

**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**ENGL387 L 02 Topic 97: Steal This Course**

**Winter 2014**

**Class:** Tuesday/Thursday 9:30am-10:45 am, Room ST130  
**Instructor:** Rachel Zolf  
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**Office hours:** Monday 5:30-6:30 pm, Tuesday 11am-12 pm

**Homepage/course website:** <http://english.ucalgary.ca/courses>

**Course Description:**

“Good artists copy. Great artists steal.” – Pablo Picasso

“Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal.” – T.S. Eliot

“There is nothing original; all is reflected light.” – Honoré de Balzac

“There is only seeing and, in order to go to see, one must be a pirate.” – Kathy Acker

Plagiarism is wrong; we all know it. And yet there’s really nothing new under the sun. From mimetic Greek drama to the craft of the medieval cento to Shakespeare’s infamous thefts; from the anxiety of influence to modernist montage, appropriation and pop art, punk pastiche, hip hop and conceptual writing – artists and writers have consistently paid conscious or unconscious homage to their mythic and actual forebears through the fine art of the copy. This course explores the way literature and art are always stealing. We will study creative works that steal material from the Internet, the government, the weather report, the law, the psychological assessment, the porn magazine, the garbage, other writers, etc. – anywhere words exist to be taken from one context and (re)used in another context deemed “literary.” We will examine practices of (re)appropriation, gleaning, poaching, sampling, ragpicking, détournement, piracy, pastiche, and replication in the work of such figures as Kathy Acker, William S. Burroughs, M. NourbeSe Philip, Dodie Bellamy, Vanessa Place, Charles Reznikoff, Walter Benjamin, and Agnès Varda. Students will have the opportunity to steal words themselves and make them into something creative. Maybe your work could even be pirated and taught on this course someday. Feel like stealing this course description – go ahead!

In all seriousness, “plagiarism is necessary,” as Comte de Lautréamont decreed. “It is implied in the idea of progress. It clasps the author’s sentence tight, uses his[her] expressions, eliminates a false idea, replaces it with the right idea.” For, as John Donne wrote, “All [hu]mankind is of one author, and is one volume; when one [hu]man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated.”

**Required Texts (available in the University Bookstore):**

1. *I’ll Drown My Book: Conceptual Writing by Women*, ed. Bergvall, Browne, Carmody, Place. Les Figues Press. ISBN: 978-1934254332
2. *transcript*, Heimrad Backer. Dalkey Archive press. ISBN: 978-1-56478-565-7
3. *Blood and Guts in High School*, Kathy Acker. Grove Press. ISBN: 978-0-8021-3193-5
4. *Zong!*, M. NourbeSe Philip. Wesleyan University Press. ISBN: 978-0819571694

**Assignments****Percentage of Final Grade**

Group project	10%
Response papers	25%
Research paper	25%
Creative project	15%
Individual Presentation	5%
Writing Exercises	10%
Participation	10%

There will be no Registrar-scheduled exam in this course.

**Assignment Descriptions:**

All assignments must use the MLA methodology. No extra-credit assignments will occur in the course for any reason.

**Group Project**

Students will do a group project and presentation related to course themes and texts. If a student misses class, with no evidence of a medical emergency, on a day they are scheduled to give a presentation, they will receive a grade of 0 on the presentation.

**Response papers**

Students will post ten 200-word response essays to course texts on the class blog. If all ten posts are completed on time with serious and clear critical analysis, the student will receive 20 points (worth a total of 20% of the final grade). Points will be deducted for late entries. Students can receive a total of 5 possible additional points on the response papers at the end of term, depending on the level/sophistication of critical analysis, argument, and close reading skills demonstrated by the student in the response papers over the course of the term.

**Research paper**

Students will do a 1200-word research paper related to course themes and texts.

**Creative Project and Individual Presentation**

Students will develop a creative project related to course themes, texts, and methodologies.

Student will present their creative project to class at the end of term, and hand in a 500-word project analysis paper with their creative project. If a student misses class, with no evidence of a medical emergency, on a day they are scheduled to give a presentation, they will receive a grade of 0 on the presentation.

