



**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 – SPRING 2026

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



KEY TO COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

- BEG** Beginner. These courses are open to all students, but are designed specifically for new writers.
- INT** Intermediate. These courses are for students with writing experience and some familiarity with workshops.
- ALL** All. These courses are for writers of all experience levels--including beginners!
- PRO** 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.
- GEN** Generative. These courses focus on creating new work through exercises and prompts.
- SEM** Seminar. These courses examine literary schools, craft, and/or writing theory in practice; reading is often required.
- WRK** Workshop. These courses focus on peer critique and/or revision strategies.
- MS** Multiple Styles. Classes will incorporate multiple instruction styles.
- DWC** Course will take place in-person at the Downtown Writers Center
- ONLINE** Course will take place online (e.g. Zoom)
- HYBRID** Students can join either in-person at the Downtown Writers Center or online.
- ASYNCH** Students write and share work without a weekly scheduled class.

SPRING 2026 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

POETRY COURSES

MUSE WRITING

(BEG - GEN - ONLINE) with Tim McCoy. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 13. Muse Writing returns! Move beyond your conventional imagination with free-writing and associative techniques when drafting poems. Readings of wild poems along with writing exercises will help you access your generative muse.

POETRY AS LEGACY

(ALL - MS - ONLINE) with Gloria Hefferman. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 13. How do you want to be remembered? What poems do you want to leave as your legacy? This is a safe place for exploring your most tender stories for those who mean the most to you.

SURVEY OF LATIN AMERICAN POETRY

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Deb Diemont. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 14. We'll explore Latin American poetry in translation from indigenous languages, Spanish and Portuguese, and use our reading to inspire our own poems.

READING POEMS, MAKING POETRY

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Derek Pollard. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 14. Ever read a poem so good you wanted to share it with everyone? That's what this workshop is all about: explore the poems we can't get enough of and apply the lessons they teach to our own writing.

SURREAL PROSE POEMS

(ALL - MS - ONLINE) with Suzanne Frischkorn. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 15. This popular class returns! Expect to generate lots of new work using surrealist techniques and learning from writers like Mary Biddinger, Mary Ruefle, James Tate, and many others.

ADVANCED POETRY WORKSHOP

(PRO - WRK - ONLINE) with Georgia Pop-off. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 16. Refine your writing and learn from others in this workshop that studies how great poems work, designed for writers with workshop experience and whose goal is publication. Please call 315-474-6851 x480 or email for more details.

ECHOES OF LOVE

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Sara Parrott. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 16. With ears to our hearts, read and write poems that explore how past relationships shape present feelings: platonic, romantic, spiritual, punk noir, and more.

CONTEMPORARY POETRY

(ALL - MS - ONLINE) with Darien Razdar. Saturdays, 10 AM to 12 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 18. Each session will focus on a contemporary writer, pairing close readings with guided writing prompts. We'll think about style, voice, and themes, to write new poems in dialogues with the people we read.

FICTION COURSES

THE WRITER'S LIFE, PART THREE: WORKSHOP

(INT - WRK - ONLINE) with Chris DelGuercio. Tuesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 14. The final Writer's Life class is your chance to get constructive feedback. Through the instructor's guidance, you will get focused peer critique so you can take your work to the next level.

DEVELOPING YOUR STYLE

(INT - MS - ONLINE) with Alyssa Pfingst. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 15. You'll learn how to write with a strong, consistent voice on the sentence, and scene level, diversifying your writing approaches to create unique, spectacular fiction that's uniquely you.

MORE SPRING 2026 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

NONFICTION COURSES

INTRODUCTION TO MEMOIR

(BEG - GEN - ONLINE) with Susan Keeter. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM, starts April 13. Do you want to write a memoir or help a loved one write theirs? Using the StoryCorps interview questions and Modern Love's "36 Questions that Lead to Love," we'll write stories that are soul-searching, intimate, and satisfying to read.

THE SPRING FLOW: NONFICTION WORKSHOP

(ALL - WRK - ONLINE) with Georgia Popoff. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM, and Thursdays, 1 to 3 PM, 8 weeks, starts April 15 and 16. Expect to share and receive comments and constructive critique. New members are welcome, so join us if you need a supportive group!

