

**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME**

**MA IN CREATIVE WRITING: 2008
CREW 591: Writing for the Page**

This course gives recognition to work in creative writing. Its aim is to develop the literary skills and imaginative capacity of emerging writers through a programme of folio supervision, writing workshops, and complementary reading. The MA does not limit itself to a single literary genre. Nor does it teach a specific set of predetermined skills; rather, it encourages each student to identify and articulate, as appropriate, their own distinctive voice as a writer. The MA in Creative Writing is a research degree, and by the end of the year each student is expected to complete a book-length work of literature, in publishable form and of publishable standard.

MA students meet as a group twice a week. **These weekly meetings are compulsory.**

Workshop

There is a weekly, three-hour workshop which runs throughout and sometimes a little beyond the first two trimesters. In 2008 the 20 MA students are divided into two workshops.

Bill Manhire (Glenn Schaeffer House: Room 302, phone 463 6808; home phone 801 8019) convenes the workshop on Tuesdays from 2.00–5.00 p.m.

The other workshop is conducted by Kate Duignan (Glenn Schaeffer House: Room 201, phone 463 6905; mobile 021 653 501) on Thursdays from 10.00am–1.00 p.m.

All workshops are held in the Workshop Room (Room 102, Glenn Schaeffer House, 16 Waiteata Road).

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

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

Weekly meetings for Bill Manhire's class are held 3.00–5.00 p.m. on Wednesdays in the Workshop Room.

Weekly meetings for Kate Duignan's class are held 12.30–2.30p.m. on Wednesdays in the Workshop Room.

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.

Where appropriate, we will run combined sessions. These will be held on Wednesday afternoons, 2.00–4.00 p.m.

There are no Reading Programme meetings during university breaks.

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 Sept 1st 2008.

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. Your supervisor will respond to your work as you write it, and act as final reader at the point when the folio is to be submitted. Your supervisor will also be one of your assessors.

The recommended length of an MA thesis in a subject such as English Literature is 30,000 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 Bill Manhire or Kate Duignan.

Assessment

Assessment is based entirely on your submitted portfolio. At present there is provision for the degree to be awarded with distinction or with merit. Three examiners – your supervisor, an external reader from the writing community, and Fergus Barrowman, Managing Editor of Victoria University Press – will read each portfolio and make their recommendations. Copies of their written reports will be returned to you.

You must submit three copies of your folio or thesis by Tuesday 4 November 2008.

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.

Depositing Your Thesis

After you have received your readers' reports, you must then lodge one softbound copy of your portfolio and one hardbound copy with the International Institute of Modern Letters, which will keep the softbound copy as part of its record of work done for the MA. The hardbound copy will be deposited in the university library on your behalf. The library requirements for the depositing of theses can be found at:
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/library/services/thesesdeposit.aspx>

Electronic Library Deposit

If you visit the above url you will note that from 2008 it is mandatory to deposit an electronic copy of your portfolio/research thesis with the library. We are currently discussing the implications of this requirement with the library and other university authorities, and would welcome your views.

Mandatory Course Requirements

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

There are two requirements:

- you must attend and fully participate in the weekly workshop meeting
- and you must meet Reading Programme requirements as described above, including attendance at the weekly meeting.

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 coordinator.

Masters 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 Masters thesis policy can be read at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/degrees/docs/master's-thesis-policy.pdf>. The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences also has guidelines for Masters students at: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/degrees/docs/masters-guidelines-07.pdf>

Workload

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

Practical Matters

Any additional information about the MA will be made available at workshop meetings, or by e-mail, or will be distributed into student pigeonholes.

As well as the Workshop Room, there are three rooms set aside for students in the MA Creative Writing programme. Room 401 in Glenn Schaeffer House contains a small library, student lockers and pigeonholes as well as an on-line Mac and PC. There is also a small writing room next to the IIML at 14 Waiteata Road, which you can book for private work. (A second room at No 14 will become available on a more limited basis as the year progresses.) 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 Glenn Schaeffer House. You are welcome to use anything here – fridge, microwave, stove – but please wash your dishes and clean up after yourself.

