

**FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
COURSE OUTLINE**

**ENGLISH 201.L09: APPROACHES TO LITERATURE**

Winter 2019

**Course Title:** Foregone Conclusions

**Class Date and Time:** T/R 3:30-4:45

**Room:** SS129

**Instructor:** Dr. Morgan Vanek

**Office hours:** T/R 2:00-3:00

**E-mail:** morgan.vanek@ucalgary.ca

**Office:** SS1106

**Course description**

This course will examine foregone conclusions: events or outcomes that seem predictable, even inevitable, or the endings we can see coming right from the start. How does a story make one conclusion seem more likely than another, or some conclusions appear to be altogether impossible? What kinds of twists are treated as implausible, and how might an adventurous storyteller encourage us to imagine otherwise? Drawing our examples from contemporary poetry, drama, and a range of prose genres (including literary fiction, science fiction, fairy tales, and horror), we'll begin by learning to identify and explain how these texts set up or challenge our expectations, and we'll compare the different formal strategies we find in our course readings to expose the assumptions at work in the world of each text. In the second half of the semester, we'll look more closely at how our course materials also examine the conditions of contemporary life at their logical (or illogical, or disastrous) conclusions, and we'll use the literary critical vocabulary we've developed to interrogate the alternatives these texts offer to the often quite bad endings that our current ways of being – with each other, and with the planet – seem to guarantee.

By the end of this course, you will be able to recognize and describe the conventions used to establish norms and police plausible outcomes in a wide range of contemporary literary genres, and you will have developed the analytical and argumentative skills you will need to advocate for the alternative endings you'd like to see for the stories we've already set in motion. Please note that this course will require a significant amount of work in small groups or partners.

**Required readings**

- Miller, *Incident at Vichy* (Penguin)
- Marquez, *Chronicle of A Death Foretold* (trans. Rabassa, Vintage)
- Morrison, *The Bluest Eye* (Vintage)
- Crace, *Being Dead: A Novel* (Picador)
- Bacigalupi, *The Windup Girl* (Nightshade)
- Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves* (Dancing Cat Books)

Additional required readings by Thomas King, Adrienne Rich, Angela Carter, Ursula K. Le Guin, Eudora Welty, Rudy Wiebe, Craig Raine, Harryette Mullen, and Ted Chiang will be posted on D2L.

**Recommended readings**

You may also find the following reference guides useful: M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (7<sup>th</sup> ed. or later), and *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.).

## Assignments and Evaluation

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
<b>Writing Assignments</b>		
Assignment #1: Notetaking (500 words)	Jan. 24	10%
Assignment #2: Comparative Essay		
Writing Worksheets (x3) & Consultation	Feb. 25-Mar. 6	10%
Peer Review	Mar. 14-21	5%
Comparative Essay (1250-1300 words)	<i>Comments &amp; rubric:</i> March 30 <i>Rubric only:</i> April 4	25%
<b>Participation &amp; Reflection</b>		
Reading Lab & Reflections (x2)	See syllabus for lab dates	5%
Habits of Mind reflections (2% x 3 + 4%)	Jan. 17, Feb. 14, Mar. 26 Apr. 9	10%
In-class participation	Every day!	5%
Registrar-scheduled exam	TBA	30%

## Assignment details

### Writing Assignments (50%)

*Please note:* Additional instructions and assessment details (rubrics) for each of the following assignments will be provided in class.

#### *Assignment #1: Notetaking (10%)*

During Week 2, you will be introduced to the Cornell Note-Taking System, which you are encouraged to use to organize your notes on both lectures and our course readings throughout the semester. During Week 3, you will be required to use this system to prepare two sets of notes: one on a recorded version of one of our usual lectures, and one on one of the course readings assigned for the week. For this assignment, you will submit both of these sets of notes for feedback. This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade.

#### *Assignment #2: Comparative essay (40%)*

From Weeks 7-12, you will complete your final writing project in three steps.

