

2025 Iowa Summer Writing Festival Schedule of Workshops

Weeklong Workshops June 15–20

Venise Berry	Writing the Popular Novel: Key Ingredients
Anna Bruno	Portraying Professional Life in Fiction and Nonfiction
Kelly Dwyer	Revision Bootcamp: Revise Your Novel, Memoir, or Story Collection in a Week
Mieke Eerkens	Researching and Writing Family History
Patricia Foster	Writing the Body
Josh Parkinson	Anatomy of a Scene: The Building Block of Screenplays
William Pei Shih	Taking Care of the Audience: A Fiction Workshop
Clarisse Baleja Saïdi	Writing Homeward: Locating your Fiction and Nonfiction
Zach Savich	Inspiration and Insight: How to Get Started and Keep Going
Katie Jean Shinkle	What's Love Got To Do With It?: Writing About Love
Justin Wymer	Revising Poems for Publication

Weekend Workshops June 21–22

Mary Allen	Travel Writing Made Easy, and It's All Travel Writing
Kelly Dwyer	Building a Real World in Fiction
Mieke Eerkens	Block Party: Break Through Writers' Block and Get Yourself Writing Again
Eric Goodman	Getting It Right in Longform Fiction & Nonfiction: An Advanced Workshop
Madeline McDonnell/ Caryl Pagel	Ficetry Potions!: Finding Poetry in Fiction, Fiction in Poetry, and a Magical Friendship Between Forms
June Melby	A Cavalcade of Memoir Writing Exercises
Kat O'Brien	How to Pitch a Movie or TV Show
Caleb Rainey	Hook, Line, & Sinker: Using Spoken Word Techniques to Capture & Hold an Audience
Clarisse Baleja Saïdi	After Poems and Afterthoughts: The Art of Response in Poetry and Prose
Zach Savich	Playing with Playwriting: What Can It Add Across Genres?
Leslie Schwartz	Fearless Fiction: Moving the Big Idea into Bold and Daring Prose
Kevin Smith	Tell It Queer
Justin Wymer	Letters to Nobody: Writing the Epistolary Poem

Weeklong Workshops June 22–27

Eric Goodman	Writing History: Tricks of the Trade in Historical Fiction and Memoir
Charles Holdefer	The Balancing Act: Narration, Character, and Dialogue in Prose Fiction
Madeline McDonnell	The Summer Book: How to Build a Book out of Fragments, Vignettes, and Other Grand-But-Not-Grandiose Prose Episodes
Thomas Mira y Lopez	Expanding the Personal Narrative
Kat O'Brien	Writing the Feature Screenplay
Caryl Pagel	Chaos & Control: A Poetry Workshop
William Pei Shih	A Taste of the MFA in Fiction
Danielle Roderick	The Mystery of the Mystery: Character & Plot in the Mystery Genre
Leslie Schwartz	Novel Bootcamp: From Writing Prompt to Full-Fledged Narrative
Kevin Smith	Writing in the Danger Zone

Weeklong Workshops July 13–18

Jessica Alexander	Setting: The Art of Writing a World
Mary Allen	Spiritual Writing: Listening to Our Lives
Nancy K. Barry	Making the Middle Flow: Finding Form in Nonfiction
Hope Edelman	The Story Beneath Your Story: Exploring Your Memoir's Deeper Message
Hugh Ferrer	Approaching Revision: An Advanced Fiction Workshop
Diana Goetsch	The Heart of the Poem: Revising and Composing Poetry
Robin Hemley	Writing a Book Proposal for Agents, Editors, or Yourself
Jared Joseph	"You Must Change Your Life": Addressing the "You" in Poetry
Tricia Park	Putting It Together: How to Make Your Book
Suzanne Scanlon	Finding Your Foundation: Memoir Beginnings
Elizabeth Stuckey-French	Your Novel in a Week: How to Start, Keep Going, and Know When You're Done

Weekend Workshops July 19–20

Jessica Alexander	The Anecdotal as Antidote to Finding Your Voice
Kyle Beachy	The Sentence in an Age of Emoji
Karen Bender	Difficult People: Characters You Can't Stop Reading About
Tricia Elam Walker	Dare to Walk in Somebody Else's Shoes: How to Authentically Write about Characters Different from You
Diana Goetsch	Working Against Your Drift: A Generative Workshop for All Genres
Afabwaje Kurian	Fast Drafting: The Art of Speed and Imperfection
James McKean	Writing Triggers: A Workshop for Poems and Prose
Juliet Patterson	Everything You Want to Know About Publishing Poetry
Sarah Saffian	So What's Your (Life) Story?: Memoir in a Nutshell
Suzanne Scanlon	Writing Yourself as a Character
Robert Anthony Siegel	Flash Fiction
Elizabeth Stuckey-French	Saying the Unsayable in Fiction
Deborah Jackson Taffa	The Possibilities of the Essay: An Exploration of Forms and Typologies
Denise Williams	Crafting Chemistry: The Art and Science of Writing Romance

Weeklong Workshops July 20–25

Aamina Ahmad	Larger than Life: Character and Storytelling
Timothy Bascom	Expand Your Essay Horizons: An Introduction to Multiple Forms
Kyle Beachy	The Missing Body: A Generative Workshop Toward More Evocative Prose
Karen Bender	Finding Your Story: A Generative Fiction Boot Camp
Hope Edelman	Writing to Make Sense of the World
Tricia Elam Walker	Small Bodies, Big Minds: The Art of Writing Picture Books
Robin Hemley	Just Kill Me Now: Writing Humor
James McKean	Memoir: Pieces for the Whole
Juliet Patterson	Form and Formlessness: A Poetry Workshop
Sarah Saffian	Who You Looking At?: Bringing Your Profile Subject to Life
Robert Anthony Siegel	Kickstarting Your Novel