

Area of Interest: Creative Media and Communications

Professional Writing

Ontario College Diploma

Program Code: 3001X01FWO

2 Years

Ottawa Campus

Our Program

Learn highly marketable skills in writing for a career in digital and print media.

With a focus on both professional and creative writing, the two-year Professional Writing Ontario College Diploma program teaches you the skills and flexibility to work as a writer in a variety of fields. You learn writing skills for digital and print media from nationally recognized writers, authors and communications experts.

Acquire the necessary skills to write independently and collaboratively in freelance and organizational settings. With attention to detail, learn to research, write, edit and proofread.

Many writers balance freelancing with other employment, so the program focuses on the development of creative skills along with knowledge of the existing market for fiction and creative non-fiction in Canada. You gain highly marketable communications, writing, and editing skills that are useful in many industries in both for-profit and non-profit sectors.

During the program, local writers lead workshops and may mentor you in the field. You participate in a work environment for a 180-hour field placement where you have the opportunity to apply your writing skills while building connections with potential clients and employers.

Graduates from this program have a wide range of exemplary writing skills and comprehensive knowledge of contemporary social and political issues needed to begin careers as professional writers.

Graduates may find employment at a junior level as a:

- communications officer
- marketing copywriter
- copy editor
- researcher
- proofreader
- web content writer

Graduates also have the skills to be hired on contract or as a freelancer to write magazine-style articles, booklets, brochures, training materials and manuals.

You may also consider continuing your education and training through Algonquin's Advertising, Public Relations, Scriptwriting, Technical Writing, Journalism, Broadcasting - Television and Streaming Video or Broadcasting - Radio and Podcasting programs.

SUCCESS FACTORS

This program is well-suited for students who:

- Have a solid foundation in the basic rules of English grammar.
- Have strong written and oral communications skills.

- Are inquisitive, well-organized and have an analytical nature.
- Can work independently.
- Enjoy researching topics and gathering information.

Employment

Graduates may be employed at a junior level as communications officers, copy editors, researchers, proofreaders and web content writers. They also have the skills to be hired on contract or as a freelancer to write magazine-type articles, booklets, brochures, training materials and manuals.

Learning Outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

- Recognize the fundamental concepts of storytelling.
- Write for media in Canada with an awareness of historical and cultural contexts.
- Demonstrate understanding of the production process of print, live events, broadcast, the Internet and film.
- Employ computers and writing software proficiently.
- Work in independent, collaborative, and organizational settings.
- Write in a broad range of styles appropriate to a variety of media.
- Write scripts for presentations, live events and speeches.
- Create plots, characters and themes that engage audiences.
- Effectively edit their own and others' writing.
- Demonstrate superior time management skills.
- Manage their writing career on sound small-business principles.
- Market their writing skills in their chosen field.
- Identify and apply discipline-specific practices that contribute to the local and global community through social responsibility, economic commitment and environmental stewardship.

Program of Study

Level: 01	Courses	Hours
ENL1813M	Communications I	42.0
SCR3000	Role of the Writer in North American Culture	42.0
SCR3002	Creative Writing 1	56.0
SCR3003	Introduction to Research	56.0
SCR3048	The Fundamentals of Writing	42.0
Choose one from equivalencies: Courses		Hours
GED3001	General Education Elective	42.0
Level: 02	Courses	Hours

ENL2008	Interpersonal Skills for Personal and Career Success	42.0
PRL1519	Design for Public Relations 1	28.0
SCR3005	Creative Writing II	56.0
SCR3007	Professional Writing I	56.0
SCR3014	Issues in Canadian Society and Media	42.0
SCR3020	Introduction to Editing	42.0
Choose one from equivalencies: Courses		Hours
GED3001	General Education Elective	42.0
Level: 03	Courses	Hours
PRL1536	Design for Public Relations 2	28.0
SCR3022	Professional Writing II	56.0
SCR3025	Narrative Non-Fiction	42.0
SCR3035	Writing for the Web	56.0
SCR3038	Substantive and Literary Editing	42.0
SCR3047	Creative Writing III	42.0
Level: 04	Courses	Hours
SCR3030	Field Placement	180.0
SCR3037	Preparation for Placement	28.0
SCR3042	Production Projects	21.0
SCR3043	The Business of Writing and Publishing	21.0
SCR3044	Scriptwriting for the Online Environment	28.0
SCR3045	Plain Language Tune Up	28.0
SCR3046	Creative Writing Workshop	21.0

Fees for the 2023/2024 Academic Year

Tuition and related ancillary fees for this program can be viewed by using the Tuition and Fees Estimator tool at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/fee-estimator>.