- During the first half of the term, you will complete a series of worksheets on the following critical skills: close reading; drafting a thesis statement; and comparative analysis. Once you have completed these worksheets, you will use these notes to prepare an outline of your comparative essay and a rough draft of your introductory paragraph. Some time during Week 7 or Week 8, you will bring these materials with you to a brief (15 min.) consultation during my office hours, during which we will discuss your work in progress. Though I will assess your worksheets (for completion), you will use the assessment rubric attached to the instruction sheet for this assignment to evaluate your own preparation for this consultation. Altogether, this portion of this assignment is worth 10% of your final grade.
- Next, during Week 9, you will prepare a full (but still rough) draft of your comparative essay to exchange with another student for review. During Week 10, you will peer review each other's work,

and submit both your comments on your peer's work and your response to the feedback you've received for assessment. This portion of your assignment is worth 5% of your final grade.

- Finally, at the end of term, you'll write a 1250- 1300-word essay comparing two texts that we have discussed together in class. Please note, however, that this assignment has two possible deadlines. If you wish to receive summary comments on your essay in addition to a graded rubric, you must submit your paper by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, March 30. If you are content to receive only a graded rubric, however, you may submit your paper up to one week later (by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, April 4). Note that the late penalty will apply only to papers submitted after 11:59 p.m. on April 4. This portion of your assignment is worth 25% of your final grade.

## **Participation & Reflection (20%)**

### *Reading Labs & Reflections (5%)*

Twice over the course of this term, you are required to attend a Reading Lab. During this 1-hour lab session (location TBC), we will spend approximately 45 minutes completing the reading assigned for this class and approximately 15 minutes discussing critical reading and note-taking strategies. After the lab, you will be required to submit a brief (approx. 150-word) reflection on how your reading practice has changed over the course of the term. Both your participation and this reflection will be marked for completion. There will be four Reading Labs scheduled over the course of the term, and you are welcome to attend any two that suit your schedule. This assignment is worth 5% of your final grade.

### *Habits of Mind Reflections (10%)*

Four times during the term, you will be invited to complete a short reflection on how (or whether) the critical tools and approaches we're testing in class have changed the way that you think about and engage with literature. Each of these reflections should be submitted via D2L by or before the deadline listed on the syllabus.

Each reflection will be marked out of 2 (Excellent – 2; Complete – 1; Incomplete – 0). The first three of these reflections will be worth 2% each, and the last is worth 4%. An assessment rubric and additional instructions for this assignment will be provided in class.

### *In-class participation (5%)*

This portion of your participation grade will be based on your contributions to our in-class discussion. You will not be penalized for being absent, but just showing up is not a sufficient contribution to the class. Evidence of active and substantial engagement in this course will include: making comments that consistently demonstrate careful thought and creative analysis; listening actively and responding thoughtfully to your peers; contributing to cooperative argument-building by attempting to synthesize discussion and relate new readings to prior course material; and arriving fully prepared with specific questions and ideas to share during each class. To make the most of our time together, please bring your books with you to class.

## **Exam (30%)**

The final exam will be scheduled by the registrar, which means that you must be available up until the last day of the Winter term exam period (April 15-27). The exam will also be cumulative, and though you will have the opportunity to choose which terms and passages to address in your written answers, the exam will not be open-book.

## Policies & Guidelines

### Respectful Classroom Conduct

In order to create an atmosphere conducive to respectful conversation and the free exchange of ideas, please be considerate of your peers. We expect you to arrive on time and prepared for class, to keep from interrupting one another, and to give your full attention to our discussion. Rudeness, derogatory language, or personal attacks are not permitted. Also, you are welcome to take notes on a laptop, but please be mindful about your use of electronic devices in class. Checking social media sites, sending personal messages, and participating in other online activities unrelated to class distracts both you and the people around you – so unless the whole class has been asked to log on to D2L as part of a specific course activity, please use your laptop only for word processing or accessing our readings, and keep your cell phone stowed in your pocket or bag.

### Talking (and Writing) About Difficult Subjects

Some of the texts assigned for this course – and many of our in-class discussions – will ask you to think critically about the literary treatment of racialized violence, sexual coercion, and other forms of structural violence and oppression. If you find this work especially uncomfortable, or you would like to talk privately about how literary critics learn to engage with material that we find personally difficult to read, I hope that you will visit my office hours. In the meantime, please remember that each member of our course will bring different experiences with this material into the classroom – so let's approach each of our class discussions with patience and respect for one another, and do our best to take care of ourselves.