DRAMATIC WRITING

I'M TALKING HERE: DICTION IN PLAYWRITING

(PRO - WRK - ONLINE) with Len Fonte. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 16. Plays are built on engaging dialogue, so we will explore ways to create vibrant characters through how they speak. You should expect to complete a ten-minute play or scene in a longer work by the end of the class. Reserved for writers who have previously taken a playwriting class through the Writers Voice.

CROSS-GENRE COURSES

ADVANCED PROSE WORKSHOP

(PRO - WRK - ONLINE) with Yvonne Murphy. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 13. We'll workshop nonfiction or fiction projects and read contemporary examples. Space is reserved for writers with prior workshop experience or PRO students. Please call 315-474-6851 x 480 or email Tim Carter.

PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY AND WRITING

(ALL - SEM - DWC) with Misha Tentser. Mondays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 13. How do we cultivate a sense of place and belonging as writers? We'll imagine and map our relationships to where we live and write by focusing on the works of contemporary, local authors.

HYBRID CRYPTIDS

(ALL - MS - DWC) with Misha Tentser. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM, 8 weeks starts April 15. Through poems, short stories, and essays by (mostly) contemporary authors, we'll investigate the origins of cryptids—supernatural, hybrid creatures based in folklore—and generate our own mystical, genre-nonspecific tales.

PICTURES = 1000 WORDS

(ALL - MS - ONLINE) with Susan Keeter. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 15. How do we make images and words work together? We'll learn how to merge visual art with text. This class is for those interested in creating social media posts, magazine spreads, graphic novels, picture books, displays, etc. Background in photography, drawing, or painting is helpful, but not necessary. (Note: this class is 4 weeks.)

WRITING LONGER WORK

(INT - MS - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack. Wednesdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 15. This popular workshop is back! Do you have a great idea for a book, but get stuck on the beginning? Do you write short stories, but want to make the leap to something longer? We'll sharpen our skills for going the distance through exercises critiques. You don't need to have started your book to take this class—just bring your ideas and commitment!

MORE SPRING 2026 CREATIVE WRITING COURSES

CROSS-GENRE (CONTINUED)

SPRING READING SERIES BOOK CLUB

(ALL - WRK - ONLINE) with the Writers Voice. Wednesdays, 4:30 to 5:30 PM. 8 weeks, starting April 15. Read and discuss the latest books in our Winter Visiting Author Reading Series on Friday nights! Best of all, Book Club is free: you just purchase the books from the Writers Voice at a discount.

WRITING WITH HISTORY

(INT - MS - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack. Thursdays, 6 to 8 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 16. Fascinated by a historical era or moment? Writing a story that is set in the past? In this class, you'll learn to use historical research to create vibrant narrative, ending in a complete short story, set of poems, or short play.

MINIMAL WORDS, MAXIMUM IMPACT

(ALL- MS - ONLINE) with Ona Gritz & Dan Simpson. Thursdays, 5 to 7 PM. 8 weeks, starts April 16. How do we hold a reader's interest in this world of short attention spans? One answer is to write brief and impactful pieces. Learn to craft short poems, flash prose, and more in this hands-on and supportive class.



SPRING 2026 INSTRUCTOR BIOS

TIM CARTER is the Director of Writing Workshops at the Writers Voice of CNY. His books are *Remains* and *The Pigs*.

GEMMA COOPER-NOVACK is a queer writer, playwright, scholar, and writing coach. 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 is *An Unsettled Score* (2023).

DEB DIEMONT has three books of poetry: *Wanderer*, *Diverting Angels*, and *The Charmed House*. Her poems have appeared in *Nimrod*, *Stone Canoe*, and elsewhere.

LEN FONTE is the winner of numerous SALT Awards. He has taught playwriting at Syracuse University and is a theater critic for the Post-Standard.

SUZANNE FRISCHKORN is the author of four poetry collections, most recently *Whipsaw*. She's an editor for *\$-Poetry is Currency*, and is an assistant poetry editor for Terrain.org.

