

YOUR CREATIVE SELF

* BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS PLEASE COMPLETE THIS [GOOGLE FORM](#) SO I CAN LEARN A BIT ABOUT YOU! *

Course Number	Course Title	Semester	Year
CRI 780	Your Creative Self	Fall	2022
Section	Day of Week	Time	Classroom
All together	Monday	3:00 – 6:00pm	ENG 101
Professor	Email	Office hours	
David Gauntlett	david.gauntlett@ryerson.ca	After class, or email for appointment	
<i>Only TMU emails are to be used for communication between faculty, staff, and students. All news (announcements) posted on class D2L.</i>			

Course Description

This course is about self-driven creativity – making media, making inspirations, and making a difference.

Everything begins with creative individuals. We may move in and out of creative communities, and collaborative environments, but the one constant is your own creative self.

This course will mix theory and practice, looking at philosophical and psychological approaches to creativity, as well as a more hands-on engagement with digital creativity, tools for makers, and how to get things out there.

The week-by-week schedule

1. Introductions, and Your creative identity [12 Sept]
2. Inspirations [19 Sept]
3. Experimenting [26 Sept]
4. Connecting [3 Oct]
- [Study week]
5. Getting it out there [17 Oct]
6. Building your networks [24 Oct]
7. Field trip [31 Oct]
8. Vulnerability, ambiguity, uncertainty [7 Nov]
9. Money [14 Nov]
10. Getting things done [21 Nov]
11. Building [28 Nov]
12. Wrapping up [5 Dec]

Details of each week appear on pages 5–9 below.

Teaching methods

Your Creative Self happens synchronously (all of us at the same time... in an actual room!) on Mondays, 3.00–6.00pm. It's in ENG101, which is in the George Vari Engineering and Computing Centre at 245 Church Street, just over the road from the Rogers Communication Centre. ([Google Map](#)).

You should arrive in ENG101 between 3.00–3.10 and the class starts at 3.10pm.

It's an interactive class, so it's not something that could be a recorded video. So please make sure you come to all the classes.

There is also an asynchronous element (at any time you want to drop in and do it) in the Forums on D2L. See [Assignments](#) for more information.

People

Your Creative Self is led by David Gauntlett, Canada Research Chair in Creativity, from The Creative School. That's me. I have a website with a lot of stuff on it at davidgauntlett.com.

The course also features these Special Guests (subject to availability!):



Ashley Lewis



Kalaisan Kalaichelvan



Vanese Smith



Mike Regis



Justine Woods



Habiba El-Sayed

Resources

For accessibility reasons I don't expect you to have any particular fancy materials or equipment, although you will always need some kind of paper and pen! And you will need access to a computer to do the assignments.

Key resources:



- Please keep up with the resources posted on [the D2L site for this course](#), which will also be sent to you by email.
- Check out the *Your Creative Self* [YouTube playlist](#) (a choice of more than 60 short videos – I don't expect you to watch all of them, of course! It's just a bunch of things, some of which might grab your attention).
- The week-by-week guide below includes some readings (always with a link so you can get the reading free online) and videos. I encourage you to follow your interests and dig into things that seem meaningful for you.

Plagiarism




Because this course is specifically about you and your creativity, I would hope that you wouldn't want to plagiarize anything, because that would be really missing the point. Since you would be claiming someone else's creative journey as your own, it would be an especially cheeky lie. Plagiarism is of course forbidden, and if you submit other people's work as your own, that work will be graded zero. (See TMU's policy on [academic integrity](#)).

Weekly schedule (subject to change)




SESSION ONE: Monday 12 September 2022

	TOPIC	INTRODUCTIONS, and YOUR CREATIVE IDENTITY (In which we meet each other, consider the meaning of creativity, and your own creative identity)
	PREPARE / DUE	Before this first class, make sure you have completed this Google Form . You don't have to do any other work <i>before</i> this first class. You might want to think about how you're going to do your Learning Journal , but you only need to start it after <i>next</i> week.




