

	School of Arts & Science ENGLISH DEPARTMENT CRWR 153 Writing a Novel 1 Winter 2013
---	---

COURSE OUTLINE

The course description is online @ <http://camosun.ca/learn/calendar/current/web/anth.html>

Ω Please note: the College electronically stores this outline for five (5) years only.

It is **strongly recommended** you keep a copy of this outline with your academic records.

You will need this outline for any future application/s for transfer credit/s to other colleges/universities.

Calendar Description: This course will provide students with practical experience in writing a novel.

Students will learn how to write for quantity, write to a deadline, meet daily word-count goals, and sketch an entire story arc. At the end of the course, students will have a 50,000 word first-draft of a novel.

1. Instructor Information

(a)	Instructor:	Candace Fertile		
(b)	Office Hours:	Tuesday and Thursday 2:30-3:30; Wednesday 1:00-3:30; or by appointment		
(c)	Location:	Paul 337		
(d)	Phone:	250.370.3354	Alternative Phone:	
(e)	Email:	fertile@camosun.ca		
(f)	Website:			

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

The Writing Process

Upon completion of this course students will be able to

- Write on deadline.
- Meet daily word-count goals.
- Write uncritically for quantity.

1. The Manuscript

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Develop scenes.
- Create complex characters.
- Create plots, subplots, and through-lines.

2. The Big-Picture Rewrite

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Write a chapter by chapter analysis to clarify the novel's current structure.
- Clarify how the interrelated plots and subplots play out against the chapters.
- Break down each chapter into its component scenes.
- Cut filler scenes.
- Transform passages of summary into scene.
- Change the order of scenes.
- Take inventory of characters and their actions.
- Cut extraneous characters.
- Bind characters more tightly to the core of the story.
- Improve the inventory of characters through-lines.

3. Required Materials

Writing 21st Century Fiction by Donald Maass (in Camosun bookstore)
 notebook (your choice of size and format—something you can carry regularly)
 8.5 X 11 inch paper (lined or unlined—whatever you like) and folder or binder
 Copycard/money for photocopying and printing—budget about \$20
 Recommended—a flash drive

Basic tools for writers, some available free on-line: dictionary, thesaurus, handbook, coffee, chocolate . . .

4. Course Content and Schedule

The purpose of this course is to encourage participants to write as much as possible of a first draft of a novel. A novel is usually about 80,000-120,000 words, and wild variations exist. For this course, participants should aim for about 50,000 words (about 5000 words per week or about 1000 words per day over the ten weeks of the intense writing period in the course: January 14-March 31, with a reflection break in the sixth week of classes that coincides with the February 11 holiday).

On Mondays the class takes place in Young 220 and consists of lectures and discussions about novels and techniques, along with in-class writing. On Wednesdays the class takes place in Ewing 115 and consists primarily of writing time on novels. Please note that you will need to devote much time to writing outside of class time.

And as writers, participants must also be readers. In class we will use examples of writing from fiction, but as writers, you will be honing your craft constantly, not only through writing itself, but also through reading the work of others, both your fellow participants' and published authors' work.

The novel you write in this course is entirely up to you. In *Writing 21st Century Fiction*, Donald Maass discusses literary fiction and genre fiction and argues that the goal is a strong novel. He says, “[W]hen writing fiction with high impact, there’s no subject matter too taboo, no character too eccentric, no emotional content too intense, no themes too difficult. It’s all in how you handle it. What overcomes all objections are characters who compel, stories that grip, and writing that amazes” (15). I agree with Maass to a point, but I think it’s worth remembering that readers have preferences (you do, don’t you?), and so a book that one reader admires may be a book that another reader doesn’t admire or doesn’t finish (or even start). So what? The world is full of readers. Because you chose this course, you’ve already identified yourself as a person fascinated by words and sentences and stories. Perhaps you’ve already written a great deal or perhaps you are just exploring the idea. It doesn’t matter. You want to write a novel.

So welcome.

5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

The assessment in this class is largely dependent on completion of work, including assignments in and out of class and the novel draft. A first draft by its very nature is rough, so while spelling and grammar are important, in a first draft, you should not get caught up in the minor details. Instead you need to press on and get your ideas onto the page or screen. Obviously, the higher your level of skill with the basics, the less time you will spend on them, but these are things that you will improve over time. Take advantage of the computer tools available such as a spell check program, but remember that no computer program can replace the ability of the human brain when it comes to language.

- 10% assignments (in class and take- home, variable dates)
- 10% notebook (write ideas, questions, words, anything that smacks your mind, daily)
- 20% check-in with drafty draft and 200 word minimum self-critique (Feb. 13 in class)*
- 10% 200 word minimum critique of two participants' (your group) draft (Feb. 13 in class)
- 40% draft (March 31) **
- 10% any 20 pages revised (April 8 at beginning of class)

* grade range by minimum word count: A 8000 words; B 6000; C 4000

** grade range by minimum word count: A 20000; B 15000; C 10000

Grades within a range are determined by the strength of the writing (the elements of fiction: e.g. plot, character, setting, point of view, style)

6. Grading System

(No changes are to be made to this section unless the Approved Course Description has been forwarded through the Education Council of Camosun College for approval.)

Standard Grading System (GPA)

Percentage	Grade	Description	Grade Point Equivalency
90-100	A+		9
85-89	A		8
80-84	A-		7
77-79	B+		6
73-76	B		5
70-72	B-		4
65-69	C+		3
60-64	C		2
50-59	D	Minimum level of achievement for which credit is granted; a course with a "D" grade cannot be used as a prerequisite.	1
0-49	F	Minimum level has not been achieved.	0

Temporary Grades

Temporary grades are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy E-1.5 at camosun.ca for information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

Temporary Grade	Description
I	<i>Incomplete:</i> A temporary grade assigned when the requirements of a course have not yet been completed due to hardship or extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.
IP	<i>In progress:</i> A temporary grade assigned for courses that, due to design may require a further enrollment in the same course. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course. <i>(For these courses a final grade will be assigned to either the 3rd course attempt or at the point of course completion.)</i>
CW	<i>Compulsory Withdrawal:</i> A temporary grade assigned by a Dean when an instructor, after documenting the prescriptive strategies applied and consulting with peers, deems that a student is unsafe to self or others and must be removed from the lab, practicum, worksite, or field placement.

7. Recommended Materials or Services to Assist Students to Succeed Throughout the Course

LEARNING SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

There are a variety of services available for students to assist them throughout their learning. This information is available in the College calendar, at Student Services, or the College web site at camosun.ca.

STUDENT CONDUCT POLICY

There is a Student Conduct Policy **which includes plagiarism**. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of this policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, at Student Services, and the College web site in the Policy Section.