, syntax and style: 33.3%; Structure and organization: 33.3%; Creativity and depth: 33.3%. Story # 2 will also be assessed on commitment to the assignment (imitation of style and voice). To achieve an A to A+ you must spend more time on assignments, demonstrate active engagement with the work, and exceed expectation (this may include: making radical revisions to your own work; discovering something original; challenging yourself to leave your comfort zone; experimenting with a style different from your own). Those who spend more time on assignments and demonstrate engagement with the work will receive a B- to A-. Those who do the minimum work required will receive a C.
Course outline, ENGL 335: Creative Writing 1, Fall 2018

Course curriculum

Week 1, Sept. 6: Welcome
What is creative writing? Why do you write? Discussion of course structure.

Thursday, Sept. 6
In-class exercises: Lynda Barry journal page. Writing from journal page. Discussion of book report, due week six. Formulation of collective class rules + individual goal-setting and reflection on participation.
**Due by midnight on LEARN: Statement of goals for your own creative writing practice & class participation this term (250-500 words, unmarked, optional).

Week 2, Sept. 11 & 13: Good poems/bad poems
Why read poems? Why write poems?

Tuesday, Sept. 11
Today’s reading: Lynda Barry excerpts from “What It Is,” in Courseware
In-class exercises: Lynda Barry exercise + discussion of an image. Meet poetry workshop groups. List poems.

Thursday, Sept. 13
Today’s reading: Mary Oliver’s A Poetry Handbook, pp 1-34 + Warsan Shire’s poem
In-class exercises: Writing poems, talking about why we read & write poems.

Week 3, Sept. 18 & 20: Line breaks and listening
Workshopping: line breaks & workshopping the workshop; choose book for Story # 1

Tuesday, Sept. 18
Today’s reading: Mary Oliver’s A Poetry Handbook, pp 58-108
In-class exercises: Exploring the formal elements of a poem.

Thursday, Sept. 20
Today’s reading: Mary Oliver’s A Poetry Handbook on the line, pp 35-57
In-class exercises: Line break workshop—important: bring to class one original poem, written by you, in order to participate in the workshop. Collective creation of checklist to be used to analyze poems.
**Due at the beginning of class: your selection of a short story collection for Story # 1. (List of selected short story collections can be found at the end of this course outline.)
**Due on Friday, Sept. 21, by midnight: three to five poems for portfolio submitted to workshop group on LEARN.

**Reminder: First notebook sample is due on Sunday, Sept. 23, at midnight (unmarked, optional, for participation).
Week 4, Sept. 25 & 27: Poetry peer reviews

*Working together as a group, creating rather than destroying.*

Tuesday, Sept. 25
Today’s reading: Assigned poem from Courseware + excerpt on workshops in Courseware.
In-class exercises: Workshopping the workshop—important: bring Courseware to class.
**Due at class-time: Completed analysis of assigned poem for today’s workshop (unmarked, for participation).**

Thursday, Sept. 27
Poetry workshop: Come to class prepared to discuss your peers’ work. Participation in class is a required component of the peer review.
**Due: Submit completed analysis of peers’ poems on LEARN before class-time, and bring copies to class for workshop (10%).**

Week 5, Oct. 2 & 4: Intro to short story unit + fun with grammar

*What is the short story? Exploring beginnings, setting and character development.*

Tuesday, Oct. 2
Today’s reading: excerpt from Stephen King’s *On Writing: “Toolbox.”*
In-class exercises: Writing in different verb tenses. Exploring partner editing and self-editing techniques.

Thursday, Oct. 4
In-class exercises: Writing about home.
Meet new workshop groups.
**Due on Friday, Oct. 5: Poetry portfolio + reflection (15%), submitted on LEARN by midnight.**

Thanksgiving week, Oct. 11: Preparing for book report

*Practicing micro & macro textual analysis. Discussion of transitions and anchoring images.*

Thursday, Oct. 11
Today’s reading: “Mother,” by Grace Paley. Bring Courseware to class for discussion on transitions and anchoring images.
In-class exercises: Windows & doors, fictional places, transitions, and anchoring images.
**Submit on LEARN after class: Upload your micro and macro analysis of “Mother,” (unmarked, optional, submit if you want to receive feedback).**
Week 6, Oct. 16 & 18: Writing “in the manner of …”

Book reports & character development.

Tuesday, Oct. 16
In-class exercises: “One of the three who survived” exercise + Meet in new workshop groups to discuss short story collections & writing “in the manner of …”
**Due: Book report on story collection, hand in hard copy at the end of class (5%).

