



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

## **THE WRITERS VOICE OF CENTRAL NEW YORK DOWNTOWN WRITERS CENTER and WRITERS VOICE ONLINE WRITING WORKSHOPS – SUMMER 2025**

### **FIND YOUR Y WITH WRITERS VOICE PRO**

Writers Voice PRO is a two-year intensive program for writers who are serious about developing their writing. PRO gives all the dedication, guidance, and community of an MFA program without the high cost.

Writers Voice PRO emphasizes what is essential to growing as a writer: sharing work with our incredible writing mentors and getting generous feedback to help refine your strengths as a writer.

PRO is open to new and former students. We accept writers on a rolling basis, so you can join at any point in the year. Learn more at our website!

[ymcacny.org/programs/arts/creative-writing](http://ymcacny.org/programs/arts/creative-writing)



### **KEY TO COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

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|---------------|--|
| <b>BEG</b>    | Beginner. These courses are open to all students, but are designed specifically for new writers.   |
| <b>INT</b>    | Intermediate. These courses are for students with writing experience and some familiarity with workshops.  |
| <b>ALL</b>    | All. These courses are for writers of all experience levels—including beginners!   |
| <b>PRO</b>    | PRO/Advanced. Space may be limited in these courses for students not enrolled in PRO. A manuscript review may also be required for new students. |
| <b>GEN</b>    | Generative. These courses focus on creating new work through exercises and prompts.  |
| <b>SEM</b>    | Seminar. These courses examine literary schools, craft, and/or writing theory in practice; reading is often required.                            |
| <b>WRK</b>    | Workshop. These courses focus on peer critique and/or revision strategies.   |
| <b>MS</b>     | Multiple Styles. Classes will incorporate multiple instruction styles.   |
| <b>DWC</b>    | Course will take place in-person at the Downtown Writers Center  |
| <b>ONLINE</b> | Course will take place online (e.g. Zoom)  |
| <b>HYBRID</b> | Students can join either in-person at the Downtown Writers Center or online.   |
| <b>ASYNCH</b> | Students write and share work without a weekly scheduled class.  |

# SUMMER 2025 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

## POETRY COURSES

### WHAT IS YOUR POETICS?

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Thomas Townsley. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 7. Have you taken time to consider your poetics? What are your thoughts about the nature and function(s) of poetry? We'll read excerpts from various essays on poetics and then share our own ideas.

### OLD GODS, NEW VERSE: REIMAGINING ANTIQUITY

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Tim McCoy. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 8. Explore how poets (Oswald, Carson, etc.) dialogue with antiquity. We'll write our own poems inspired by their approaches and create direct poetic responses to ancient texts.

### CONTEMPORARY POETRY AND CRAFT

(ALL - SEM - ONLINE) with Melissa Tuckey. Wednesdays, 4 to 6 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 9. Whether you're working on your own collection of poems, or you just want to read more poetry, this class is for you. We'll read award-winning books by Jericho Brown, Carolyn Forché, Ilya Kaminsky, Diane Seuss, and Lena Khalaf Tuffaha. Weekly writing prompts will be offered.

### SHARED VOICES: A COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Derek Pollard. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM. 4 weeks, starting July 24. This generative workshop explores how collaboration can help you discover new ways of writing. We'll create new work with our fellow poets and gain practical tools for ongoing collaborations.

### JUMP-STARTING YOUR POETRY

(BEG - GEN - ONLINE) with Dan Simpson. Thursdays, 5 to 7 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 10. In this encouraging community, we'll write poems, read wide-ranging work by established writers, and talk all things writing. We'll pay some attention to revision, but our focus will be writing new work.

## FICTION COURSES

### THE SPECULATIVE FICTION GENERATOR

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Chris DelGuercio. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 8. Students will complete a short, speculative fiction piece using a variety of creative prompts, brainstorming, and workshopping.

### WRITING THE MIDDLE

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Alyssa Pfingst. Saturdays, 1 to 3 PM. 6 weeks, starting August 2. How a story begins and ends are important, but the middle of the story rarely gets the attention it deserves. This course is dedicated to making the middle of your story just as thrilling to keep the reader riveted every step of the way.

## NONFICTION COURSES

### THE SUMMER FLOW: NONFICTION WORKSHOP

(ALL - WRK - ONLINE) with Georgia Popoff. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 9, and Thursdays, 1 to 3 PM, starting July 10. Our popular workshop continues with weekly comments and critique. New members are welcome, so if you're working on a project or need a group, join us!

### HOW TO BE YOUR OWN BEST EDITOR

(BEG - WRK - ONLINE) with Steven Schwankert. Mondays, 7 to 9 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 7. In this class, you'll learn the secrets that every editor wished people knew! We'll talk grammar, style, structure, proofreading, editing tools, and publishing standards.

## DRAMATIC WRITING

### WHAT'S REALLY IN A SCREENPLAY?

(ALL - SEM - HYBRID) with Casey Baker. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 9. We'll analyze award-winning screenplays to learn the "do's and don'ts" of screenwriting and to identify the hidden "beats" that screenwriters hit in each of their stories.

