

## MUS3735A SONGWRITING

**Course Instructor:** Bob Wiseman (he/ him) [rwisema2@uwo.ca](mailto:rwisema2@uwo.ca) **Office hours:** By online appointment via Zoom, Teams or What's app.



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 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, visually altering 3:2, eavesdrop lyrics, bad song listening sessions, zoom guests, bring an interesting sound, bring an interesting lyric.

### Expectations:

It is expected you keep a daily journal for the first half of the course.

It is expected students write and perform but it doesn't matter how good you think you are.

It is expected you perform in class.

If an assignment is handed in late without prior request for an extension, it is marked at a lower rate than if handed in on time.

If the assignment is submitted as a song, adhere to the following guidelines, two verses, two choruses, one bridge (optional: intro, outro, further verses and choruses)

Taping lectures and discussions is only permissible if requested in advance.

## Methods of Evaluation:

**Critical reflections 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 two minute song) - as per assignment. **Upload your completed work to OWL 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 45 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 two hour class for student performances of original songs. You must sign up/ show up 3 times to be eligible for the 10%.

**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 Address all of the following:

- (i) Introductory paragraph on your view of bad vs. good songs. Is it real or imagined?
- (ii) Explain what went into your creation.
- (iii) Reference at least one technique or concept from class discussions/ exercises.
- (iv) Reference at least one idea from class reflection assignments.
- (v) Explain what makes your song so bad?

If you are agreeable we will play it in class and discuss it's badness.

**Daily Journal 10%** - You are expected to keep a daily journal about your songwriting or thoughts about songwriting. Lyric ideas or melodic ideas. Improvisational or stream of consciousness entries regarding your songwriting. It is to be handed in halfway through the course, the date will be announced in September.

**Song Story 10%** – In each Wednesday class, 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 7 Wednesday		Review syllabus Sign up schedule	
2	Sept 12	Open stage, Song story		

	Monday			
3	Sept 14 Wednesday		Review Assignment #1 <b>Alive Inside</b>	Assignment 1 due Saturday the 17 <sup>th</sup>
4	Sept 19 Monday	Open stage, Song story		
5	Sept 21 Wednesday		Review Assignment #2 <b>JAIL</b>	Assignment 2 due Saturday the 24th
6	Sept 26 Monday	Open stage, Song story		
7	Sept 28 Wednesday		Review Assignment #3 <b>Poetry</b>	Assignment 3 due Saturday the 1st
8	Oct 3 Monday	Open stage, Song story		
9	Oct 5 Wednesday	Review Assignment #4 <b>Rumble</b>	Group 1 presentation Review Bad Song	Assignment 4 due Saturday the 8th
10	Oct 10 Monday	NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING	NO CLASS
11	Oct 12 Wednesday		Group 2 presentation	
12	Oct 17 Monday	Open stage		
13	Oct 19 Wednesday		Group 3 presentation	
14	Oct 24 Monday	Open stage , Song story	Review Assignment #4 <b>Rumble</b>	
15	Oct 26 Wednesday		Group 4 presentation	BAD SONG due Saturday the 29 <sup>th</sup>
	Nov 1 – 7	FALL READING WEEK	NO CLASSES	FALL READING WEEK
16	Nov 7 Monday	Open stage, Song story	Review Assignment #5 <b>Very Good Light</b>	
17	Nov 9 Wednesday			Assignment 5 due Saturday the 12th
18	Nov 14 Monday	Open stage , Song tory	Group 5 presentation	
19	Nov 16 Wednesday		Review Assignment #6 <b>Theft</b>	Assignment 6 due Saturday the 19th
20	Nov 21 Monday	Open stage, Song story	Group 6 presentation	
21	Nov 23 Wednesday		Review Assignment #7 <b>Black &amp; Queer inside Metal</b>	Assignment 7 due Saturday he 26th
22	Nov 28 Monday	Open stage, Song story	Group 7 presentation	
23	Nov 30 Wednesday		Review Assignment #8 <b>The Boy Band Con</b>	Assignment 8 due Saturday the 3rd
24	Dec 5 Monday	Open Stage, Song story		

**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/](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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](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](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](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](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](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/>).

### **Masking Guidelines**

*Students will be expected to wear triple layer, non-medical, paper masks at all times in the classroom as per University policy and public health directives. Students who are unable to wear a mask must seek formal accommodation through Western Accessible Education, and present medical documentation.*

*Students are not permitted to eat or drink while in class to ensure masks stay in place. Students will be able to eat and drink outside of the classroom during scheduled breaks.*

*Students unwilling to wear a mask as stipulated by Western policy and public health directives will be referred to the Dean, and such actions will be considered a violation of the student Code of Conduct.*

### **Course Absences due to Daily COVID Screening Questionnaire**

*Missed assessments (e.g., presentations, essays, quizzes, tests, midterms, etc.) require formal [academic considerations](#) (typically self-reported absences and/or academic counselling). Methods for dealing with missed work and course content are at the discretion of the instructor(s). Students should be aware that some learning outcomes cannot be easily made up and may need to be completed in a subsequent year. Your instructor will provide you with further information as to how this applies within this course.*

*Students who demonstrate a pattern of routinely missing coursework due to self-reported COVID symptoms, and therefore do not demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes of the course, will not receive credit for the course.*

### **Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning**

*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 as determined by the course instructor. In the event that online learning is required, a stable internet connection with working microphone and webcam will be required. As has been the case in the past, the decision to pivot to online learning will be made by Western, and not individual instructors or departments (excepting temporary online instruction in the event of instructor illness).*