SESSION TWO: Monday 19 September 2022

	TOPIC	INSPIRATIONS (What inspires you? How do inspirations work?)
	PREPARE	Selim Bulut (2018), ' Six pieces of creative advice for musicians from Janelle Monáe ', <i>Dazed & Confused</i> , 26 September 2018 (or watch Janelle Monáe's whole lecture / read transcript)
	DUE	After this session, begin your Learning Journal by creating your first entry.

SESSION THREE: Monday 26 September 2022




	TOPIC	EXPERIMENTING (What can we learn from the experimental art school model? What happens when we set rules, restrictions, or take things away?)
	PREPARE	Legacy Russell (2020), Glitch Feminism: A Manifesto , London: Verso. (The link is to the first three chapters).
	DUE	This is where we begin doing posts on the D2L Forum. Before <i>next</i> week's session, post about your own creative practice in the D2L Forum – see Assignments below for details. <i>AND</i> do the second part of your Learning Journal .

SESSION FOUR: Monday 3 October 2022




	TOPIC	CONNECTING
	PREPARE	Nothing in particular but do read or view something interesting!
	DUE	Before session 6, post constructive comments on other students' posts in the D2L Forum – see Assignments below for details. <i>AND</i> do the third part of your Learning Journal : reflect on the activities, if you were able to come, and – whether you could attend or not – use this opportunity to reflect on how the Covid era affected your ability to be creative.

Study Week – No classes on 10 October




SESSION FIVE: Monday 17 October 2022

	TOPIC	GETTING IT OUT THERE (including sharing the process as well as the product)
	PREPARE	Austin Kleon (2014), Show Your Work!: 10 Ways to Share your Creativity and Get Discovered , New York: Workman. and/or Austin Kleon (2014), Show Your Work talk (YouTube, 55 mins).
	DUE	Before next week's session, if you haven't already, post constructive comments on other students' posts in the D2L Forum – see Assignments below for details. <i>AND</i> do the fourth part of your Learning Journal .




SESSION SIX: Monday 24 October 2022

	TOPIC	BUILDING YOUR NETWORKS (Finding your communities, and getting support)
	PREPARE	Aries Moross (2019), ' Use Your Workplace to Create Change ', talk from the Forward Festival, Vienna. [The designer Aries Moross was called Kate Moross at the time of this talk].
	DUE	Before next week's session, do the next post about your own creative practice in the D2L Forum – you did a first one after session 3, and you will do a final one after session 9. This is the one in the middle, where you tell us about progress so far. (Assignments below has more details). <i>AND</i> do the fifth part of your Learning Journal .




SESSION SEVEN: Monday 31 October 2022

	TOPIC	FIELD TRIP (Details to follow, but don't worry, you'll be able to do your own 'field trip' wherever you are in the world, and we don't all need to get together)
	PREPARE	You might be inspired by The White Pube website, in particular: Zarina Muhammad (2020), ' Ideas for a New Art World ', The White Pube. (And many of the other Art Thoughts on The White Pube site are great too).
	DUE	Before session 9, post constructive comments on other students' posts in the D2L Forum – see Assignments below for details. AND do the sixth part of your Learning Journal .




SESSION EIGHT: Monday 7 November 2022

	TOPIC	VULNERABILITY, AMBIGUITY, UNCERTAINTY (How vulnerability can make your creative work and process better. Embracing ambiguity and uncertainty).
	PREPARE	<p>Brené Brown (2013), 'Why Your Critics Aren't The Ones Who Count', talk at 99U conference (YouTube, 22 mins).</p> <p>This is also be a good time to consider Indigenous perspectives on creativity and how we go about things:</p> <p>Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013), Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants, Minneapolis: Milkweed.</p> <p>Dylan Robinson (2020), Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.</p>
	DUE	Before next week's session, if you haven't already, post constructive comments on other students' posts in the D2L Forum – see Assignments below for details. AND do the seventh part of your Learning Journal .




