

Course Outline

ENGL253.03 (W2023): Studies in Genre: The Novel

Department of English, University of Calgary

- **Instructor:** Dr Michael Ullyot
- **Office:** SS1044
- **Drop-in Hours:** Mondays, 13:30-15:30 or by appointment
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Description & Goals

Novels, as their name connotes, began as a novelty in the seventeenth century. In the centuries since, they have become the indispensable literary form for transmitting human experience across the circumstantial barriers of time and place. The five novels we will read in this course take us from a formative moment in the novel's emergence (*Emma*) to a recent Booker Prizewinner (*Girl, Woman, Other*), recounting the divergent experiences of women in the early 19th and 21st centuries. Between those bookends we will read novels about quotidian life and formative events in London (*Mrs Dalloway*) and across America (*The Hours, Ceremony*) that alter our perceptions of experience itself.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- demonstrate your familiarity with these five authors and their novels;
- relate excerpts to a novel's recurring themes and methods;
- annotate texts to gather evidence for well-grounded arguments;
- develop a thesis from your annotations and other notes;
- respond to the ideas and methods of other literary critics.

Required Textbooks

- Jane Austen, *Emma*, ed. John Mullan (Oxford World's Classics: 2022);
- Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*, ed. David Bradshaw (Oxford World's Classics: 2000);
- Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (Penguin: 2006);
- Michael Cunningham, *The Hours* (Harper Perennial: 2011); and
- Bernardine Evaristo, *Girl, Woman, Other* (Black Cat: 2019).

All five books are on reserve in the TFDL.

Some of your assigned readings are in these editions only. Using other editions of these books will needlessly complicate your life in various ways — so buy these editions.

A valuable source for online book-shopping is *bookfinder.com*. Or buy them from a local independent bookstore: I recommend Pages in Kensington (for a 15% discount), The Next Page in Inglewood, or Shelf Life in Victoria Park.

If you opt for an e-book version of any textbook, be forewarned that two in-person assessments worth 50% of your final grade (the Midterm Exam and the Final Exam) are open-book — but *only for paper* (i.e. not digital) *books and notes*.

Recommended Reference Books

Occasionally students ask which books are worthwhile resources for expository writers. My [guide to Effective Critical Writing](#) has detailed advice, but here are some more recommendations:

1. Your first duty is to choose the right words, so consult the *Oxford English Dictionary* ([link](#)) and the *Oxford Thesaurus* ([link](#)) through the library website. Bookmark both, and consult them as you write.
2. Your next duty is to use words correctly. For this I recommend *Fowler's Dictionary of Modern English Usage* ([link](#)), to resolve questions like that/which, who/whom, and other stumbling blocks.
3. Your ultimate duty is to write clearly and succinctly; Verlyn Klinkenborg's *Several Short Sentences About Writing* ([link](#)) is a wise and readable guide to better sentences.

Evaluation

- Quizzes (2 x 5 = 10%)
- Response Paper (20%)
- Thesis Exercise (20%)
- Midterm Exam (20%)
- Final Exam (30%)

You must complete these 3 assignments to pass this course: Response Paper, Thesis Exercise, and Final Exam. Detailed descriptions of each assignment are below. There are no opportunities to earn credit toward your final grade beyond these 5 assignments.

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. I do not round up final grades, even if you are very close to the next letter grade category.

Policies

Submission & Due Dates

Submit assessments either on D2L. Details are in the descriptions below, and all dates are in the Schedule of Readings and Assignments.

You must complete and submit the Midterm Exam in class during that class, in person. Complete both Quizzes in D2L before they close at midnight on their dates in the Schedule. **If you miss those classes, or those submission windows, there is no opportunity to make up these assessments.**

Due dates for the Response Paper and Thesis Exercise are midnight of their dates in the Schedule. Each student is permitted **1** free extension of 1 day without penalty, on **either** the Response Paper **or** the Thesis Exercise. **You do not need to ask permission for these extensions.**

I penalize late assignments at a rate of 5% daily for the first two days, and 1% daily thereafter. You must submit all assignments no later than one calendar week after the due date. Any later, and you will receive a zero grade on that assignment.

