

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**SCHOOL OF LINGUISTICS AND APPLIED LANGUAGE STUDIES**

**WRITING PROGRAMME  
WRIT 203: WRITING FOR MEDIA  
20 POINTS**

**TRIMESTER 2 2016**

**Key dates**

**Trimester dates:** 11 July to 13 November 2016

**Teaching dates:** 11 July to 16 October 2016

**Mid-trimester break:** 22 August to 4 September 2016

**Last assessment item due:** 11 October 2016

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds). If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

**Class times and locations**

CRN 11054 Tuesday 10am – 12:50pm in von Zedlitz (VZ) 509/510

**Names and contact details**

**WRIT 203 Course Coordinator**

Dr Derek Wallace

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**WRIT 203 Course Administrator**

Matthew Vink

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Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 9am – 4.15pm



## Communication of additional information

Additional information will be communicated through email and/or Blackboard:

[www.blackboard.vuw.ac.nz](http://www.blackboard.vuw.ac.nz)

## Prescription

This course focuses on how to produce creative nonfiction publications: personal essay, personality profile, review, commentary, and investigative or feature article. Students are introduced to research and interview procedures, composition techniques – including those characteristic of creative nonfiction – and responding to their own and others' texts.

## Course content

The course comprises:

- assigned readings for critique and discussion,
- writing exercises and assignments, and
- weekly 3-hr workshops for writing practice, presentation, discussion, and peer review.

The course covers five main topics:

- The context and nature of professional nonfiction writing,
- Auto/biographical writing (e.g., profiles),
- Interactive writing (e.g., opinion and commentaries),
- Investigative writing (e.g., features and researched articles), and
- Editing for publication.

Throughout the course we will be working in nonfiction, particularly 'creative nonfiction', sometimes classified as literary journalism. This is an increasingly popular hybrid form that uses aspects of fictional writing techniques to create nonfiction works. There will also be opportunity to work with the blogging medium.

## Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. explore a variety of nonfiction writings
2. read about and discuss aspects of writing theory, process, techniques and style
3. analyse the requirements, problems and constraints in writing contexts
4. develop writing assignments to publication standard through multiple drafts, revision and editing
5. review other students' texts.

## Teaching format

WRIT 203 has weekly writing workshops. Students are expected to participate in class discussions, practical writing activities, a range of in-class and out-of-class exercises, and analyses of texts. Regular and on-going class participation and engagement with fellow students form vital aspects of the workshop approach. Some writing activities may be conducted online via Blackboard or other web-based applications.

## Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- attend at least 10 of 12 workshops unless prevented by illness, injury, bereavement, or other exceptional circumstance. See attendance policy below for justification of this requirement.

Any student who is concerned that s/he has been (or might be) unable to meet the MCR because of exceptional personal circumstances should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

## Attendance

WRIT 203 is not an information-based course that allows you to catch up through borrowing of notes, access to lecture handouts, reviews of workshop powerpoints, etc. Instead, WRIT 203 revolves around writing activities, peer engagement, and group-oriented learning activities that require on-going participation. Hence, your absences affect the learning opportunities of others in the workshop as well yourself. WRIT 203 has limited entry to foster individual learning and collaborative engagement with professional writing processes, and attendance at workshops is necessary to benefit from this approach. It is understood that an absence is sometimes unavoidable through illness, injury, or another unforeseen development. Whenever possible, you should alert your tutor prior to the workshop you cannot attend; if that is not possible, do so well in advance of the next workshop to ensure that you can prepare for the subsequent meetings.

## Workload

The expected workload for a 20-point course is 200 hours spread over the trimester, to include the mid trimester break. It is difficult to estimate the time you will spend on workshop assignments, since individuals vary markedly in their writing and reading processes and speeds. Overall, you should schedule your trimester to include:

- 36 hours attending and participating in required classes (12 weeks x 3 hours per week);
- approximately 35 hours in tasks related to course readings and exercises in support of assignments 1, 2, and 3 outside of workshop;
- approximately 30 hours outside of workshop directed primarily towards Assignment 1 (to include further research and interviewing as needed, an initial draft for peer review, a peer review of a colleague's work, a revised final draft for grading, and, as directed, an editorial review of a colleague's final revision);
- approximately 40 hours outside of workshop directed primarily towards Assignment 2 (to include further research as needed, an initial draft for peer review, a peer review of a colleague's work, a revised final draft for grading, and, as directed, an editorial review of a colleague's final revision);
- approximately 60 hours outside of workshop directed primarily towards Assignment 3 (to include research as needed, an initial draft for tutor feedback, an revised draft for peer review, a peer review of a colleague's work with, as directed, an editorial review of a colleague's revised draft, and a revised final draft for grading).

