



# TLEF Project – Final Report

Report Completion Date: (2022/05/05)

## 1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

### 1.1. General Information

<b>Project Title:</b>	Redefining the undergraduate learning experience in Creative Writing		
<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	John Vigna		
<b>Report Submitted By:</b>	John Vigna		
<b>Project Initiation Date:</b>	2018/04/01	<b>Project Completion Date:</b>	2022/03/31
<b>Project Type:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large Transformation <input type="checkbox"/> Small Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Other: [please specify]		

### 1.2. Project Focus Areas – Please select all the areas that describe your project.

- Resource development (e.g. learning materials, media)
- Infrastructure development (e.g. management tools, repositories, learning spaces)
- Pedagogies for student learning and/or engagement (e.g. active learning)
- Innovative assessments (e.g. two-stage exams, student peer-assessment)
- Teaching roles and training (e.g. teaching practice development, TA roles)
- Curriculum (e.g. program development/implementation, learning communities)
- Student experience outside the classroom (e.g. wellbeing, social inclusion)
- Experiential and work-integrated learning (e.g. co-op, community service learning)
- Indigenous-focused curricula and ways of knowing
- Diversity and inclusion in teaching and learning contexts
- Open educational resources
- Other: [please specify]



### 1.3. Final Project Summary

We have completed 11 course redesigns in the three years of the TLEF. Of these 11 course redesigns, six of them are multiple iterations, that is, each of these six courses are offered in both Term 1 and Term 2 (the other five courses are offered in Term 2 only).

Our objectives included:

- Ground and strengthen our pedagogical approach through blended learning in our Minor Program courses, create consistency across sections, and promote a more meaningful and flexible undergraduate student experience.
- Make use of online tools available in UBC's Canvas including: video lecture, peer- and self-assessment, critical reading, comprehension assessment, and application toward creative work to help us create an immersive and engaging learning experience for students, provide access to global resources and materials (i.e. writers from around the world) and increase student/instructor interaction in an immersive blended learning experience.
- Advance our flipped classroom design by converting the online portion of flipped classroom curriculum to Canvas and adopt an integrated blended learning rather than flipped classroom approach.
- Re-focus in-class contact hours toward deeper discussions of process, craft and technique, where students can engage individually and collaboratively with instructors and GTAs on their own creative work.
- Review and integrate peer assessment tools (i.e. Studiorum, ComPAIR, PeerScholar), and implement the most effective, meaningful tool (s) for an enhanced collegial community in the blended classroom.
- Evaluate student participation and compare student performance over the span of each pilot course to inform and develop further iterations of pilot courses and create subsequent Minor Program courses.

Each of these objectives have been met and exceed as evidenced by our School's ability to seamlessly transition these courses and all other courses across our Minor, BFA Major, MFA (on campus and Optional Residency) during the pandemic. The result of shifting to a 100% online model has created further discussions in our School as to proceeding in the future with more blended and fully online course offerings to complement the in-class courses as we return to the classroom post-pandemic. When designing each of our courses in year 1, we initially tested all of our pedagogical decisions against the following established principles of Blended Learning (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008) and built upon these in a more assertive, focused manner as it relates to the unique challenges of creative writing pedagogy:

- Design for open communication and trust
- Design for critical reflection and discourse
- Create and sustain sense of community
- Support purposeful inquiry
- Ensure students sustain collaboration
- Ensure that inquiry moves to resolution
- Ensure assessment is congruent with intended learning outcomes

Adjustments based on feedback from student and instructor surveys in year 1 have informed iterations of each course and assisted in minimizing the time to develop new courses, as did building a cohort of instructors who collaborated on course designs. This deeper and broader pool of instructor knowledge and experience has



been invaluable throughout the project and will continue to support a sustainable model beyond the support of this grant.

Self-assessment (i.e. reflective reviews) and peer-to-peer assessment have been implemented to translate and detail learning achievements of the online component of the blended class. Greater interactivity has fostered collegiality, while providing students with additional opportunities to reflect on their own work and make necessary adjustments to it. User statistics calculated from the online components were also studied to assess student patterns of online learning behavior and aided in evaluating the effectiveness of content and delivery overall.