Thursday, Oct. 18
In-class exercises: Picture exercise.

**Reminder: Second notebook sample is due on Sunday, Oct. 23, at midnight (unmarked, optional, for participation).

Week 7, Oct. 23 & 25: Character development & political writing

Writing in the third person. Writing about current events.

Tuesday, Oct. 23
Today’s reading: “A Flawless Silence,” by Yiyun Li. Bring Courseware to class for discussion on character development in the third person.
In-class exercises: TBD

Thursday, Oct. 25
Today’s reading: “Without Inspection,” by Edwidge Danticat. Bring Courseware to class for discussion on finding plot through character development.
In-class exercises: Political writing. Writing about the now.
**Due on Friday, Oct. 26: Draft of Story # 1 (written “in the manner of …”) submitted to your workshop group on LEARN by midnight.

Week 8, Oct. 30 & Nov. 1: Expanding a draft

Building on what you’ve already made. Peer review workshop.

Tuesday, Oct. 30
Discussion of the stages of editing, and writing an editorial letter.
In-class exercises: Party exercise. Expanding a draft.

Thursday, Nov. 1
In-class exercises: Story # 1 peer review workshop. Come to class prepared to discuss your peers’ work. Participation in class is a required component of the peer review.
**Due before class-time: Submit two assigned peer reviews, written as editorial letters, on LEARN (10%).
**Week 9, Nov. 6 & 8: The stages of editing**
*Editing drafts. Storyboarding sequences.*

**Tuesday, Nov. 6**
Today’s reading: “Silver Tiger,” by Lu Yang. Bring Courseware to class for discussion on imagery and subtext.  
In-class exercises: Partner editing for Story #1, due on Friday.

**Thursday, Nov. 8**
Today’s reading: “Books and Roses,” by Helen Oyeyemi. Bring Courseware to class for discussion on plot and sequences.  
In-class exercises: Storyboarding sequences.  
**Due on Friday, Nov. 9, at midnight: Story #1 plus brief reflection submitted on LEARN (15%).**

**Week 10, Nov. 13 & 15: Polishing your work & publishing**
*Writing and editing cover letters. How to get published in Canada?*

**Tuesday, Nov. 13**
Guest speaker! Pamela Mulloy, editor of *TNQ*.  
Also: Meet with new workshop group to discuss plans for Story #2, based on your notebook work; rough draft is due to your workshop group on Tuesday, Nov. 20.

**Thursday, Nov. 15**
Today’s reading: “The Carver Chronicles” by D.T. Max and “Rana in Rien,” by Jana O. Al Khatib. Bring Courseware to class for discussion on editing/publishing.  
In-class exercises: Writing and editing your cover letter (bring sample to class).

**Reminder:** Third notebook sample is due on Sunday, Nov. 18, at midnight (unmarked, optional, for participation).

**Week 11, Nov. 20 & 22: Dialogue**
*Listening and recreating.*

**Tuesday, Nov. 20**
Today’s reading: Bring Courseware to class for discussion on dialogue.  
In-class exercises: Turning dialogue into story.  
**Due: Rough draft of Story #2, submitted to your workshop group on LEARN, by midnight.**

**Thursday, Nov. 22**
In-class exercises: Partner storytelling.  
Important: Bring to class a story about yourself that you’re willing to share.
Week 12, Nov. 27 & 29: Sharing our stories
Reflecting on the editing process. Who do our stories belong to?

Tuesday, Nov. 27
In-class exercises: Story # 2 peer review workshop. Come to class prepared to discuss your peers’ work. Peer responses will be presented orally in class (2.5%). Participation in class is a required component of the peer review.
In-class exercise: Endings.

Thursday, Nov. 29
In class exercises: Group editing for Story # 2. Poetry slam!
**Due today, in class: Hard copy of cover letter and story/poetry submission for The New Quarterly (unmarked, optional, for participation).

