



YOUR NOVEL, FROM FIRST WORD TO LAST AND ON TO MARKET

Loft Year-Long Novel Writing Project

Project Leader: Peter Geye | petergeye@msn.com

Thursdays | 6-9 PM CST | Online Via Zoom | all times listed in US Central Time
[Cohort Dates](#)

2026 Year-Long Novel Writing Project - January 2026 Start Cohort

The Loft Literary Center
Project Leader: Peter Geye
Via Zoom

Year-Long Creative Nonfiction Project - Important Dates

Meeting dates

(Calendar is subject to adjustment; specific class dates listed after the workshop description)

[Cohort Dates](#)

YLWP Access Funds Application Window

October 1-November 15, 2025

Loft Access Fund committee chooses top 2-4 candidates; TA ranks recipient and runner-up

Year-Long Writing Project Orientation

Wednesday, January 20, 2026 | 6-7:30 p.m

Online/Zoom

Year-Long Writing Project Registration

November 12 for friends; November 13 for general public

10:00 AM Central Time via website, phone, or email

Final Reading:

Tuesday, January 12, 2027 | 7-8:30 PM

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Your novel, from first word to last and on to market. One year is plenty of time to write a novel. That's the first lesson of this year-long course. The hundred other lessons that follow will take into account everything from how to begin to how to end, and what to do with your novel once you've finished. This online cohort will meet via Zoom for all cohort meetings for the entire year.

Over the course of the next calendar year, we'll write seriously, we'll read like scholars, we'll meet best selling authors, luminaries in publishing, and distinguished booksellers and local literary agents. But most importantly, we'll develop the resources and relationships to move ahead with a writing life once the course is finished.

COURSE BOOKS: *The Dead Lands* by Benjamin Percy
Vacationland by Sarah Stonich
Three Day Road by Joseph Boyden
Station Eleven by Emily St John Mandel
Our Souls at Night by Kent Haruf
The Turner House by Angela Flourney
The Story of My Teeth by Valeria Luiselli

COURSE MEETINGS

This class will meet for two twelve-week terms, one in the winter/spring and one in the fall/winter. We will also meet three times during the summer. Each class meeting will be organized and disciplined, and each participant will be asked to participate fully. The class simply won't work without everyone's engagement.

Our work will range over several topics. To begin, we'll focus on how fiction and its various elements work in concert. We'll also consider the architecture of our projects and begin to work immediately on putting plans into place. The main focus of the course will be workshop-based, but we'll also read and study a series of

novels. The authors of most of these assigned readings will join us for in-class discussions.

During the summer months, we'll focus mainly on the work of writing. In the fall term, we'll begin by focusing on writing, workshoping, and revision, but we'll also move more directly into discussions about the business of writing and publishing. For these purposes, we'll be visited by several industry professionals.

WORKSHOP

The workshops will follow the traditional model. Each student will submit two excerpts for revision during each twelve-week term. Excerpts must be single-sided, double-spaced, in 12-point font, paginated, and not exceed 25 pages. Students will be expected to provide paper copies of their manuscripts for each member of the workshop. Manuscripts will be disseminated the week prior to the scheduled workshop. If a student is absent from class, it is their responsibility to go to The Loft to pick up a copy of the workshop stories for the following class meeting. Extra copies of manuscripts will be left in the instructor's mailbox outside The Loft offices.

VISITING AUTHORS AND PUBLISHING PROFESSIONALS

As stated, several distinguished guests will visit us during the course of the year. The purpose of these visits is to introduce students to enduring works of fiction, the people who wrote them, and the sorts of people who help bring them to the world. These meetings will be largely informal, and include ample opportunity to interact with and ask questions of the guests. Please, do not ever use these meetings as an opportunity to pitch your own work.

Confirmed guests for 2025 include:

- Mona Susan Power
- Kawai Strong Washburn
- Amy Greene

Past Guests Include:

- Laila Lalami
- Rumaan Alam
- Mira Jacob

- Courtney Maum
- Benjamin Percy
- Sarah Stonich
- Emily St. John Mandel
- Joseph Boyden
- Chris Cander
- Shannon Gibney
- Linda LeGarde Grover
- Leif Enger
- Julie Schumacher
- Kaethe Schwehn
- Lorna Landvik
- Richard Blanco
- Diane Wilson

INSTRUCTOR CONSULTATIONS

Each student will be asked to meet individually with the instructor regularly during the course. Meetings will be scheduled as follows: two meetings during winter/spring term, one meeting during the summer, two meetings during the fall/winter term, and one meeting after the course to discuss final submissions. The first of these meetings should take place during the first three weeks of the first twelve-week term. The purposes for these meetings will be wide-ranging, but their primary function is to discuss plans and courses of action for the aspiring novelists.

FINAL MANUSCRIPT CONSULTATION

At the end of the course, students will be expected to submit their final and complete manuscript. The instructor will read each submission and provide a written critique of each novel. The instructor will also conduct a final consultation with each student to present them with the critique. These consultations will extend into February 2026.

PLEASE NOTE: final manuscripts must be properly formatted and bound. Single-sided, double-spaced manuscripts only. Pages must be numbered. Only manuscripts turned in to the instructor on the last day of class will be read for the final consultation. That is to say, it is the responsibility of the student to finish their manuscript by the final class meeting. If a student fails to complete it, the instructor will only read what has been submitted on the final day of class. Please also note that ENROLLING IN THIS COURSE DOES NOT ENSURE PUBLICATION OF YOUR NOVEL.

COMMUNAL WRITING SPACE

Online cohorts have their virtual classroom available to them via Zoom for the duration of their year. These spaces are available for Year-Long Writing participants to utilize at any time for writing and discussion space outside of group cohort meetings.