

COURSE OUTLINE

JOUR 6202.03

Publishing Residency II

Instructor

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Course description

JOUR 6202.03 is the second-year Publishing Residency and associated assignments. While the presentations, discussions and lectures are presented to students in both JOUR 6202.02 and JOUR 6102.03 (the corresponding first-year course), the assignments are tailored to the knowledge level and stage of manuscript development expected of second-year students.

Students and faculty convene in January of alternating years in Toronto (even-numbered years) or New York (odd-numbered years) for a seven-day Publishing Residency session as part of the core curriculum. They are joined by 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, craft, and professional application of nonfiction writing skills. As well, students are directed to required and optional readings and resources useful in completing their assignments.

The curriculum focus is on marketing, legal and editorial issues related to nonfiction writing, including preparing for contract negotiations, navigating the editorial and production processes, and creating good practices for career development and artistic asset management. Approximately 25 guest speakers make presentations to the King's MFA students during the residency.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the Publishing Residency 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 non-fiction writing.
- Acquire fundamental business skills related specifically to publishing commerce.

Texts/Learning Materials

Required:

Negotiating a Book Contract: A Guide for Authors, Agents & Lawyers (Levine)

Additional resources:

Build Your Author Platform by Carole Jelen and Michael McCallister (BenBella Books)

Guide to Literary Agents 2018, Cris Freese, editor (Writers' Digest Books)

Association of Canadian Publishers guide to literary agents:

<http://publishers.ca/index.php/get-published/literary-agents>

Writers' Union of Canada guide to literary

agents: <https://www.writersunion.ca/content/literary-agents>

Member database for Association of Canadian Publishers: <http://publishers.ca/search-companies/>

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

<http://penguinrandomhouse.ca/publishers>

Simon and Schuster Canada imprint list <http://www.simonandschuster.ca/c/about-ss-canada>

Assessment

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

* Agents and Publishers: A research paper to be submitted prior to the Publishing Residency II commencement, geared to identifying agents or publishers suitable for each student's particular project.

* Participation and pitching: A formal book pitch by the students during the Publishing Residency. A one-paragraph description of each student's project must be submitted in advance of the residency.

* Legal issues: An open-book publishing contract exam distributed on or about February 1st and due on February 19.

* Marketing: A book marketing assignment to be submitted no later than March 14.

The rationale for these deadlines is to encourage the students to manage their time and workload – essential skills for independent writers.

Assignment One: Research Paper (25%)

Due date: January 5, 2018

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. For agents, students should use resources such as Association of Canadian Publishers guide to literary agents <http://publishers.ca/index.php/get-published/literary-agents> ,

Writers' Union of Canada guide to literary

agents <https://www.writersunion.ca/content/literary-agents> and *Guide to Literary Agents 2018* (Writers' Digest Books), as well as seeking leads in the author's notes and

acknowledgements of comparable titles. For publishers, students should use resources such as the member database for Association of Canadian Publishers:

<http://publishers.ca/search-companies/> , 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 <http://penguinrandomhouse.ca/publishers> , and Simon and Schuster Canada imprint list <http://www.simonandschuster.ca/c/about-ss-canada> as well as seeking leads by looking at the publishers of comparable titles. 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 (250 words per agent or publisher/imprint, max). 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.

Assignment Two: Participation & Pitching (25%)

MFA students are expected to participate in all aspects of the residency: classroom activities, field trips, and special events. This involves preparation for each lecture, and active engagement with the presenters.

By **December 6, 2017**, students must submit a one-paragraph (no more than 200-word) description of their project. This project description will be supplied to guests and other participants in the residency.

On the second-last day of the residency (January 12, 2018), each student makes two professional pitches to individuals within the publishing community: editors, publishers, agents, etc. They are graded based on feedback from those individuals.

Marks are allocated for the following:

- Full attendance at all classes and events during the week
- Participation in classroom discussions
- Appropriate interaction with guest speakers
- Professional participation in all field-trips
- Appropriate preparation for the pitching sessions
- Successful delivery of the pitches

The compilation of these grades is done with input from all the MFA faculty present during the Publishing Residency.

