



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

FACULTY OF ARTS
Department Of English

COURSE OUTLINE

ENGL 309 L01: Literature and the Environment

Winter 2023

Class Schedule (Tu/Th/11:00 – 12:15/online; synchronous)

Instructor	Professor Banting
Email:	pbanting@ucalgary.ca
Web Page:	D2L (access via MyUofC portal); https://profiles.ucalgary.ca/pamela-banting
Office Hours:	Wednesdays 10 to 12 a.m. (by prearranged Zoom unless otherwise specified/arranged)

Course description:

An examination of the field of nature writing, environmental literature and ecological literary criticism.

This is an online course in a synchronous modality.

A few keywords: climate chaos; carbon; ocean, land, property; imposition vs. proposition; colonialism; slow and fast violence; transcorporeality; shape-shifting and metamorphosis; memory; kinship; community; observation, paying attention, noticing; extirpation and extinction; ethics and etiquette; animacy and aliveness; kin and kinship; environmental justice; action and activism; bioregional knowledge; life forms vs. forms of life; biodiversity; sufficiency, enough, gratitude, enchantment; the gift economy; plant writing; genre; and more.

Course learning outcomes:

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of a range of environmental texts of different genres, environmental issues and ecocritical approaches;
2. Understand and interpret literary texts in relation to their theoretical, cultural and ecological contexts;
3. Pay close attention to both literary texts and the 'texts' of the world beyond the text;
4. Engage in meaningful conversations about nature writing and environmental literature;

5. Question the hierarchies, binary oppositions and ideas that have shaped the Western legacy of thought about the natural world.

Required texts and readings:

Barry Lopez, *The Rediscovery of North America* (nonfiction; essay; colonialism)

Gail Anderson-Dargatz, *The Spawning Grounds* (novel; set in BC; salmon lives; colonialism)

Kathleen Dean Moore, *Great Tide Rising: Towards Clarity and Moral Courage in a Time of Planetary Change* (nonfiction; personal essays; climate; biodiversity; loss, grief, mourning; solastalgia)

Sue Goyette, *Ocean* (the serial poem; ocean; CO₂; water; naturecultures)

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding Sweetgrass* (nonfiction; personal essays; plants; Indigenous relationships with the plant world; Indigenous languages and cosmologies)

Sid Marty, *The Black Grizzly of Whiskey Creek* (nonfiction; Alberta; reading locally; bears; a bear mystery; a forensics narrative)

Ross Gay, *Catalog of Unabashed Gratitude* (poetry; the lyric; nature and the lyric; joy and gratitude)

Genre: Genre is key to the reading and accurate comprehension of texts. Novels are works of the imagination. Works of nonfiction are not fiction: therefore they are not novels. You can call them nonfiction, literary nonfiction, creative nonfiction, or you can refer to them as books or texts. Only book-length works of fiction are called novels. **In other words, the word “novel” is not synonymous with “book.”** There is one novel, *The Spawning Grounds*, on this course.

Learning technology requirements:

There is a D2L site for this course which contains required readings and other relevant class resources and materials (see d2l.ucalgary.ca).

In order to successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection.

Most current laptops will have a built-in webcam, speaker and microphone.

Assessments and Evaluation:

Mid-term test (in class) 20%
Feb. 28th

Reading journal (20 pp. total) 50%
10 pp., due Feb. 9 (entries one through five, 25%)
10 pp., due March 23 (entries one through ten, 25%)

A personal journal or diary of your reading, thinking and responding to the texts of the week, journal entries will be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font, with 1" margins on all four sides of the page, dated, and written in the first person "I."

Research essay 20%
(6 pp., due April 4)

Final quiz (April 11) 10%
TOTAL 100%

Important Information:

Passing grade: Students must complete and submit ALL of the assignments in order to be eligible for a passing grade for the course. See also the late penalty below.

Exam: There will NOT be a registrar-scheduled final examination or any final exam in this course.

Extra credits: There are no extra-credit assignments.

Style: MLA Style is the citational style we use in English literature studies, but APA Style or Chicago Style are acceptable too. Select the style your discipline prefers. Just be proficient and consistent with whichever style you choose. Don't blend them or invent them. Consult your writing manual.

Active learning: This course will be conducted as a mixture of lecture, class and small-group work, general discussion, creative responses, and other forms of learning. Respectful and thoughtful participation in all such activities is compulsory. A crucial part of intellectual work in general is being able to speak about it with others. In short, students will be expected to assume the role of active participants in the co-construction and dissemination of knowledge rather than that of merely passive consumers of it.