Extraordinary cases of medical emergencies and other domestic afflictions may be subject to extensions or alternate arrangements, only at the instructor's discretion.

E-mail

Use your @ucalgary e-mail for course communications. I will respond to e-mails sent via @ucalgary accounts within 48 hours. Do not follow up before 48 hours have elapsed.

Expectations

When writing an e-mail to a professor, follow these five conventions:

1. Include a short, informative subject line that explains what the email is about.
2. Include a greeting in your email, like "Dear Professor [last name]" or "Hi Professor [last name]." Not "Hey there."
3. Be clear and concise. Write short messages and making direct requests. Say what you need in 2-4 sentences and ideally ask for simple answers (like yes or no).
4. Sign the email with your full name and the course number.
5. Before hitting the send button, quickly review your message for errors.

Assignment Descriptions

Quizzes

Two 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 grammatically correct literary criticism.

After you watch the videos you should be able successfully to complete the quiz. Both quizzes will include a series of questions not just about the information you learned in the video, but

applying your new knowledge to different information. Schedule at least 40 minutes to finish each quiz; they 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. I will not test you on an optional [third video](#), on when and how to quote texts to support arguments with evidence.

Response Paper

This is a 1000-word essay (with an introduction, 1-2 paragraphs, and a conclusion) responding to a journal article on Austen's *Emma*. Your task is to analyze how this article uses textual evidence (quotations) from the novel to make its argument. What is that argument, and how do(es) the author(s) quote *Emma* to make it effectively? You may also quote other passages from *Emma* to extend or complicate the article's interpretation.

- Use at least 5 quotations from the article, each about 7-8 words or more. You may also quote Austen's novel directly. Cite all quotations using **MLA format**, and include a correctly formatted Works Cited section at the end of your paper.
- The length of your essay may not exceed 1000 words, or you will incur a 5% penalty. That covers every word from the start of your introduction to the end of your conclusion, including quotations and in-text citations. (If you can meet the assignment's criteria in fewer words, do it. Brevity is the soul of wit.)
- Your paper should make (1) a rigorous and thorough argument in (2) clear, concise, and natural language that (3) obeys the rules of grammar. For details on these criteria, and my presentation guidelines, see [my guide to Effective Critical Writing](#).
- **Do not** do external research; the only sources you should quote are the assigned article and (optionally) Austen's novel.

Thesis Exercise

This is a 750-word summary of an original argument you develop as you read Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*. Your task is to develop an original argument interpreting any aspect of the novel (e.g. its characters, themes, style, methods). Your argument must be sufficiently broad to require textual evidence from all four of its main (long) chapters. It also must be an argument rather than a topic: that is, a precise and debatable thesis that takes a defensible position on the text — as opposed to a vague and bland topic sentence that no one would conceivably oppose.

- Begin with a one-sentence thesis statement. This is the essence of your work on this assignment, so choose every word carefully. That means you revise and refine your thesis statement repeatedly, until it summarizes your whole argument in clear, concise, and precise language.
- Then, in a paragraph or two, summarize how you developed this argument as you read the novel. What were your first impressions, and how did new textual evidence change them? What quotations would you use to argue your position? Quote from Chapters One, Two, Three, and Four (about 7-8 words each time) and describe how you would use this evidence. (You may also quote from other sections, in addition to these four required quotations.)

- Follow the presentation guidelines in my online [guide to Effective Critical Writing](#), which includes more advice on argumentation, language, grammar, and the use and citation of evidence.
- If you are quoting from the assigned Black Cat edition, cite your quotations with their page numbers only; there is no need for a Works Cited section. If you use a different edition, you must provide full publication details in a Works Cited section.
- Submit your document to the designated dropbox on D2L.
- The rubric to evaluate this exercise is appended to this outline.

Midterm Exam

This is an in-person test of the knowledge and interpretive skills you have developed as you read the first two novels (*Emma* and *Ceremony*). It consists of two parts.

