

Course Outline

ENGL 251.01 (W2020): Literature and Society

Department of English, University of Calgary

- **Instructor:** Dr Michael Ullyot
- **Office:** Social Sciences 1044
- **Office hours:** Fridays, 10:00-11:00
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Description and Goals

“[T]o console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight by making the happy happier, to teach the young and the gracious of every age, to see, to think and feel, and therefore to become more actively and securely virtuous; this is their office, which I trust they will faithfully perform long after we (that is, all that is mortal of us) are mouldered in our graves.”

Thus William Wordsworth described the fate of his *Poems in Two Volumes* in 1807, many of which we'll read in this course.

In English 251 you will learn to read and write. Not literally, of course: basic literacy is one of those unstated prerequisites. You'll learn to read texts and then to write about them as a literary critic. Critics notice details and annotate them, and then use those notes to make arguments. So will you.

Our readings will alternate between Wordsworth's poetry and observational essays and podcasts, by the Spanish novelist Javier Marías and by a range of contemporary writers. **By the end of this course you will be able to:**

- write original and persuasive arguments about literature;
- practice different interpretive skills to analyze texts, including close reading;
- write observations of places and of people that are both perceptive and creative;
- organize complex arguments with a clear thesis statement, focused topic sentences, and well interpreted evidence;

- reflect critically on your reading and writing practices.

Evaluation

- Participation Report: 10%
- Journal Entries (5): 20%
- Reading Quizzes (3): 15%
- Module Quizzes (3): 15%
- Midterm Exam (in class): 20%
- Final Exam (on D2L): 20%

There are detailed descriptions of each assignment below. There is no Registrar-scheduled exam in this course.

I use percentages to grade every assignment, and use D2L to convert them to these letter-grade equivalents:

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).

Only at the end of the course do I convert your final percentage grades into letters or GPA scores. Please note that, according to the University Calendar, instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Assignments

Submission Policies and Due Dates

You must complete these 4 assignments to pass this course: all 5 Journal Entries, the Midterm exam, the Final exam, and the Participation Report.

Due dates are always midnight of the day indicated in the Course Schedule. Each student is permitted 1 extension of 1 day without penalty, on **either** the Participation Report or the Final Exam.

I penalize late Final Exams — i.e. those submitted after midnight on the due date — at a rate of 5% daily for the first two days, and 1% daily thereafter. You must submit your Final Exam no later than one calendar week after the due date. Any later, and you will receive a zero grade on that assignment.

Aside from the Final Exam, you must submit every other assignment on the day indicated in the Course Schedule in order to receive a grade for that assignment. Extraordinary cases of medical emergencies and other domestic afflictions may be subject to extensions, but only at my discretion.

If you are absent from any assessments you inform me as soon as possible. I may request that you provide evidence in the form of documentation. If I determine that the reason provided for your absence is acceptable, I 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, see www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html.

Participation Report

Your participation grade depends on your regular, substantive, face-to-face contributions to class discussions. That means you come to class with an annotated copy of the assigned texts, ready to discuss them. If you have questions about the course material and assignments, you come to my office hours rather than only sending me electronic queries. And you never (seriously, *never*) ask me a question you can answer by reading this course outline.

It also means that you post at least **twice** during term to the **#wordsworth-passages** channel in our Slack workspace. 24 hours before the classes when we are scheduled to discuss Wordsworth's poems, post an excerpt of about 10 lines from any 1 of those poems that you'll discuss in class. Come ready to recite your excerpt (from the book, not from memory); to discuss how you annotated it, including any words you looked up in the Oxford English Dictionary; and to ask an interesting question for the class to discuss (i.e. one with a nuanced answer, not a binary answer).

Participation in this class is a self-reporting exercise. That means on April 9th you submit to the designated D2L Dropbox a 1-page account of how you engaged with the course, its readings, and its assignments. In other words, what evidence can you offer that you were more than a body in the room during our meetings; that you did more than the utter minimum to read, analyze, annotate, and think about our readings; that you reflected thoughtfully on your individual assignments; that you came to my office hours; that you posted to the **#wordsworth-passages** channel in Slack the requisite five times? Cite any other evidence of your engagement.

Finally, on the basis on this evidence, award yourself a grade out of 10. Be credible; tell me not only what you did, but what more you could have done to earn a higher grade. If I agree with your self-assessment and evidence, I will give you that grade.

Journal Entries

These are 5 informal responses, each about 400 words long, to the following topics or questions. I mean 'informal' in structure, not grammar; follow the standard rules of sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and so on, but forget the rules of formal essay-writing. There's no need for an introduction, body, or conclusion here; use whatever structure addresses the question or topic.