# MORE SUMMER 2025 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

## CROSS-GENRE COURSES

### **BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO LITERARY TRANSLATION**

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Deb Diemont. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 7. We'll read essays by renowned writer-translators, including Lydia Davis and Octavio Paz, compare different versions of translated works, and discuss what makes a translation effective. Writers will have the option to translate a poem or story to share.

### **CAPTURING MOTHERHOOD IN ESSAYS AND POEMS**

(INT - GEN - ONLINE) with Ona Gritz. Tuesdays, 5 to 7 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 8. Mothering deepens us as people, and adds poignancy and urgency to our work as writers. In this class, we'll learn to write authentically about motherhood in all its beauty and messy complexity.

### **STRIKING SATIRES FOR SOCIAL CHANGE**

(ALL - GEN - ONLINE) with Suzanne Ondrus. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 9. Flip the script and learn to use humor to critique political and social problems. Explore the form of satire in plays, proposals, poems, and stories.

### **ADVANCED PROSE WORKSHOP**

(PRO - WRK - ONLINE) with Jason Zencka. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 8. We will workshop creative nonfiction or fiction, and there will occasionally be readings if time permits, but the class will primarily be centered on reading and providing feedback on each others' work. Space is reserved for writers who have prior workshop experience or Writers Voice PRO students. Please call 315-474-6851 x 380 or email Tim Carter.

### **WRITING ABOUT LOVE**

(ALL - GEN - DWC) with Gemma Cooper-Novack. Thursdays, 5 to 7 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 9. Love is central to all of our favorite works of art. Through generative exercises, discussions, and wild literary adventures, this class will explore the excitement and complexity of writing about love in all of its forms.

### **FINDING YOURSELF AS A QUEER WRITER**

(ALL - WRK - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack. Saturdays, 3 to 5 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 12. How can queer writers identify the traditions and present moments to which we belong? We'll read fiction, poetry, and scripts by queer writers, and use them to develop our own understanding, voice, and skills as queer writers. Returning and new students are welcome!

### **WRITING LONGER WORK**

(ALL - MS - DWC) with Gemma Cooper-Novack. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 10. This popular workshop returns! For anyone who has a great idea and wants to take the leap to write something longer. Through exercises and critiques, we will sharpen our skills for going the distance. We welcome new members, and you don't need to have started your book to take this class. Just bring your ideas and commitment!

### **INTRODUCTION TO GRANTWRITING**

(ALL - MS - ONLINE) w/ Tory Russo. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 6 weeks, starting July 9. This course provides an overview of how grants are made, finding opportunities and funders, and writing grants. Writers will develop a grant template for current or future opportunities. This course is for both individuals or organizations.

## SUMMER 2025 INSTRUCTOR BIOS

CASEY BAKER has been working as a screenwriter and independent film producer for 10 years covering multiple genres for both feature films and short films.

TIM CARTER is the Director of Writing Workshops at the Writers Voice of CNY. He is the author of *Remains* (2022) and *The Pigs* (2023).

Deb Diemont's poetry is influenced by her time in Mexico and Central America. She has taught Spanish-language poetry and translates Spanish poetry into English. Her books are *Wanderer*, *Diverting Angels* and *The Charmed House*.

GEMMA COOPER-NOVACK is a queer writer, playwright, scholar, and writing coach who has published in over 50 journals. She's the author of *We Might As Well Be Underwater*.

CHRIS DELGUERCIO is a writer, teacher, editor, and lecturer. His new collection of short stories *An Unsettled Score* (2023) is available. Visit him at [www.CDelGuercio.com](http://www.CDelGuercio.com).

ONA GRITZ's book *Everywhere I Look*, received the Readers' Choice Gold Award, Pencraft's Best Book Award, and was named StoryTrade's Non-fiction Book of 2024. A longtime columnist for Literary Mama, Ona's work has appeared widely.

TIM MCCOY's poems appear in and are forthcoming from the *Notre Dame Review*, *BlazeVOX*, *Action Fokus*, *Interim*, and elsewhere. He's a graduate of Syracuse University's MFA program and teaches writing in the Syracuse area.

PHIL MEMMER founded the Downtown Writers Center in 2000. His sixth book of poems, *Cairns*, was published in 2022.

SUZANNE ONDRUS' poetry books *Passion Seeds* and *Death of an Unvirtuous Woman* deal with history, foreign cultures, women's sexuality, racism, identity, and domestic violence serve as platforms for discussion of these taboo topics.

ALYSSA PFINGST is a book coach specializing in novels and graphic novels. Alyssa is certified by Author Accelerator and is a LGBTQ+ Editor's Association member.

DEREK POLLARD is Series Editor for the *Poets on Poetry Series* (Univ. of Michigan Press). His books include *On the Verge of Something Bright and Good* (Barrow Street), and, with Derek Henderson, *Inconsequentia* (BlazeVOX).

GEORGIA A POPOFF is the author of five books of poetry, most recently, *Living with Haints* (Tiger Bark Press 2024). She is currently Poet Laureate of Onondaga County and edits the Under Discussion Series from University of Michigan Press.

TORY RUSSO has nearly a decade of experience in project management, development, communications, and community engagement across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. She is a freelance grant writer and consultant for arts and culture organizations.