**Writing exercises**

Students will do five writing exercises to practise the creative methodologies enacted in course texts. This will also help students develop methodologies for their creative project. These exercises will not be graded. Two points (worth a total of 2% of the final grade) will be awarded for the completion of each exercise, and points will be deducted if the exercises are not completed by the due dates.

**Participation**

Active student participation is a key aspect of this course, and includes in-class discussion, group work, blog comments, and attendance.

**Please note:** Some of the materials and topics in this class may include explicit written or audio-visual content (violence, sexuality, objectionable or illegal conduct). If these materials make you uncomfortable, you are encouraged to speak with the professor. You will not be exempt from any assigned work but we will work together to accommodate your concerns. This class respects difference and diversity while welcoming thoughtful, critical debate and discussion.

**General Submission Instructions/Expectations:**

- Students are expected to attend class prepared to participate actively in class activities and discussions. Students must read and prepare notes on all required readings for the class.
- Responsibility for attending and fulfilling the requirements for lectures, readings, and assignments resides with the student. The professor will not give out lecture notes, repeat information, nor provide replacement copies of material that was provided during regular class hours. Use of recording technologies in class is prohibited.
- Evaluation: The instructor uses specific requirement criteria to calculate grades on assignments. The grade given is the grade for the assignment.
- Extensions for assignments are on a case-by-case basis.
- All assignments must be submitted to qualify for a passing grade.

**Guidelines on E-mail Etiquette and Electronic Submissions policy:**

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>

Assignments and course work must be submitted at the beginning of class, on the due date and in printed form (typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, stapled), unless other specific arrangements have been made. Assignments must be in MLA format with a works cited attached. In particular, submitting work by e-mail without prior agreement is not an acceptable alternative to handing in work in class.

I am happy to reply to short specific questions via e-mail and will answer as promptly as possible (usually it takes me approx. one week to respond to a given e-mail). However, I cannot guarantee that you will have a reply within a specific amount of time. If you have detailed questions on the course material, it is more appropriate to visit me during office hours or make an appointment to see me personally in my office.

*Note: Please make all efforts to take assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS1152 and place it in the drop-box. Your assignment will then be date-stamped and placed in your instructor's mailbox. To retain confidentiality, place your assignment in an envelope. Please keep a copy of your assignment in case of loss by any cause. It is your responsibility to do so. **Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.***

**Policy on late assignments:**

All written assignments must be submitted in hard copy. Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (an A- to B+) for each day [not each class] that the assignment is overdue, unless a written proof of medical reasons is provided.

**Undergraduate Grading System:**

The following grading system will be used for final grades. Percentage or Letter grades will be given for assignments and will be based on the following grade conversion chart.

Here is the grading system is used in this course:

A+/90+% ; A/85-89% ; A-/80-84% ; B+/77-79% ; B/74-76 ; B-/70-73% ; C+/67-69% ; C/64-66% ; C-/60-63 ; D+/55-59 ; D/50-54 ; F/0-49%.

**Plagiarism:**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

**Scribe and 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 <http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club>.

Our email address is [smec@ucalgary.ca](mailto:smec@ucalgary.ca).

**English Department Website:**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>. 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. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

**Library and 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](mailto:maboym@ucalgary.ca)  
Find *The English Pages* research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

**Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:****Academic regulations and 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

<http://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.”

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

**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 form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>, <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

**Academic Accommodation:**

It is the students' responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodations and have not registered with Student Accessibility Services, please contact them at 403-220-6019. Students who have not registered with Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodations. More information about academic accommodations can be found at [www.ucalgary.ca/access](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access).

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:**

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:**

<http://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.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:**

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://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 in their new space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

**Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:**

[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

**Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):**

"At the University of Calgary, 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](http://www.ucalgary.ca/usri)). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

**PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. 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:

1. Plagiarism - 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.

While it is recognized that 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. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT**

According to the University Calendar, (<http://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.