SESSION NINE: Monday 14 November 2022

	TOPIC	MONEY (How can we sell or financially support our creative works?)
	PREPARE	David Gauntlett (2018), chapter 9, 'Doing it yourself: More lessons from music making and connecting', in Making is Connecting- Second Edition , Cambridge: Polity.
	DUE	Before next week's session, do the final post about your own creative practice in the D2L Forum – see Assignments below for details. <i>AND</i> do the eighth part of your Learning Journal .




SESSION TEN: Monday 21 November 2022

	TOPIC	GETTING THINGS DONE (Boosting your capacity to make things, finish things, make more things. And the philosophy of 'Try anything').
	PREPARE	We've got lots of positive resources, in line with this course's 'just do it' ethos (see the YouTube playlist for instance), but it's also important to consider structural barriers, as discussed in: Lola Olufemi (2020), Art for Art's Sake , in <i>Feminism, Interrupted: Disrupting Power</i> , London: Pluto.
	DUE	Before the session in week 12, post constructive comments on other students' final posts in the D2L Forum – see Assignments below for details. <i>AND</i> do the ninth part of your Learning Journal .

SESSION ELEVEN: Monday 28 November 2022

	TOPIC	BUILDING (How can we take things to the next level?)
	PREPARE	Nothing in particular but do read or view something interesting!
	DUE	Before next week's session, if you haven't already, post constructive comments on other students' final posts in the D2L Forum – see Assignments below for details. <i>AND</i> do the tenth part of your Learning Journal , with some wrapping-up thoughts and conclusion.

SESSION TWELVE: Monday 5 December 2022

	TOPIC	WRAPPING UP
	PREPARE	Look around the D2L Forums and see what your fellow students added.
	DUE	Make sure your Learning Journal ends with some wrapping-up thoughts and conclusion – you hopefully did that last week – and complete your grading sheet (I'll tell you about that). The learning journal and grading sheet are due on Thursday 8 December (before 11.59pm).

Assignment	Brief Description	Due Date	% of Final Grade
#1	Participation	Each week, in class and/or in D2L Forums	20
#2	Your creative process (posts in D2L Forums)	Between sessions 3–4, and 6–7, and 9–10	20
#3	Responding to others in D2L Forums	Between sessions 4–6, and 7–9, and 10–12	10
#4	Learning journal, added to every week throughout the course	Thursday 8 December (before 11.59pm) <i>and submit your grading sheet at the same time</i>	50

The tyranny of grading

The University aims towards ‘decolonizing’ its teaching and operations, even though, of course, aggressive colonization already happened, and cannot be unpicked just by changing some of the things we talk about in a university classroom. It seems to me that one of the most central things to overturn is the idea that your subjective, thoughtful and creative work should then be given a grade by me, an older white man, which enters the system and becomes a pseudo-scientific ‘fact’ about your performance.

When looking at the work of 60+ students, it is highly unlikely that I will be able to fully appreciate what you came to this work with, and what your intentions were, and what you did or didn’t know already, and whether real learning and growth happened for you or not. If we are suggesting that a person grading your work could know all these things, that’s just a deception, and it seems like one of the worst Western-colonial type ideas, that I’m going to know it better than you.

On top of that, there’s a whole *other* set of reasons why traditional grading is a bad idea. There’s good evidence that grades are the enemy of real learning. Worrying about their grade affects students’ work, but not usually in a good way. We are used to grades being at the heart of education, but ironically, grades destroy learning.

What does this mean in practice? You still want a grade, probably, because we are in a system where all courses lead to grades and that’s how you get a degree. So don’t worry, you’ll get a grade in this course, but the grade will be proposed by you and you will be able to explain your choice.

This kind of approach is called ‘ungrading’, and is a growing movement. As Jesse Stommel explains in [‘Ungrading: An Introduction’](#), if we as educators value the humanity of students, want to support their needs, and engage them as full participants in their own education . . . well, grades are the opposite of all those things.

As he highlights in that piece, grades are designed to pit students and teachers against one another, to rank students in competitive ways, and to measure output with little concern for the learning process. Grading values extrinsic over intrinsic motivation, and is rooted in a suspicion of students. And research shows clearly that grading reinforces bias against marginalized students.