STEVEN SCHWANKERT is an award-winning writer and editor. His books include "The Six," about Chinese passengers aboard RMS Titanic, and "Poseidon," about a British submarine lost off the coast of China.

DAN SIMPSON's poetry collection, *Inside the Invisible*, won the Propel Poetry Prize and was nominated for the American Academy of Poets Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize.

THOMAS TOWNSLEY has published five books of poetry, and his work appears in two international anthologies of surrealist poetry. A graduate of Syracuse University's MFA program, he teaches at Mohawk Valley Community College in Utica, NY.

MELISSA TUCKEY is the author of *Tenuous Chapel* and *Ghost Fishing: An Eco-justice Poetry Anthology*. She lives in Ithaca, NY.

JASON ZENCKA writes and teaches in Syracuse, New York. His stories and essays have appeared in *One Story*, *StoryQuarterly*, *EPOCH*, among other journals, and he has been awarded a Pushcart Prize.

# COURSES FOR TEENS

## YOUNG AUTHORS ACADEMY

(ALL - WRK - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack. Saturdays, 12 to 2 PM. 10 weeks, starting July 12. An afternoon workshop for students grades 6 through 12 who are on fire to write! Free for students in the Syracuse City School District and active Y of CNY members.

Want to know more?

Contact Tim Carter  
Email: [tcarter@ymcacny.org](mailto:tcarter@ymcacny.org)  
Phone: 315-474-6851 x380  
Website: [ymcacny.org/young-authors-academy](http://ymcacny.org/young-authors-academy)

## WORKSHOP REMINDERS...

**All enrollment is first-come, first-served.**  
**All class times are Eastern.**  
**We do not call to confirm registrations; we will, however, call you if there is any problem.**  
**Refunds are not given after a course begins. (If a course is canceled, payments are refunded.)**  
**If a course has a required text listed in its description, you will need to obtain that text before the first class meeting.**

# THANK YOU

The Writers Voice of CNY is supported with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, with the support of the office of the Governor and the NYS Legislature. Additional support by Onondaga County and CNY Arts.



**Council on  
the Arts**



## REGISTRATION FOR YMCA OF CNY MEMBERS

**STEP 1: GO TO [YMCAcny.org/myaccount](http://YMCAcny.org/myaccount).**

Create a new account or enter your valid YMCA of CNY membership email and password.

**STEP 2: REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM.** Click "Activities" in the upper right-hand corner, and then click "Register for a program."

**STEP 3: SEARCH FOR PROGRAMS.** Type "creative writing" into the search bar and use the filters to find the right class for you.

**STEP 4: COMPLETE REGISTRATION.** To take advantage of your free course benefit as a Y-member of CNY, use promo code "DWCSUMMER25" when you register.

Please note that you must complete your transaction for your free course, then start a new transaction for any additional courses.

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## REGISTRATION FOR Y-USA and ALL OTHER STUDENTS:

Register by phone with a credit card  
by calling (315) 474-6851 x380.

Paying by check? Call first to reserve your place,  
then return to your registration form with check  
payable to the YMCA to:

The YMCA's Downtown Writers Center, 340  
Montgomery St., Syracuse, NY 13202

Members of a YMCA outside of YMCA of  
Central New York are eligible to take work-  
shops at a discount!  
Use promo code "DWCYUSA".


**<https://ymcacny.org/dwc>**



# SUMMER 2025 WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: TUESDAY, 1 JULY 2025

Late registrations, when space is available, are subject to a \$15 late fee.

Courses (Please mark with an  )	Member Level	YMCA	WV	Non-member
_____ What is Your Poetics?		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Old Gods, New Verse: Reimagining Antiquity		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Contemporary Poetry and Craft		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Shared Voices: A Collaborative Workshop		Free*	\$68	\$90
_____ Jump-starting Your Poetry		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ The Speculative Fiction Generator		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Writing the Middle		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ The Summer Flow: Nonfiction Workshop (Wed)		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ The Summer Flow: Nonfiction Workshop (Thurs)		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ How to Be Your Own Best Editor		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ What's Really in a Screenplay?		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Beginner's Guide to Literary Translation		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Capturing Motherhood in Essays and Poems		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Striking Satires for Social Change		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Advanced Prose Workshop		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Writing About Love		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Finding Yourself as a Queer Writer		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Writing Longer Work		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Introduction to Grantwriting		Free*	\$100	\$130

\*YMCA of CNY members are entitled to one free class per season, per membership (a family membership counts as one membership). Additional fees (Book Club, late fees) still apply. All other Y members from anywhere in the country are eligible for "WV Member Rate" discount. Call 315-474-6851 x380 for more information.

TOTAL FEES \_\_\_\_\_ NAME \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS (city, state, zip) \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

YMCA of CNY MEMBER? YES / NO (If yes, please specify branch) \_\_\_\_\_

WRITERS VOICE MEMBER? YES / NO Y MEMBER FROM ANOTHER YMCA ? YES / NO (If yes, specify) \_\_\_\_\_

ALL STUDENTS please refer to page 5 for details about registering for classes online.