



**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**Department Of English**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**ENGL 251-08: LITERATURE AND SOCIETY**  
**Fall 2022, Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30-1:45 PM, SA 129**

**Instructor:** Kaitlyn Purcell  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 2-3 PM  
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**Office:** SS 1130

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**Radical & Resurgent, from *Jonny Appleseed* to *Ubu Roi***

**Course Description**

Injustices in society become the seeds for revolutionary forms of creativity. In the last decade, we are fortunate to experience what some might call an Indigenous Renaissance. Indigenous artists, poets, storytellers, scholars, scientists, creatives, are all becoming more and more represented across all forms of media. We can begin to look at a history of the world around us by exploring some of the most radical and boundary-breaking storytellers and theorists, as well as those literary movements that have inspired contemporary Indigenous artists. This course incorporates Indigenous ways of knowing, one being structurally through defying conventions of linearity. We will start with Indigenous scholars and scientists, before exploring histories of non-Indigenous literary revolutionaries whose work, in many ways, galvanized the creative processes of contemporary Indigenous artists.

In 1956, the American writer Allen Ginsberg published the poem “Howl” which led to an obscenity trial due to the depiction of straight and gay sex. Ginsberg won his defense and became one of the most influential writers from the Beat Generation, alongside his prolific friends Jack Kerouac and William Burroughs, among others. We will be exploring contemporary Indigenous writers and artists that are in some cases, such as Jordan Abel and Joshua Whitehead, were explicitly influenced by the Beat Generation. We will look at other instances where Indigenous peoples have created works of art (whether that’s music or film) that generally shook the core of creative practices.

These early literary movements began as artistic impulses to defy societal conventions. Some of the central issues in these movements are around sexual liberation and equality. The raw, real, and sensual. We could say that they were decolonizing sexuality, sexual sovereignty, and the erotic.

These movements have been called absurd, avant-garde, or experimental. In the case of Alfred Jarry's 1896 play, *Ubu Roi*, it sparked a riot and heated debate between socioeconomic classes. But this play was also highly influential in artistic literary movements, from the absurd to the avant-garde. The nonconventional becomes radicalized and revolutionary.

Today, we have what Indigenous scholars have been calling Indigenous resurgence. The ideas behind this phrase have been contemplated and embodied for generations by elders, scholars, and artists. We will be exploring what Leanne Betasamosake Simpson calls "Kwe as Resurgent Method":

"At its core, kwe as method is about refusal. It is about refusing colonial domination, refusing heteropatriarchy, and refusing to be tamed by whiteness or the academy. [...] Within Nishnaabewin, refusal is an appropriate response to oppression, and within this context it is always generative; that is, it is always the living alternative" (*As We Have Always Done* 33).

*As We Have Always Done* will be one of the foundational texts in our course before we begin the study of the radicalized, the rule breakers, experimental, and avant-garde. We will be surveying the works of Indigenous scholars and artists that discuss what it means to be an Indigenous person studying and creating artwork in the world today. Through the duration of this course, each of you will develop your own inherent strengths and methodologies for researching literature and literary movements, and to develop your own voice as a writer and academic.

I will be assigning chapters or excerpts from the assigned books, and many of the digital texts and materials are shorter works written primarily by Indigenous authors. These texts have been chosen to help support your study of radical and resurgent Indigenous brilliance. Please be aware that several of these texts may contain sensitive subject matter. I will provide content warnings in advance.

Each class will be a space for lectures, group discussions, and writing exercises. The classroom will be a space for nurturing a sense of reciprocity, community, creativity, and restorative conversations centered around the weekly readings, film, and/or media. We will aim to create a classroom where we can share, learn, and grow together over the course of the semester.

I will hold an office hour every week on Tuesday from 2-3 PM. Students are encouraged to attend office hour with any questions they may have regarding the course readings and/or assignments.

It is quite possible that, there may be a time when you cannot come to class due to illness or other unforeseen circumstance. If and when this happens, please contact me and we will make a plan to keep you involved in the work of the course.

The course is designed to develop students' skills in critical reading and effective, logical writing. Students will produce at least 2000 words of formal, academic writing during the semester. Finally, there will be a registrar-scheduled exam. Only ISAP students can take this course. There are no prerequisites.

### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate a holistic understanding on a range of critical and creative literary writings from Non-Indigenous, Indigenous, Inuit, and Metis authors.
2. Understand and interpret literary texts in relation to their historical and cultural contexts.
3. Learn how to write a strong, well-supported, and clearly written academic essay, which involves introducing students to the notion of writing as a process that requires multiple stages of composition.
4. Learn how to cite sources according to MLA style and learn about what constitutes plagiarism.
5. Develop library research skills: how to search and locate reference books and articles (both electronic and in print), and how to use print and online resources responsibly and thoughtfully.
6. Engage in meaningful conversations about literature with peers.