Attendance and being present: Active learning is premised on being present. A strong commitment to class attendance, completing the assigned readings **in advance** of the class for which they are scheduled, avidly participating in your own and others' learning, demonstrating

respectful, accountable, and open intellectual engagement with the course materials and with fellow students and professor are very important components of learning. A class is a community, a group of living, breathing, thinking, responding, feeling, knowledge-creating beings. It is also a workplace, a working group, a think tank. We generate some of our best ideas and insights collectively, and this is both a good skill to acquire and one of the most pleasurable and memorable aspects of university. Intermittent attendance (more than a couple of absences per term) for reasons other than illness results in losing one's place in terms of the material, assignments, and the others in the course, and it can be a real challenge to regain one's momentum. In other words, don't skip classes if you are healthy.

Downloads: Please download from D2L and save to your own computer both 1) the course syllabus and 2) the class and reading schedule for easy reference throughout the term and so that you can access it even if your internet access is temporarily unavailable.

Formatting: All written assignments must be **double-spaced** in 12-point font with 1" margins on all four sides of the page. Times New Roman is the default font for work in English literature, though you can use another easily readable, professional font. "Fun fonts," however, do not make anyone's work appear professional. Times New Roman is the default font for work in English literature, though you can use another easily readable font such as this one, Calibri, Arial, Cambria, or Garamond.

Late penalties will be deducted for late assignments. Late penalties can and sometimes do result in a failing grade on an assignment so students will want to start assignments well in advance of the due date. The late penalty for assignments is one mark per day late. For instance, if an assignment is assessed at 16/20, but it is two days late the grade will be deducted two marks, one percent for each day late, for a total of 14/20.

Submission of assignments: Assignments will be submitted via Dropbox in D2L (unless alternate special arrangements are made).

Technology: The use of laptop and mobile devices in class is totally 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](#).

Surfing the web, checking email or social media, taking calls or texting during class time is distracting. Taking calls or texting, even by leaving the Zoom classroom, is also very disruptive to everyone and is heavily discouraged.

Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at specific times for a live video conference, so that we can have the opportunity to meet each other virtually and discuss relevant course topics as a learning community.

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, and not hacked, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, and respect (as per the **Code of Conduct**). When entering Zoom or other video conferencing sessions (such as MS Teams), you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behaviour in these sessions may affect others. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities. Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (e.g., **Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy**). If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your zoom sessions visit: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/>.

Office hours: if you need or would like some guidance, assistance or advice with anything course-related, please make an appointment by emailing me in advance to set up a time for a zoom appointment. See the top of this outline for my Zoom office hours.

Spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, and other formal elements of writing will be assessed with respect to all assignments for the course, not just specific assignments. There is no circumstance in which incorrect or very poor writing is advisable, not even in casual emails or text messages. Your reading journal will be written in the first-person ("I") but writing in the first person is no reason not to use proper spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Taking notes: Please take extensive notes, and remember to take them of any films, videos or podcasts on the course. Films are vivid and you think you will remember them in sufficient detail to analyze and think about them, but unless you are a highly visual person you probably won't. The same applies to such evanescent media as video and audio. The word 'text' applies to such non-print materials as well as to books and articles.

Keep in mind that it is the student's responsibility to take notes. (In other words, notes are not given but taken.) Sometimes students assume that notes should be taken only when there is a PowerPoint Presentation on the screen, but this is not true.

Annotations and underlining: I highly recommend that you **annotate and underline** your course texts. Underlining and annotating in the margins are the best ways of acquiring and consolidating your knowledge of textual material and the best strategy for studying. 'Make tracks' in your text (though not, of course, in any library books, not ever), and you will be far

more likely to take 'ownership' of the knowledge we will be co-creating in the classroom. It is also vastly more efficient when it is time to prepare for class, prepare questions for your peers, study, and carry out your research.

Feedback. For each of your written assignments, I will give you editorial feedback on how you can improve the quality of your work. It is expected that you address any indicated deficiencies, errors or infelicities – even if your writing is very good, you can always improve along the lines I highlight – prior to submitting your next assignment. You don't want to make the same errors, infelicities or omissions more than once.

Attendance and participation expectations: Students are expected to attend class regularly and to be fully present and engaged in class activities and discussions.

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 required for the online class format. Please use them in a manner appropriate to the course and classroom activities. For instance, please refrain from accessing extraneous 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](#).

Grading System:

Assignments will be graded as a percentage. Percentages are easily converted to letter grades or the points system using the following table:

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

- 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 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.
- Any final grades that end in a point 5 (.5) will be rounded up to the next whole number before being converted to a letter grade (A, B, C, etc.) using the table above.

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. 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.

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
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.