Further information on fees can be found by visiting the Registrar's Office website at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro>.

Fees are subject to change.

Additional program-related expenses include:

- Books and supplies cost approximately \$900 in the first year and \$600 in the second year.
- Students must purchase their own PC laptop computer and software.
- Computers and supplies can be purchased directly from Algonquin's Connections Store at

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Admission Requirements for the 2024/2025 Academic Year

College Eligibility

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or equivalent. Applicants with an OSSD showing senior English and/or Mathematics courses at the Basic Level, or with Workplace or Open courses, will be tested to determine their eligibility for admission; OR
- Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) certificate; OR
- General Educational Development (GED) certificate; OR
- Mature Student status (19 years of age or older and without a high school diploma at the start of the program). Eligibility may be determined by academic achievement testing for which a fee of \$50 (subject to change) will be charged.

Program Eligibility

- English, Grade 12 (ENG4C or equivalent) with a grade of 70% or higher.
- **Direct entry into second year:** Applicants with a degree in a field that demands a high level of writing (e.g. English literature, Creative Writing, History, Journalism, Political Science), may enter directly to the second year of the program. During the Fall semester, direct-entry students receive three hours of coaching per week to review material from Level 01 and Level 02. Applicants should contact the coordinator directly for more information.
- Applicants with international transcripts must provide proof of the subject specific requirements noted above and may be required to provide proof of language proficiency. Domestic applicants with international transcripts must be evaluated through the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) or World Education Services (WES).
- IELTS-International English Language Testing Service (Academic) Overall band of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each band; OR TOEFL-Internet-based (iBT)-overall 88, with a minimum of 22 in each component: Reading 22; Listening 22; Speaking 22; Writing 22; OR Duolingo English Test (DET) Overall 120, minimum of 120 in Literacy and no score below 105.

Should the number of qualified applicants exceed the number of available places, applicants will be selected on the basis of their proficiency in English.

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College Eligibility

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Application Information

PROFESSIONAL WRITING Program Code 3001X01FWO

Applications to full-time day programs must be submitted with official transcripts showing completion of the academic admission requirements through:

ontariocolleges.ca
60 Corporate Court
Guelph, Ontario N1G 5J3
1-888-892-2228

Students currently enrolled in an Ontario secondary school should notify their Guidance Office prior to their online application at <http://www.ontariocolleges.ca/>.

Applications for Fall Term and Winter Term admission received by February 1 will be given equal consideration. Applications received after February 1 will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis as long as places are available.

International applicants please visit this link for application process information:
<https://algonquincollege.force.com/myACint/>.

For further information on the admissions process, contact:

Registrar's Office
Algonquin College
1385 Woodroffe Ave
Ottawa, ON K2G 1V8
Telephone: 613-727-0002
Toll-free: 1-800-565-4723
TTY: 613-727-7766
Fax: 613-727-7632
Contact: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro>

Additional Information

Students complete their studies with either special projects or a field placement. Students completing their training within the College environment are provided with small group projects and brief seminars to enhance their writing, research, editing and web-related skills. Students with a minimum B+ average have the option of completing their diploma with a field placement. Finding and securing an approved fieldwork opportunity is a shared responsibility. Your faculty and field work supervisor/coordinator has contacts in industry and where feasible will assist you in finding an approved field placement. During an external placement, students apply the knowledge and skills they have gained in the classroom to professional practice within an organization.

Contact Information

Program Coordinator(s)

- Michele Hall, <mailto:hallm@algonquincollege.com> , 613-727-4723, ext. 6399

Course Descriptions**ENL1813M Communications I**

Communication remains an essential skill sought by employers, regardless of discipline or field of study. Using a practical, vocation-oriented approach, students focus on meeting the requirements of effective communication. Through a combination of lectures, exercises, and independent learning, students practise writing, speaking, reading, listening, locating and documenting information, and using technology to communicate professionally. Students develop and strengthen communication skills that contribute to success in both educational and workplace environments.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

ENL2008 Interpersonal Skills for Personal and Career Success

To be effective storytellers, writers need to work with others. Students explore several different factors that affect our relationships, including how deeply we listen to others and what to do if conflict arises. Students have an opportunity to assess, analyze, and develop their own interpersonal skills. Activities include self-evaluation work, journaling, pairs and small-group work and responsibility for an individual project. Communication skills, both written and oral, are stressed.

