



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS

CREW 591: CREATIVE WRITING PORTFOLIO 120 POINTS

FULL YEAR 2016

Key dates

Trimester dates: 29 February to 13 November 2016

Teaching dates:

Trimester 1: 29 February – 23 March, 31 March – 22 April and 2 May – 3 June 2016

Trimester 2: 11 July – 19 August and 5 September – 14 October 2016

Mid-trimester breaks 1/3: 24 March – 30 March and 25 April – 1 May 2016

Mid-year break: 6 June – 8 July 2016

Mid-trimester break 2/3: 22 August – 2 September 2016

Last assessment item due: 1 November 2016

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

Workshops will take place in Room 102, 16 Waiteata Road (the workshop room), Kelburn Campus.

Days and times:

Pip Adam and Emily Perkins workshops (fiction): Thursdays 10am-1pm

Pip Adam and Emily Perkins reading programme: Wednesdays 12.30-2.30pm

Chris Price workshops (poetry and nonfiction): Tuesdays 1.30-4.30pm

Chris Price reading programme: Wednesdays 3-5pm

From time to time, the reading programme meetings will be combined on Wednesdays 2-4pm (see Teaching Format below). **The first of these combined sessions will take the form of a masterclass with Scottish novelist Andrew O'Hagan on Wednesday 9 March, 2-4pm.**

Each year we try to offer at least two international masterclasses, timing dependent on the schedules of visiting writers. Details of masterclasses are announced as they are confirmed. Note that they are often scheduled outside of workshop hours.

Names and contact details

Pip Adam (Trimester 1)

Room: 201, 16 Waiteata Road
Work phone: 463 6905
Email: pip.adam@vuw.ac.nz

Emily Perkins (Trimester 2)

Room: 201, 16 Waiteata Road
Work phone: 463 6905
Email: emily.perkins@vuw.ac.nz

Chris Price (full year)

Room: 301, 16 Waiteata Road
Work phone: 463 5815
Email: chris.price@vuw.ac.nz

Communication of additional information

Any additional information or information on changes will be made available at workshop meetings, conveyed to students by email to all class members, or will be distributed into student pigeonholes.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who attain this degree should be able to:

1. Initiate and develop a creative writing project into a full book that is written to a high literary standard
2. Develop and document a reading research programme that will inform and extend their principal project
3. Creatively analyse this project's potential readerly or audience effects and generate further composition and revisions accordingly
4. Extend their body of writing with attention to ideas, innovation and craft
5. Demonstrate critical reading skills, give respectful constructive criticism of other's writing and receive constructive criticism judiciously
6. Formulate structures and routines that will support their writing process for this project and beyond.

Teaching format

WORKSHOPS:

At workshops a range of exercise work is presented and discussed, and workshop members present folio work-in-progress for discussion.

The first few workshops will concentrate on weekly exercise pieces.

In the later part of the year, students will also be required to produce written commentaries on the work of other workshop members.

Unless we agree otherwise, there are no formal classes during university breaks: see attached meetings schedule.

READING PROGRAMME:

Where appropriate, we will run combined sessions. These will be held on Wednesday afternoons, 2.00–4.00 pm. Therefore, please keep the whole of Wednesday afternoon free.

Reading Programme meetings provide a forum for the discussion of craft and literary issues, as well as a number of texts from individual reading lists (each class member leads at least one meeting). They also provide a forum for guest visits.

There are no Reading Programme meetings during university breaks.

A NOTE ON THE FICTION STREAM

Emily Perkins will be on Research and Study Leave during the first half of 2016 and Pip Adam will convene the Fiction Workshop during Trimester 1.

Mandatory course requirements

There are two requirements:

- You must attend classes and fully participate in workshops, including completion of all exercise work, except in extenuating circumstances
- You must meet the appropriate requirements for the Reading Programme.

If you fail to meet these requirements your folio may not be assessed and you may automatically fail the course.

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

Workload

You should expect to spend about 40 hours a week working on this course.

Assessment

Assessment is based entirely on your submitted portfolio. You will receive a letter grade, and there is provision for the degree to be awarded with distinction or with merit. Two examiners – an external reader from the writing community and the Publisher of Victoria University Press – will read the portfolio and make their recommendations. Your supervisor will also write a report. Copies of their written reports will be returned to you.

