

**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MODERN LETTERS
VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAMME
CREW 592**

MA IN CREATIVE WRITING (SCRIPTWRITING): 2008

This course gives recognition to work in creative scriptwriting. Its aim is to develop the craft skills and imaginative capacity of talented new writers through a programme of folio supervision, writing workshops, complementary reading/viewing and industry placements. The MA does not limit itself to a single performance medium, it encompasses writing for film, theatre, television and radio. Nor does it teach a specific set of predetermined skills; rather, it encourages writers to identify and articulate their own distinctive voices in their chosen medium. By the end of the year each class member will complete a full-length script to third draft standard.

The three elements in the MA programme (and mandatory course requirements for CREW 592) are as follows:

Classes

Classes run throughout the first two trimesters - i.e. from late February to mid-October - and total 5 hours per week. All sessions are conducted by Ken Duncum (Glenn Schaeffer House: Room 403, phone 463.6882; home phone 385-6199) and are held in the Workshop Room, GSH 102.

You are required to attend all classes.

Meeting times are:

Tuesday Workshop:

10:00am-1:00pm

At the Tuesday Workshop a range of exercise work is undertaken and the results presented and discussed. This is also where class members present their folio work-in-progress.

Wednesday Workshop:

10:00am-12:00noon

The Wednesday Workshop is an opportunity for class discussion and practical exercises and also provides a forum for guest visits by writers and industry professionals.

Unless we agree otherwise, there are no formal classes during university breaks: see attached meetings schedule. Any additional information about the MA will be made available at workshop meetings, or by e-mail, or will be distributed into student pigeonholes.

Reading Programme

You are required to read and/or view extensively in areas related to your major writing project and to the craft of scriptwriting in general. To do this, you follow an individually designed programme (agreed upon with the course director) of film/video titles, theatre productions, scripts, books on scriptwriting and research material relevant to your project. You report on your reading/viewing by keeping a detailed and regular Reading Journal where you note your responses to your list of agreed films, videos, scripts or books. You should have completed your reading/viewing list and submitted your Reading Journal (minimum length 6,000 words) by Friday September 26.

Portfolio (Major Project)

It is expected that you will complete 3 drafts of a full-length work as your portfolio project, with first, second and third drafts due on specific dates during the year: see attached schedule. 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. In terms of timings, a feature film script would be expected to be of a duration not less than 80 minutes. The duration of a full-length playscript similarly should be not less than 80 minutes. The duration of TV scripts should conform to the commercial half-hour or hour. Students undertaking a TV project as their Portfolio should discuss with Ken Duncum the amount and type of work that should be delivered throughout the year and for final assessment.

You will be discussing the progress of your portfolio work at 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. Usually Ken Duncum acts as supervisor for seven writers in the class, the remaining three writers are matched up with external supervisors.

Major Exercises

Apart from your main project there are two major writing exercises during the year. These are:

30 Minute Script – written during the early part of the year. If your major project is film then you will be expected to write a half-hour play for this exercise, if your major project is theatre, then you will write a thirty minute film script. This exercise is to be delivered on Friday March 28. The delivered script will provide a basis for further exercise work through the year, and may be the source of a 10 minute reading performed by actors at the City Art Gallery as part of the Writers On Mondays series around September.

TV Series Outline – written during the middle of the year. This is an outline (including concept, character breakdowns and one-page story outlines) for a 7 x 1-hour drama series for television. This exercise is to be delivered on Friday July 18. During the first half of the year you will have an in-class storylining session on your series.

Readers Report

In addition to verbal feedback given in class, you will be expected to write a more detailed Readers Report on a fellow class member's first draft. You will be notified of the required format for the report. The date for delivery of the completed Reader's Report is Friday June 27.

Industry Placements

You will be expected to complete about 40 hours of industry placement. Arrangements will be negotiated during the first half of the academic year. Dates for placements are dependent on the schedules of production companies and other host organisations - but usually the best time for this has been during the latter part of the June/July mid-year break.

Assessment

Assessment is based entirely on the Portfolio script you submit at the end of the year. At present there is provision for the MA degree to be awarded with a grade of pass, merit or distinction. Three examiners - your supervisor, an external reader from the scriptwriting community, and an industry representative - 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 (ie completed third draft script) by Friday 31 October, 2008.

These should be in soft or temporary bindings. When examining is completed, two of these copies will be returned to you, along with examiner's reports. At this point

you can make any necessary corrections. The third softbound copy will be kept by the International Institute of Modern Letters as part of its record of work done for the MA.

Depositing Your Thesis

In order to complete the requirements for graduation you must then lodge one hardbound copy of your folio with the International Institute of Modern Letters who will deposit it 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 three requirements:

- you must attend classes and fully participate in workshops (including completion of all exercise work)
- you must meet the appropriate requirements for the Reading Programme
- you must fulfil all requirements of your industry placement

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.

MA Workspace

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 student lockers and pigeonholes, an on-line computer and a small library containing a collection of books on scriptwriting available for loan. The IIML subscribes to a number of scriptwriting magazines which can also be found in this room.

There are also two small writing rooms next to the IIML at 14 Waiteata Road, which you can book for private work. 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.)