So, none of that seems good, which is why we will be doing something a bit different. If this causes you any worry, you’re welcome to talk to me about it of course. We will be talking about all this as we go along.

(If you want to dig more into this – I think it’s fascinating, and Jesse Stommel writes about it very well – see also his [FAQ](#) and [bibliography](#) about ungrading).

Meanwhile . . . we still have assignments!

Description of assignments

☐ **Assignment #1: Participation**

- This is *participation* and not mere *attendance*. This is a large class so participation doesn’t only mean saying something in the room, it may also mean participating in online activities and small group discussions, and/or engaging in creativity-related chat in the D2L Forums (separate from assignments #2 & #3).
- *This assignment should be assessed by considering:*
Did you show up (except in exceptional circumstances)? Did you participate meaningfully in the activities and discussions?

❑ **Assignment #2: Your creative process (posts in D2L Forums)**

- In between sessions 3–4, in the D2L Forums (the ‘Discussion’ section) you will be asked to make a post – responding to specific prompt questions – about an ongoing creative project that you are already engaged in, or which you can start now.
- In between sessions 6–7, again in the D2L Forums, you should make another post – again, responding to specific prompt questions – reflecting on the progress of the project or thing that you posted about after session 3.
- In between sessions 9–10, again in the D2L Forums, you will do the third and final post – again, addressing specific prompt questions – on the progress of the project you posted about previously.
- *This assignment should be assessed by considering:*
Did you answer the questions? Did your posts offer some insights into your creative process? Were they clearly and engagingly presented?

❑ **Assignment #3: Responding to others in D2L Forums**

- In the week or two *after* you’ve created your own post (so this would be between sessions 4–6, and 7–9, and 10–12), you should provide some thoughtful feedback to at least three other students, about their posts. (So between sessions 4–6, you post feedback to three students, then later between sessions 7–9 you post feedback to three *different* students, and then between sessions 10–12 you post feedback to three more *different* students. So by the end you will have provided feedback to at least nine different students).
- If a post already has three or more responses, please try to find and respond to ones that don’t have so many responses already.
- If you want an indication of how *much* to write . . . well, two or three sentences for each comment is fine.
- The main thing is: don’t just say ‘This was awesome!’ or similar. Of course you can appreciate the work – that’s nice! – but it is essential to provide at least one thoughtful point of constructive feedback for the person to consider.
- *This assignment should be assessed by considering:*
Did you engage thoughtfully with the work of your fellow students? Did you seek to offer engaging, helpful comments?

❑ Assignment #4: Learning journal

- The idea of the learning journal is that you add to it each week, responding to the topic of that session. You will be given a prompt or question each week.
- This will involve language/text/writing — in particular, so that you can address the prompt or question set for each week — but the learning journal is meant to be creatively done, and engaging to look at. You can include drawing, photography, graphics, and whatever you like. But don't give us something that's *purely* visual because we need to hear clearly your response to the weekly topic.
- The journal can be physical or digital. You can make a physical journal, and hand that in. Or you can make a physical journal, but then photograph it and submit a PDF. Or you can make something digital and submit that.
- If you're doing a digital journal — you can decide what this should be (although it can't be something that requires unusual software for us to look at it). You could use Illustrator or InDesign (or something else) to make a nice PDF. Or you might use [Google Slides](#) but treat the slides more like a scrapbook than a bullet-point presentation. You could do a [Wordpress](#) blog. You could make a video. You could embed some audio (e.g. a song) within something, but — sorry — don't do something that's *just* loads of pure audio because it's literally impossible to listen to that much audio. (If each student made just 10 mins of audio a week, that adds up to 105 *hours* of audio in total!)
- We cannot download huge files from students onto our computers, so please ensure that whatever you do sits online to be looked at, rather than requiring a massive download. This is good practice and common sense for when you make something digitally anyway.
- You are bound to ask: How 'much' each week? If you're doing an actual journal, two 'letter' size pages per week would be what we expect (not full of just text though!). Otherwise, you should aim to do the equivalent of that, in whatever medium you're in (in terms of the amount of effort or amount of content). One or two minutes per week of video would be a video of 12–24 mins in total, which sounds about right. Obviously we're interested in the *quality* of response rather than a particular quantity, though. An intensely edited video can pack a lot into a minute, whereas a single-shot video of you talking could go on for quite a long time but may well involve less effort and fewer ideas.
- Your entry each week should connect in some way with what we discussed in class.
- *This assignment should be assessed by considering:*
Does the journal contain interesting reflections on each week's assigned topic or question? Is it engagingly and clearly presented? Does it add up to a meaningful set of reflections or ideas about your creative self?

