



**FACULTY OF ARTS
Department Of English**

COURSE OUTLINE

**ENGL 203: Introductory Seminar
Winter 2023**

Class Schedule: MW 9:30-10:45, Social Sciences 1153

Instructor	Dr. Kit Dobson
Email:	christopher.dobson@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	MW 11-12 or by appointment in Social Sciences 1028

Course description (calendar):

A seminar on a special topic, emphasizing critical reading and writing. This course prepares students for advanced undergraduate studies in English.

Course description (course-specific):

Welcome to English 203: Introductory Seminar! This course is designed to introduce you to the study of English in a post-secondary context and to set you up for your future studies as an English major. Each section of English 203 is themed. This section of English 203 focuses on the local – literatures produced in and about the province of Alberta – in order to set us up to consider in depth what it may mean to study literatures in this place. What are the stakes of reading here and now? What happens when we learn to witness interactions between literature, this land, and the discipline of English? While we narrow our focus to this specific theme, we will maintain significant breadth in terms of genre, as we incorporate fiction, non-fiction, graphic narratives, and poetry into our studies.

English 203 takes place at the University of Calgary. The University's main campus is situated in the city of Calgary, which is known as Mohkintsis in the Blackfoot language. The University is situated in Treaty 7 territory, a treaty signed in 1877 between representatives of the British Crown and the Blackfoot or Niitsitapi Confederacy (Siksika, Pikani, and Kainai Nations), the Stoney Nakoda Nations (Wesley, Bearspaw, and Chiniki), and the Tsuut'ina Nation. Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta, region 3. The University is only here, then, due to treaty relationships established in 1877. This fact alone shapes the learning that takes place in this course, in that this is a place of ongoing Indigenous presence. It is a place marked by story long

before the province of Alberta was created in 1905, and this knowledge will profoundly influence the directions that our conversations will take.

As we get down to work on these questions and issues, I want to note that the texts that we examine in this course are sometimes challenging ones. The writers whom we study take on difficult issues including racism, sexism, homophobia, and sexual violence. The texts that we study negotiate historical and contemporary problems that are, in this course, quite literally close to home. If you find our course materials upsetting at any point, I encourage you to feel welcome to reach out to me and / or to seek appropriate supports. I look forward to working together to make it be the best possible experience for us all!

Course learning outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. engage in the practice of close reading, which, among other things, requires a student to realize that a text is constructed, and not a transparent reflection of reality;
2. use technical terms and critical tools with which to interpret texts;
3. write a strong, well-supported, clearly written academic essay. This practice includes focusing on writing as a process that involves both various stages of composition and learning how to create effective arguments;
4. use proper documentation and avoid plagiarism;
5. deploy library research skills: search and locate reference works, books and articles, both electronic and print; access and use scholarly resources and databases; and use print and online resources responsibly and thoughtfully;
6. engage with other scholars by responding to critical texts;
7. value and build upon each other's ideas by actively fostering discussion; and
8. foster collegiality and scholarly consultation, accomplished through small group class work or projects as well as individual consultations between instructors and students.

Texts and readings:

Beaton, Kate. *Ducks*. Drawn & Quarterly, 2022.

Bickersteth, Bertrand. *The Response of Weeds: A Misplacement of Black Poetry on the Prairies*. NeWest P, 2020.

Goto, Hiromi. *Chorus of Mushrooms*. 20th anniversary edition, NeWest P, 2014.

King, Thomas. *Borders*. HarperCollins, 2021.

Wharton, Thomas. *Icefields*. Landmark edition, NeWest P, 2021.

Additional required readings listed on the course schedule will appear via D2L.

Supplementary reading: I always recommend knowing the *MLA Handbook* thoroughly in its current edition.

Learning technology requirements:

There is a D2L site for this course which contains key class resources and materials (see d2L.ucalgary.ca).

Assessments and Evaluation:

Student results for this iteration of English 203 will be determined via the following assessments:

1. Close reading responses: 15% (3 x 5%)
2. Critical source analysis: 20%
3. Final essay proposal: 10%
4. Essay work-in-progress sessions: 20% (2 x 10%)
5. Final essay: 35%

Close reading responses (3 x 5% = 15%): three times during the semester you will write a response, using the tools of close reading, that responds to up to one page of text or poem from any of our assigned primary texts. Expected length: up to 250 words per response. **Due date: January 25 for the first one; the second and third are to be completed when you choose, but by the final date of class on April 10.**

Critical source analysis (20%): early in the semester, we will read and discuss two peer-reviewed secondary sources that focus on one of our primary texts (Thomas Wharton's *Icelfields*). Your task will be to write a critical analysis of one of these two secondary sources. Your analysis will seek to understand how, rhetorically and intellectually, your chosen source functions. Expected length: 500-750 words. **Due date: February 13.**

Final essay proposal (10%): you will write a brief proposal for your final essay, which may take the form of an abstract. This proposal will respond to the full guidelines for the final essay. Expected length: up to 250 words. **Due date: February 27.**

Essay work-in-progress sessions (2 x 10% = 20%): on two dates later in the semester we will devote class time to better understand writing as a process by working in small groups to consider elements of essay writing. You will be evaluated on your participation and your response to a series of prompts to be shared during those sessions. **Due date: March 15 and April 3.**

Final essay (35%): you will complete a final essay that builds on your essay proposal and incorporates your learning from our work-in-progress sessions. This essay will function as the final summative assessment for our course. Expected length: 1500-2000 words. **Due date: April 12.**

Late assignments: Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a 3% for each calendar day (not class meeting) that the assignment is overdue. No assignments will be accepted one week past the assignment deadline without prior consent.

Additional notes: Please see the detailed assignment guidelines for each assignment for additional details and explanations (posted to D2L). Note that there is no registrar-scheduled final exam for this course. Students should submit their work electronically via D2L's dropbox in .docx or .pdf format.

Attendance and participation expectations:

Please plan to attend class. English 203 is a seminar class for English majors and it will be very useful to you in your degree. We will develop a series of interconnected discussions over the course of the semester, and missing these discussions will negatively impact your understanding of the material that we are studying and your future success. While there is no formal participation grade, do know that attendance is a basic expectation of this course. Should you miss class, too, please note that I will not be able to catch you up to our conversations either during office hours or via email.

Conduct:

Students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment. As members of the University community, students, employees, and academic staff are expected to demonstrate conduct that is consistent with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found at:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Policy on use of electronic devices:

The use of laptop and mobile devices in class is acceptable when used in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. Please refrain from accessing websites and resources that may be distracting to you or to other learners during class time. Students are responsible for being aware of the University's [Internet and email use policy](#).

Grading System:

This course uses the following standard grading scale:

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

Please note the following:

- Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, I 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>
- There is no registrar-scheduled final examination for this course.
- There is no D- grade.
- There are no extra credit assignments available in this course.
- Students need not pass any particular assessment in order to pass this course.
- In calculating final grades, students must have surpassed the minimum grade threshold to qualify for any letter grade — that is, grades will never be rounded up into the nearest grade category even if very close to that minimum threshold.

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. 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.

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
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.

COVID-19:

The ongoing global pandemic remains in a fluid situation as the semester begins. Please note that this course will adhere to the University of Calgary's COVID-19's policies and practices throughout the semester. In this context, it is important for us to take care of ourselves and of one another. Please do not hesitate to be in touch should COVID-19 or illness impact your studies and I will do my best to ensure that your progress in our course is not hindered.