ONA GRITZ's memoir, *Everywhere I Look*, won the Pencraft's Best Book Award, and was named *StoryTrade's* Nonfiction Book of 2024. A longtime columnist for *Literary Mama*, Ona's work has appeared widely.

GLORIA HEFFERNAN has authored three poetry collections, most recently, *Fused* (Shanti Arts Publishing). Her craft book, *Exploring Poetry of Presence*, received the CNY Book Award for Nonfiction.

SUSAN KEETER writes nonfiction for all ages. Her book *Sunday's Wheels* was published in Ghana and received the CNY Book Award. She has an MFA from Syracuse University.

TIM MCCOYS's poems have appeared in the *Notre Dame Review*, *BlazeVOX*, and others. He graduated from the Syracuse University MFA program and teaches writing in the Syracuse area.

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

YVONNE MURPHY teaches creative writing and studio art at SUNY Empire State University. Her first book, *Aviaries*, won the Carolina Wren Prize in Poetry.

SARA PARROTT is the author of *Tipping the Water Jar of Heaven*. Her poems are in *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *Dappled Things*, and *Light on the Walls of Life*.

ALYSSA PFINGST is a professional development editor and book coach, who supports authors and graphic novelists as they start, refine, and publish their books.

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 *Inconsequentia* (BlazeVOX).

GEORGIA A POPOFF is the author of five books of poetry, most recently, *Living with Haints* (2024). She is currently Poet Laureate of Onondaga County.

DARIAN RAZDAR is a writer, artist, and independent scholar. His practice combines research, poetry, imagery, textile, and print. He is based in Toronto and Mexico City.

DANIEL SIMPSON's most recent poetry collection, *Inside the Invisible*, won the Propel Poetry Prize. He serves as flash nonfiction editor for *Wordgathering*.

MISHA TENTSER is a poet from Tucson, Arizona. He is the author of the chapbook *Born in the Wrong Desert*.

COURSES FOR TEENS

YOUNG AUTHORS ACADEMY

(ALL - WRK - HYBRID) with Gemma Cooper-Novack and Olivia Silver. Saturdays, 12 to 2 PM. 10 weeks, starting April 18. YAA is an afternoon workshop for students in grades 6 through 12 who are on fire to write! Free for all students in the Syracuse City School District and Y of CNY members.

Want to know more?

Contact Tim Carter

Email: tcarter@ymcacny.org

Phone: 315-474-6851 x380

Website:

ymcacny.org/young-authors-academy

WORKSHOP REMINDERS...

Enrollment is first-come, first-served.

Class times are Eastern.

We don't call to confirm registrations;

however, we'll 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

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**Council on
the Arts**



REGISTRATION FOR YMCA OF CNY MEMBERS

STEP 1: GO TO 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 “DWCSRING26” when you register.

Please note that you must complete your

transaction for your free course, then start a new transaction for any additional courses.

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 workshops at a discount!

Use promo code “DWCYUSA”.

<https://ymcacny.org/dwc>

SPRING 2026 WORKSHOP REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, 8 APRIL 2026

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

Courses (Please mark with an X)	Member Level	YMCA	WV	Non-member
_____ Muse Writing		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Poetry as Legacy		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Survey of Latin American Poetry		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Reading Poems, Making Poetry		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Surreal Prose Poems		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Advanced Poetry Workshop		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Echoes of Love		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Contemporary Poetry		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ The Writer's Life, Part Three		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Developing Your Style		Free*	\$100	\$130
_____ Introduction to Memoir		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ The Spring Flow (Wednesday)		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ The Spring Flow (Thursday)		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ I'm Talking Here		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Advanced Prose Workshop		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Psychogeography and Writing		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Hybrid Cryptids		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Pictures = 1000 Words		Free*	\$65	\$85
_____ Writing Longer Work		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Spring Reading Series Book Club		\$130	\$130	\$130
_____ Young Authors Academy		Free*	\$100	\$100
_____ Writers Voice Membership		\$45	\$45	\$45
_____ Writing with History		Free*	\$130	\$170
_____ Minimal Words, Maximum Impact		Free*	\$130	\$170

*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 _____ 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 6 for details about registering for classes online.