



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

Faculty of Arts  
Department of English

**\*\*REVISED FOR THE REMAINDER OF SEMESTER\*\***  
**ENGLISH 251-L04:**  
**The Discursive North in Canadian Literature**  
**Winter 2020**

**Instructor: Chris Brown**

**Email: [christopher.brown1@ucalgary.ca](mailto:christopher.brown1@ucalgary.ca)**

**Students are expected to attend weekly class meetings, held each Wednesday for the remainder of the semester. Please contact me if there are circumstances that prohibit your attendance.**

**Zoom meeting dates: Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>**  
**Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Time: 1-1:50 pm**

**Zoom Office hours: Thursdays from 1-3 pm**

**I will also be available to meet via Zoom upon request, and have updated my Email Policy below to offer a more fluid and adaptable line of communication.**

**Email Policy:** I'm happy to reply to brief, specific questions over email and will do so as quickly as possible – usually within the day, but sometimes longer depending on the depth or level of complication required by my response. Given that some students might not be comfortable (or able) to meet via Zoom, I'll answer emails containing longer or more challenging questions than usual; please understand that it might take longer for me to respond. I'll do my best to be as responsive as possible within reason.

**Course description:**

Whether it be geographically, symbolically, commercially, or ideologically, Canada has staked part of its identity within the North long before its national anthem proclaimed the “true north strong and free.” Yet despite Canada’s preoccupation with its own “northly-ness,” its actual northern territories are often misrepresented, caricatured, or forgotten altogether within the scope of the Canadian consciousness. We might have an idea of where is the North, but how often do we ask what, or more importantly, who, is the North? One of the ways we can engage with these questions is through how the North is rendered in writing – what Sherrill Grace calls the “discursive formation of North.” By engaging with texts ranging from early exploration narratives to traditional oral expressions of Inuit storytellers, this course offers a survey of how literatures have responded to the North over the course of Canadian history. While this course aims to introduce students to the kinds of narratives both settler and Indigenous peoples have created to evoke the North, the hope above all is to reflect upon the colonial impact settlers have had upon the North, its land, and its peoples.

This course will include instruction on close reading and critical writing and provide opportunities for students to develop both their writing skills and their analytical methodologies.

**Required Texts:**

*(available at the U of C bookstore)*

- Marie Clements, *Burning Vision* (play)
- Elizabeth Hay, *Late Nights on Air* (novel)
- Adam Shoalts, *Beyond the Trees: A Journey Alone Across Canada's Arctic* (non-fiction)
- Tanya Tagaq, *Split Tooth* (novel)
- Richard Van Camp, *The Lesser Blessed* (novel)

*(available on D2L)*

- Samuel Hearne, *Journey from Fort Prince Wales in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean* (excerpt)
- Farley Mowat (selected stories)
- Al Purdy, "Lament for the Dorsets"
- Richard Van Camp, "the uranium leaking from port radium and rayrock mines is killing us"

*(films available via D2L):*

- Links will be provided for shorter films available online

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

**\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*** Any readings assigned for a given week must be read BEFORE we discuss them in class. I have tried to break up longer texts into smaller portions throughout the semester, so although I might not require you to have read an entire novel for any given week, you must at least read to the point I've assigned up to.

**Grade Distribution:**

*(Completed)*

Response Paper	(250-400 words)	5%	due Jan. 24
Close Reading #1	(350-500 words)	10%	due Feb. 14
Midterm Exam	(in class)	<b>15-25%</b>	
Attendance & Participation		7%	

*(Remainder of the semester)*

Close Reading #2	(350-500 words)	10%	due Mar. 27
Discussion Forum		10%	
Reading Quiz	(via D2L)	5%	on Apr. 8
Analytical Essay	(1250-1700 words)	20%	due Apr. 15
Presence & Participation		8%	

*\*(Optional)\**

Film Review	(500-750 words)	<b>10%</b>	due Apr. 29
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***All assignments must be completed in order to receive a passing grade in this course.***

## IMPORTANT\*\*\*

Dropboxes will be created within your D2L portal for the submission of all remaining assignments, including Close Reading #2, the Analytical Essay, and if you choose, the Film Review.

Close Reading #2: This assignment requires you to write a 1-2 page (350-500 words) analytical response to one of the texts assigned in the second half of the course. Using evidence drawn directly from a given text, you will be expected to employ close reading methods to form an argument about some aspect – whether based in character, theme, history, narrative, etc – of text in order to demonstrate critical engagement with ideas and contexts discussed in class. Here, you will have the chance to practice and hone your thesis statement writing abilities for later assignments.