Prerequisite(s): ENL1813M

Corerequisite(s):none

GED3001 General Education Elective

Students choose one course, from a group of general education electives, which meets one of the following four theme requirements: Arts in Society, Civic Life, Personal Understanding, and Science and Technology.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

GED3001 General Education Elective

Students choose one course, from a group of general education electives, which meets one of the following four theme requirements: Arts in Society, Civic Life, Personal Understanding, and Science and Technology.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

PRL1519 Design for Public Relations 1

Public Relations practitioners often work with graphic designers and an understanding of basic design principles helps to facilitate that partnership. Students are introduced to graphic design and learn the techniques, methods, basic tools and terminology required to communicate and collaborate with graphic designers in the field. They explore the theoretical aspects of graphic design, including design principles, colour harmony, typography and branding, with emphasis on technical specifications and best practices for print and digital content. Students develop software skills and learn basic program commands and functionality. A focus is placed on the importance of proper file naming, file structure and organization. Students apply design theory and technical knowledge to design basic layouts and execute tasks.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

PRL1536 Design for Public Relations 2

Knowing how to do basic design work is an asset for public relations practitioners, particularly those who work in smaller organizations. Students enhance their working knowledge of design principles and software by applying it to the design of various public relations products, such as posters, social media graphics, media materials, and websites.

Prerequisite(s): PRL1519

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3000 Role of the Writer in North American Culture

Students explore the role writers have played in the North American context over the last 50 years. Writers of books now considered classics, as well as younger writers are, included on the reading list. Students examine how writers have a unique perspective on their societies, often by challenging themselves and others. Through reading a variety of genres, such as poetry, short stories, comic books, life writing and science fiction, students gain an understanding of how writers have played many roles, from outsider to witness and interpreter.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3002 Creative Writing 1

Students learn the fundamentals of storytelling, such as plot, point of view, dialogue, character development, theme and how language usage creates a unique voice. Students also study the common and unique elements in different styles of published writers of short fiction. Students are provided the opportunity to develop strong storytelling skills in their own creative writing.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3003 Introduction to Research

Students learn how to find the information and resources they need for their written products. Students also learn how to find governmental, cultural and statistical information in a variety of locations. Students use media sources, access archival material and develop a facility with the diverse research tools available through the Internet. Copyright, public domain, reproduction, privacy and other legal restrictions are addressed.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3005 Creative Writing II

Students learn about the publishing environment for fiction in Canada and how to submit their short stories for publication in small literary magazines. Students build on fundamental storytelling skills by learning a variety of approaches to structure and genre in the short story form. Through the study of fiction and writing exercises, students learn to create powerful stories with memorable characters. Self-editing and peer-editing skills are stressed, with students developing their best exercises into fully realized stories.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3002

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3007 Professional Writing I

Students learn the skills necessary to be successful in entry-level writing and communications positions. They study and practise a broad range of communications products used in organizational environments, such as basic reports, minutes, correspondence, speaking notes and Power Point presentations. Students develop an awareness of writing inclusively and creating

accessible documents. They also explore advocacy as an important role that writers often assume.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3003

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3014 Issues in Canadian Society and Media

Students explore a wide variety of current political and sociological issues that have an important impact on the role and function of the professional writer in Canada. Students follow important issues in the media related to Canada's diverse populations and develop an understanding of how unfolding media coverage is part of current public discourse.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3020 Introduction to Editing

Students develop a basic understanding of proofreading, copy editing and the process by which editors work with writers in a variety of contexts. Students review principles of grammar and learn how to manipulate sentence structures to enhance clarity and style. Students learn both the symbols for hard copy editing and procedures for editing documents in electronic form.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3048

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3022 Professional Writing II

Students learn to write in different formats for a variety of organizational environments, including government, NGO and private sector. Students learn about and practise writing web copy, and media releases on behalf of organizations, as well as become acquainted with the fundamental principles of speech writing for presentation. Students also develop an understanding of corporate culture and the writer's responsibilities in relation to a variety of organizational structures.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3007

