



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY  
FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department Of English

COURSE OUTLINE

ENGL 203 L01: Introductory Seminar Winter '23

<b>Course Title</b>	Unreliable Narrators <b>Modality:</b> In person
<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	Tu/Th 12:30-1:45 pm <b>Room:</b> SS1153
<b>Instructor</b>	Professor Halpern
<b>Email</b>	fhalpern@ucalgary.ca
<b>Web Page</b>	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
<b>Office Hours</b>	Wed, 2:00-3:00 pm, over Zoom. <a href="https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/99918829355?pwd=SmtrSUc0WEttTnJ6ODhEWE04OGIvUT09">https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/99918829355?pwd=SmtrSUc0WEttTnJ6ODhEWE04OGIvUT09</a> Passcode 042269 Meeting ID: 999 1882 9355 If you can't make it then, feel free to email Dr. Halpern to set up an alternative time.

**Course Description**

How can you tell an unreliable narrator from a trustworthy one? How does unreliable narration work differently in fiction versus film? This class will study the phenomenon of the unreliable narrator in order to introduce key literary concepts and enable students to practice close reading and constructing university-level arguments about literary texts. This is an interactive course--not a lecture course--where students share and hone their ideas about the course material in class discussions, small group work, discussion board posts, and essays. It's intended to equip English majors and minors with concepts and skills to help them progress through the degree.

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Explain the phenomenon of unreliable narration using key literary concepts;
- Close read passages and use their close readings as evidence in their essays;
- Build on the ideas of their peers and professional literary scholars both informally and formally, in oral and written contexts;
- Cite sources correctly and understand the thinking behind the rules;
- Revise (rather than just copy-edit) their essays and provide peers with helpful feedback on their work;
- Write sentences that are error-free and use sophisticated punctuation.

**Course Texts and Readings**

The following texts are available at the University of Calgary Bookstore in print and (where available) e-book formats:

Emma Donoghue, *Room* (Little Brown)

Kazuo Ishiguro, *Remains of the Day* (Ballantine)

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The film *The Sixth Sense* is available for rent or streaming (more details on how to access it on the reading schedule)

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Additional primary readings by Thomas King, Edith Wharton, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Colson Whitehead, and others as well as critical readings are available on D2L.

### **Learning technology requirements**

You will need regular access to a computer in order to use our D2L site, which contains required readings and other class materials (see [d2l.ucalgary.ca](http://d2l.ucalgary.ca)) and is where you will turn in all of your assignments. You will also need to either print or arrive with access to an electronic copy of all readings posted on D2L.

### **Assessments and Evaluation**

#### **Quizzes 10%**

A major goal of this class is to foster critical thinking and discussion skills within a collaborative environment. In order for us to have a high-level discussion, it is necessary that you come to class having prepared the readings. Throughout the semester, there will be between six and eight unannounced reading quizzes, given at different times during the class session. There will be no make-up quizzes; instead, I will drop your lowest quiz score.

#### **“Interpreting an Aspect of a Text” Essay, Workshop Letters, Draft, and Cover Letter 25%**

For the first of the two essays you’ll write for this class, you’ll illuminate, in 900-1000 words, an aspect of one of the fictional texts we read—a passage, a scene, a character, or an effect—by building on or modifying an idea from class or the discussion board. More details and rubric will be posted on D2L.

#### **“Entering a Critical Conversation” Essay, Draft, and Cover Letter 35%**

In this 1600-1800 word essay, you will use two published critical articles in order to develop and support your own debatable claim about a literary text. More details and rubric will be posted on D2L.

#### **Drafts & Cover Letters for Your Two Essays**

Each of the two essays will be preceded by a draft and accompanied by a cover letter. Drafts take the pressure off you to get everything perfect the first time; cover letters help you get to know yourself as a writer. You will receive feedback on your drafts from your classmates. Drafts will not be graded although you must turn the draft in on time. It must be roughly the same length as the revision and not written in outline form. Late drafts will result in grade penalty on the revised essay: 1/3 grade for every day late, including weekend days. Your cover letter will answer a series of questions that ask you to reflect on what went well and where you struggled. Cover letter directions will be posted on D2L.

#### **Prep for the Essays: Workshops, Workshop Letters, and the Critical Annotation 10%**

To help you go from the draft of your two essays to the revision, we'll have two peer workshops. For each of them, you'll write letters to the members of your workshop group responding to their drafts. If you need to miss a workshop, you can still receive partial credit by writing workshop letters and e-mailing your letters to your workshop group and Dr. Halpern before the workshop. Another form of preparation pertains to the second essay, which asks you to enter into a critical conversation, a crucial move for English students to be able to make. To help you do this, you will be asked to summarize two critical articles and propose ways to build on or modify something the author says. Directions about preparing for the workshops and the critical annotation will be posted on D2L.

### **Discussion Board Posts 10%**

The class discussion board will provide a forum apart from class discussion to explore the literature we read and find and test out ideas for your essays. Posts will not be individually graded but given either credit or no credit according to whether they meet a set of guidelines and deadlines whose details will be given out in class. If you write three posts that fulfill the requirements, you'll receive a "B" for this portion of the grade; if you write five or more posts that meet the requirements, you'll receive an "A" for this part of the grade. You must put up two posts before term break begins (Feb. 19), and only one can be posted the last week of class. More details will be posted on D2L.

