

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 201.15 Approaches to Literature

Fall 2016

COURSE TITLE: The Other Side: The Literary Representation of Otherness

M/W 15:30-16:45 SS 109

Instructor: Prof. C. Olbey

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Office hours: Monday 11-12

**Course description:**

Does it ever seem to you that the world we inhabit is increasingly being described in terms of them and us? Have you ever noticed that this basic construction of them and us, self and other, appears in a wide variety of cultural locations from television shows, movies, novels and stories of all kinds, to news and magazine articles, political rhetoric and policies, advertising, police activities, and fundamentalist and extremist positions of all stripes. In all of these areas it appears that the concept and construction of the other and otherness are alive and well. On the other hand, have you ever felt, in some significant way, that you don't fit your society's definition of normal, that you are seen as less, strange, unfamiliar, or a threat because of your presumed difference from some perceived definition of value in terms of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race, class, religion, language, appearance, beliefs, education, physical status (abilities and disabilities), or just the way you dress or cut your hair? If you have, then you have known, more or less, the experience of otherness. Where did this structure of self and other begin? Is this fundamental division an essential and inescapable aspect of human identity? Who or what exactly gets to be an 'other'? What are the possibilities, problematics, or benefits of the attempt to transcend or overcome this way of thinking? This course will explore several different literary approaches to the question of otherness, to see how the concept has functioned in different historical periods, how it has evolved over time, and how it continues to express itself in our contemporary social and historical context. To aid this exploration, the course will have a primary focus on the critical reading of, and critical writing about literature that features a range of commentaries on the experience of others and experiences of otherness.

Texts and readings:

Seamus Heaney.	<i>Beowulf</i>
William Shakespeare.	<i>The Tragedy of Othello</i>
Charlotte Bronte.	<i>Jane Eyre</i>
Ursula K. LeGuin.	<i>The Left Hand of Darkness</i>
Janet Gardner.	<i>Writing About Literature</i>

## **Assignments and Evaluation:**

### 15% Exam #1 (60 minutes)

- Short answer on technical terms and techniques involved in reading and writing about literature

### 15% Short Writing Assignment #1

- 1-2 typed, double-spaced, 12pt font page (approximately 300-400 words) – Essay introduction and thesis statement
- This assignment requires the inclusion of a critical secondary source

### 20% Exam #2 (60 minutes)

- Long answer: Thesis Statement, Explication and Analysis of a literary passage
- Short answer questions on plot, reading, lecture material

### 20% Long Assignment

- minimum 6-7 typed, double-spaced, 12pt font pages (approximately 1500-1800 words)
- Options: 1) Essay 2) Creative writing project 3) Group Presentation

### 30% Registrar scheduled final exam

## **Attendance**

- There is no explicit grade for attendance in this course. However, students should be aware – since each class, in a variety of ways, will develop skills and deliver information needed to score effectively on assignments – that in most cases there is a direct, implicit correlation between attendance and the student’s ability to produce a successful experience in this course. In addition, attendance is one component used at the end of the course “when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.”

## **Participation**

- There is no explicit grade for participation in this course. However, students should be aware that student participation in various ways (questions, comments, discussions, debates, arguments, presentations etc.) will be a key feature and an important tool to facilitate student success in this course. Students are encouraged, but not required, to speak in class and effective participation can be just as much the act of attentive, engaged listening and thoughtful consideration as insightful speaking. Since our readings will lead us into a wide range of critical investigations of social, cultural, historical, aesthetic and political issues, and since the class is a relatively large, diverse group of human beings with different ideas, opinions, arguments and positions on the issues and ideas the stories present, this course will proceed with a fundamental tone of respect, tolerance, and thoughtful consideration of the ideas of others (the instructor for students, students

for the instructor, and students for each other). This guiding tone of respect does not mean that ideas, opinions, and arguments, expressed by students or instructor, cannot be challenged and debated from other positions and through different arguments. Indeed this can and should be an interesting and engaging aspect of our course. It means that when we disagree we try to persuade others through offering a more convincing argument. When students engage this sort of participation they further develop skills required to produce success on assignments and exams. This is one key reason for why, in most cases, there is a direct implicit correlation between participation and the student's ability to produce a successful experience in this course. In addition, participation is one component used at the end of the course "when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades."