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3025 Narrative Non-Fiction

Students learn how to apply fictional techniques to narrative non-fiction (essays, memoirs and feature stories). They read and discuss a wide range of classic and contemporary non-fiction and learn various approaches to story structure, style and research. Students follow a step-by-step process, from pitching a story idea to an editor to interviewing sources to completing a narrative essay, memoir or feature story for one of the program's e-zines. They learn the basics of professional writing for magazines and journals in today's competitive freelance marketplace.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3002 and SCR3020

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3030 Field Placement

Students complete their studies with either an external or internal work integrated learning experience. Students completing their training within the College environment are provided with small projects to enhance their writing, research, editing and web-related skills. Students with a minimum B+ average have the option of completing their diploma with a field placement. During an external placement, students apply the knowledge and skills they have gained in the classroom to professional practice within an organization.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3014 and SCR3022 and SCR3025 and SCR3026 and SCR3035 and SCR3040 and SCR3041 and SCR3048 or SCR3040

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3035 Writing for the Web

Students learn the stylistic requirements of writing that is designed to be read on the web. They learn the importance of clear succinct writing that falls naturally into different layers of detail. They also learn how to select and edit effective web content. Students research, write and post to individual blogs and also contribute other kinds of content to a program website.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3005

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3037 Preparation for Placement

Students prepare for their transition to their post-college writing and working lives by learning essential skills, including researching work opportunities, practicing interviewing skills and building a flexible portfolio. Those students seeking an external field placement are coached as they search for and approach suitable organizations. Students doing an internal placement, meanwhile, hone their professional communications skills.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3022

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3038 Substantive and Literary Editing

Students further develop their skills as editors, with emphasis on structural editing and editing for style. Students learn the process by which editors work with writers, and explore a number of editing controversies that reveal how the role of the writer continues to evolve. They also learn how to create solid executive summaries, apply plain language principles to editing documents, cut for length and identify stylistic differences.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3020

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3042 Production Projects

Students have the opportunity to see how their words and ideas reach audiences. Students build on the elementary knowledge of design software previously acquired. Students learn strategic thinking skills which they apply in the design of effective and accessible marketing documents. Individually and in teams, they apply this process to the creation of several print-based and online marketing pieces.

Prerequisite(s): PRL1536 and SCR3007

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3043 The Business of Writing and Publishing

Many writers perform their working lives on a freelance basis. In this course, students learn about aspects of freelance writing, including long-term planning, networking, typical rates of pay, tax obligations, applying for grants and reporting on income. They become familiar with the relevant writers' organizations and issues all writers should be following that directly impact the professional milieu. Students also explore the structure of the book and magazine publishing industries and how models are rapidly evolving, including e-publishing and self-publishing.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3044 Scriptwriting for the Online Environment

Writers must adapt to quickly transforming platforms for communication. With the increase in organizational use of social media such as YouTube and websites with dynamic content, the ability to write for visual media is an asset. Students learn about scripting for the online environment in a range of genres, whether they are reaching out to customers, advocating for a cause, or providing information to the public. Students culminate their learning by planning and constructing scripts for existing organizations.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3025 and SCR3035

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3045 Plain Language Tune Up

Adaptation is one of the key skills of writers working in an organizational context. The principles of plain language are increasingly important as communication becomes more visual in the context of competing sources of information. Students practise plain-language skills taught over the course of the program and also focus on transforming content for presentation on websites and the online environment.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3022 and SCR3038

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3046 Creative Writing Workshop

Testing one's creative work against the expectations and critical discussion of an audience is an essential skill for creative writers who hope to publish. This course culminates the three previous levels of fictional practice by focusing on full group workshopping of finished stories. Students learn to integrate helpful feedback as well as develop their critical capacities by entering into focused discussion of technique, approach and meaning in others' and their own fiction.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3038 and SCR3047

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3047 Creative Writing III

Students broaden their understanding of the approaches that contemporary fiction writers take to short and longer fiction, including world building, unusual points of view and speculative concepts. Students also enhance their ability to write realistically with increasing depth and literary attention. They study techniques and themes of contemporary writers through readings and discussion. Students also practise providing and assimilating feedback through revision after testing their work in small groups.

Prerequisite(s): SCR3005

Corerequisite(s):none

SCR3048 The Fundamentals of Writing

Professional writers require mastery of English grammar, mechanics, syntax and other foundational elements of writing. Students study and apply the rules of English and adopt effective writing strategies, with a focus on well-structured sentences and paragraphs. Through a series of self-paced modules, activities, assignments and quizzes, students review the basics of the written language and refine their writing skills towards developing a critical eye for reading, writing and editing required in the field.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none