



To: Anyone and Everyone

From: The 2024/2025 Student Writer-in-

Residence, Jules Lee

Fourth Year

English and Creative Writing

Connection, Creativity, and
Community:
My Year as Western's Student
Writer-in-Residence



Western
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Unique in North America, the SWIR program supports the development of an accomplished undergraduate writer while fostering a vibrant culture of creativity and literary exchange on campus and beyond. The program aims to provide opportunities for peer mentorship, community engagement, and interdisciplinary exploration across literary genres, media, and technologies.

As the Student Writer-in-Residence, my role involves responsibilities centered on both creativity and community building. My main tasks include offering one-on-one writing consultations to students, providing feedback on their creative work, and organizing literary events that promote artistic collaboration. I also represent the program by participating in public readings, classroom visits, and community engagement opportunities. Another key component of my role is using social media to highlight student writing, promote events, and create an inclusive space for writers to connect.



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Overview

Throughout my internship as the Student Writer-in-Residence, I've had the privilege of immersing myself in both Western's and London's vibrant creative communities through a range of meaningful experiences. From one-on-one office hours where I offered mentorship and connected personally with fellow students, to literary events that brought together writers and artists from across the city and campus, this year has been filled with moments of growth, collaboration, and inspiration. As I reflect on it all, I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for the connections I've made and the stories I've had the chance to witness and support.

57	office hour meetings
52	works reviewed/edited
6	classes visited
3	invited readings
2	workshops hosted
1	poetry contest judged



Event Highlights

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role as Student Writer-in-Residence was organizing and taking part in community literary events. In September 2024, I kicked off my term with a 20-minute inaugural reading for Writing 2520: Write Now! Writers on Writing, where I had the chance to share my creative work with a new group of student writers. That same month, I led a zine-making workshop titled "Cut and Paste: Narrative Zines" at the Satellite Gallery, which encouraged students to experiment with visual and written storytelling in a fun and accessible way. In October, I co-hosted a fiction workshop called "Creating Character" alongside Western's Writer-in-Residence, Saeed Teebi, focusing on techniques for developing strong, believable characters. Later in December, I gave a reading from my chapbook "Irregular Odes to Regular Things" at Brown and Dickson during the book launch event for author Liz Hunt. Most recently, in March 2025, I participated in the Local Authors Showcase, where I shared my work and connected with students and members of the broader London literary community.

Though each event I participated in had its own unique value, the zine workshop stands out as my favourite—both for how personally connected I felt to it and for how spontaneously it came together. I was invited to host the workshop by Ruth Skinner at the last minute, and despite the short notice, it ended up being one of the most fulfilling parts of my internship. The concept for the event was entirely mine, and having full creative control over how it was run—from the structure to the materials to the tone—made it feel deeply meaningful. Despite being planned on short notice, the workshop felt lively, collaborative, and creatively charged. Watching students flip through magazines, piece together pages, and share ideas reminded me that some of the most rewarding experiences happen when we say yes to unexpected opportunities. It was a highlight of my time as SWIR—and one that reminded me why I love literary spaces that prioritize process, play, and community.



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Inaugural Reading with Writer-in-Residence,
Saeed Teebi



Cut and Paste: Narrative Zines



Office Hours

Another significant and deeply rewarding aspect of my time as Student Writer-in-Residence was hosting office hours. These one-on-one sessions offered a chance to connect with students in a more personal, intentional way—whether they came to me for help with a creative writing assignment, a personal project, or simply to talk about the writing process and the creative community at Western. I cherished the opportunity to engage with students on an individual level and to support their work in a way that felt meaningful and collaborative.

In the first term, I held drop-in office hours every Wednesday from 12–2 p.m. and received a total of 24 visits from 14 different students. Each meeting varied in focus and tone, but all were rooted in genuine curiosity, creativity, and conversation. In the second term, however, I had to shift to holding office hours virtually and by appointment due to health reasons. Initially, I worried that this change would reduce student engagement or create barriers to connection. But to my surprise, it had the opposite effect, totaling in 33 meetings from 19 different students.

Without the constraints of traditional drop-in hours, I was able to offer more flexible, personalized support. Zoom meetings often lasted longer—sometimes over an hour—and allowed us to dive deeper into discussions without the pressure of others waiting outside or a strict two-hour window. The virtual format also made it easier for students to fit meetings into their own schedules, which I believe helped sustain, and in some cases even increase, participation.

While I missed the casual spontaneity of in-person visits, this change in format helped me realize how adaptable mentorship can be. It taught me the value of meeting students where they are—both literally and figuratively—and reminded me that meaningful support doesn't always depend on physical presence.





As my time as Student Writer-in-Residence comes to a close, I'm filled with gratitude for the experiences, connections, and creative growth this role has brought me. It's been an incredible opportunity to not only share my own work but to support and learn from the many talented writers I've met along the way. This internship has affirmed my commitment to writing as both a personal practice and a communal act—one rooted in curiosity, empathy, and the joy of creative exchange.

As I pass the torch to the next SWIR, I'm excited to see how they'll bring their own voice and vision to the role. Every writer has something unique to offer, and I know the position will continue to evolve in exciting, meaningful ways. My advice to the next Student Writer-in-Residence—and to any writer reading this—is simple: don't be afraid to take up space with your work. Say yes to unexpected opportunities. Trust that your voice matters, even when it feels quiet. And remember that writing doesn't have to happen in isolation; some of the most powerful moments come from sharing your words and creating alongside others.

