

MUS3735A SONGWRITING

Course Instructor: Bob Wiseman (he/ him) rwisema2@uwo.ca **Office hours:** By online appointment via Skype or What's app. I respond to emails within 24 hrs but not weekends.



Western University is committed to a **thriving campus**; therefore, your health and wellness matter to us! The following link provides information about the resources available on and off campus to support students: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/> Your course coordinator can also **guide you** to resources and/or services should you need them.

MUS 3735A happens at Monday 11:30 – 12:30, Wednesday 10:30 – 12:30, 2021

Course Syllabus

Course Materials: Students are expected to have Spotify, Kanopy and subscribe to the Bob Lefsetz letter - <https://lefssetz.com/wordpress>. No reading materials need to be purchased, everything is linked through OWL via MUS 3735A. Students need to have the means to record, import and export audio.

Prerequisite: MUS 1730A/B. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol 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.

Excursions: song structure, haiku, poetry translations by neighbours, octave tricks, silent piece of paper, industry tip sheets, discuss Bob Lefsetz, visually altering 3:2, eavesdrop lyrics, bad song listening sessions, zoom guests, bring an interesting sound.

Expectations:

It is expected students write and perform songs but it matters not how experienced or inexperienced students are with performing or singing.

It is expected you keep a daily journal and hand it in near the end of the term.

It is expected you perform in class.

Hand in assignments as word docs not .pdfs and adhere to the following guidelines in your papers, 1.5 spacing, 12 pt. font in Times New Roman. If an assignment is handed in late without prior request for an extension, it is marked at a lower rate than if it was handed in on time. Taping lectures and discussions is only permissible if requested in advance and voted on by the class. You will usually hear back from me within 24 hours but not on weekends.

Methods of Evaluation:

Critical reflection papers 40% total of 8 – each worth 5% - Prepare for each class meeting by reading the assigned text or listening to the assigned music or viewing the assigned film and write a 4 hundred word reflection paper or a song - as per assignment. **Upload your completed work to Dropbox before midnight each Saturday. Always hand them in as a word doc – not a .pdf**

Seminar Presentations 10% - Each group of three students selects one record to study (see the complete list in OWL) and make a minimum 30 minute presentation regarding what they discovered about this particular song writing and facilitate an in-class discussion by posing one or two questions or exercises about the chosen record.

Open Stage 10%– Time is allotted in each Wednesday class for student performances of original songs or covers. You must sign up at least 3 times for the open stage.

Write a Bad Song 20% - Write a bad song, accompanied by an essay of 10 pages double spaced (2500 words), explaining all of the following (i) what makes it so bad, (ii) how did you realize it, (iii) how did you record it (iv) what can you compare and contrast between any song writing we've learned and your song. Submit an MP3, FLAC or WAV plus a .pdf of the lyrics and a separate page for bibliography if necessary. If you are agreeable we will play it in class and discuss how bad it is (or isn't). **Due October 31st**

Daily Journal 10% - You are expected to keep a daily journal about your songwriting or the songwriting of others. Lyric ideas or melodic ideas. Improvisational or stream of consciousness entries regarding your songwriting. It is to be handed in 2 weeks before the class ends.

Song Story 10% – In each Monday class, two students present a song story, an explanation of a song that had an emotional effect upon them. The song story can be presented as a spoken story or performed. (sign up online via Owl)

Course Overview

Class	Dates	Assignments	Subject	Due dates
1	Sept 8 Wednesday		Review syllabus/ review	
2	Sept 13 Monday	Song story	Review Assignment #1 Alive Inside	
3	Sept 15 Wednesday	Open stage		Assignment 1 due Saturday the 18 th
4	Sept 20 Monday	Song story	Review Assignment #2 JAIL	
5	Sept 22 Wednesday	Open stage		Assignment 2 due Saturday the 25 th
6	Sept 27 Monday	Song story	Review Assignment #3 Poetry	
7	Sept 29 Wednesday	Open stage	Review Bad Song	Assignment 3 due Saturday the 2 nd
8	Oct 4 Monday	Song story	Review Assignment #4 Rumble	