Printing and copying arrangements: check with the IIML's administrators.

We are building a small library of contemporary writing in the MA Room. Please use this library as a resource. 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 Videos

We have a significant resource in the Lannan Writers Video Collection, which features readings and conversations with many of the world's leading writers. The videos may not be borrowed, but we have booked the Workshop Room on Fridays from 2.00 p.m. should you wish to view these videos. These sessions are not a formal requirement but offer you a chance to see a favourite writer in performance or to discover new writers.

From 2008 a collection of New Zealand and international poetry recordings on CD will also be available to listen to in the Workshop Room.

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 – “Writers on Mondays” usually held at lunchtimes in the second trimester. This year the venue will be the marae at Te Papa. Attendance at these events, where invited writers read and speak about their work, is strongly encouraged. Students will also have the opportunity to take part in this series as writers in September.

Masterclasses

We are very pleased once again to be able to offer international masterclasses as part of the MA programme. The poet Michael Palmer will be with us in the first week of May, while the novelist Richard Powers will be here in the last week of July. Each will give a public presentation as well as lead a masterclass for writers in the MA workshops.

Prizes and Scholarships

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 (2006, for *Going Under*), Ellie Catton (2007, for *The Rehearsal*).

Each year a US\$20,000 Glenn Schaeffer Fellowship takes a member of the MA class to the Iowa Writers' Workshop. Past recipients are Paula Morris, Anna Livesey, Tracey Hill, Emily Dobson, Alice Miller, and Therese Lloyd. The 2008 Schaeffer Fellow will be Ellie Catton.

Last year the first annual \$3000 Biggs Poetry Scholarship, which seeks to recognise the potential of a writer, was awarded to Joan Fleming.

There were also four post-MA project scholarships awarded in 2007. Pip Adam, Sarah Bainbridge, Mariana Isara, and Brent Kininmont each received \$5000. These scholarships will be awarded again 2008 to allow selected students to work towards publication of their folios.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui



GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly those regarding assessment and course of study requirements, and formal academic grievance procedures.

Student Conduct and Staff Conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps can be taken if there is a complaint. For queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor. This Statute is available in the Faculty Student Administration Office or on the website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StudentConduct.

The policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/StaffConduct.

Academic Grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned or, if you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean of your faculty. Class representatives are available to assist you with this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievance Policy which is published on the VUW website:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/AcademicGrievances.

Academic integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means **no cheating**. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. Plagiarism is **prohibited** at Victoria.

The University defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not.

‘Someone else’s work’ means anything that is not your own idea, even if it is presented in your own style. It includes material from books, journals or any other printed source, the work of other students or staff, information from the Internet, software programmes and other electronic material, designs and ideas. It also includes the organization or structuring of any such material.

Plagiarism is not worth the risk.

Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct (www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct) and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- suspension from class or university
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course.

Find out more about plagiarism and how to avoid it, on the University’s website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html.

Students with Disabilities

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity with all other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the Course Co-ordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services to confidentially discuss your individual needs and the options and support that are available. Disability Support Services are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building:

Telephone: 463-6070

Email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

The name of your School’s Disability Liaison Person is in the relevant prospectus or can be obtained from the Administrative Assistant.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students' learning experiences at the University to be positive. If your academic progress is causing you concern, the following staff members will either help you directly or quickly put you in contact with someone who can.

	Staff member	Location
FHSS	Dr Allison Kirkman	Murphy Building, room 407
Law	Kirstin Harvey	Old Govt Building, room 103
Science, and Architecture and Design	Liz Richardson	Cotton Building, room 150
Commerce and Administration	Colin Jeffcoat	Railway West Wing, room 119

Kaiwawao Maori	Liz Rawhiti	Old Kirk, room 007
Manaaki Pihipihinga	Melissa Dunlop	14 Kelburn Pde, room 109D
Victoria International	Matthias Nebel	Rutherford House, room 206

The Student Services Group is also available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/

Email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz.

VUWSA employs two Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building:

Telephone 463 6983 or 463 6984

Email: education@vuwsa.org.nz.