- Academic Consideration (e.g., extended assignment deadlines, make-up assessments) may be requested on the basis of Extenuating Circumstances (such as health or compassion), and must be supported by a properly completed documentation such as a TMU University PDF Student Health Certificate.

Note: Part of the TMU University Student Health Certificate must be completed by a Regulated Health Professional (RHP).

Requests for Academic Consideration must be submitted to the teaching department for verification via the on-line ACR system within 72 hours of the missed deadline.

<https://www.ryerson.ca/senate/course-outline-policies/academic-consideration-health-policy-134-152/>

- NEW due to COVID-19: Students who miss an assessment due to cold or flu-like symptoms, or due to self-isolation, are currently not required to provide a health certificate. Other absences must follow Senate [Policy 167: Academic Consideration](#).
- Religious or cultural observations accommodations can be requested any time.
<https://www.ryerson.ca/humanrights/religious-cultural-observances/>
- We expect that all communications by e-mail and in person between students, their colleagues, and instructors will be civil and professional as per Senate Policy #61.
- Grades are posted on D2L. Not all materials submitted for marking will be returned, so make extra copies for your records.
- Assignments submitted late, without extension, will result in a penalty of (5% deducted per day, 10% for a weekend). Do not wait until the last moment to submit your work. Allow for technical glitches.
- Students are required to retain a copy of all work undertaken as well as *all rough materials, references, sources, and notes* until the marked original has been returned.
- The professors reserve the right to modify the syllabus and assignments as required over the course of the term, but any changes to the course assignments, due dates, and/or grading scheme will be discussed with the class prior to being implemented.
- The unauthorized use of intellectual property of others, including your professors', for distribution, sale, or profit is expressly prohibited, in accordance with Policy 60 (Sections 2.8, 2.10). Intellectual property in this context includes, but is not limited to: slides, lecture notes, presentation materials used in and out of class, lab manuals, course packs, and exams.

- **Students are expected to show respect for their fellow students:**
 - Arrive on time (*before* 10 minutes after the hour). Be ready to start. The first ten minutes (15.00-15.10pm) are for arriving and making sure everyone's technology is working – but do use this time, because things often aren't quite right at first. Then we start at 15.10pm.
 - Please be respectful of your fellow students. We reserve the right to adjust a student's overall mark if they interfere with their colleagues' learning through pointless disruptive behaviour.

This course is conducted in accordance with all relevant University academic policies and procedures and students are expected to familiarize themselves with them and adhere to them. Students should refer online to for specific information with respect to the following policies:

- [Policy #60:](#) Academic Integrity
- [Policy #61:](#) Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct
- [Policy #135:](#) Final Examinations
- [Policy #157:](#) TMU's E-mail Accounts for Official Communication
- [Policy #159:](#) Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities
- [Policy #166:](#) Course Management
- [Policy #167:](#) Academic Consideration
- And all other [course outline policies](#)

Important Resources Available at TMU

- [The Library](#) provides research workshops and individual assistance. If the University is open, there is a Research Help desk on the second floor of the library, or go to [Workshops](#).
- [Student Learning Support](#) offers group-based and individual help with writing, math, study skills, and transition support.
- [TMU COVID-19 Information and Updates for Students](#) summarizes the variety of resources available to students during the pandemic.
- [TMU COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#)
- For more information on CI Academic Policies & Procedures and links to resources please see: <https://www.ryerson.ca/creativeindustries/academic-advising/>