### **In-Class Participation 10%**

This class is based on the model of building on people's ideas to get to new insights and deeper analyses of literary texts. One way that can happen is in our class discussions. Starting the week of Jan 24<sup>th</sup>, if you contribute at least once in 18 classes or more (and attend the entire class), you will receive at A for this requirement. If you contribute at least once in between 15-17 classes (and attend the entire class), you will receive a B, etc. A contribution can take different forms: an oral comment or question; a response to a prompt on TopHat; active participation in a small group writing exercise. More details will be posted on D2L.

There is no registrar-scheduled final examination in this class.

### **Late and Missed Assignments**

Every student is allowed to take up to a two-day extension on any one written assignment, other than essay drafts, which need to be turned in on time to enable your peers to give you feedback, as long as you let Dr. Halpern know you are taking it at least twenty-four hours before it's due. After you use up your extension, late assignments will result in a 1/3 grade deduction for every day late, including weekend days. Essays that are more than a week late will not receive credit unless you've received prior permission from Dr. Halpern.

All assignments will be submitted online, to our D2L site. There are no extra credit assignments in this class.

### **Attendance and participation expectations**

Students are expected to attend regularly and to be fully present and engaged in class activities. Preparedness and participation will be assessed by the reading quizzes and the in-class participation requirement.

### **Missed classes**

Certainly, emergencies arise, or you might become ill at some point in the semester. I recommend that you exchange contact information with a class “buddy” who can provide you with notes and information in case of your absence. There are also a variety of policies, like the automatically dropped quiz, to make sure you can do well in the class even if you need to miss a class or two.

### **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 to give your full attention to the discussion. Also, keep in mind that we all bring a diversity of knowledge, lived experiences, and blind spots to the table. Engaging in lively discussion and debate is one of the most rewarding parts of the university experience; we’ll establish class norms together, but please remain collegial at all times when interacting with your fellow students and professor, even if you find yourselves disagreeing. Racist, sexist, homo/queer/transphobic, or otherwise inflammatory remarks will not be tolerated in the classroom; however, it will not be assumed they were made knowingly or intentionally.

### **Policy on Use of Electronic Devices**

It’s recommended that whenever possible, you go analog during class. That said, it’s fine to use your computer for note-taking, accessing the readings, or doing a particular class activity that requires it. Checking social media sites, sending personal messages, and participating in other online activities unrelated to class distracts both you and the people around you. Please keep your cell phone in your pocket or bag unless there’s a specific class activity it’s needed for and you don’t have a computer.

### **Grading System:**

You will receive both letter grades and percentages. In calculating final marks, letter grades are converted to percentages using the English-department conversion table.

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

- Students need to receive passing grades on both essays on all written components of the course to receive credit for the course.
- Final grades are not rounded up.
- Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that far exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

- The interpretation of the undergraduate university grading system can be found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1-1.html>

### **Academic Integrity**

This course, like all courses at the University of Calgary, holds students to high standards of honest and responsible scholarship. Please consult the [Academic Integrity website](#) for a detailed description of university policies, which will be enforced in this course. Cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Associate Dean of Arts for a ruling.

Plagiarism is a type of academic misconduct. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of another person as their own. Another equally serious form of plagiarism occurs when a student submits something they have written themselves for credit in two or more courses without first securing written permission from all those course instructors. Consequences for plagiarism include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense.

### **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](#) must be completed. It is the student's responsibility to initiate this process with the instructor. The University also has regulations governing the [deferral of final examinations](#).

### **Grade appeals:**

To pursue a Reassessment of Graded Term Work or a Reappraisal of an Academic Assessment, Consult the [University Calendar](#) and request advice from the English Department at [engl@ucalgary.ca](mailto:engl@ucalgary.ca). Please note that mere dissatisfaction with a grade is not sufficient grounds for an appeal.

### **[English Department Website:](#)**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English.

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

The [Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club](#) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. Our email address is [smecuofc@gmail.com](mailto:smecuofc@gmail.com).

### **Writing support:**

[The Student Success Centre](#) offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

### **[Academic regulations and schedules](#)**

### **Student Academic Accommodations:**

The Student Accessibility Services website is available [here](#). University accommodation policies can be found at the following links:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-1.html>  
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6.html>  
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/b-6-2.html>

**Program Advising and Student Information Resources** is done through the Faculty of Arts Students' Centre. Office location: SS102; phone: 403-220-3580; email: [ascarts@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca)  
Website: <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>

### **Instructor's Intellectual Property**

Course materials created by instructors, including presentations, posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams, remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

### **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy**

Student information will be collected in accordance with usual classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty and teaching assistants. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

### **Sexual violence policy:**

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Sexual-and-Gender-Based-Violence-Policy.pdf>

### **Other important information:**

- [Wellness and Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Student Success](#)
- [Student Ombuds Office](#)
- [Student Union \(SU\) Information](#)
- [Graduate Students' Association \(GSA\) Information](#)
- [Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points](#)
- [Safewalk](#)

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

Please participate in [USRI Surveys](#) toward the end of the course. The feedback they provide helps us evaluate teaching, enhance student learning, and guide students as they select courses.