Developing a mature creative practice with an awareness of meaning, subjectivity, and ethical perspectives was central as a discipline-specific strategy in each of these courses. This is in alignment with our goal (shared with the university) to encourage and develop responsible citizenship. This renewed focus aligns with the goals of the Creative Writing Program, the Faculty of Arts and UBC, and solidifies our School’s desire and ability to sustain the work completed here as we look to new courses and modes of delivery in the future, not only at the Minor Program level, but across the BFA Major and MFA Programs.

**1.4. Team Members** – Please fill in the following table and include students, undergraduate and/or graduate, who participated in your project.

Name	Title/Affiliation	Responsibilities/Roles
Alix Ohlin	Professor, Director	Co-applicant
Nancy Lee	Associate Professor, Undergrad Chair	Co-applicant
Annabel Lyon	Professor, Grad Chair	Co-applicant
Andrew Gray	Program Coordinator	Co-applicant
Jeff Miller	CTLT	Senior Associate Director
Jason Myers	Faculty of Arts	Faculty Liason
Bosung Kim	CTLT	Assistance with course design
Adriana Briseno-Garzon	CTLT/SoTL	Assistance with SoTL
Paulina Semenec	CTLT/SoTL	Assistance with SoTL
Will Preston	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Manjinder Sidhu	Undergrad Student	Beta Tester
Robin Evans	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Keri Korteling	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Gena Ellet	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Molly Cross-Blanchard	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Shazia Hafiz Ramji	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Selina Boan	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Shaun Robinson	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Olga Holin	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Mariah Devcic	Grad Student	Beta Tester



Elizabeth Leung	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Shyamala Parthasarathy	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Claire Arnett	Grad Student	GAA / Beta Tester
Stacy Penner	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Ray Clark	Grad Student	Beta Tester
Brian Johnson	Undergrad Student	Filming
Will Dickson	Undergrad Student	Filming
Andrew Daselaar	Grad Student	GAA
Nancy Wu	Grad Student	GAA
Loghan Paylor	Grad Student	GAA
Jeff Miller	Grad Student	GAA
Cara DiGirolamo	Grad Student	GAA
Tania De Rozario	Grad Student	GAA

**1.5. Courses Reached** – Please fill in the following table with **past**, **current**, and **future** courses and sections (e.g. HIST 101, 002, 2017/2018, Sep) that have been/will be reached by your project, including courses not included in your original proposal (you may adapt this section to the context of your project as necessary).

Course	Section	Academic Year	Term (Summer/Fall/Winter)
CRWR 201	001	2018/19/20/21/22/23	Fall
CRWR 201	002	2018/19/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 206	001	2019/20/21/22/23	Fall
CRWR 206	002	2019/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 208	001	2019/20/21/22/23	Fall
CRWR 208	002	2019/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 209	001	2018/19/20/21/22/23	Fall
CRWR 209	002	2018/19/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 213	001	2019/20/21/22/23	Fall
CRWR 213	002	2019/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 230	001	2020/21/22/23	Fall
CRWR 230	002	2020/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 301	002	2018/19/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 306	002	2019/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 308	002	2019/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 309	002	2018/19/20/21/22/23	Winter
CRWR 310	001	2020/21/22/23	Winter



2. OUTPUTS AND/OR PRODUCTS

2.1. Please list project outputs and/or products (e.g. resources, infrastructure, new courses/programs). Indicate the current location of such products and provide a URL if applicable.

Product(s)/Achievement(s):	Location:
N/A	

2.2. Item(s) Not Met – Please list intended project outputs and/or products that were not attained and the reason(s) for this.

Item(s) Not Met:	Reason:
CRWR 200	We're restructuring our Minor Program and reassessing the role of CRWR 200.
CRWR 203/303	Due to academic leaves and retirements, we haven't had enough core faculty to have at least two of them work on these courses together.
CRWR 205/305	Due to academic leaves and retirements, we haven't had enough core faculty to have at least two of them work on these courses together.

3. PROJECT IMPACT

3.1. Project Impact Areas – Please select all the areas where your project made an impact.

- Student learning and knowledge
- Student engagement and attitudes
- Instructional team-teaching practice and satisfaction
- Student wellbeing, social inclusion
- Awareness and capacity around strategic areas (indigenous, equity and diversity)
- Unit operations and processes
- Other: [please specify]

3.2. What were you hoping to change or where were you hoping to see an impact with this project? – Please describe the intended benefits of the project for students, TAs, instructors and/or community members.