These rooms belong to you. Please use them whenever you wish, both as work-spaces and meeting spaces. There is also a kitchen on the ground floor of Glenn Schaeffer House. Tea and coffee is free for MA students. You are welcome to use anything here - fridge, microwave, stove - but please wash up after you.

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

Award

The Embassy Trust Prize of \$1000 is awarded to the best script submitted by a CREW 592 student in any one year.

Scholarships

There are three 'project scholarships' currently available to fund a period of further work on selected major projects beyond the third draft stage (ie in 2009). These scholarships will be awarded at the end of this year or early next year. Two scholarships (including the Michael Hirschfeld Scholarship) are for \$5,000 each, the Dominion Post Scholarship is for \$2,500.

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or on the VUW website at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx>

Student 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 are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information queries about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at:

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx

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

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/staff.aspx

Academic Grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; the VUWSA Education Coordinator is available to assist in 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 at:

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy/students.aspx

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. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct. All cases will be recorded on a central database and severe penalties may be imposed. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

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

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

www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

Students with Impairments (see Appendix 3 of the Assessment Handbook)

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as 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 coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS 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 School Office or DSS.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Maori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

In addition, the Student Services Group (email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/

VUWSA employs an Education Coordinator who deals with academic problems and provides support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.

Office of the AVC (Academic), October 2007

MA IN CREATIVE WRITING (SCRIPTWRITING): 2008 PROVISIONAL MEETING SCHEDULE

Tues February 26	Introductory Session	HW: Snowstorm
Wed February 27	The Big Picture	HW: Project Exercise
Tues March 4	Snowstorm Results/'Legs'/Project Exercise results	
		HW: Invention
Wed March 5	Guest: Briar Grace-Smith	
Tues March 11	Invention/ Build-A-Story	HW: First Five Pages
		Evening Film Screening?
Wed March 12	Guest: David Geary	HW: Film Analysis
Tues March 18	First Five Pages results/ Film Analysis	
Wed March 19	Guest	
Wed March 26	TV Genres	
Thurs March 27	1pm-4pm Writing Film exercise ? (due to Easter)	
Friday March 28	Delivery: 30 minute scripts	
Tues April 1	Character/ First 10 minutes	HW: Scene edit
Wed April 2	Dialogue	
Tues April 8	30 minute scripts 1 - 6	
Wed April 9	30 minute scripts 7 - 10	
APRIL BREAK (2 weeks)		
Tues April 29	Joint Folio Workshop: Projects 1 and 2	
Wed April 30	TV Series Storylining: 9 and 10	

Tues May 6	Joint Folio Workshop: Projects 3 and 4
Wed May 7	<i>TV Series Storylining: 7 and 8</i>
Thurs May 8	Radio NZ Workshop – Radio NZ House 9am–5pm
Tues May 13	Joint Folio Workshop: Projects 5 and 6
Wed May 14	<i>TV Series Storylining: 1 and 2</i>
Tues May 20	Joint Folio Workshop: Projects 7 and 8
Wed May 21	<i>TV Series Storylining: 5 and 6</i>
Tues May 27	Joint Folio Workshop: Projects 9 and 10
Wed May 28	<i>TV Series Storylining: 3 and 4</i>
Friday May 30	Delivery of completed First Draft of folio project

MID-YEAR BREAK (5 wks) – Placements

Friday June 27	Delivery of Reader’s Report of a First Draft
Tues July 8	Rewriting/Editing 1
Wed July 9	Rewriting/Editing 2
Tues July 15	Reading/Feedback of Projects 1 & 2 First Drafts
Wed July 16	Exercise: Story/Theme
Friday July 18	Delivery of TV drama series outline
Tues July 22	Reading/Feedback of Projects 3 & 4 First Drafts
Wed July 23	Exercise: Drama/Plot
Tues July 29	Reading/Feedback of Projects 5 & 6 First Drafts
Wed July 30	Exercise: Character
Tues Aug 5	Reading/Feedback of Projects 7 & 8 First Drafts
Wed Aug 6	Exercise: Scene Construction/Flow
Tues Aug 12	Reading/Feedback of Projects 9 & 10 First Drafts
Wed Aug 13	Exercise: Dialogue

AUGUST BREAK (2 weeks)

Tues Sept 2	Workshop 1
Wed Sept 3	Workshop 2
Friday Sept 5	Delivery of completed Second Draft of folio project
Tues Sept 9	Reading/Feedback of Projects 1 & 2 Second Draft

Wed Sept 10	Exercise: Beginning
Tues Sept 16	Reading/Feedback of Projects 3 & 4 Second Draft
Wed Sept 17	Exercise: Middling
Tues Sept 23	Reading/Feedback of Projects 5 & 6 Second Draft
Wed Sept 24	Exercise: Ending
Friday Sept 26	Delivery of completed Reading Journals
Tues Sept 30	Reading/Feedback of Projects 7 & 8 Second Draft
Wed Oct 1	Guests
Tues Oct 7	Reading/Feedback of Projects 9 & 10 Second Draft
Wed Oct 8	Guests
Tues Oct 14	Final class
Friday October 31	Final delivery of completed folios (Third Draft)