### **Assignment Information**

- There is a Registrar scheduled final exam in this course. Term examination dates are available at the following address: (Calendar, Academic Schedule; <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/exam-schedule.html>). Students must be available for examinations up to the last day of the examination period (Dec 12-22).
- Except for reading quizzes, students must complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade for the course.
- There are no 'extra credit assignments in this course.
- Unless specifically directed to do so, there is no electronic submission of assignments.
- All assignments must be handed in at the beginning of the class in which they are due. After this they are considered late.

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (an A- to B+) for each business day [not class] that the assignment is overdue. Please make every effort to take assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the drop box. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.

### **Policy on Electronic Devices**

Over the last few years an increasing number of students report that they find device use for non-class purposes by their peers to be distracting and as an instructor, I find, through much experience, that the distraction is amplified and can negatively affect the class as a whole. While I understand that laptops have become a necessity for many students and accept their use for notetaking or other course tasks, I request that their use be limited to course concerns while we are in class. I further request, as a courtesy to other students and your instructor, that phones be left in your bags or pockets during class lectures and discussions except in cases where course texts are accessed through your phone. I too will adhere to the same policy and will extend the same courtesy and consideration to you by not having my phone out and active for other concerns while we are working in class together.

E-mail: I encourage students to use office hours for questions and course concerns. I check student emails as part of my office hour commitments during the week. This means that I read student email during office hours if no students are present or shortly after office hours during the week. Students should not expect that I have seen emails at any other time. My expectations are that students can email me to notify me of important or emergency situations (family emergencies, accidents, illnesses etc.). Questions and comments about course lectures and discussions are also acceptable, although in most cases I will respond to the question or comment at the beginning of the next class. Students should not assume that email is a substitute for missing class. If you miss class it is your responsibility to get the material from one of your peers and then to bring any further questions or discussions into office hours. Further all questions about writing or format or assignments, or the solicitation of my opinions or suggestions regarding your writing should be stated in class for the sake of efficiency and time management or in office hours.

### **Grading system:**

In this course, your final grade will be marked on the University of Calgary's four-point Undergraduate Grading System, as described in the Calendar: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>

A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

All quizzes and exams will receive a numerical grade to be converted using the following scale:

90 + %	A+	4.0
85 – 89 %	A	4.0
80 – 84 %	A–	3.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3
74 – 76 %	B	3.0
70 – 73 %	B–	2.7
67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
64 – 66 %	C	2.0
60 – 63 %	C–	1.7
55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
50 – 54 %	D	1.0
0 – 49 %	F	0

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the 4-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

**Plagiarism:**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

**Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:**

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events

<http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club>.

Our email address is [smecuofc@gmail.com](mailto:smecuofc@gmail.com).

**English Department Website:**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

**Writing support:**

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

**Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:**

<http://www.enough.utoronto.ca/computeruse/eetiquette.htm>

**Library and Research Support:**

Christie Hurrell, Interim Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: [christie.hurrell@ucalgary.ca](mailto:christie.hurrell@ucalgary.ca).

Find The English Pages research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

**Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:**



**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

**Grade appeals:**

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.” <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

**Deferral of term work and final examinations:**

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>,

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

**Student Accommodations:**

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available

at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf) .

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

**“Safewalk” Program:**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:**

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Arts Students’ Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at

[ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at

<http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

**Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:**

[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

**Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):**

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses ([www.ucalgary.ca/usri](http://www.ucalgary.ca/usri)). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT**

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>)

“The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, . . . , to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community”. The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a “positive and productive learning and working environment.”

This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that “seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff”. Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.