1. The first is a series of short-answer questions about our readings and the instructor's lectures. You will answer each question as briefly as possible, in no more than a few words. They are factual questions about the texts and lectures.
2. The second is a series of short passages from these novels. You will choose some of these passages and in each instance identify its source, its context, and its significance in relation to the text's major themes. All of the passages will have been discussed in lectures or podcasts.

The Midterm Exam is an open-book exercise, in which you may consult any paper (*i.e. not digital*) books or notes that you wish. Normally this would include your annotated copies of these two novels.

Final Exam

This is a registrar-scheduled in-person test of the knowledge and interpretive skills you have developed as you read the last three novels (*Girl, Woman, Other*; *Mrs Dalloway*; and *The Hours*). It consists of two parts, identical to those on the Midterm Exam — though with more questions to answer in part 1, and more passages to identify in part 2.

The Final Exam is an open-book exercise, in which you may consult any paper (*i.e. not digital*) books or notes that you wish. Normally this would include your annotated copies of these three novels.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Abbreviations:

(P) = podcast in lieu of lecture

W1

Jan 10 Course Introduction

Jan 12 (P) (Podcast: "How to Read Jane Austen's *Emma*")

W2

Jan 17 Mullan, Introduction to *Emma* (vii-xxxiii)

Jan 19 Austen, *Emma* I.I-XVIII (1-117); Quiz 1 opens

W3

Jan 24 Austen, II.I-XVIII (118-240)

Jan 26 Austen, II continued; Quiz 1 closes

W4

Jan 31 Austen, III.I-XIX (241-372)

Feb 2 Austen, III continued; Quiz 2 opens

W5

Feb 7 Preface & Introduction to Silko

Feb 9 Silko, *Ceremony*; Quiz 2 closes; Response Paper due

W6

Feb 14 Silko continued

Feb 16 Midterm Exam

READING WEEK

W7

Feb 28 (P) (Podcast: "How to Read Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*")

Mar 2 (No class)

W8

Mar 7 Evaristo, *Girl, Woman, Other*

Mar 9 Evaristo continued

W9

Mar 14 (P) Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway*: Biographical Preface and Introduction (vii-xlv) (Podcast: "How to Read Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*")

Mar 16 Woolf continued; Thesis Exercise due

W10

Mar 21 Woolf continued

Mar 23 Woolf continued

W11

Mar 28 Cunningham, *The Hours*

Mar 30 (P) (Podcast: "How to Read Michael Cunningham's *The Hours*")

W12

Apr 4 Cunningham continued

Apr 6 Cunningham continued

W13

Apr 11 Review and Conclusions

15 Apr to 26 Apr: Registrar-scheduled Final Exam

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 [here](#).

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](#) and [here](#).

Student Conduct

Principles

According to [the University Calendar](#), “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.” Report any cases of such misconduct immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.

Sexual Violence Policy

The University recognizes that all members of our community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The [University of Calgary’s sexual violence policy](#) guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances.

Classroom Conduct

All students, employees, and academic staff in the university community are expected to demonstrate behaviour in class that promotes and maintains a positive and productive learning environment, and to conduct themselves in accordance with the University of Calgary Calendar, the Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures, which can be found [here](#).

Internet & Electronic Communication Devices

Use laptops and mobile devices in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. Do not access websites and resources during class that are distracting to you or to other learners. You are expected to know and to follow [the University’s internet and email use policies](#).

Instructor’s Intellectual Property

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and 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.

Copyright

All students are required to read [the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright](#) and [requirements of the copyright act](#) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the [Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

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

Department Website

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to [our website](#).

Writing Support

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

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. Its email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

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 [here](#).

Grade Appeals

Consult [this University Calendar link](#) and request advice from the English Department at engl@ucalgary.ca. Please note that mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.

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](#).

Student Accommodations

The student accommodation policy can be found [here](#). 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](#). 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 [here](#).

Program Advising & Information Resources

The Arts Students' Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts. Drop in at SS102, call them at 403-220-3580 or email them at ascarts@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit [the Faculty of Arts website](#) which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at (403) 220-5881 or visit them on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

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.

Other Important Information

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