The specific outcomes of developing a blended redesign into our CRWR 200- and 300-level courses were:

- Flexibility for students to learn on their own time. From theory to practice: put into practice core elements of craft and technique through digitization of specific components of the course prior to in-class contact time.
- In the moment assessment that allows instructors to monitor learning progress and effectiveness in real time. Instructors can react to this feedback and pivot rapidly to provide a more engaging learning experience for students.
- Create a greater range of online video and audio instruction that focuses on the core craft foundational knowledge needed to write genre-specific creative work. The videos serve as an archive that students can refer back to on their own time, and tests and demonstrates their foundational knowledge.
- Online material allows for dynamic critical analysis (structured and assessed).
- Facilitate a directed online module that incorporates self- and peer-assessment. Initiates and practices collegiality, communication, and critique specific to the course. Streamlined assessment with immediate connection to learning.
- More varied assessment: peer- and self-assessment – frees up TA and instructor time for meaningful substantive assessment of creative work in-class.
- Extends beyond physical classroom facilities to include media such as interviews with prominent local and international writers and other mixed media components that relate to the content of the lectures.
- Pedagogical benefits: scaffolded online modules build a necessary foundation for a more interactive classroom. Contact hours in class can re-focus on a productive and deeper understanding of the foundational core content and creative work supported through online preparation.
- Increased instructor interaction and discussion time in-class better develops GTA resources, expertise, and individual specialties. This cultivates a more engaging experience for GTA's, as they incorporate their own research into assisting students.
- Seamless transition to 100% online during COVID-19.

This project has had both an immediate and sustained contribution to enhancing teaching and learning in Creative Writing and impact all of our Minor Program students.

The direct short-term benefits of the project: to substantially increase the student learning experience through a more rigorous pedagogical approach, provide instructors and GTA's with more focused in-class time. The direct long-term benefit: to prepare students in their creative writing, university and professional careers with core verbal and written communication skills and critical thinking and analysis.

Benefits for students include: a greater opportunity for participation in class, opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer and self-assessment, and the ability to apply foundational concepts of craft and technique through critical analysis and reading. Peer critique skills are just as important - not only in the writing workshop, but in many other areas of study, both inside and outside of the arts. Peer critique requires critical thinking, analysis, tact and sensitivity. The process is a learning tool for students in both giving and receiving critical feedback, leading to the practice of rewriting and revision. Most importantly, the process provides students with core written and verbal communication skills they will use in future study at UBC and as part of their professional and personal development.

**3.3. Were these changes/impacts achieved? How do you know they occurred? – How did you measure changes/impacts? (e.g. collected survey data, conducted focus groups/interviews, learning analytics, etc.)**



*Describe what was learned from this process. You are encouraged to include copies of data collection tools (e.g. surveys and interview protocols) as well as graphical representations of data and/or scenarios or quotes to represent and illustrate key themes.*

1) Student surveys. These surveys gathered data on motivation, engagement, and overall satisfaction in both the online and in-class modules of the blended redesign. We also evaluated user statistics or log data to understand students' patterns of learning behavior online. The surveys took place at the mid-point and the end of the course. The online study of user statistics were conducted randomly throughout the semester.

2) GTA surveys. GTA's work closely with students and, as students themselves, have a perspective between undergraduate student and instructor, that can provide valuable course feedback. They often receive in-the-moment feedback from students as the course progresses that is beneficial for instructors to pivot and update the course as necessary. GTA surveys took place in the planning of the blended course redesign, at the mid-point and end of the course.

3) Instructor surveys. Capturing data from instructors on their experience of developing and implementing the course, the integration of the blended redesign, and challenges they encountered. These surveys were conducted informally through regular consultation at our Teaching and Learning meetings and in various ad hoc discussions.