### Office Hours & Email

All updates regarding readings or changes to the schedule will be posted on D2L. Whenever possible, however, I prefer to discuss course business in person during office hours, so I hope you will visit me during the twice weekly office hours that will take place just after our class meetings (Tues. and Thurs., 2:00-3:00 p.m.), or email me to set up an appointment. You will be able to find me in room SS1106 (down the hallway to the left of the elevators).

If you have a brief question about course business that has not been addressed on the syllabus, you are also welcome to email me. Please use your University of Calgary email address and put the course code [ENGL201] in your subject heading to ensure a prompt reply. Note, however, that I do not check my email regularly after 7:00 p.m. or on weekends. For additional advice about professional communication, please refer to the resources posted on D2L.

### Late Assignments

All assignments must be submitted via D2L as either a Word document (.doc) or PDF (.pdf) by or before 11:59 p.m. on the day that they are due.

For all written assignments, the late penalty is 2% per business day (up to a maximum of 5 business days, after which point the assignment will receive a mark of 0). There are no extensions. In the case of serious illness, please email me as soon as possible to discuss an alternate submission date, and plan to submit **appropriate documentation** along with your assignment. Late assignments should also be submitted online as a PDF (.pdf).

### 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, you must complete an Application of Deferment of Term Work form. For more information, refer to [the University Calendar site on the Deferral of Final Examinations. See Calendar.](#)

### **Grading system**

In this course, all essays, midterms, and exams will receive a numerical grade, which can be converted to the [University of Calgary's four-point Undergraduate Grading System](#) 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

*Notes:* 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. Also, although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, I will use this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

Students do not need to complete every assignment in order to pass this course.

### **Grade appeals**

Consult [the University Calendar site on the Reappraisal of Grades](#) 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.”

### **Academic regulations and schedules**

Consult [the University Calendar](#) for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities.

Plagiarism, even where it is unintentional, is a serious academic offense. 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 [here](#).

### **Department of English Statement on Principles of Conduct**

According to [the University Calendar](#), "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.

## **Accessibility Services**

If you have a disability or any other concern about your ability to fully participate in this class, please contact Student Accessibility Services at (403) 220-8237 or refer to [this website](#) for their hours and location. If you require accommodations related to your coursework based on a protected ground other than disability, the University [Student Accommodation Policy](#) requires you to communicate this need in writing. If you contact Student Accessibility Services using the information listed above, their counselors can help you process the request and issue letters of accommodation to your instructors.

## **Academic and Personal Counseling**

University can be a stressful time. If you are experiencing difficulty adjusting to university life, coping with anxiety or depression, or just want help developing good time- and stress- management skills, please contact [the Wellness Centre](#) to set up an appointment. Alternatively, you can work on your note-taking, essay writing, and exam preparation skills at [the Student Success Centre](#).

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

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at (403) 220-5881 or visit them 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. You can also visit [the Faculty of Arts website](#) for more detailed information on common academic concerns. You can reach the Student Ombudsman's Office [here](#).

## **Writing Centres**

Learning to write well is an important part of this course, and I hope to provide you with plenty of support in this effort. If you feel like you would benefit from additional support, however, please consult [the Writing Support section](#) of the Student Success Centre website for a list of online and workshop writing supports for University of Calgary students.

## **Library and Research Support**

You can find the English library and research guide [here](#). Melanie Boyd, Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. You can contact here at [maboym@ucalgary.ca](mailto:maboym@ucalgary.ca).

## **English Department Website**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please visit the department's [website](#). Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals, so you 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. You can also follow the Department of English on [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#).

## **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. SMRWC also strives 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. You can contact SMRWC at [smecuofc@gmail.com](mailto:smecuofc@gmail.com).

**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)

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points**

In the event of an emergency during our class, please assemble at one of the locations identified [here](#). The Social Science – Food Court is the Assembly Point closest to our classroom.

**“Safewalk” Program**

Day or night, you can contact **Campus Security** at (403) 220-5333 for assistance or an escort through the “Safewalk” Program. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**

As a publicly funded institution, the University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* (FOIP) Act in all aspects of its operations as a publicly funded institution. For more information, please contact [the Legal Services office](#).

**Contact Information**

For notes & emergencies, please collect the contact information for two other members of the class here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_