Each entry is a pass/fail assignment. You pass if you address the question or topic as fully described. Here are the 5 topics or questions for your 5 entries:

1. What are your intentions for this course? Why are you here, aside from the fact that it's a requirement? What skills do you intend to develop, and how will you practice them?
2. As Wordsworth writes in "The Tables Turned", "Close up these barren leaves" (i.e. books) and observe and describe the world surrounding you -- the world of nature, of human society and culture -- with "a heart | That watches and receives." Write a description of any natural or artificial place that you inhabit. Whether you choose the IKEA parking lot, the deer on Nose Hill, or a stairwell in MacEwen Hall, the only condition is that you describe a place you encounter directly and uniquely; use Slack to claim a location that nobody else has claimed. Begin your entry with how you chose this space over others in your lived environment. Then describe the details and people and animals and objects and other things you encountered there, and how they affected you. This is effectively an exercise in Wordsworthian observation. The only difference from Wordsworth is that it will be in prose — though I welcome verse submissions if the spirit moves you.
3. Do a close reading of any 10 or more lines of "Lines Written a few miles above Tintern Abbey" (61). Use at least 5 terms from [Dr Ulyyot's online guide to close reading](#), and/or from pages 82-105 of *Digging into Literature*.
4. Repeat what you did for Entry 2, but this time describe your encounter and conversation with any person whose life-circumstances are dissimilar to your own — that is, normally not a fellow student, family member, or your significant other. Include a selfie of you with your subject, but ask their permission first.
5. What do you think of the descriptive or argumentative methods of two or more essays or podcasts that we have read or heard in this course? Quote from both in your answer.

Due dates for all five entries are in the course outline.

Reading Quizzes

There are three quizzes on material covered in the 'Readings' column of the course outline. Quiz 1 covers weeks 1-4; Quiz 2 weeks 5-8; and Quiz 3 weeks 9-13. Finish the readings and you'll do just fine.

Each quiz is password protected. I'll release the passwords only in class (no exceptions), sometime in week 4 (for Quiz 1); week 8 (for Quiz 2); and week 12 or 13 (for Quiz 3). You will write each quiz on D2L anytime on the days indicated in the course calendar. Give yourself about 45 minutes to complete them; each will have a time limit of 90 minutes.

Module Quizzes

Three times in this course, you'll watch a short video on [my YouTube channel](#) and then complete a quiz in D2L on what you've learned. The videos cover skills that are key to your success in this and other courses. They decode the skills of reading and quoting texts to write persuasive and grammatical literary criticism.

After you watch the videos you should be able successfully to complete the quiz. Each quiz will include a series of questions not just about the information you learned in the video, but applying your new knowledge to different information. (So, for instance, if the video teaches you some principles to avoid academic misconduct, you might be asked to identify whether or not some example text upholds or violates those principles.) Each quiz is worth 5%, and should take less than 30 minutes to complete; each will have a time limit of 60 minutes.

[The first video](#) (and quiz) covers ten grammar mistakes to avoid. [The second video](#) is on how to read texts like a literary critic, and how to develop arguments about them. [The third video](#) addresses when and how to quote texts to support arguments with evidence.

Midterm Exam

This exam, handwritten in class, will give you two short Wordsworth poems from our anthology that we have not read, along with a list of terms from [my online guide to close reading](#) and from pages 82-105 of *Digging into Literature*. You will choose one poem to write a brief analysis using a set number of these terms. Then you will write a brief comparison between the poems, using different terms from the same list.

Final Exam

This exam, written in D2L, will give you a short poem, not from our anthology, that we have not read. First you will write a short paper responding to specific questions about this poem's relationship to Wordsworth. This first paper will quote and analyze at least 3 items from a list of Wordsworth's poems and sections of *The Prelude*. Then you will write an original paper on the growth of your mind and the progress of your literary-critical skills in English 251. Your second paper will quote and analyze 3 passages (your choice) from *The Prelude*, 3 passages from a list of the essays we have read, and 3 passages from your own journal entries.

Dates for the exam are in the course outline. It will have a time limit of 48 hours.

Policies and Guidelines

Screen Policy

Use a laptop to take notes, if you insist. But consider this: students who take longhand notes retain concepts better than those who type them. (*Don't believe me? See for yourself.*) That's because writing more slowly requires you to summarize ideas, not just transcribe words.

But if you're using your computer as a shield to avoid eye contact with others, or as a distraction from the reason you actually came to class (to read texts and talk about them), stop that. Not only is it really obvious, it's mindless. Be mindful, instead: be present in class, and focus your intentions on the reason you're there.

Needless to say, the same goes for phones and tablets. Set your phone to vibrate and put it away. If you use your device for class-related reasons, like I do to consult my lecture notes, then do as I do: silence your

notifications during class. (*That's a good life-habit, by the way; why are you letting other people's timing disrupt your mental focus?*)

Academic Integrity

While 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.

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offence. If you submit an assignment that includes material (even a very small amount) that you did not write, but that is presented as your own work, you are guilty of plagiarism. **The consequences include failure on the assignment or in the course, and suspension or expulsion from the university.** For details, see www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html

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:

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.

Advice on adequate documentation can be found here:

- www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/
- owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/

Principles of Conduct (Department of English Statement)

According to the University Calendar (www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.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.

Other Information

Scribe & 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. Our email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

- arts.ucalgary.ca/english/current-students/undergraduate/scribe-and-muse-club

Department Website

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at 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.

- www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support

Guide to E-Mail Etiquette

- www.enough.utoronto.ca/computeruse/etiquette.htm

Library & 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. Find the English Pages research guide here:

- libguides.ucalgary.ca/english

Academic Regulations & 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:

- 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.”

- www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html

Deferral of Term Work & 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.

- www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html
- www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html

Student Accommodations

The student accommodation policy can be found at:

- 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

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:

- www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf

Absences

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:

- www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/n-1.html

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points

- www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints

Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act

- 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.

- www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/

Program Advising & Information Resources

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The 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. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at 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 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.

Faculty of Arts Students' Union Representatives

Contact: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

Student Ombudsman's Office

- www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI)

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). Your responses make a difference; please participate in USRI Surveys.