You must submit three copies of your folio or thesis by Tuesday 1 November 2016.

These should be in soft or temporary bindings. When examining is completed, copies will be returned to you, along with readers' reports. At this point you can make any necessary corrections.

Your Portfolio

This is the equivalent of an academic thesis. While you will be discussing your folio at the workshop meetings, you will also be assigned a portfolio supervisor, with whom you will have regular meetings. (These should average out at one hour per fortnight across the teaching year.) As against the diversity of views you are likely to meet in workshops, your supervisor provides the response of a single, continuing reader.

The recommended length of an MA thesis in a subject such as English Literature is up to 40,000 words. It is recognised, however, that the length of a Creative Writing portfolio will depend very much on the nature of each project. A fiction portfolio, for example, is likely to have a much larger word count, while a poetry portfolio will be shorter. This is a matter you should discuss with your supervisor, as well as with Chris Price or Emily Perkins.

Reading Journal

As part of your Reading Programme you are required to read extensively in an area related to your main writing project. You report on your Reading Programme by keeping a detailed, regular journal where you note your responses to the texts you have been reading, as much as possible in the light of your own writing.

The Reading Journal, which is not formally assessed, must be submitted by Friday 9 September 2016.

Depositing your thesis

After you have received your examiners' reports, you must then lodge THREE copies of your folio: one softbound, one hardbound and one electronic copy. The IIML will keep the softbound copy as part of its record of work done for the MA. The hardbound and electronic copies will be deposited in the University Library. The library requirements for the depositing of theses can be found at: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/using-library/submit-your-thesis>

You must complete and sign an Availability of Thesis form at the final workshop and hand it to the IIML Administrator. All electronic theses from the IIML go into the Library's Restricted Archive, unless you specify that you would prefer your work in the Open Archive.

Human Ethics Regulations

If your research involves quoting directly from interviews with living people, you may need to seek approval from the Human Ethics Committee. If you are in doubt, talk first to your supervisor or workshop convenor.

Master's Thesis Policy

The MA in Creative Writing is a distinctive research degree, with its own protocols and requirements. Broader information about Victoria's university-wide Master's thesis policy can be read at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fgr/policies-and-resources/#masters>. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences also has guidelines for Masters students at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/study/postgraduate/ma> and <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/study/postgraduate/postgraduate-resources-and-links>

Please note the following reporting responsibilities for Master's students:

Master's thesis students are required to complete a progress report. The dates for submitting this report will be confirmed during Trimester 1.

MA students are also required to submit (via the IIML) a research proposal within one calendar month of their initial enrolment. This may take the form of your project proposal as outlined in your application, or reflect any changes made to the project plan and agreed with your workshop supervisor.

Further information on these requirements will be available from your workshop supervisor.

Practical Matters

As well as the Workshop Room, there are three rooms set aside for students in the MA Creative Writing programme. Room 401 at 16 Waiteata Road contains student lockers and pigeonholes, an on-line Mac and PC and a small library containing a collection of books and magazines about scriptwriting (books may be borrowed on a card system; magazines must be read in the library only).

There are also two small writing rooms next to the IIML at 14 Waiteata Road, which you can book for private work. You will have key access to the buildings and rooms, so that you can come and go after hours. (You will need to see the IIML's administrators about keys and swipe cards).

There is also a kitchen on the ground floor of the IIML. You are welcome to use anything here – fridge, microwave, stove – but please wash your dishes and clean up after yourself.

Printing and copying arrangements: read the document titled 'Information for MA Students 2016' in your course information folder, then check with the IIML's administrators.

We are building a small library of contemporary writing in the Postgraduate Room (Room 401). Please use this library as a resource (books may be borrowed on a card system; journals must be read in the library only). We subscribe to a range of contemporary journals, while a number of current NZ literary magazines – *Landfall*, *New Zealand Books*, *Sport* – have generously donated gift subscriptions. Donations of your own future publications will of course be very welcome!