9	Oct 6 Wednesday	Open stage	Group 1 presentation	Assignment 4 due Saturday the 9th
10	Oct 11 Monday	NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING	NO CLASS
11	Oct 13 Wednesday	Open stage	Group 2 presentation	
12	Oct 18 Monday	Song story		
13	Oct 20 Wednesday	Open stage	Group 3 presentation	
14	Oct 25 Monday	Song story	Review Assignment #5 Theft	
15	Oct 27 Wednesday	Open stage	Group 4 presentation	BAD SONG due Saturday the 30 th
	Nov 1 – 7	FALL READING WEEK	NO CLASSES	FALL READING WEEK
16	Nov 8 Monday	Song tory		
17	Nov 10 Wednesday	Open stage	Group 5 presentation	Assignment 5 due Saturday the 13th
18	Nov 15 Monday	Song story	Review Assignment #6 Boy Band Con	
19	Nov 17 Wednesday	Open stage	Group 6 presentation	Assignment 6 due Saturday the 20rst
20	Nov 22 Monday	Song story	Review Assignment #7 Black & Queer inside Metal	
21	Nov 24 Wednesday	Open stage	Group 7 presentation	Assignment 7 due Saturday he 27th
22	Nov 29 Monday	Song story	Review Assignment #8	
23	Dec 1 Wednesday	Open Stage		Assignment 8 due Saturday the 4th

Marks: University-wide grade descriptors:

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

Policies:

Mental Health – Students that are in distress should refer to the free and confidential services here https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ for a complete list of options to help you.

If you require academic accommodations because of a disability, please let me know during the first week of classes. You can learn more about services for students with disabilities at www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd. Accommodations may also be possible for students suffering from medical illness at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf and download the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf. Medical documentation should be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Associate Dean undergraduate (TC 210).

Academic Integrity – Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence as found here: www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Religious Accommodation: Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counselor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar. <http://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>

Accommodation for illness: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Consideration for Student Absence: Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade.

Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. **Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counseling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.**

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office. For the Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Consideration_for_absences.pdf

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

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

Academic Consideration for Missing Work: In cases where students are unable to submit work due to medical illness or compassionate grounds, if an online self-reported absence is submitted, or if appropriate supporting documentation is submitted to the Associate Dean's office, and the accommodation is granted, then the missed assessments may be rescheduled or discounted in the calculation of the final grade for the course, at the discretion of the instructor. If neither a self-reported absence nor an appropriate supporting document is submitted to the appropriate office, then the missed assignments will receive a grade of zero.

Academic Offences: 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 offence. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, as found at:

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

Notes Specifically to Address Covid-19-related Issues for 2020-21 Only.

Contingency Plan: In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, all remaining course content will be delivered entirely 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 grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online at the discretion of the course instructor.

Recording of Online Activities: All of the remote learning sessions for this course will be recorded. The data captured during these recordings may include your image, voice recordings, chat logs and personal identifiers (name displayed on the screen). The recordings will be used for educational purposes related to this course, including evaluations. The recordings may be disclosed to other individuals participating in the course for their private or group study purposes. Please contact the instructor if you have any concerns related to session recordings.

Online Etiquette: Some components of this course may involve synchronous online interactions. To ensure the best experience for both you and your classmates, please honour the following rules of etiquette:

- Use your computer and/or laptop if possible (as opposed to a cell phone or tablet)
- "Arrive" to class on time
- Ensure that you are in a private location to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material
- To minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire class until you are invited to speak, unless directed otherwise
- Unless invited by your instructor, do not share your screen in the meeting
- Be prepared to turn your video camera off at the instructor's request if the internet connection becomes unstable

The course instructor will act as moderator for the class and will deal with any questions from participants. To participate please consider the following:

- If you wish to speak, select the blue “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question.
- Kindly remember to unmute your microphone and turn on your video camera before speaking.
- Self-identify when speaking.
- Kindly remember to select the “raise hand” function again to lower your hand, mute your mic and turn off your video camera after speaking (unless directed otherwise).

General considerations of “netiquette”:

- Keep in mind the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students in the course.
- Be courteous toward the instructor, your colleagues, and authors whose work you are discussing.
- Be respectful of the diversity of viewpoints that you will encounter in the class and in your readings. The exchange of diverse ideas and opinions is part of the scholarly environment.

Note that disruptive behaviour of any type during online classes, including inappropriate use of the chat function, is unacceptable. Students found guilty of “Zoom-bombing” a class, or of other serious online offenses, may be subject to disciplinary measures under the Code of Student Conduct.

Examinations & Attendance: Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Plagiarism Detection Software Usage: All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).