

MUSIC 3735B - SONGWRITING I

Winter 2024

INSTRUCTOR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Songwriting is a skill developed through practice. To develop better songwriting skills the best option is to consistently be creating and capturing content that can then be worked into song. This can include musical elements such as melodies, countermelodies, bass lines, rhythms and lyrics that can be arranged with instrumentation and form. In this class we will be approaching songwriting from a practical approach. You will be asked to write and create during class time as well as outside of class. We will be exploring different forms of songwriting as it pertains to different genres as well as for radio and commercial use. There will be collaborative assignments where you will be working with another classmate to write and create a song. During class time you will be expected to perform your work for your fellow students as well as respect the space and time of the work of others.

ASSIGNMENTS

You will be required to submit 5 separate song creations:

JAN 22 - Lyrics only (unless you choose to add music)

FEB 5/7/9 - Observational Song - No lyrics required

MAR 4/6/8 - Co-writing Part 1

MAR 11/13/15 - Co-writing Part 2

APR 1/3/5 - Personal Reflection

The dates above are the due dates. You will need to sign up for one of the dates for the performance of your song. A schedule for performance dates will be put in place using OWL and in class time.

GRADING SCALE

15% - Attendance (If a lecture or class time is missed due to illness, I require notification by email. There will be an allowance of 1 missed class to grant you perfect attendance.

10% - Graded for each song completion on time. There are 5 songs to be completed. This means you will receive 50% in the course for submitting all of your 5 pieces on time. (If a song is late but still submitted you will receive 7%)

7% - The remaining grade will include 7% for each song and will be calculated on collaboration and demonstration of effort and skill building.

OFFICE HOURS

I will be available for consultation outside of class by appointment. Please contact me by email mkolls@uwo.ca to arrange for a meeting in my office TC323 or by zoom.

SCHEDULE

Music 3735B

Week	Topic	Assignment
1 - JAN 8/10/12	Intro to songwriting: styles, heritage, genres, inspiration, likes, dislikes Location inspiration: writing from a present place in nature - lyrics only	
2 - JAN 15/17/19	Guest speaker Jan 15 Canadian Country Music Award Winner Aaron Allen Guest speaker Jan 17 Indigenous Songwriter Adam Sturgeon Lyric composition: Writing from a place in nature WEAR GOOD FOOTWEAR FOR THE OUTDOORS	Lyric Composition Due Jan Jan 22 Please submit your piece with written words.
3 - JAN 22/24/26	Lyric composition readings Jan. 22 Location inspiration: writing from a place of observation of others - no lyrics required	
4 - JAN 29/31/2	Working with Producers Guest Speaker Producer Simon Larochette	Performance Bonus/Extra Credit Feb. 2 (Taproot Open Mic)
5 - FEB 5/7/9	Observation Song Performances - all week	Observation Song Due Please submit lyrics Sign ups for Feb 5/7/9
6 - FEB 12/14/16	Co-writing Part 1 Lyrics matched with someone's music Guest Speaker Feb. 12 PhD Scholar Erwan Noblet	

	Improvisational Music	
READING WEEK		
7 - FEB 26/28/1	Co-Writing Part 2	
8 - MAR 4/6/8	Co-Writing Part 1 Song Performances- all week MARCH 6 LOCATION TBD	Co-writing Part 1 Song Due Please submit lyrics Sign ups for Mar. 4/6/8 Performance Bonus Mar. 7 (Taproot Open Mic)
9 - MAR 11/13/15	Co-Writing Part 2 Song Performances - all week	Co-writing Part 2 Song Due Please submit lyrics Sign ups for Mar. 11/13/15
10 - MAR 18/20/22	Personal reflection: Songwriting from the first person, lyrics and music	
11 - MAR 25/27/29		
12 - APR 1/3/5	Personal reflection song Performances - all week	Sign ups for Apr. 1/3/5 Please submit lyrics Coffee House Performance Preparation

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Please read these carefully. They contain important information.

1. Course Prerequisites: Music 1730A/B Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

2. At least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a 1000- or 2000-level course without academic penalty, students will receive assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade. Generally, students can expect some form of feedback on their performance in a course before the drop date. In rare instances, at the Dean's discretion, an exemption can be issued, which also must be noted in the course syllabus. In rare instances and at the Dean's discretion, other courses could receive a similar exemption, which also must be noted in the course syllabus. Deans should review exemptions on a course-by-course basis each time an exempted course is offered. Performance-based courses in the Don Wright Faculty of Music are exempt (1900-1999, 2900-2999).

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/exam/evaluation_undergrad.pdf

3. Grading scale: A+=90-100%, A=80-89%, B=70-79%, C=60-69%, D=50-59%, F=0-49%.

For undergraduate programs at UWO, the following Senate-approved definitions apply:

A+ 90-100	One could scarcely expect better from a student at this level
A 80 - 89	Superior work which is clearly above average
B 70 - 79	Good work, meeting all requirements, and eminently satisfactory
C 60 - 69	Competent work, meeting requirements
D 50 - 59	Fair work, minimally acceptable
F. below 50	Fail

4. Academic Consideration for Student Absence and Missing Work greater than or equal to 10%

Students are responsible for making up any missed classes or assignments as soon as possible. The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. Academic Consideration provides students with consistent, fair, and pedagogically appropriate consideration, without compromising the academic integrity of the course or program, when they have been unable to complete some component of a course due to short-term extenuating circumstances. Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions (physical or mental) that may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities are directed to seek Academic Accommodation through Accessible Education ([Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)).

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the end of the period of absence covered, to the Academic Counselling unit or Office of the Associate Dean, Undergraduate (TC210), of the student's Home Faculty together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the academic consideration being requested. Students are directed to read the Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Medical Illness at the following website for further details regarding various requirements and procedures for the supporting documentation: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration.pdf

Whenever possible, students who require academic consideration should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.

5. Academic Consideration for Student Absence & Missing Work less than or equal to 10%

In cases where students miss work that is worth less than 10% of the total course grade due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, you will have no more than 2 weeks to complete a missing assignment. Students who have been denied accommodation by an instructor may appeal this decision to the Associate Dean's office but will be required to present appropriate documentation.

6. Statement on Academic Offenses

Submission of work with which you have received help from someone else (other than the course instructor or TA) is an example of plagiarism, which is considered a major academic offense. Scholastic offenses are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offense, as found at:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

7. Mental Health and Wellness

Students that are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the Health and Wellness at Western page (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help or to go to the Wellness Education Centre located in Thames Hall room 2170. Students in crisis in need of immediate care are directed to go directly to Student Health Services in Thames Hall 2170 or to click on the big green “I Need Help Now” button on the Health and Wellness page above.

8. Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students work with Accessible Education which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

9. Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays (other than statutory holidays), and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. The Diversity Calendar from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion provides information on multifaith, multicultural and diversity related holidays and observances and links to resources for more information.

<https://www.edi.uwo.ca/resources/2816-2023-Diversity-Calendar-PDF.pdf>

10. Contingency Plan

Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, should any university-declared emergency require some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience), the course will adapt accordingly. The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

11. Gender-based and Sexual Violence

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, either recently or in the past, you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca or call 519 661-3568.

