



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS  
Department Of English

### COURSE OUTLINE

ENGL 303.01

Winter 2023

Tuesday and Thursday 12:30pm – 1:45pm

Room: ST 127

Modality: In-person

Instructor	Prof. C. Olbey
Email:	cwolbey@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal)
Office Hours:	Tuesday 2-3pm

#### Calendar description:

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.

#### Course description:

‘Why do I need to learn about literary theory anyway?’ Fair question, and in this class we will spend a considerable amount of time during the Winter semester of year 2023 trying to develop a satisfactory answer to this question and others like: what is theory and what values could it hold for students working in the discipline of literary studies? How can students use theory to extend and expand their own engagement with literary and cultural texts? Who are theorists, and what types of languages do they use? What type of questions about art and human life does literary theory take up and what types of answers does theory help us to produce? Where does theory fit into our reading and critical engagement with literary and cultural texts? What is the value of literary theory beyond the relatively narrow terrain of English departments? And more pressing questions like: how can theory help me to get better grades, a job, or even a date? While this course cannot promise any final or even unambiguous answers to most if not all of these questions, it can promise a rigorous intellectual engagement with all of them, and many more. This course will ask you to read about theory and to write with a clearly defined theoretical focus in your engagement with a range of literary and cultural texts. Students will read Lois Tyson’s accessible guide to theory in the effort to build their understanding of key theoretical concepts and their function within a range of different forms of criticism. In class we will also look at some representative examples of key works from

different theorists to gain some exposure to the languages of theory. On top of this understanding students will have the opportunity to apply their own individual interests in theory to critical engagements with their own selection of literary or cultural texts. Your assignments will be designed to facilitate this process with the goal to help you get to a point where you can go forward with your work in the English department with the confidence that you can produce critical engagements with more substance, depth, and ultimately more intellectual satisfaction for you and for your future readers.

### Course learning outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will acquire the following learning objectives:

- 1) Extend and expand their ability to go forward with your work in the English department with the confidence that you can produce critical engagements with more substance, depth, and ultimately more intellectual satisfaction for both you and your future readers.
- 2) Extend and expand their understanding of a range of technical terms, theoretical concepts and terminology and to apply them to their reading and interpretation of literary and cultural texts
- 3) Extend and expand their ability to write a strong, well-supported, clearly written academic essay. This includes teaching students the idea of writing as a process by guiding them through the various stages of composition and teaching students how to create effective arguments
- 4) To extend and expand their ability to critically engage with the theoretical foundations of all literary/cultural criticism.
- 5) To develop their ability to value and build upon each other's ideas by actively fostering discussion
- 6) To develop, extend, and expand their knowledge of how the application of theory to literary and cultural texts fosters the exploration of questions of difference, otherness, history, contemporary social and political issues, and identity in Canadian contexts
- 7) To extend and expand their ability to use theory to build more positive and productive intellectual and social interactions both within and outside academia.

### Texts and readings:

Required:

Lois Tyson. *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition available in U of C bookstore.)

\*Students will also engage a number of other literary/cultural texts (short stories, film, t.v., music, video, selections from specific theorists etc.) which will be indicated in the course schedule and/or introduced in class lecture/discussions to provide illustrations of and opportunities to see how to use theoretical concepts to respond to literature, culture and society in positive and productive ways.

### **Learning technology requirements:**

Students will require a computer or other electronic device to access the D2L site for this course which contains required and relevant class resources and materials (see [d2L.ucalgary.ca](http://d2L.ucalgary.ca)).

### **Assessments and Evaluation:**

#### **15% Participation Grade**

- This grade is for individual student contributions to the discussion boards for this class.
- This grade is scored out of 10 points and consists of 10 total discussion board contributions over the duration of the course. Student contributions can be either a post or a reply to another student post.
- Students are limited to a maximum of two points per theory discussed in this class. Students may make more posts/replies to any discussion board but can score no more than 2 points per theory and no more than 1 point per board for a post. Students can receive contribution points for all replies up to the limit of 2 points per board. For example: a student who makes 2 or more posts only for any individual board would only receive 1 contribution point for that board. A student that makes 1 post and 1 reply would score the maximum of 2 points for that board. A student that makes 2 or more replies on a board would receive the maximum 2 points for that board.
- Posts will not be given letter grades.
- To qualify as point scoring, posts and replies must be between 100 and 200 words and show evidence of an original critical engagement with the theory or discussed course text for that board (through specific textual references) and that demonstrate an awareness of the methods and modes of literary theory/criticism consistent with and connected to lecture/discussions and/or texts in this class. General statements and/or mere brief responses or repetitions of what others have said will not normally qualify as point scoring posts or replies.
- Discussion board calculations for points have deadlines, after which points can no longer be accumulated on a particular discussion board (normally this date will be 7 days after a after class lecture of the specific theory is finished).

**15% Short Written Assignment #1 (Close reading/ Explication)**

- 500-600 words
- For this assignment students have the opportunity to produce a close reading to support their argument for how a particular theoretical concept can be used to extend and expand your critical engagement with a literary/cultural text.

**10% In-class exam #1**

- Exam date appears on your course schedule
- Exam will consist of multiple choice, and/or short answer/ matching questions on material from class lecture/discussion (texts, terms, concepts, close reading)
- Time 60 minutes in class only

**20% In-class exam #2**

- Exam date appears on your course schedule
- Exam will consist of multiple choice, and/or short answer/ matching questions on material from class lecture/discussion (texts, terms, concepts, close reading)
- Time 60 minutes in class only

**15% In-class exam #3**

- Exam date appears on your course schedule
- Exam will consist of multiple choice and/or matching questions on material from class lecture/discussion (texts, terms, concepts, close reading)
- Time 60 minutes in class only

**25% Long Written Assignment (Minimum 7, Maximum 10 typed, double-spaced, 12pt font pages).**

\* This assignment may utilize and develop elements from your first written assignment.