**Due on Wed., Dec. 5 at midnight: Story # 2 plus brief reflection, submitted on LEARN unless you’ve made other arrangements (17.5%) + reflection on participation (unmarked, optional, for participation).
**Reminder: Final notebook sample is due on Wed., Dec. 5, at midnight (unmarked, optional, for participation).
**Short story collections for book review**

Homesick For Another World, by Ottessa Moshfegh (2017)
What Is Not Yours Is Not Yours, by Helen Oyeyemi (2016)
The Kindness of Enemies, by Leila Aboulela (2016)
These Were Their Faces, by Silvina Ocampo (2015)
Tenth of December, by George Saunders (2013)
Islands of Decolonial Love, by Leanne Simpson (2013)
Suddenly, a Knock on the Door, by Etger Keret (2012)
What We Talk About When We Talk About Anne Frank, by Nathan Englander (2012)
Siege 13, by Tamas Dobozy (2012)
God Loves Hair, by Vivek Shraya (2010)
Gold Boy, Emerald Girl, by Yiyun Li (2010)
Memory Wall, by Anthony Doerr (2010)
A Visit from the Goon Squad, by Jennifer Egan (2010)
In Other Rooms, Other Wonders, by Daniyal Mueenuddin (2009)
Monstress, by Lysley Tenorio (2008)
Varieties of Disturbance, by Lydia Davis (2007)
No One Belongs Here More Than You, by Miranda July (2005)
Interpreter of Maladies, by Jhumpa Lahiri (1999)
Birds of America, by Lorrie Moore (1998)
The Elephant Vanishes, by Haruki Murakami (1993)
The Middleman and Other Stories, by Bharati Mukherjee (1988)
At the Bottom of the River, by Jamaica Kincaid (1983)
Home Truths, by Mavis Gallant (1981) or other Gallant collection
Will You Please Be Quiet, Please? by Raymond Carver (1976) or other Carver collection
Dance of the Happy Shades, by Alice Munro (1968) or other Munro collection
Little Disturbances of Man, by Grace Paley (1959)
A Good Man is Hard to Find, by Flannery O’Connor (1955)
Collected Stories, by Anton Chekhov (originally published between 1883-1903)

**Mental Health Services**

Students suffering from anxiety, depression, problems with sleep, attention, obsessions or compulsions, relationship difficulties, etc., may make an appointment by phone or in person. Appointments are usually available within 2 days of initial contact. All contacts are completely confidential. Contact Health Services: 519-888-4096 to schedule appointment. For free 24/7 help: 1-866-797-0000. Contact Counselling Services: 519-888-4567 x 32655 to schedule appointment, or counserv@uwaterloo.ca

**Territorial Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron, Anishnaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.
Notes on assignments and important due dates for ENGL 335, Fall 2018

Notebook work: Each week you will be assigned out-of-class writing work on a topic or image related to what we’re discussing in class. Bring your notebook to class: work may be used in class. Outside of assigned work, you are encouraged to use your notebook to develop your individual writing practice: collect ideas, observations, snippets of overheard dialogue, descriptive passages, character studies, journal pages, etc.

You may submit up to four samples of notebook work, written outside of class, over the course of the term; these contribute to your overall participation mark, but are not marked, and as such as optional. You may type up your samples, or scan/photograph and upload them to LEARN. A dropbox will be open to collect each sample with a hard deadline every three weeks. You may submit your notebook sample at any point during each cycle.

Deadlines for notebook samples: Sunday, Sept. 23; Sunday, Oct. 21; Sunday, Nov. 18; Wednesday, Dec. 5.

Due dates for poetry portfolio

Friday, Sept. 21: Rough drafts of original poems for peer review due. You may submit between 3 to 5 poems. File on LEARN to your workshop group, midnight deadline. These poems may be of any length and style. You may submit poems you’ve written in class or for notebook work, or you may submit poems you’ve been working on outside of class; the only restriction is that these poems must be original and written by you.

Tuesday, Sept. 25: Completed analysis of assigned poem from Courseware due. Complete before class and bring to class. This assignment is unmarked, but important for participation in “workshopping the workshop.”

Thursday, Sept. 27: Poetry peer reviews due. A dropbox will be opened on LEARN to collect your peer reviews, which are due before class. You are required to submit a formal review of ONE poem from each poet in your group. Please submit reviews in a single file. In class, workshop groups will spend 10-15 minutes discussing each poet’s poems, so please read every poem, even those you don’t review formally. Come prepared with notes and comments on each poet’s work. I will upload examples of poetry peer reviews from past terms, to help you with the written portion of this assignment. (10%, includes in-class participation).

Friday, Oct. 5: Poetry portfolio + personal reflection due. File on LEARN, midnight deadline. Your poetry portfolio consists of THREE revised poems, plus a short personal reflection (250 words) on the exercise of writing and revising your work. The reflection is your chance to tell me about your writing and editing experience: helpful advice given, frustrations or difficulties, and what you hoped to achieve. (15%).
Due dates for Story # 1 (written “in the manner of…”)

Thursday, Sept. 20: Select your short story collection on which to base Story # 1, chosen from the collections listed in the course outline. Your selection is due at the beginning of class. Choose a style and voice that you are drawn to and interested in imitating, in some way. If you want to sample an author’s style, most have published stories that are accessible online. If you have difficulty tracking down a collection, I should be able to loan you the book.