## Assessment

All assignments submitted must be both original and written specifically for WRIT 203. Submitting/recycling writing from another course is not acceptable and will earn no assignment credit, though you may draw on content from other courses. Peer review and editorial review tasks are designed to provide additional, formative feedback on your writing; they are not assessments. WRIT 203 has no examination. Your final assessment will be based on the completion of the following writing assignments. Marking criteria for all assessment items are individually specified and addressed during workshops and made available on Blackboard.

Assessments		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	<p><b>Assignment 1 – Profile</b></p> <p>An interview-based portrait, preferably linked to the topic selected for Assignment 3, peer reviewed and revised.</p> <p>Length of profile: 800 words</p>	25%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	<p>DRAFT for Peer review: 2 August</p> <p>FINAL version: 9 August</p>
2	<p><b>Assignment 2 – Blog(s)</b></p> <p>Commentary or reflective piece(s), which may be linked to the topic selected for Assignment 3, peer reviewed and revised.</p> <p>Length of blog: 1,000 words (with prior, written tutor permission, assignment may develop from two blog entries constituting that word count).</p> <p>DRAFT for Peer review: 16 August</p> <p>FINAL version: 6 September</p>	30%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	<p>DRAFT for Peer review: 16 August</p> <p>FINAL version: 6 September</p>
3	<p><b>Assignment 3 – Investigative Article</b></p> <p>A researched article written for a non-academic audience that is drafted, developed, tutor and peer reviewed, and revised.</p> <p>Length: 1,500 – 2,000 words</p>	45%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	<p>DRAFT for tutor review: 20 September</p> <p>DRAFT for peer review: 4 October</p> <p>FINAL version: 11 October</p>

## Submission and return of work

All DRAFTS and all FINAL REVISIONS of assignments 1, 2 and 3 must be submitted electronically via Blackboard/Turnitin prior to the start of your workshops in the weeks noted above, with paper copies brought to workshop. Any assignments submitted to Blackboard after the start of class will be considered late.

Assessments 1 and 2 will generally be returned in workshops or via Blackboard/email the week following assignment deadlines. If you desire your third assignment returned to you following marking, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope to your tutor during the final workshop. If you are unable to submit the paper copies in workshop on their due dates, then you should submit those to the drop box next to the Von Zedlitz 210 office as soon as possible thereafter (or make alternative arrangements with your tutor).

## Extensions and penalties

### Extensions

Except in the case of medically documented illness or injury or documented emergencies, extensions should be requested in advance of assignment deadlines. Tutors may grant extensions of up to 72 hours; the course coordinator must approve extensions longer than 72 hours.

## Penalties

Late work: In line with School policy, assignments handed in after the due date will receive a substantially reduced grade unless accompanied by a medical certificate or other evidence of exceptional circumstances. If you require an extension for good reasons, ask your tutor or the course coordinator ahead of the date for handing in the assignment. Assignments submitted late without permission are penalised by 5% per late day, including weekends. An assignment that is more than 10 days late without an extension by the course coordinator will not receive a grade but may be accepted for purposes of meeting the Mandatory Course Requirements.

## Set texts

WRIT 203 Course Readings (available from vicbooks, [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz)). Other reading materials will be distributed in class or made available via Blackboard.

## Recommended reading

A number of recommended readings will be made available in Blackboard, and your tutors can provide suggestions for individuals. Course participants are also welcome to suggest additional readings and/or links to interesting articles or postings to their tutors. The following print texts are available in the library:

Gerard, P. *Creative Nonfiction*. Cincinnati: Story Press.

Cheney, T. *Writing Creative Nonfiction*. Ten Speed Press.

Minot, S. *Literary Nonfiction: The Fourth Genre*. Prentice Hall.

Perl, S., & Schwartz, M. *Writing True: The Art and Craft of Creative Nonfiction*. Houghton.

## Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:
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## Student feedback

No changes have been made to the course for this trimester because student evaluations were not taken in 2015.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php).

## Other important information

**For WRIT 203**, students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the free resources available via the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/> for further guidance and examples regarding issues with common English grammar and punctuation usage.

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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)

- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://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](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)