



**FACULTY OF ARTS
Department Of English**

COURSE OUTLINE

ENGL 594.2: Studies in Creative Writing: Prose Fiction (Popular Genre Writing)

Fall 2022

Wed., 9:00-11:45 am, SS 1059, In person

Instructor	Dr. Suzette Mayr
Email:	smayr@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Wednesdays, 2-4 pm via Zoom Meeting ID: 982 3226 6374 Passcode: 801686 https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/98232266374?pwd=dUtwZXNEaUdCTi9XVDIGU0x1WF10dz09

WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

On behalf of the University of Calgary Department of English, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. The City of Calgary is also home to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III.

E-mail and electronic submissions policy:

I am happy to reply to short, specific questions via e-mail, and will answer as promptly as possible. If you have detailed questions on the course material, it is more appropriate to arrange a Zoom meeting with me. Additionally, please do not upload your assignments late/after the agreed upon deadlines – this is disrespectful to the other students who may not have time to read late work well or thoroughly, and will disrupt the rhythm of the class.

Course description:

English 594.2 is a graduate course in Creative Writing, intended to offer advanced students an opportunity to work intensively on prose pieces in one or more popular genres. Students at this level must be completely comfortable with the various practices and theories of narrative intervention, and should be prepared to work creatively and imaginatively in applying those theories to their own writing, as well as to their colleagues' work. This course requires students to work toward completion of three short stories, or three stand-alone chapters from a longer work. Students are also expected to read widely as part of their background work.

This course requires critical acumen, editorial focus, and steady writing and reading – I strongly recommend that you endeavour to write every day. Regular submissions during the course should be between 10-15 pages. On Wednesday, 14 December 2022, students will submit via Dropbox a final prose piece of approximately 15-20 pages for instructor evaluation.

There are no pre-requisites for this course. Consent of the instructor is the only requirement.

This course may be repeated for credit.

Pedagogy:

This class will be conducted primarily as a once-a-week workshop, with students submitting via D2L short stories or stand-alone chapters three times during the semester. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss their colleagues' writing and the published texts with constructive, informed, and intelligent criticism. Grades will be based on writing achievements, one group presentation, the ability to critique, and class participation.

Selected students upload writing to D2L one week in advance, and all students are expected to come to class having posted their critiques of the work on the D2L discussion board. Please be prepared to expand upon these critiques with constructive criticism and relevant responses.

Course learning outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and develop the more nuanced elements that make up their own voices and concerns as writers;
2. Do further work on where to “find” story while continuing their own creative writing practice;
3. Read fiction thoughtfully and critically at an advanced level from a writerly perspective;
4. Read fiction effectively from an editorial perspective, with a concentration on elements such as character, setting, language choice, and plot;
5. Use newfound tools taught in the course to embark on future, publishable work.

Texts and readings:

Osborne, Heather. *Songbroken* (Forest Path Books, 2021)

Salesses, Mark. *Craft in the Real World: Rethinking Fiction Writing and Workshopping* (Catapult, 2021)

Assorted readings on D2L

Learning technology requirements:

Students will need to have access to a laptop computer or smartphone in class time or they may choose to print out hardcopies of students' work to consult during class time. Keep in mind that the presentations may include an electronic handout that will only be available on the day of the presentation. There is a D2L site for this course which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials (see d2L.ucalgary.ca).

Assessments and Evaluation:

Your final grade will consist of an evaluation of all the work you hand in. Your attendance, participation, and the degree of improvement you make will figure in your final mark. You are expected to attend classes and to contribute to class discussion.

All work must be typed and double-spaced in a legible font, no smaller than 12 point. Fiction to be workshopped must be posted in a Word document to the class D2L discussion board one week before it is due to be workshopped. The final assignment will be submitted via Dropbox.

Written critiques of other students' fiction must be posted to the class D2L discussion board on the dates outlined in the syllabus.

Assignment #1: Writing (Due date: Ongoing)	70%
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Ending Exercise – 250-300 words (via email to smayr@ucalgary.ca, due date Sept. 6, midnight)
Fiction #1 – 10-15 pages (via D2L discussion board, due date will be determined in class)
Fiction #2 – 10-15 pages (via D2L discussion board, due date will be determined in class)
Final prose piece #3 – 15-20 pages (due December 14, 11:59 pm, via D2L Dropbox)

NB: STUDENTS IN THE CLASS ARE NOT OBLIGED TO POST WRITTEN FEEDBACK TO OTHER STUDENTS' LATE SUBMISSIONS. LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE WORKSHOPPED LAST, AND WILL RECEIVE ONLY LIMITED IN-CLASS FEEDBACK.