Students will make individual pitches to publishing industry professionals during a one-to-one 20-minute session. The pitch should be approximately 6 – 8 minutes. The panelist will ask questions for approximately 5 minutes after the student's pitch. After the question stage, the pitch will conclude, and the panelist will provide feedback on the student's presentation for the remainder of the 20 minutes.

Students may choose to use a laptop to supplement their script. However, the primary goal should be a convincing oral narrative. 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.

The panelist will complete a “scorecard” for each student, with comments where appropriate. This evaluation will be added to the other criteria listed above in order to determine the student’s overall grade for participation during the Winter Residency. Please also note the grading rubric below for further guidance on the expectations of the panelists and MFA faculty:

- Is the pitch clearly defined, appropriately focused, and succinctly delivered in terms of the potential publishing format and delivery channel?
- Is the pitch convincingly directed to a distinct readership and market niche?
- Does the author support both of the above goals by providing sufficient market analysis and consumer data?
- Does the content of the presentation conform to all of the norms and expectations of the creative nonfiction genre and marketplace?
- Is the author ideally situated in terms of his/her art and craft to deliver a publishing manuscript as described in the pitch presentation?

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 business 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.

N.B. Please note that preparation and pitch assistance will be offered during the Publishing Residency.

Assignment Three: Legal Issues (25%)

Due date: February 19, 2018

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 on or about February 1. 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.

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 14, 2018

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.

Details of this assignment are distributed on or about February 1. Students may submit this assignment anytime prior to March 14.

Equal marks will be given for the content, organization, and presentation of each of the two documents.

Grade of A: Demonstrates an exceptional understanding of the elements of book marketing and the role of the author in supporting that exercise. Students will

demonstrate convincingly how they plan to use contemporary media to promote and publicize their writing work to the audience identified in the first part of the assignment.

Grade of B: Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the elements of book marketing and the role of the author in supporting that exercise. Student will demonstrate in a satisfactory manner how they plan to use contemporary media to promote and publicize their writing work to the audience identified in the first part of the assignment.

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 the demographic and psychographic components of a reader profile, 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 media as a means to promote and publicize their writing work to the identified audience.

Or:

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

Academic Performance

Grading Scale:

A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
F	<70

Students must achieve a B- in all classes.

Academic policies

1. Ethical Conduct

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with and abide by the School of Journalism Code of Ethics, which can be found at kingsjournalism.com/ethics-code

2. Safety

All students are expected to read the School's safety guidelines which can be found at kingsjournalism.com/safety-guidelines/. To do nonfiction well, you may sometimes be uncomfortable. You should never be unsafe. If you run into

trouble, or if you feel a situation might put your or others' personal safety at risk, bail out and call your instructor right away.

3. Inclusive Behaviour

King's prides itself on inclusiveness and respect for others. Our classrooms and newsrooms are public spaces in which racist, sexist, homophobic or intolerant comments or humour will not be tolerated. Do not screen such videos, images or web pages on school equipment or in school facilities. Offensive behaviour is not just disrespectful to your colleagues and to your profession; it may constitute harassment under the King's Code of Conduct. For more information, go to the King's website <policies.ukings.ca/> and find the Yellow Book.

4. Contacting the Police

Students must talk to their instructor before they contact Halifax Regional Police or RCMP. On approval of their request, they must send the police an email from their official school account that is cc'd to their instructor.

5. Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity at the graduate level are taken very seriously. The punishment for plagiarism or other forms of academic integrity can range from receiving a zero on the assignment, to failing the course, being suspended or expelled from the university. If you have any doubt about proper citation for an academic paper or proper attribution in a piece of journalism, contact your instructor or the Writing Centre at Dalhousie University. For more information, consult the calendar of the University of King's College.

6. Accessibility

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation – Form A.

A note taker may be required as part of a student's accommodation. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

7. 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 the University of King's College Calendar and the Dalhousie University Graduate Calendar.