Thursday, Oct. 11: Micro and macro analysis of “Mother.” This assignment will be completed in class. Upload to dropbox on LEARN after class if you want to receive feedback on your analysis. Optional, unmarked.

Tuesday, Oct. 16: Book reports due. Oral report and written report due in class. This assignment is the foundation for Story # 1. You will select and read a short story collection, and present a book report to your workshop group. Your report will include a macro analysis of the author’s style and technique, tone, central themes and images, strengths and weaknesses; and a micro analysis of a single page, chosen from a story in the collection. I will provide a guide to focus your macro analysis. Reports will be collected at the end of class. Your presentation should be between 3-5 minutes in length. You will also have the opportunity to discuss and brainstorm your plan for writing “in the manner of …” with your workshop group. (5%)

Friday, Oct. 26: Rough draft of Story # 1 (written “in the manner of …”) due. File story (1500 word limit) on LEARN to your workshop group, midnight deadline. Story # 1 is an imitative assignment, in which you write a story by building off a borrowed style, theme, character(s), plot-line, setting, or tone. You may interpret “in the manner of …” quite freely. Please talk to me before this deadline if you have any questions.

Tuesday, Nov. 1: Story # 1 peer reviews due. File on LEARN before class. In class, each workshop group will spend roughly 10-15 minutes discussing each writer’s story, so you must also come prepared with notes and comments on everyone’s work. You will be writing the story peer reviews as editorial letters. I will upload examples of story peer reviews from past terms, to help you with the written portion of this assignment. (10%, includes in-class participation).

Friday, Nov. 9: Story # 1 + personal reflection due. File on LEARN, by midnight. Your portfolio for Story # 1 consists of one revised story (1500 words), written in the manner of a short story collection of your choice, plus a short personal reflection (250 words). Reminder that this assignment will be marked on the following criteria: Grammar and syntax: 25%; Structure and organization: 25%; Creativity and depth: 25%; Style and voice (commitment to imitation): 25%. (15%)
Due dates for Story # 2

Tuesday, Nov. 13: **Meet with workshop group in class to discuss Story # 2.** Story # 2 will be based on your notebook work from this term (in class and out of class), so you should re-read your notebook for ideas and inspiration before class today. The meeting with your workshop group is an informal discussion to help you shape your ideas and state your goals for this open-ended project.

Tuesday, Nov. 20: **Rough draft of Story # 2 due.** File story on LEARN to your workshop group, midnight deadline. Story # 2 is an open-ended project based on your notebook work this term, and you are invited to interpret it as openly as you wish, incorporating drawing, poetry, fiction, and non-fiction, as you wish, into your story. No word limits.

Tuesday, Nov. 27: **Story # 2 peer review workshop.** Come to class prepared to discuss your peers’ work. Bring notes on each story. Peer responses will be presented orally in class. For assessment purposes, writers will take notes on the editorial feedback they receive and submit their notes at the end of the workshop (2.5%). Participation in class is a required component of the peer review.

Wednesday, Dec. 5: **Story # 2 + sample of original notebook work + personal reflection due.** File on LEARN, by midnight. Your portfolio for Story # 2 consists of a story developed from notebook work, a sample of the notebook work on which the story is based, plus a short personal reflection (250 words) on the experience of writing and revising your work. (15%)

Due dates for other participation assignments

Thursday, Sept. 6. **Statement of goals for your own creative writing practice & class participation this term** (250-500 words). File on LEARN. This assignment is unmarked and optional.

Thursday, Nov. 29: **Cover letter and story/poetry submission for TNQ due.** Bring a hard copy of your cover letter, submission form, and story submission to class. Follow the submissions guidelines found at tnq.ca. Your submission may be a story or poems you’ve written and revised this term, or it may be a story or poems you’ve been working on outside of class. I will collect the submissions and deliver them to TNQ’s office on campus. This assignment is unmarked and optional.

Wednesday, Dec. 5: **Final reflection on your participation in this class due.** I will use your input in this reflection to help me assess your overall participation mark. File on LEARN by midnight. This assignment is unmarked and optional.

**IMPORTANT:** Please speak to me a week in advance if you require an extension on any project. Last-minute extensions are granted only in emergency situations.