

David Berry – 2026 Writer in Residence

Manuscript consultation / meeting guidelines

I am open to any and all forms of writing. My professional experience is primarily with creative non-fiction and essays, but I am comfortable and experienced with fiction, poetry, scriptwriting, journalism, journaling, blogging, memoir, game writing and more. My interest is in helping you make the most out of whatever you want to write, and if I cannot help you I can find you someone who can.

If you do not have a specific piece of writing you wish to discuss, but have a question or idea you'd like to explore, I will book you in for 30 minutes. If you are looking for feedback on a piece of writing, I will book you in for at least one hour, and perhaps longer if time permits.

For writing consultations, I will review your work in advance, make notes and then discuss the work with you in person. After we meet, I'll adjust feedback as needed and send you along your manuscript with my full thoughts. Each piece and writer is different but, generally speaking, notes will be made to address issues of style or substance, highlight strong passages and suggest areas that could be explored further; our discussion will primarily focus around questions and digging deeper into the text to explore what you want to say and how you want to say it. Notes made after the fact may include further areas of research or reading. My goal with any consultation is to give you the tools and framework to make the piece as true to your intention, goals and voice as possible.

Please submit no more than 3000 words from any one piece of prose (i.e. short story, novella, novel, memoir, essay, creative nonfiction, etc.). For poetry, please submit up to 4 poems. If you are submitting a script of any kind, please submit one to two scenes approximately 10-15 minutes in length total.

FAQ

What kind of work can I submit?

I am open to any and all forms of writing, in any genre. My professional experience is primarily with creative non-fiction and essays, but I am comfortable and experienced with fiction, poetry, scriptwriting, journalism, journaling, blogging, memoir, game writing and more. My interest is in helping you make the most out of whatever you want to write, and if I cannot help you I can find you someone who can.

What formats can I submit my work in?

Please submit your work in a format that allows digital edits, ideally Microsoft Word or Google Docs. (I may print off work for reading, but I need to be able to share comments with you.)

Please also include your name and contact information directly on your submission, ideally in the header or footer of each page, but at least somewhere on the first page.

How much work can I submit for consultation?

Please submit no more than 3000 words from any one piece of prose (i.e. short story, novella, novel, memoir, essay, creative nonfiction, etc.). For poetry, please submit up to 4 poems. If you are submitting a script of any kind, please submit one to two scenes approximately 10-15 minutes in length total.

What if my submission is longer than the guidelines above?

Please limit yourself to a section or selection that fits in the guidelines. This is simply to ensure that I have the time and space to give your work a full consideration, and that we have the time and space to discuss the work with the depth it deserves (and you are certainly welcome to ask questions about other sections or pieces during our discussion). If your submission does not meet the guidelines outlined above, you will be asked to resubmit your work.

When are your office hours?

I will be in the office and available to meet in person or online every Tuesday from 4pm to 8pm, and every Thursday from 12pm to 3pm. If neither of those times works for you, I may have be available for select times outside my usual office hours; reach out and I will do my best to accommodate you.

How many times can I submit something to the Writer in Residence?

You are welcome to submit your writing multiple times, and welcome to submit the same piece, a different section of a previously discussed work, or something entirely new. To ensure everyone gets a chance, priority will be given to writers who have not yet had a consultation. Unfortunately I cannot guarantee that I will be able to review your work beyond our initial meeting.

Do I need to be a resident of Strathcona County or St. Albert to submit my writing?

All are welcome to submit, but priority will be given to residents of Strathcona County and St. Albert. Everyone is encouraged to check out the programs offered by the Writers in Residence and Guest Artists at the Strathcona County Public Library, St. Albert Public Library and Edmonton Public Library.

Will you consider work generated by AI?

The purpose of the Writer in Residence position is to help humans with the production of written creative works. While AI can be used as a tool in the creative process, the Writer in Residence does not help people who are using AI to substantially create or revise written works. People seeking help with using AI should contact the Library's Tech Help service to learn more about how to use that technology.

Are there any topics, subjects or themes that are off-limits?

Some of the best writing is that which takes on things we might have trouble otherwise talking about, and as such I'm happy to accept work on any topic, subject or theme, including difficult and uncomfortable work. With that said, please be advised that hate speech and harassment are not permitted in either submissions or private meetings.