The evaluation of students, GTA's and instructors during and after each pilot course allowed us to gather analysis and make adjustments in further iterations of each course, as well as inform the development of new pilot courses. We correctly anticipated that this evaluation process would yield a more streamlined, efficient workflow in Year 1 as we entered Term 2 and Term 3. In the long-term (beyond the TLEF project), our evaluation plan supports the creation of a solid pedagogical foundation for development and evaluation in years 2 and 3, and directs our blended redesign into CRWR 350-level and eventually BFA workshop courses. These discussions are ongoing as we assess our current undergraduate program curriculum.

**3.4. Dissemination** – *Please provide a list of past and upcoming scholarly activities (e.g. publications, presentations, invited talks, etc.) in which you or anyone from your team have shared information regarding this project. Be sure to include author names, presentation title, date, and presentation forum (e.g., journal, conference name, event).*

**International presentations:**

2021 Vigna, John., *Frontiers of Online Teaching in the Creative Writing Workshop*, Paper Presentation, University of East Anglia/European Association of Creative Writing Programs Conference (Norwich, UK)

2020 Vigna, John., *The Case for Digital Pedagogy in Creative Writing*, Presentation, Association of Writers & Writing Programs Conference (San Antonio, USA) [Event canceled due to Covid-19]

2020 Vigna, John., *Pedagogy and Technology: Frontiers of Online Teaching in Creative Writing*, Paper Presentation, Australasian Association of Writing Programs Conference (Gold Coast, AUS)



2018 Vigna, John., *Bricks and Mortar vs Digital Pedagogy in Creative Writing*, Paper Presentation, National Association of Writing Education Conference (York, UK)

2018 Vigna, John., *The Blended Workshop: A Digital Craft Model Explored*, Paper Presentation, Creative Writing Studies Organization Conference (Montreat, USA)

#### Regional presentations:

2021 Vigna, John., *The Case for a Blended Classroom in Creative Writing*, UBC TLEF Showcase, CTLT (Vancouver, BC)

2020 Vigna, John., *Blending Classes With Creative Student Work: Balancing Online Interaction & Live Lectures*, Presentation & Workshop, Arts ISIT (Vancouver, BC)

2020 Vigna, John., *The Case for a Blended Classroom in Creative Writing*, UBC TLEF Showcase, CTLT (Vancouver, BC) [Event canceled due to Covid-19]

2019 Vigna, John., *Experiments Building Community Within a Blended Classroom*, Presentation, UBC First Year Experience Symposium (Vancouver, BC)

#### Publications:

Vigna, John., Michael, Rose., Russon, Penni. The Writer's Workshop Goes Online: Three creative writing researcher-teachers reflect on their move to online teaching, and share a surprising finding. *TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses*. (Pub: May 2022).

#### 4. TEACHING PRACTICES – Please indicate if **your** teaching practices or those of **others** have changed as a result of your project. If so, in what ways. Do you see these changes as sustainable over time? Why or why not?

Our School's teaching practices have evolved immeasurably during this time, and it's difficult to say how because it's so prevalent at all levels of teaching across our Minor, BFA major, MFA on campus and MFA optional residency programs, and our edX courses. Our School's instructors are well versed in online, blended and F2F teaching and consistently seek new ways to explore pedagogically strong methods in any medium. In a word, we're much more fluent across these mediums, more fluent in the strategies to employ, the reasons for doing so, and experimenting with pushing these in fresh ways that ultimately benefit our students. Much of this sharing of teaching practices within our School takes place on a monthly basis at our Teaching and Learning meetings, where instructors present on and share their current pedagogy and practices.

#### 5. PROJECT SUSTAINMENT – Please describe the sustainment strategy for the project components. How will this be sustained and potentially expanded (e.g. over the next five years). What challenges do you foresee for achieving the expected long-term impacts listed above?

With the unexpected advent of COVID-19, which pushed all post-secondary teaching to a 100% online model, our blended courses set a foundation for additional courses to transition online. Our collective knowledge, developed during the TLEF project, gave our School ample resources, experiential learning and strategies for developing 100% online courses, and have since created further discussions about how to move forward in the





future: is there more of an appetite for online learning and how can we address that? Can we consider moving to a blended and/or online pedagogically strong model beyond the courses supported by the TLEF? Our School believes we can and challenges to sustain and build upon this will include addressing financial support to continue developing flipped courses, researching and experimenting with new models of online and blended learning, and instructor energy and enthusiasm (post-pandemic) when energy reserves are low.