

COURSE OUTLINE

Fiction Publishing I

Term: Winter

Delivery Mode: Online

Territorial Acknowledgement

The University of King's College is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people.

We encourage you to find out more about the Indigenous lands you may live and work in. A good starting point is native-land.ca.

Course Description

Fiction Publishing I is the first-year Fiction Publishing Residency and associated assignments. While the presentations, discussions and lectures are presented to students in both Fiction Publishing I and Fiction Publishing II, the corresponding second-year course), the assignments are tailored to the knowledge level and stage of manuscript development expected of first-year students.

Students and faculty convene in January of alternating years for online residencies featuring guests from Toronto and other Canadian locations (odd-numbered years) or from New York, the U.S. and internationally (even-numbered years) for a week-long Fiction Publishing Residency as part of the core curriculum. Guests include high-ranking professionals from the book industry, including publishers, editors, literary agents, publicists, book retailers, and digital publishing specialists. Together they examine the core topics outlined in the curriculum materials below. This course content is presented through a series of lectures, workshops, panel discussions, and Q&A sessions—all of which focus on the art and craft of writing fiction and the business side of publishing fiction. As well, students are directed to required and optional readings and resources useful in completing their assignments. Throughout the term, additional online webinars may be scheduled. These will be recorded and posted to Brightspace for those unable to attend live.

The curriculum focus is on

- The marketing of fiction books
- Career development and the writing community
- Legal issues related to fiction publishing
- Editorial issues related to writing fiction

This includes anticipating and addressing potential legal issues related to the research and writing of your manuscript, seeking support for your writing, developing your author platform and creating good practices for career development and the control and management of your work.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the Fiction Publishing I course, five key learning outcomes are achieved. Students will:

- Develop specific knowledge of legal issues that may affect the research and writing of a fiction manuscript, including libel, privacy and copyright.
- Develop knowledge of granting programs and residency opportunities appropriate to their project.
- Be introduced to the mechanics of book acquisition and editing.
- Increase their ability to create, maintain, and further develop a professional platform and embark on initial steps to develop their platform.
- Acquire increased literacy in the artistic and craft elements of fiction writing.

Texts/Learning Materials

The Business of Being a Writer by Jane Friedman (University of Chicago Press) The residency component of this course is delivered via Zoom, supported by additional materials shared on Brightspace.

The Residency

The Fiction Publishing Residency takes place online from Sunday, January x to Friday, January x. You will be provided with a schedule in December. Announcements with links to the Zoom sessions will be posted on the Online Community Announcements page in Brightspace, as well as emailed to you. The shape of the days will be:

- Optional Coffee Breaks to start your day.
- Required lectures, Q&A panels, virtual field trips and mentor group meetings
- Optional end-of-day social events, including student and mentor readings
- One day set aside for one-to-one pitching. Note that pitch day meetings may take place in the morning and afternoon.

The Part of This Course That Stresses People Out

Pitching. Yes, it's stressful to talk to strangers—smart publishing strangers—about your project, especially when you are in the early stages of your work. But it is also valuable to talk to smart publishing professionals about your project: they will have insights, opinions and ideas that may be helpful to you.

How it will work: We will match you with two publishing pros for two short Zoom meetings (one with each person you are matched with). We do our best to make those matches based on interest areas, but the bottom line is that all of our pitch panelists have insights of value, and having a conversation with them will enrich your project. Each of your appointments will last for approximately 15 minutes. ***It is essential that you be on time, as the person you are pitching will have 12-15 meetings on pitch day, with no opportunity to reschedule if you don't get the time right.***

You should be prepared to spend about 5-6 minutes introducing yourself and describing your project and your qualifications for tackling it—this is your pitch. Please don't read your pitch, though if you need notes, that's ok. The publishing pro you are matched with

may then ask you some questions about your project or offer some thoughts or advice on how to position your project. Note: Some publishing pros will interrupt you early on and start asking questions—if that happens, shift gears and engage in the conversation.

Resources:

* *Watch the pitching video.* This video is uploaded to Brightspace and accessible from the Announcements page under the “Start Here” heading.

* *Read Ch. 12: Book Queries and Synopses* in Jane Friedman’s *The Business of Being a Writer*. Note especially pp 106-110.

Some general guidelines:

The primary goal is for you to deliver a convincing oral narrative about your book, and to receive feedback and market insight from professionals currently working in the book publishing industry. The following guidelines may be helpful:

- 1) Introduce yourself.
- 2) Give the title of the book and explain the genre/subject area of your material.
- 3) Describe the book’s premise or hook.
- 4) Draw a comparison to a similar title, if this is appropriate.
- 5) Describe the potential audience for your book.
- 6) Explain why you are the ideal person to write this book.
- 7) Describe your personal platform for promoting the book.
- 8) Close the pitch by giving a quick summary of the above points.

A successful pitch:

- Is clearly defined, appropriately focused, and succinctly delivered
- Is convincingly directed to a distinct readership and market niche
- Is supported by market analysis
- Conforms to the norms and expectations of the fiction genre and marketplace
- Demonstrates that the author is ideally situated in terms of their art and craft to deliver a publishing manuscript as described in the pitch presentation

Students should take notes during or immediately following feedback to ensure that they capture the feedback for their reflection assignment (see Assignment #2 below). Written feedback will not be provided. Do not record meetings without permission from the person with whom you are meeting.

From an academic perspective, the four learning outcomes of the pitching exercise for the students focus on:

- Managing time and resources to create the content of a convincing book pitch.
- Developing strong interpersonal skills in order to make a dynamic personal pitch in a business context.
- Acquiring additional rhetorical skills needed for a pitching environment.
- Demonstrating an ability to “close the deal” by delivering a strong message that demonstrates how your creative idea can be a publishing opportunity.

There will be time in the publishing residency for you to do some pitch practicing. You will be provided with bios for the pitch panelists in advance so that you know a little about the people you will be speaking with.

Course Assignments and Assessment

The grade for this course is based on four assignments, which are each worth 25% of the overall grade.

Every written assignment is an opportunity to demonstrate your skill as a writer. Can you open your piece with a compelling scene or interesting anecdote? Can you use a metaphor or other rhetorical device to illuminate your argument or add grace to your writing? Is your voice evident on the page? Is your conclusion well-crafted and compelling? In writing these assignments, aim for “engaging for any reader” as opposed to “will only be read because it must be marked.”

1. Assignment One: Supporting your writing (25%)

Due date: January x, 202X

Purpose: To increase student understanding and knowledge in one of two areas: either of the grants available to them OR of residencies/workshops/conferences that would assist in their development as writers.

Components:

* Craft a compelling 200-word description of your project geared to grant reviewers or residency applications.

* Using the resources listed below, in addition to your own additional research into grants, residencies, workshops or conferences specific to your location, subject matter, membership in writers’ organizations, etc. Research **either** possible sources of financial support for the research and/or writing of your book OR a writing residency, workshop or conference that would assist you in moving your book project forward, through networking, seminars or the development of your writing skills. Please include source references (you can use footnotes or in-line attribution—the key factor being is it clear to me, as a reader, what your sources are?). In 550 words, summarize your findings, including financial support for which you could apply OR residencies, workshops or conferences you could attend.

Total length, including project summary: 750 words

Learning Resources:

King’s MFA Tip Sheets: *Attending writing conferences;* and *Grants and residencies for writers* (accessible from the Class of 202x Paper Page on Dropbox under the heading MFA Tip Sheets; also uploaded to Brightspace)

Recorded lectures: [insert as applicable]

Canadian granting programs:

Canada Council

<https://canadacouncil.ca/funding/grants>

Writers' Union of Canada Government Agencies listing

<https://www.writersunion.ca/government-agencies>

Access Copyright Foundation grants <http://acfoundation.ca/grants/>

Toronto Arts Council Grants to Writers <http://www.torontoartscouncil.org/grant-programs/tac-grants/literary-arts/writers-program>

Arts Nova Scotia funding <https://artsns.ca/grants-awards/grants/grants-individuals>

US granting programs:

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies <https://nasaa-arts.org/>

Funds for Writers <http://fundsforwriters.com/>

New York Foundation for the Arts Source (lists resources nationally)

<http://source.nyfa.org/content/search/search.aspx?SA=1>

Foundation Centre <http://foundationcenter.org/>

Residencies, fellowships and conferences:

Writers' Trust Residency Programs <https://www.writerstrust.com/programs/residency-programs/>

Banff Centre <https://www.banffcentre.ca/literary-arts>

Literistic.com www.literistic.com

Poets and Writers Conferences and Residencies Database

https://www.pw.org/conferences_and_residencies

Alliance of Artists Communities

<http://www.artistcommunities.org/residencies/directory>

Assessment Criteria: Grade of A: Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the fit between their project and the targeted grants OR residencies/workshops/conferences. Assignment is exceptionally well written and researched, including clear references/footnotes.

Grade of B: Demonstrates an understanding of the fit between their project and the targeted grants OR residencies/workshops/conferences. Writing and research are adequate.

Please note that any grade below a B- is considered a failing grade (i.e., an F) for this program. Students receiving such a grade would likely be receiving assignment feedback such as the following: Did not make a convincing case for fit between project and grants OR residencies/workshops/conferences. Research not evident or poorly documented. Poor writing.

2. Assignment Two: Reflection on the Residency and Pitching (25%)

Deadline: January xx, 202x

Students will be expected to attend all classes (synchronous and asynchronous) and to participate in online discussions (synchronous sessions and discussion boards). You will also have two individual meetings with publishing experts. All of these sessions feed into

your assignments for both Publishing I and your work on your manuscript. Additionally, I ask that you reflect on your residency experience in two ways:

- **During the residency**, keep track of what challenges you, what surprises you, and what makes you think about your research, writing and the business side of publishing in new or unexpected ways. Following the residency, please draft a 500-word reflection on your residency experience. What were your key take-aways from the residency lectures, panels, field trips and readings? Note: This is not your feedback or evaluation of the residency—we'll ask for that in a post-residency survey. This is your reflection on what you learned.
- **Your one-to-one meetings** with publishing experts are a valuable opportunity for you to gather market insight about your project. Following your meetings, in 300 words, reflect on the feedback you received and how the insights gained will affect your project.

Format: Please use 12 pt type, double-spaced, justified left/rag right setting

File name: Please name your file as follows: YourLastName_ReflectionCourse#

Rubric: Grade of A: Exceptionally well-written; demonstrates an openness to learning and feedback and an ability to respond to feedback with specific insight with regards to the student's own project.

Grade of B: Well written; demonstrates openness to learning and feedback but may be unclear on how to integrate feedback within project.

Please note that any grade below a B- is considered a failing grade (i.e., an F) for this program. Students receiving such a grade would likely be receiving assignment feedback such as the following: Poor writing. Lack of evidence that feedback was heard and absorbed; lack of reflection on how feedback could influence project.

3. Assignment Three: Legal Issues (25%)

Due February X, 20XX.

The third assignment focuses on legal issues that may arise during the writing of a fiction manuscript. What legal issues do you need to be aware of as you work on your particular manuscript? These could include but are not limited to privacy, libel, copyright. What specific steps are you taking to address these issues and ensure that you are on the right side of the law? Please include source references (these may be in footnotes or embedded in the text).

Length: 750 words

Format: Please use 12 pt type, double-spaced, justified left/rag right setting

File name: Please name your file as follows: YourLastName_LegalCourse#

Learning Resources:

Recorded lecture: Legal issues lecture, available on Brightspace

Canadian:

Defamation:

Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch, "Defamation: Libel and Slander"

<https://www.cbabc.org/For-the-Public/Dial-A-Law/Scripts/Your-Rights/240>

JSource.ca, "The Freedom to Jest: Protecting Our Democratic Right to Parody and

Satire” <http://j-source.ca/article/the-freedom-to-jest-protecting-our-democratic-right-to-parody-and-satire/>

Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, “Defamation, Libel and Slander: What Are My Rights to Free Expression?”

https://www.cjfe.org/defamation_libel_and_slander_what_are_my_rights_to_free_expression

Ethics and interviewing:

Canadian Association of Journalists, “Ethics Guidelines”

<http://caj.ca/content.php?page=ethics-guidelines>

Interviewing children, trauma survivors and other vulnerable people

[https://dartcenter.org/resources?type\[0\]=16](https://dartcenter.org/resources?type[0]=16)

<https://victimsandthepast.org/outputs/media-training-workshops/>

<https://dartcenter.org/content/ethics-and-practice-interviewing-victims>

<https://dartcenter.org/content/product-writing-about-ipv-with-insight-accuracy-and-context>

Copyright:

Centre for Canadian Copyright Law <https://www.copyrightlaws.com/centre-for-canadian-copyright-law/>

Government of Canada, “A Guide to Copyright”

[https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr02281.html#understandingCopyright)

[internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr02281.html#understandingCopyright](https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/h_wr02281.html#understandingCopyright)

Professional Writers Association of Canada, “Copyright – The Basics”

<https://www.pwac.ca/PWAC-Copyright-Basics>

American:

Privacy and Defamation:

“A Writer’s Guide to Defamation and Invasion of Privacy”

<http://www.writersdigest.com/online-editor/defamation-and-invasion>

Kelly/Warner “Chart: Differences Between United States and Canadian Defamation Law” <http://kellywarnerlaw.com/chart-differences-between-united-states-and-canadian-defamation-law/>

HG.org “Defamation Law – Guide to Libel and Slander”

<https://www.hg.org/defamation.html>

Ethical issues:

Society of Professional Journalists “SPJ Code of Ethics”

<https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>

Copyright:

Copyright Law of the United States <https://www.copyright.gov/title17/>

BitLaw “Copyright Law in the United States”

<https://www.bitlaw.com/copyright/index.html>

CopyrightLaws.com “Canadian vs U.S. Copyright Law”

<https://www.copyrightlaws.com/canadian-and-u-s-copyright-law/>

Assessment Criteria: Grade of A: Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the specific legal challenges that may affect their book project, including but not limited to

privacy, libel and copyright. Assignment is engaging and exceptionally well-written, with clear evidence of strong research, including footnotes/references.

Grade of B: Demonstrates a good understanding of the specific legal challenges that may affect their book project, including but not limited to privacy, libel and copyright.

Assignment is well-written, with evidence of research, including footnotes/references.

Please note that any grade below a B- is considered a failing grade (i.e., an F) for this program. Students receiving such a grade would likely be receiving assignment feedback such as the following: Poor writing. Lack of adequate consideration given to potential legal challenges. Lack of depth of understanding of legal challenges and steps to redress them. Poorly researched.

Assignment Four: Marketing (25%)

Due date: March X, 20XX

The final assignment is to consider and outline the steps you will take for one new marketing/platform-building activity that you can undertake now to start to build interest in and audience for your project. Outline specific steps you will take before the next Summer residency to launch this activity. Please include source references.

Length: 750 words.

(Please include a short description of your book project at the top of your assignment—100 words max. This is not counted in your assignment word count.)

Format: Please use 12 pt type, double-spaced, justified left/rag right setting

File name: Please name your file as follows: YourLastName_MarketingCourse#

Learning Resources:

Required reference: *The Business of Being a Writer* by Jane Friedman (University of Chicago Press)

King's MFA Tip Sheets: Podcasting; Newsletters and Blogs

Recorded lectures: [insert as applicable]

Optional references: *Sell Your Book: An Author's Guide to Publicity and Promotion* by Suzanne Alyssa Andrew, published by The Writers' Union of Canada and available as a downloadable PDF for \$9.99 at <https://www.writersunion.ca/writers-how-to>

Assessment Criteria: **Grade of A:** Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the elements of book marketing and the role of the author in supporting that exercise. Student has demonstrated convincingly how they plan to promote and publicize their writing. Exceptionally well written, with clear evidence of research, including references/footnotes.

Grade of B: Demonstrates a good understanding of the elements of book marketing and the role of the author in supporting that exercise. Student has demonstrated in a satisfactory manner how they plan to promote and publicize their writing. Adequately written, with evidence of research, including references/footnotes.

Please note that any grade below a B- is considered a failing grade (i.e., an F) for this program. Students receiving such a grade would likely be receiving assignment feedback such as the following: Failed to provide sufficient and/or appropriate arguments regarding specific steps to promote and publicize their writing. Poorly written. Poorly

researched. Demonstrates an inability to provide substantial information, arguments, or supportive materials in multiple aspects of the assignment.

Submission of Assignments

Assignments should be submitted via email to xxx.xxx@ukings.ca

Deadlines & Late Penalties

Assignment deadlines are midnight in your time zone on the due date. If you are unable to meet a deadline, please contact me in advance of the deadline to discuss a deadline adjustment. Assignments submitted late without prior arrangement will lose one grade (for instance, A+ drops to an A) for missing the deadline, with an additional grade deducted for every additional three days late (so if an assignment is 4 days late you lose two grade and that A+ drops to an A-). Bottom line: I'm a reasonable person and I don't like to chase people. Get in touch with me before the deadline and we will almost always be able to sort something out. If you do blow a deadline—still get in touch with me and let's have a conversation about getting your assignment completed. I'm more interested in ensuring you get the value of having completed the assignments than in punishing people. That said, the business of writing is built on deadlines, so please do your best to ensure you meet yours.

Absences

If you face health or other circumstances that result in missing residency sessions or assignments, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss.

A student experiencing a longer-term absence is encouraged to meet with the School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing's Graduate Coordinator, or the Director of the Writing & Publishing program.

Grade Scale

Grade	Grade Point Value	%	Definition
A+	4.30	90-100	
A	4.00	85-89	
A-	3.70	80-84	
B+	3.30	77-79	
B	3.00	73-76	
B-	2.70	70-72	

F	0.00	0-69	
INC	0.00		Incomplete
ILL	Neutral and no credit obtained		Compassionate reasons, illness

Grammar and Style

Proper usage and grammar are an expectation for all written work in this course. As the publishing content is intended primarily for book content, we will follow the *Chicago Manual of Style* for all written work.

Deadlines

Deadlines are crucial in the publishing industry. Learning to meet deadlines is a necessity for writers. So, working to deadlines is a part of this course. Submit all assignments by the stated deadlines. If allowance is needed – for health or other reasons – please email or phone me to request more time.

Ethical Conduct

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the Journalism School's [Handbook of Professional Practice](#) and abide by its ethical standards. For book writing, there may be some differences in approach from those of daily news gathering. If in doubt, please discuss with your mentor or cohort director.

Learning & Support Resources

In addition to resources at King's, many are available to you at Dalhousie University. These include the [Student Health & Wellness Centre](#), the [Indigenous Student Centre](#), the [Black Student Advising Centre](#), the [LGBTQ2SIA+ Collaborative](#), and the [South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre](#), among others.

Fair, Inclusive and Safe Conduct

All students in the School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing should feel they are participants in a respectful, fair and safe learning environment. Classrooms and online course delivery systems are spaces where everyone should feel welcomed and supported. The School expects students, staff and faculty to abide by the highest standards of collegial learning. The University has policies, procedures and resources to guide students' experience. If you are concerned about your learning environment you may take a range of steps to initiate a discussion or a process:

Meet with the course instructor or mentor: You are encouraged to discuss concerns about a particular course first with the instructor or mentor. The instructor or mentor may be able to address concerns informally. Such concerns may relate to grading, course content, interpersonal issues with other students, or any other issue. The instructor or mentor may also direct you to other resources within the University. If you have an unresolved issue with an instructor or mentor, you can also:

- Appeal a final grade in a course by filing a [Request for Reassessment of a Final Grade](#) form.
- Provide written comment on an instructor in the Student Ratings of Instruction, distributed near the end of the course. Evaluations are reviewed by the Director each year and used in tenure and promotion decisions for Faculty.

Meet with the Director of Writing & Publishing: The Director welcomes any comment on the experiences of students within the Writing & Publishing program. Concerns may be addressed informally — especially as they relate to the curriculum, academic environment and interpersonal issues. The Director may refer students with more specific or serious concerns to individual policies, procedures and resources of the University. Inclusion and respect for others are key values of the School. An experience of racism, intolerance or inequitable treatment will typically prompt cooperation between the Director and the Equity Officer in working toward immediate and longer-term resolutions.

- Write a letter to the Director of Writing & Publishing to express a strong concern about an experience in the program. The Director may bring it to a meeting of Writing & Publishing Faculty and will keep the letter on file.

Meet with the Equity Officer: King's Equity Officer is available for consultation on any issue concerning equity, diversity, inclusion, discrimination and harassment. The officer administers the Policy and Procedures for Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment, found in the [Yellow Book](#). If you have concerns about your experience in the Writing & Publishing program, you are encouraged to seek advice and assistance from the officer, who also receives complaints and administers the process for resolution under the policy. This policy is part of the University Code of Conduct, also found in the Yellow Book, which governs conduct by all members of the University community. The Equity Officer is Rhema Ferguson <rhema.ferguson@ukings.ca>

Meet with the Sexual Health and Safety Officer: The SHSO provides support around experiences of sexualized violence and administers King's [Sexualized Violence Policy](#). This support is confidential and can include [informal discussion, academic accommodations, and assistance with disclosures and reports](#). All decisions regarding disclosure of sexualized violence are in the hands of the individual disclosing. Academic accommodations may be available to those who do not wish to make a formal report. The SHSO is also available if you are supporting someone who has experienced sexualized violence. The SHSO is Jordan Roberts <jordan.roberts@ukings.ca>, 902 229-6123.

Academic Integrity

At King's and Dalhousie, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. Plagiarism — stealing someone else's work and presenting it as your own — is a form of academic fraud and unethical behaviour within the writing community. The most common instance involves copying material from the Internet without attributing it. If you have any doubt about proper citation for an academic paper or proper attribution in a piece of

writing, contact your instructor, mentor or Cohort Director. For more information, consult the section on Intellectual Honesty on p. 54 of Dalhousie's [Graduate Studies Calendar](#) (Find "PDF Versions" at the top of that page) or the [King's academic calendar](#).

Accessibility

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers to inclusion related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. If you experience barriers related to the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course please contact the [Student Accessibility Centre](#). Please note that a classroom may contain specialized furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require them will be able to participate in the class.

Appeals

Disputes over academic performance and assessment will be dealt with according to the Academic Regulations of the School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing. Students may appeal decisions of the Journalism Studies Committee to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. For more information, see the [King's Academic Calendar](#).

Students must achieve a minimum grade of B- in all classes. Disputes over academic performance and assessment will be dealt with according to the Academic Regulations of the School of Journalism, Writing & Publishing and the Dalhousie University Faculty of Graduate Studies. Students may appeal decisions of the Journalism Studies Committee to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. For more information, see the University of King's College Calendar and the Dalhousie University Graduate Calendar.