

FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 201, Lecture 05 Approaches to Literature Fall 2016  
COURSE TITLE: How We Tell Our Stories: Storytelling and Narrative in Literature  
M/W/F 12:00-12:50 SA 124A

Instructor: Jess Nicol

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Office hours: Wednesdays 11:00-11:50, or by appointment

Homepage/course website: <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/d2l/home/155380>

**Course description:** Thomas King writes: “The truth about stories is that that’s all we are.” During this course we will immerse ourselves deeply in the stories of a short list of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry writers. These texts are steeped in heartbreak, rage, joy, and hilarity, and explore their topics from a variety of viewpoints. How and why are stories told? What power do they hold? We will interrogate what it means for a story to be “true” and which voices are allowed to tell their stories. The course texts will lead us into discussions about class, race, gender, and other important considerations of literature and the world around us. By participating in this class, students will learn to develop skills in close-reading and essay writing, as well as critical and creative thinking. We will all become better listeners and readers of the stories that surround us.

**Texts and readings:**

**Required Texts:**

Thomas King’s *The Truth About Stories* (storytelling, multi-genre)

Brecken Hancock’s *Broom Broom* (poems)

Tim O’Brien’s *In the Lake of the Woods* (fiction)

Ta-Nehisi Coates’s *Between the World and Me* (non-fiction)

Joan Didion’s *The Year of Magical Thinking* (non-fiction)

\*\*We will also be reading a selection of shorter works by various writers which will be available for students to access online.\*\*

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

**In-Class Test (worth 15% of final grade)**

The in-class test will take place approximately halfway through the course and will include multiple choice and short answer questions about writing techniques and course material up until that time.

**Reading Responses (worth 15% of final grade)**

Students will be required to complete two short reading responses (250 words each, worth 7.5% of the final

grade) in the first half of the semester. These assignments will help students practice reading comprehension and writing skills to prepare for the larger Essay assignment. Students who earn C or less on these assignments will be referred to see the instructor in office hours or to writing resources on campus to address initial difficulties in writing.

Students will choose two works from the first half of our course schedule and use ideas and themes discussed in class to write a response to these texts. These will be handed in at the beginning of class on the agreed upon day for each chosen text and can be short critical or creative responses. More discussion of critical and creative guidelines will take place in class. The instructor will post deadlines for each text, but students are responsible for choosing which dates/texts to engage with.

### **In-Class Activities (worth 15% of final grade)**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and contribute to group discussion about the texts and concepts of the course. Students will be assessed based on in-class exercises which will include a short library assignment designed to introduce students to the University of Calgary research facilities in preparation for their Essay, and multiple choice quizzes testing reading comprehension.

Library Assignment: (worth 5%, pass/fail)

Multiple Choice Quizzes (worth 10%: 6 unscheduled quizzes worth 2% each, lowest grade dropped)

### **Research Essay (worth 35% of final grade)**

Students will write their essay in TWO connected steps:

Step 1: Introduction and Outline (worth 10% of final grade). Following in-class instruction on the basics of writing an essay, students will submit the first part of the essay they intend to write. This one-page section (approx. 250 words) will include an introductory paragraph and thesis statement, plus one quotation from a relevant secondary source they intend to use to support their argument.

Step 2: Once students have received feedback on this first section, they will make necessary revisions and incorporate the changes into a final 1250-word essay (worth 25% of the final grade).

### **Final Registrar-Scheduled Exam (worth 20% of final grade)**

There will be a registrar-scheduled final exam for this course. Students must be available for examinations up to the last day of the examination period (December 12- December 22, 2016).

There will be no extra credit assignments for this course.

Students must complete the In-Class Test, Reading Responses, both Research Essay components, and the Final Exam in order to receive a passing grade on the course.

Students are required to hand assignments in **electronically** via d2l prior to the beginning of class on the indicated due date. Instruction on how to do this will be provided. Students may also hand in paper copies at the beginning of class on the indicated due date if they so choose, in addition to their electronic submission.

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. No assignments will be accepted one week past the assignment deadline without the prior consent of the instructor.

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 dropbox. 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.

### **Grading system:**

In this course, all written assignments will be marked on the University of Calgary's four-point 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 exams and quizzes 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.