### **Texts and Readings**

Books available for purchase at UCalgary Bookstore:

Abel, Jordan. *NISHGA*

Drew Hayden, Taylor. *Me Artsy*.

Howard, Liz. *Letters in a Bruised Cosmos*.

Pekar, Harvey, et al. *The Beats: A Graphic History*.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. *As We Have Always Done*.

simpson, jaye. *it was never going to be okay*.

Whitehead, Joshua. *Jonny Appleseed*.

Writing and talks accessed digitally through UCalgary Library, D2L, or elsewhere:

Abel, Jordan. "A Line Can Be Drawn: An Interview."

Bellamy, Dodie. "Cunt Norton."

Caetano, Cody. "The Shadow Land: Indigenous Memoirs and the Question of 'Trauma Porn'."

Donald, Dwayne. "We Need a New Story: Walking and the *wâhkôhtowin* Imagination."

Howard, Liz. "Against Assimilation I Rose into Poetry."

Huard, Adrienne. "The Vibrational Effects of Indigenous Burlesque." *Canadian Art*.

Mackay, James, and Polina Mackay. "Nasdijj and Jordan Abel Remixing William S. Burroughs: Considering the Legacy of Beat Generation Writings in Twenty-First Century Indigenous Literature."

Maracle, Lee. "Bobbi Lee, Indian Rebel."

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. "caribou ghosts & untold stories."

Audio/visual media accessed digitally:

Bas, Hernan. "Hernan Bas: Excerpt from *Miami Heights*." (*documentary*)

*Canada Reads 2021* (series)

Cardinal, Rob. "Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science." (YouTube)

Little Bear, Leroy. "Blackfoot Metaphysics 'Waiting in the Wings'" (YouTube)

*The Fast Runner* (film)

"F\*ckin' Rez Dogs." *Reservation Dogs*. (series)

"Reservation Thots." *Food 4 Thot*. (podcast)

*RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World* (documentary)

simpson, jaye. "Let Me Speak: Providing Safe LGBTQ2+ Resources for Youth in and From Care." (keynote talk)

Tagaq, Tanya. "Tongues" and "Teeth Agape" (music videos)

Experiential texts (optional):

Kablusiak. *Mitaaqtuaqtunga*. The Bows.

Houle, Robert. *Red is Beautiful, Misquah Onesheshen*, Contemporary Gallery.

*Indigenous Science Night*. TELUS Spark, 21 October 2022.

### **Learning Technology Requirements**

While our class will be in-person, please be prepared to have access to a laptop computer, tablet, or phone during class time. There is a D2L site for this course which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials (see [d2L.ucalgary.ca](https://d2l.ucalgary.ca)).

### **Assignments and Evaluation**

*Assignment outlines will be posted on D2L.*

Participation: 10%

First Journal Portfolio: 10%

First Essay: 15%

Second Essay: 25%

Second Journal Portfolio: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

### **Additional Regulations**

- Submit all assignments to D2L as a .pdf document. Any creative portions of assignments that cannot be submitted on D2L should be submitted in class, or by email, on the deadline date.
- Assignments will follow MLA formatting, except for creative portions.
- Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized 2% each day late and will not be accepted a week past the due date. If you cannot make the deadline due to unforeseen circumstances, please email me to make a request for a deferred deadline.
- All assignments do not have to be completed to receive a passing grade. However, failure to attend the final examination or to submit the essay assignments will make passing the course extremely difficult.
- There will be no extra-credit assignments in 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.
- If you feel unwell, please email the instructor and refrain from attending in-person instruction. If I feel unwell, I will notify the class immediately and move class to Zoom until I receive a negative test result.
- The final exam is a registrar scheduled exam, and it is not open book. You may bring a single piece of paper with notes. Final exams are held from December 10 to December 21, and students must be available during this time.

**Attendance and participation expectations:**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions. If you must miss a class, please notify the instructor as soon as possible or within 48 hours to explore options to make up that component.

**Conduct:**

Students, employees, and academic staff are also 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 for other learners during class time. Students are responsible for being aware of the University's [Internet and email use policy](#). Electronic devices are not permitted during the Final Examination.

**Grading System:**

Course grades are based on the University of Calgary four-point Undergraduate Grading System and the standard percentage conversion chart of the Department of English:

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

- 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>
- There is no D- grade.

**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/policies/files/policies/sexual-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.