



**FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department Of English**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**ENGL 303: Theories for Reading  
Fall 2022**

**Class Schedule: TR 15:30-16:45, Science Theatre 130**

<b>Instructor</b>	Dr. Kit Dobson
<b>Email:</b>	christopher.dobson@ucalgary.ca
<b>Web Page:</b>	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
<b>Office Hours:</b>	TR 2-3 in office 1028, Social Sciences Tower, or by appointment

**Course description (calendar):**

An examination of contemporary critical and cultural theories and their practical applications to reading. Students will learn models of critical reading and gain experience applying them to a variety of literary and cultural texts.

Antirequisite(s): Credit for English 303 and 302 will not be allowed.

Notes: Students with prior credit in English 302 will not be allowed to take 303. Students are permitted to take English 303 prior to 302.

**Course description (course-specific):**

Welcome to English 303: Theories for Reading! I look forward to working together this semester. In this course, we consider questions about why and how we read. Rather than being a straightforward process or practice, reading is always informed by a framework, worldview, politics, or set of formal expectations. This course is designed to make those explicit rather than implicit, and to give you ways to understand and open up your own reading practices. This course, in other words, teaches us to think explicitly about the methods that we use when we read, interpret, and then write about literary and cultural works. We will use two complementary texts, Lois Tyson's *Critical Theory Today*, and F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* as the basis of our studies, but we will bring in other texts and materials as our course grows and develops. Tyson's book uses Fitzgerald's novel extensively, and so the first thing that you will want to do in this course, if you have not done so already, is read *The Great Gatsby*. The 2013 film directed by Baz Luhrmann will be part of our discussions as well, but you will definitely need to read the novel. Again, welcome, and I look forward to our conversations ahead!

## Course learning outcomes:

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

1. Demonstrate your understanding of the importance of theoretical models in literary study;
2. Draw from, or select between, a range of theoretical approaches to shape your analyses of a given literary text;
3. Demonstrate your understanding of current theoretical methodologies by summarizing, critiquing, and using key concepts and arguments;
4. Understand how differences between theoretical frameworks can produce multiple readings of a text;
5. Analyze how intersections of race, gender, class, sexuality, and national or worldwide history can shape literary studies as a field and existing interpretations of texts;
6. formulate and defend significant arguments in which you analyze, evaluate, and synthesize material effectively, using contemporary theoretical approaches;
7. Work collaboratively with others in developing a theoretically informed interpretation of a text;
8. structure a complex and engaging argument; and
9. present one's own analysis of a text within the context of a specific theoretical approach.

## Texts and readings:

Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*. Third edition, Routledge, 2015.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. 1925. Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition, Penguin, 2021.

*Optional supplementary reading:* there are multiple theory “handbooks” that you might find useful for providing additional context and framing for our discussions. Anne H. Stevens’ *Literary Theory and Criticism*, published in a new edition by Broadview in 2021, is a good recent treatment. Lois Tyson’s book is anticipated in a new edition in 2023. The field is always changing and it is important to keep oneself aware of such developments.

## Learning technology requirements:

There is a D2L site for this course which contains key class resources and materials (see [d2l.ucalgary.ca](https://d2l.ucalgary.ca)).

## Assessments and Evaluation:

Student results for this iteration of English 303 will be determined via the following assessments:

1. Quizzes: 3 x 15%: 45%
2. Short analysis: 25%
3. Final essay: 30%

*Quizzes* (3 x 15%: 45%): You will be tested on the material that we have covered three times during the semester. Literary theory is about developing an awareness of intellectual traditions and practices for the purposes of conducting literary analysis, and it is important for me to maintain a clear sense that you are gaining awareness and insight into the materials that we cover. **Quiz dates: September 29, October 27, November 24.**

*Short analysis* (25%): You will complete an academic paper in response to a series of prompts from which you may choose one. Each prompt will ask you to analyze a short literary passage using a specific theoretical lens. Papers will be between 700-1000 words in length. **Due date: October 20.**

*Final essay* (30%): You will complete an academic paper in response to a series of prompts from which you may choose. Each prompt will ask you to analyze a literary text using a specific theoretical lens. Papers will be between 1500-2000 words in length. **Due date: December 8.**

*Late assignments*: Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of 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 my 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 format.

### **Attendance and participation expectations:**

Please plan to attend class on a regular basis; we will develop a series of interconnected discussions over the course of the semester, and missing elements of this conversation will negatively impact your understanding of the intellectual traditions on which we are building. 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](#). Electronic devices are not permitted during any quizzes or exams.

### **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 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](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/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 year. 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 impact your studies and I will do my best to ensure that your progress in our course is not hindered.