Writers DVDs

We have a significant resource in the Lannan Writers DVD Collection, which features readings and conversations with many of the world's leading writers. The DVDs may not be borrowed, but we have booked the Workshop Room on Fridays from 2.00 p.m. should you wish to view these DVDs. (Certain Fridays will not be available due to the PhD programme's requirements – please check with the office.) These DVD sessions are not a formal requirement but offer you a chance to see a favourite writer in performance or to discover new writers.

There is also a collection of New Zealand and international poetry recordings on CD available to listen to in the Workshop Room. They may not be borrowed. See Chris Price for further information.

Other Meetings and Events

The Workshop and Reading Programme make up the MA's formal requirements. Informal meetings between students are another way of developing networks and skills.

The IIML also runs a series of writer events called "Writers on Mondays", usually held at lunchtimes in the second trimester. The venue for this year has yet to be confirmed. Attendance at these events, where invited writers read and speak about their work, is strongly encouraged. Students will also have the opportunity to give readings in this series over two consecutive Mondays in September.

Masterclasses

In the past few years we have presented international masterclasses as part of the MA programme. Previous visiting writers have included Janice Galloway, Mary Ruefle, Michael Schmidt, Michael Hofmann, Richard Ford, Eliot Weinberger, Lavinia Greenlaw, Michael Palmer, Richard Powers, Christopher Reid, Glyn Maxwell, David Vann, Joy Harjo, Teju Cole and Lee Gutkind.

There will be a masterclass with Scottish novelist Andrew O'Hagan on 9 March, 2-4pm, and another with novelists Louise Welsh and Zoe Strachan on the afternoon of 15 April. Other visiting writers to be confirmed (see schedule for dates and times).

Blackboard

The MA programme uses Blackboard to post and store course information, requirements and schedules; important announcements; class writing exercises; guidelines for workshop, reading journals and the reading programme packets; literary articles, essays and interviews; and university links. Access and log-in instructions will be given at the beginning of Trimester 1.

Newsletter and Twitter

The IIML produces an occasional newsletter that includes information about literary events and launches (particularly in Wellington), new books by graduates, writing competitions and other book-related goings-on. To receive the newsletter email

modernletters@vuw.ac.nz with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line. (Please note that we will assume that you are receiving the newsletter, rather than repeating the information it contains during the workshops.)

For more up-to-the-minute information about upcoming events, competition deadlines and opportunities, as well as links to useful or curious web-reading about writing, we strongly recommend following us on Twitter:

www.twitter.com/modernletters

Scholarships and Prizes

The Adam Foundation Prize in Creative Writing is awarded to the best folio submitted by an MA student in any one year. Recipients to date have been Catherine Chidgey (1997, for *In a Fishbone Church*), William Brandt (1998, for *Alpha Male*), Tim Corballis (2000, for *Below*), Paula Morris (2001, for *Queen of Beauty*), Cliff Fell (2002, for *The Adulterer's Bible*), Josh Greenberg (2003, for *A Man Who Eats the Heart*), Emily Dobson (2004, for *A Box of Bees*), Michele Amas (2005, for *The Angle of Clouds*), Anna Horsley (now Anna Taylor, 2006, for *Going Under*), Eleanor Catton (2007, for *The Rehearsal*), Lynn Jenner (2008, for *Dear Sweet Harry*), Ashleigh Young (2009, for *Can You Tolerate This?*), Rayne Cockburn (2010, for *Someplace for Boys*), Hera Lindsay Bird (2011, for *And Together We Fight Crime*), Kerry Donovan-Brown (2012, for *Lamplighter*), Helena Wiśniewska Brow (2013, for *Give Us This Day*), Craig Gamble (2014, for *The Watch List*) and Nick Bollinger (2015, for *Goneville*). Copies of these and all the other completed MA theses are available for reading in the VUW Library.

Created in 2006, the \$3000 Biggs Poetry Scholarship, which seeks to recognise the potential of a writer, has been awarded to Amy Brown (2006), Joan Fleming (2007), Louise Wallace (2008), Bill Nelson (2009), Aleksandra Lane (2010), Rachel Sawaya (2011), Zarah Butcher-McGunnigle (2012), Morgan Bach (2013), Faith Wilson (2014) and Nina Powles (2015).

There are also four post-MA project scholarships awarded to allow selected students to work towards publication of their folios. These are valued at \$3000 each depending on available funds.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf

- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st_students/services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/services/disability)
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz