



UNIVERSITY OF
KING'S
COLLEGE • HALIFAX

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

JOUR 6202.03
Publishing II

Term: Winter 2021-22

Instructor: Kim Pittaway

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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

JOUR 6202.03 is the second-year Publishing Residency and associated assignments. While many of the presentations, discussions and lectures are presented to students in both JOUR 6102.03 (the corresponding first-year course) and JOUR 6202.03, the assignments are tailored to the knowledge level and stage of manuscript development expected of second-year students.

This year, we will be joined by high-ranking professionals from the book industry, including publishers, editors, literary agents, book retailers, and digital publishing specialists, most based in Toronto, Canada's publishing hub. The 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 nonfiction writing and the business side of nonfiction publishing. Many of the sessions will be presented synchronously, live on Zoom (and recorded for later reference), with some sessions pre-recorded for asynchronous viewing at your convenience and three webinars schedule to take place later in the Winter term (all of which will be recorded and posted to Brightspace). You will be provided with a schedule for the Winter Residency synchronous sessions.

Students will also be directed to required and optional readings and resources useful in completing their assignments.

The curriculum focus is on

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

This includes preparing for contract negotiations, seeking an agent and publisher, 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 Publishing II course, six key learning outcomes are achieved. Students will:

- Demonstrate specific knowledge of publishing contracts and the negotiation process.
- Develop a thorough understanding of the mechanics of book acquisition and editing.
- Demonstrate specific knowledge of publishers and agents, including identifying appropriate contacts/markets for their manuscript.
- Increase their ability to create, maintain, and further develop a professional platform.
- Acquire increased literacy in the artistic and craft elements of nonfiction writing.
- Acquire fundamental business skills related specifically to nonfiction book publishing.

Texts/Learning Materials

The Business of Being a Writer by Jane Friedman (University of Chicago Press)

Negotiating a Book Contract: A Guide for Authors, Agents & Lawyers (Levine) available in electronic format from <https://www.bookcontracts.com/product/negotiating-a-book-contract/>

Note: This is the author's own website. Sometimes he's away on vacation or otherwise inaccessible. I would suggest that you purchase **and** download the PDF at your earliest convenience (the download link expires).

The residency component of this course is delivered via Zoom, supported by additional materials shared on Brightspace.

The Residency

The Winter Residency takes place online from Sunday, January 9 to Friday, January 14. You will be provided with a schedule. 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 similar to the June residency:

- Optional Coffee Breaks in the late morning (Eastern time) to start your day.

- Required afternoon lectures (Eastern time), Q&A panels and mentor group meetings
- Optional evening social events (Eastern time), 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, starting at 9 am Eastern and ending at approximately 3:30 pm Eastern. Students west of Ontario will be scheduled for appointments after 9 am their local time. Every student will have two appointments.

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 and review the associated handouts.*** This video is uploaded to the Online Community in Brightspace and is accessible from the Announcements page under the "Start Here: Winter Term" heading. This is the same video provided during past residencies to help you prepare for your pitches. Rewatch it to hone your pitch for the winter session. If you are having trouble with your book title, review the *Book Titles* Tip Sheet. The Tip Sheet *Getting Your Comps Right* may also be helpful. Lori May's "Query Letters: Crafting Your Pitch" recorded lecture may also be a useful reference. All will be linked from the "Start Here: Winter Term" announcement.

* ***Read Ch. 13: The Nonfiction Book Proposal*** in Jane Friedman's *The Business of Being a Writer*. Note especially pp 118-119: So what? Who cares? Who are you?

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) Draw a comparison to a similar title, if this is appropriate.
- 4) Describe the potential audience for your book.
- 5) Elaborate further on the content of the book and its special features.
- 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 creative nonfiction 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 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 Assessment

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

Want to boost your grade? Students often ask me what they could have done to get a higher grade, and I generally repeat some version of the following: If you write these as average academic assignment responses, you will get an average mark. If you instead approach them with the goal of writing pieces that engage, enlighten and entertain your reader, you will likely get a higher mark. 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: Agents and Publishers (25%)

Due date: January 8, 2022

The primary purpose of this assignment is to engage students in seeking and evaluating potential publishers or agents who would be a good fit for their project. Using the resources listed below *in addition to independent research*, students will research EITHER 3 possible agents that would be suitable for their project OR 3 possible imprints/publishers that would be suitable for their project, providing a rationale for fit for each. The purpose of the assignment is to increase student understanding and knowledge of the publishing and agent ecosystem, along with an understanding of how their project fits into the publishing program (for publishers) or representation mix (for agents) of specific targets. Please outline your rationale for why these agents or publishers are a good fit for your project. Please include references. Length: 750 words max.

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

File name: Please name your file as follows: YourLastName_AgentsPubs620203

Learning resources:

King’s MFA Tip Sheet: Finding a Publisher

King’s MFA Tip Sheet: Getting an Agent

“How to find a literary agency for your book” by Jane Friedman (includes links to US agent resources) <https://www.janefriedman.com/find-literary-agent/>

* Read Ch. 11: *Researching Agents and Publishers* in Jane Friedman’s *The Business of Being a Writer*.

* Remember too that author acknowledgements are a good source of leads on agents who might be suitable for your project and noticing the publishers/imprints of comparable titles can also lead you to a publisher/imprint that would be suitable for your project.

Canadian agents and publishers:

Association of Canadian Publishers: <https://publishers.ca/industry/> and <https://publishers.ca/our-members/>

Writers’ Union of Canada guide to literary agents: <https://www.writersunion.ca/literary-agents>

Literary Press Group Publishers

Guide http://www.lpg.ca/sites/default/files/page_attachments/PublishersGuide_2016_web.pdf

HarperCollins Canada imprint list <http://www.harpercollins.ca/imprints>

Penguin Random House Canada imprint list <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.ca/about>

Simon and Schuster imprint list <http://about.simonandschuster.biz/divisions-and-imprints/>

US agents and publishers:

Publishers Marketplace (subscription required) <https://www.publishersmarketplace.com/>

Agent Query https://agentquery.com/publishing_mp.aspx

Query Tracker <https://querytracker.net/whatisqt.php>

Rubric:

Grade of A: Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the factors that contribute to a good fit between author and agent OR between author, project and publishing house, and clearly and convincingly articulates the rationale for fit with their project/themselves. Assignment is exceptionally well-written and researched, including clear references or footnotes.

Grade of B: Demonstrates an understanding of the factors that contribute to a good fit between author and agent OR between author, project and publishing house, and articulates the rationale for fit with their project/themselves. Writing and research are adequate, including references or 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: Did not make a convincing case for fit between author and agent, or between author/project and publisher. Research not evident or poorly documented. Poor writing.

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

Due date: January 24, 2022

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 II 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 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_Reflection620203

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 date: February 23, 2022

The third assignment is an open-book exam that reviews important issues for emerging writers: copyright, options, finances, etc. The material is based on the primary legal text *Negotiating a Book Contract: A Guide for Authors, Agents & Lawyers* (Levine) assigned as required reading. ***The publishing contract exam is sent by email in mid-January.*** It includes one essay question (750 words), and three short-answer questions (250 words each). It is an open-book exam, but students are asked to work independently. Marks are accorded for content, presentation, and particularly for the persuasiveness of the legal arguments. Please include source references (these may be in footnotes or embedded in the text).

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

File name: Please name your file as follows: YourLastName_Legal620203

Required text:

Negotiating a Book Contract: A Guide for Authors, Agents & Lawyers (Levine) available in electronic format from <https://www.bookcontracts.com/product/negotiating-a-book-contract/>

Learning resources:

Recorded lecture: Contracts overview, available on Brightspace in Publishing II.

Contracts Self-Help Package, including *Model Trade Book Agreement* and *Help Yourself to a Better Contract: A Guide for Evaluating and Negotiating Your Trade Book Contract* by Marian Hebb, published by The Writers' Union of Canada; available online at

<https://www.writersunion.ca/writers-how-to>

“A Publishing Contract Should Not be Forever” The Authors Guild, July 28, 2015,
<https://www.authorsguild.org/industry-advocacy/a-publishing-contract-should-not-be-forever/>
“Authors, Keep Your Copyrights. You Earned Them” The Authors Guild, August 13, 2015
<https://www.authorsguild.org/industry-advocacy/authors-keep-your-copyrights-you-earned-them/>

Rubric: Grade of A: Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the elements of book contracts and contract negotiation practices. Students demonstrate convincingly they understand contemporary book contract issues from the author’s perspective *and* the publisher’s perspective.
Grade of B: Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the elements of book contracts and contract negotiation practices. Students demonstrate that they understand contemporary book contract issues from the author’s perspective *and* the publisher’s perspective.

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: Demonstrates adequate understanding of book contracts and negotiation practices, but fails to provide comprehensive and/or supportive research and analysis from a sufficient variety of resources. Similarly the student fails to provide sufficient and/or appropriate arguments regarding contemporary book contract issues from the author’s perspective and/or the publisher’s perspective.

Or:

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

Assignment Four: Marketing (25%)

Due date: March 21, 2022

The final assignment is to create a marketing document for your book project, and focuses on publishers’ catalogue copy, platform-building, social media utilization, and other key elements of book marketing.

The first component of this assignment is to create the equivalent of a page from a publisher’s book catalog. This is the marketing material that would be used to sell a book to booksellers and other retailers. The second part of the assignment is to develop a plan for the marketing that you, as author, will undertake for your book including an outline of the steps and tasks you will undertake to create a solid publishing platform.

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

File name: Please name your file as follows: YourLastName_Marketing620203

Part 1 (value 12.5% of final mark)

Create the copy for the equivalent of a page from a publisher's book catalog. See examples here:
Coach House Press:

<https://chbooks.com/content/download/87843/994434/version/1/file/CHB+Catalogue+Fall+Winter+2021-22+%281%29.pdf>

Biblioasis: <http://biblioasis.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Fall-21-Canadian.pdf>

Goose Lane Editions (see p. 5 for catalogue copy for MFA alum Gregor Craigie's book):

https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/1403/7679/files/CAT_Fall2021_WEB_FIN.pdf?v=1629289960

Touchwood Editions (see p. 8 from MFA alum Moira Dann's book):

https://www.touchwoodeditions.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/TWE_Cat_S21.pdf

Catalogue listing for Susan MacLeod's *Dying for Attention*:

<https://www.conundrumpress.com/new-titles/dying-for-attention/>

You do not need to do the design/layout of the catalog page, but you do need to write the elements that would be included on such a page.

This includes:

Book title and subtitle

Genre

Author name

One-line description of book

2-3 paragraphs of sell copy for the book (350 words max)

One-paragraph author bio (100 words max)

Book details: project page count, format (paperback, hard cover), price, subject category (no need to include ISBN or other codes)

Part 2 (value 12.5% of final mark):

Develop a plan for the marketing that you, as author, will undertake for your book, including an outline of the steps and tasks you will undertake to create a solid publishing platform. Maximum length: 750 words. Please include references.

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; and Pre-publication marketing and publicity* (can be accessed from the Class of 2022 Paper page, under MFA Tip Sheets; also uploaded to Brightspace)

Recorded lectures: Proposal Power by Lori A. May in Publishing II Brightspace

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>

Submission of Assignments

Assignments should be submitted via email to kim.pittaway@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 Journalism School's Graduate Coordinator, or the School Director.

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

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.

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 nonfiction 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.

Fair, Inclusive and Safe Conduct

All students in the School of Journalism 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: You are encouraged to discuss concerns about a particular course first with the instructor. The instructor 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 may also direct you to other resources within the University. If you have an unresolved issue with an instructor, 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 Journalism School Director: The Director welcomes any comment on the experiences of students within the School. 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 School Director to express a strong concern about an experience in the School. The Director may bring it to a meeting of Journalism 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 School, 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 Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Officer: The SVPRO 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 SVPRO is also available if you are supporting someone who has experienced sexualized violence. The SVPRO 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 journalism. 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 journalism, contact your instructor. For more information, consult the section on Intellectual Honesty on p. 19 of Dalhousie's [Graduate Studies Calendar](#) (Find "PDF Versions" at the top of that page) or p. 34 of [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. Students may appeal decisions of the Journalism Studies Committee to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. For more information, see p. 42 of King's Academic Calendar.