\* Whether you choose the essay or creative options, this assignment must include a substantial engagement with a minimum of two critical, secondary sources (theory and/or criticism).

\*this assignment, whether critical essay or creative, may be completed with a partner. For this option assignment guidelines regarding page limits are expanded according to the number of students involved. For example, for a partnership with 2 students the requirements would be

minimum 12 maximum 15 pages. If students are considering this they are invited to consult with the instructor regarding expanded expectations.

This assignment can be on any of the texts discussed in this class except for *The Great Gatsby*, or may be on a literary/ cultural text of your own choosing.

### **Option one –**

Critical Essay. Students have the opportunity to produce a traditional critical essay. Note: page count does not include appended bibliographic material like footnotes, appendices, or Works Cited pages.

### **Option two – Creative assignment (poetry, short story, created object, visual, performance, etc.)**

- Note: this option must include a minimum 5-8 page critical explication and analysis
- Original short story and theoretical explication option. Here you will produce your own original short story with a maximum of 5 typed, double-spaced twelve point font pages (1250 words) for your story and 5 typed, double-spaced pages for your theoretical explication of your story.
- Creative project: this option is structured like the short story option but students may produce a creative project which could be an art object, video, play, poem etc. along with a theoretical explication of your creative piece.
- Scoring for this option: Creative portion out of 10; Critical portion out of 10= total score out of 20 points.

### Assignment Information

- There is no Registrar scheduled final exam in this course.
- Students are not required to complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in the course.
- There are no 'extra credit' assignments in this course.
- All written assignments must be submitted in a .doc format through dropbox in the D2L site for this course.

- All assignments must be submitted by the due date given. Assignments submitted more than 24 hours after the assigned due date will be considered late. Any assignments submitted after the due date may receive a grade only without additional comments.
- All exams in this course are closed book and completed in class. Students are not allowed to use any electronic devices or any other aids like dictionaries during examinations. All phones must be turned off (except with consent of the instructor) and out of sight in bags or pockets during exams. Any phones visible during exams can qualify as academic misconduct.
- In cases where the opportunity to write a missed exam is granted, the exam may be in a different format than the original in-class exam.
- This course is delivered in-person. In exceptional circumstances such as instructor illness, a class or classes may be delivered online through the Zoom platform in D2L.

### 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.

### Grading System:

All assignments will receive a numerical grade, to be converted to letter grades using the following scale:

90 + %	A+	4.0	67 – 69.99 %	C+	2.3
85 – 89.99 %	A	4.0	64 – 66.99 %	C	2.0
80 – 84.99 %	A–	3.7	60 – 63.99 %	C–	1.7
77 – 79.99 %	B+	3.3	55 – 59.99 %	D+	1.3
74 – 76.99 %	B	3.0	50 – 54.99 %	D	1.0
70 – 73.99 %	B–	2.7	0 – 49.99 %	F	0

This scale is also used to calculate final grades in this course.

Note that this scale does not include a “rounding up” feature and will produce the final grade in this class. For example, a final grade of 84.99% will normally be recorded as A-, 79.99% will normally be recorded as B+, and so on throughout the grading scale. Students should not expect that any numerical grade will be rounded upward or downward in this class.

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.

### Assignment Submission Late Policy

Written assignments submitted more than 24 hours after the due date will be considered late. Such assignments may not receive editorial comments and may have 3% per 24 hours subtracted from their final percentage grade for the assignment. For example, an assignment that scores 75% and handed in within 24 hours of the due date will not receive any penalty; the same assignment handed in between 24.1 and 48 hours late may receive a penalty of 3% for a total score of 72% for the final assignment grade; an assignment handed in between 48.1 and 72 hours of the due date may receive a penalty of 6% for a final grade of 69%. This scale would continue in the same way for each additional 24 hour period.

### Attendance

There is no specific grade for attendance, in this course. However, students should understand that each class, in a variety of ways, will develop skills and deliver information needed to learn and acquire the learning objectives for this course and to score effectively on assignments and exams, and that in most cases there is a direct correlation between attendance and the student’s ability to produce a successful educational and grading experience in this course.

### Participation

The participation grade in this course consists of specific contributions to the Discussion Board in D2L. However, students should be aware that student participation in various ways (questions, comments, discussions, debates, etc.) are tools to facilitate student success in this course. Students are encouraged, but not required, to speak in class and effective participation can be just as much the act of attentive, engaged listening and thoughtful consideration as insightful speaking. Since our readings will lead us into a wide range of critical investigations of social, cultural, historical, aesthetic and political issues, and since the class is a relatively large, diverse group of human beings with different ideas, opinions, arguments and positions on the issues and ideas the stories present, this course will proceed with a fundamental tone of respect, tolerance, and thoughtful consideration of the ideas of others (the instructor for students, students for the

instructor, and students for each other). This guiding tone of respect does not mean that ideas, opinions, and arguments, expressed by students or instructor, cannot be challenged and debated from other positions and through different arguments. Indeed this can and should be an interesting and engaging aspect of our course. It means that when we disagree we try to persuade others through offering a more convincing argument. When students engage this sort of participation they further develop skills required to produce success on assignments and exams. This is one key reason for why, in most cases, there is a direct implicit correlation between participation and the student's ability to produce a successful experience in this course.

#### 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.

#### 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>

#### **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.