Assignment #2: Group Presentation (Due dates will be determined in class)	10%
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Over the course of the semester, each group must give one, 20-25-minute, in-person presentation on one of the published stories included in the "Readings" section of the course D2L site. The presentations are to be creative and engaging, and presenters should refrain from doing a flat reading presentation. Each presentation must also include a one-page handout, either in electronic or paper form.

Assignment #3: Discussion Board Posts and Class Participation (Due date: Ongoing)	20%
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Critiques (weekly): minimum 200 words each, responding to other students' fiction throughout the semester. These critiques are due at 8:30 am (ie, just before class) on the day that the other students' fiction pieces will be workshopped. Written critiques are not required for the "Ending Exercise" assignment.

There is no Registrar-scheduled Final Examination in this course. There are no extra credit assignments available.

Written Critiques:

Each student is required to critique and to edit their colleagues' work with care and in some detail, uploading the critiques to the course D2L discussion board.

Critiques should focus on what strikes you, as the reader, as the most significant or noteworthy element of the writing you have read. Critiques should avoid, at all costs, general or self-evident comments, or spurious praise. “I like this piece,” is not useful. And critiques must **NEVER** be personal or in any way derogatory – personal remarks are considered academic misconduct and could result in permanent expulsion from the class. Students are addressing the work on the page and not the writer. Nor should critiques consist of hollow praise (“this is a fantastic story!”) without substantial editorial comment. Constructive criticism analyzes both the merits and the flaws of creative work, the point being to help the writer improve work in progress; all the writing in this class is work in progress. The more critically a writer can read, the better a self-critic and consequently writer they will become. Learning to be a discerning reader is an important step in developing into a better writer.

Presentation:

Each student must give one 20-25 minute, group oral presentation (2 students maximum per group) on one published text included in the “Readings” section of the course D2L site.

On the day of the presentation, the group presenting must upload or distribute a one-page handout to every member of the class, outlining what the presentation will be about (this handout can be in point-form). You will need to bring 12 copies of the handout if you are opting for hardcopy, not including one for yourself. If you would like the instructor to print the handouts out for you, please email the handout to the instructor by 4:30 pm, Tuesday, the day before your presentation at the very latest.

Your in-class presentation should engage in a work in a writerly way, meaning that you do not apprehend the text as a critic or a casual reader, but as a writer. What does this text teach you (and the class) about writing? The story’s writerly aspects should be pertinent to the entire class and to writing as a whole. In short, if you choose a text for its particular point of view, then address how/why the point of view is effective. How does the text open itself to critical readings? Does the text exemplify certain literary tropes or habits? Do not explain the story’s content, or read overly lengthy passages aloud. The entire class will have read the text, and will be prepared to discuss how the narrative works (or doesn’t), and how it can be read. Do not give an extensive biography of the author. Engage with the text in an innovative and creative way. You might choose a text thinking you want to write a similar text, only to discover that the work you have chosen actually does something entirely different. Some of you might choose a text that you “like” only to discover that it doesn’t work very well. Your presentation should apprehend these possibilities. Presentations will be graded on their writerly and critical response to the work; keep this in mind when deciding how to proceed. Above all, utilize your writerly imagination.

Class Participation:

In order to receive full marks for the Participation portion of your final grade, students must arrive punctually, attend class regularly, and participate in a constructive, positive manner in class discussion. Absolute silence will not fulfill this grade; however, dominating the class and

interrupting colleagues during discussion will not either. Simply repeating what has already been stated in the written critiques will not suffice either – the written critiques should be a starting point only for in-class discussion and participation.

If students miss a class session that is included as a component of participation, and wish to receive credit for that day’s work, they must contact the instructor within 24 hours to discuss options to make up that component.

Guidelines for in-class discussion:

Discussion forms the body of in-class time in this course. When reading a piece of fiction, please stay away from personal tastes; the questions you must confront are not whether you “like” a character, for example, but whether the character was convincing and whether their actions are prepared for in the light of the fictional trajectory required. If you feel that some aspect of the text works well, explain why. And if you feel some aspect of the text does not work well, explain why, using literary terminology.

Conduct:

Students, employees, and academic staff are also expected to demonstrate behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. As members of the University community, students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Policy on use of electronic devices:

The use of laptop and mobile devices in class is acceptable when used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. Please refrain from accessing websites and resources that may be distracting to you or for other learners during class time. Students are responsible for being aware of the University’s [Internet and email use policy](#). Electronic devices are not permitted during the Final Examination.