Wellbeing Support

At Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), we recognize that things can come up throughout the term that may interfere with a student's ability to succeed in their coursework. These circumstances are outside of one's control and can have a serious impact on physical and mental well-being. Seeking help can be a challenge, especially in those times of crisis.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, please call 911 and go to the nearest hospital emergency room. You can also access these outside resources at anytime:

- Distress Line: 24/7 line for if you are in crisis, feeling suicidal or in need of emotional support (phone: 416-408-4357)
- Good2Talk: 24/7-hour line for postsecondary students (phone: 1-866-925-5454)
- Keep.meSAFE: 24/7 access to confidential support through counsellors via My SSP app or 1-844-451-9700

If non-crisis support is needed, you can access these campus resources:

- Centre for Student Development and Counselling: 416-979-5195 or email csdc@ryerson.ca
- Consent Comes First – Office of Sexual Violence Support and Education: 416-919-5000 ext: 553596 or email osvse@ryerson.ca
- Medical Centre: call (416) 979-5070 to book an appointment

You can find more resources available through the [TMU Mental Health and Wellbeing](#) website.

Course objectives

Introduction Reinforcement or Proficiency	By the end of this course, students will be able to:	And in doing so will fulfil the following program learning outcome (at least in part):
Contribute productively to the Creative Industries		
Introduction	Critically analyze and synthesize knowledge of creative processes in relation to cultural, economic, legal, political, and technological contexts	LO 1a- critically analyze and synthesize knowledge of the cultural, economic, legal, political, and technological environments in which the Creative Industries function,
Demonstrate an entrepreneurial capacity		
Reinforcement	Engage in independent learning	LO 2a- engage in independent learning
Facilitate the work of artists, writers, designers and media makers		
Introduction	Apply an integrated knowledge of creative and production processes (both individual and system-based) to facilitate the work of artists, writers, designers and media makers	LO 3a- apply an integrated knowledge of creative and production processes (both individual and system-based) to facilitate the work of artists, writers, designers and media makers
Introduction	Recognize and respond to future challenges and opportunities in their sectors including technological change to facilitate the work of artists, writers, designers and media makers.	LO 3c- recognizing and responding to future challenges and opportunities in their sectors including technological change to facilitate the work of artists, writers, designers and media makers.
Communicate		
Introduction	Verbally communicate within and to creative enterprises, academia and	LO 4a- verbally communicate within and to creative enterprises, academia

	industry effectively and persuasively	and industry effectively and persuasively
Introduction	In written form, communicate within and to creative enterprises, academia and industry effectively and persuasively	LO 4b- in written form, communicate within and to creative enterprises, academia and industry effectively and persuasively
Conduct research relevant to cultural and industry issues		
Introduction	Apply appropriate qualitative tools and methodologies	LO 5c- apply appropriate qualitative tools and methodologies
Apply skills and knowledge		
Introduction	Apply fundamental business and management skills within organizations and as entrepreneurs,	LO 7b- apply fundamental business and management skills within organizations and as entrepreneurs,
Introduction	Integrate an aesthetic sensibility and business acumen to the practical realities of production, promotion, and distribution of commercial or noncommercial cultural products with an understanding of the theoretical and historical underpinnings of one or more creative industry sectors;	LO 7c- integrate an aesthetic sensibility and business acumen to the practical realities of production, promotion, and distribution of commercial or noncommercial cultural products with an understanding of the theoretical and historical underpinnings of one or more creative industry sectors;
Autonomy, Professional Capacity, and Social Responsibility		
Introduction	Consider the place of creative identity within the continuing development of professional skills	LO 8a- Develop a personal plan for continuing development of professional skills and flexible ongoing career paths
Introduction	Act as socially responsible citizens with integrity and strong ethical mores	LO 8b- act as socially responsible citizens with integrity and strong ethical mores
Introduction	Work towards creating diverse and inclusive cultural opportunities accessible to all	LO 8c- Work towards creating diverse and inclusive cultural opportunities accessible to all