Analytical Essay: This assignment requires you to write a 5-6 page (1250-1700 words) essay which engages with *one* of the major texts discussed in class. The structure of the paper will include all of the essential components of an analytical essay, including an introduction with a thesis statement, body paragraphs which respond to the two to three key points of your argument, and a conclusive paragraph. You may adapt an idea or argument from one of your Close Reading assignments, but it must be revised to show how you've advanced or deepened your initial analysis.

Reading Quiz: Administered via D2L, you will answer a brief Reading Quiz meant to test your comprehension of *The Lesser Blessed*, *Split Tooth*, and *Burning Vision*. Students will have a 6 hour window to complete the quiz, which will consist of multiple choice and true-or-false questions.  
*Date: April 8<sup>th</sup> from 2 pm until 8 pm*

Presence & Participation: This accounts for the remaining 8% of your *Attendance and Participation* grade. Given that this course will take place online for the remainder of the semester, I have allotted the following:

Zoom meetings: Students will attend the mandatory class meeting via Zoom each Wednesday.  
1% each session (total 4%)

Discussion forums: Each week, I will open a forum with a series of questions or concerns revolving around the chosen text for that week. Students must engage with the forum, either by offering an answer to a question, responding to a fellow student's question or comment, or asking a question of their own. This will allow students to both communicate openly about the texts (along with key terms, concepts, etc) and show that they are actively engaging with course materials.  
1% each forum (total 4%)

Midterm/Film Review Option: Given the unique circumstances of the semester, there will be **no final exam** for this course. In lieu of this, students will have two options:

- 1) Film Review: This assignment requires you to write a 2-3 page (500-750 words) analytical response to *one* of the short Indigenous-created films posted to D2L. Briefly summarize the film within the context of the “discursive formation of north” – don't just outline what the film is about, but speak to how it fulfills, responds to, or counters previous ideas we've discussed in

class. As with a critical response, you will employ close reading methods to form an argument about the film in order to demonstrate critical engagement with ideas and contexts discussed in class. You might focus this paper around how a single idea or concept operates throughout the entire film, or you might choose one aspect of the film and analyze it through multiple concepts to expose different ways of understanding it. Analysis (showing your thought process) should be emphasized.

- 2) *Midterm inflation*: Students can choose to inflate the allotment of their Midterm grade from 15% to 25%. Whatever percentage you received on your Midterm will remain the same, but the portion of your final grade will increase.

(Examples)	Original allotment:	60% = 9/15	Inflated allotment:	60% = 15/25
		70% = 10.5/15		70% = 17.5/25
		80% = 12/15		80% = 20/25
		90% = 13.5/15		90% = 22.5/25

**Late Assignments:** Assignments handed in after the submission deadline will face a penalty deduction of a **third of a grade per business day** (from B+ to B, etc). Submissions will not be accepted after **10 days** past a submission deadline.

**What to expect on D2L:**

As mentioned above, the class will meet via Zoom each Wednesday during our regularly scheduled classroom time. This will be a more fluid, seminar-style session, meaning I will open the class with an overview of key topics and textual highlights and open up discussion to include everyone. This will be the best opportunity to talk through difficult aspects of the texts, raise questions and concerns, and parse through the narratives both formally and informally. Along with these meetings, I will post a PowerPoint slide show each Monday and open up a discussion forum each Friday. The slides will offer a framework (or frameworks) through which to understand the text, and the forums will open up further avenues of thought which could carry forward into the remaining weeks.

- **Grading system:** This course will use the four-point grading system as outlined in the University of Calgary’s academic Calendar. Rubrics will be posted on D2L for each assignment.

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 that, according to the University Calendar (F.1)

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-1.html>, 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 four-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.

**A range: Consistently excellent work**

**B range: Consistently good work**

**C range: Consistently average work**

**D range: Minimal pass**

**F range: No credit**

**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-5.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 <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/english>. 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>

**Library and Research Support:**

Melanie Boyd, Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: [maboym@ucalgary.ca](mailto:maboym@ucalgary.ca).

Find The English Pages research guide here:

[https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject\\_id=52619](https://library.ucalgary.ca/sb.php?subject_id=52619)

**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:**

**ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

The student accommodation policy can be found at: [ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy).

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

[ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available

at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.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 3rd 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:** <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/ombuds/role>

**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://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

Students who are absent from class assessments (tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform their instructors as soon as possible. Instructors may request that evidence in the form of

documentation be provided. If the reason provided for the absence is acceptable, instructors may decide that any arrangements made can take forms other than make-up tests or assignments. For example, the weight of a missed grade may be added to another assignment or test. For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>.

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT**

According to the University Calendar; <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2.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.