Grading system (undergraduate):

90 + %	A+	4.0	67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
85 – 89 %	A	4.0	64 – 66 %	C	2.0
80 – 84 %	A–	3.7	60 – 63 %	C–	1.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3	55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
74 – 76 %	B	3.0	50 – 54 %	D	1.0
70 – 73 %	B–	2.7	0 – 49 %	F	0

The interpretation of the undergraduate university grading system can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-1.html>

Unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor regarding a late assignment, late assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (eg: an A- to B+) for each business day [not class] that the assignment is overdue. No assignments will be accepted two weeks past the assignment deadline without the prior consent of the instructor.

A range: Consistently exceptional work

The work is moving toward a publishable level. The use of language is concise and precise and original; figures of speech are imaginative and compelling; the content of the work is interesting and is treated in a fresh, new way, and the form chosen is the best possible. Writing in this range employs every element of fiction with sophistication and elegance. **A+ is a grade earned in only very rare instances by work that is absolutely stellar. Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, this grade is earned for work that exceeds expectations in style, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.**

B range: Consistently good work

The work is above average, with good use of language, originality, and control, but could use more refinement or development, and more revision. It shows at least in part a heightened awareness of structure and image, several striking aspects of narrative, and an interesting perspective or point of view. Word choice and description are generally exact and thoughtful.

C range: Consistently average work

The work is satisfactory, but relies on ordinary, even somewhat predictable use of language. Work in this range is formally not innovative, although the writing will be competent, even promising. The material will definitely need more work, more layering, more texture. Image and plot are sound but may verge on clichéd and predictable. Vocabulary is adequate but may be limited.

D range: Minimal pass

The work shows some effort but is carelessly constructed and may have grammatical problems or lack awareness of the mechanics of English. Use of language will be undistinguished and clichéd, ideas ordinary, even predictable.

F: No credit

Work shows no effort; no work has been done at all.

Students must reach the minimum percentage threshold for the grade range to receive that letter grade. For example, to receive an A-, a student must have surpassed the minimum threshold of 80.00% in the course.

Students must complete all fiction assignments in order to receive a passing grade on the course.

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (e.g., an A- to B+) for each calendar day (not class meeting) that the assignment is overdue. No assignments will be accepted two weeks past the assignment deadline without the prior consent of the instructor.

NB: If you are having difficulties of any kind, or if you have any questions, please feel free to meet with me. If you cannot make an appointment during my regular office hours, I am happy to arrange to meet at another time. Do not hesitate to inform me of potential difficulties because I may be able to help you solve them. Please note, however, that “writer’s block” will not be accepted as a reason for not submitting work.

Academic Integrity:

This course, like all courses at the University of Calgary, holds students to high standards of honest and responsible scholarship. Please consult the [Academic Integrity website](#) for a detailed description of university policies, which will be enforced in this course. Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Associate Dean of Arts for a ruling.

Plagiarism is a type of academic misconduct. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of another person as their own. Another equally serious form of plagiarism occurs when a student submits something they have written themselves for credit in two or more courses without first securing written permission from all those course instructors. Consequences for plagiarism include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense.

Deferral of term work and final examinations:

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an [Application of Deferment of Term Work](#) must be completed. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate this process with the instructor. The University also has regulations governing the [deferral of final examinations](#).

Grade appeals:

To pursue a Reassessment of Graded Term Work or a Reappraisal of an Academic Assessment, Consult the [University Calendar](#) and request advice from the English Department at engl@ucalgary.ca. Please note that mere dissatisfaction with a grade is not sufficient grounds for an appeal.

[English Department Website:](#)

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English.

Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:

The [Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club](#) fosters and champions reading and writing

through community service, leadership, and engagement. Our email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

Writing support:

[The Student Success Centre](#) offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

[Academic regulations and schedules](#)

Student Academic Accommodations:

The Student Accessibility Services website is available [here](#). University accommodation policies can be found at the following links:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-1.html>

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6.html>

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-2.html>

Program Advising and Student Information Resources is done through the Faculty of Arts Students' Centre. Office location: SS102; phone: 403-220-3580; email: ascarts@ucalgary.ca
Website: <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>

Instructor's Intellectual Property

Course materials created by instructors, including presentations, posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams, remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Student information will be collected in accordance with usual classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty and teaching assistants. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

Sexual violence policy:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Sexual-and-Gender-Based-Violence-Policy.pdf>

Other important information:

- [Wellness and Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Student Success](#)
- [Student Ombuds Office](#)
- [Student Union \(SU\) Information](#)

- [Graduate Students' Association \(GSA\) Information](#)
- [Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points](#)
- [Safewalk](#)

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):

Please participate in [USRI Surveys](#) toward the end of the course. The feedback they provide helps us evaluate teaching, enhance student learning, and guide students as they select courses.